

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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Communions

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

February: First Sabbath: Broadstairs; **Second:** Dingwall; **Third:** Stornoway; **Fourth:** North Uist, Zenka.

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

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

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, Grafton, London; **Second:** Achmore, Donsa, Kinlochbervie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fourth:** Chiedza.

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

July: First Sabbath: Beaulay; **Second:** Bonar Bridge, Staffin; **Third:** Applecross, Auckland; **Fourth:** Cameron, Struan.

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

September: First Sabbath: Chesley, Larne, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Aberdeen, Barnoldswick, North Uist; **Fifth:** Fort William, Ingwenya.

October: First Sabbath: Dornoch, Grafton, Lochcarron, North Tolsta; **Second:** Gairloch, Ness; **Third:** London; **Fourth:** Edinburgh, Gisborne, Uig, Mbuma.

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

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

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The Breadth of God's Holy Law

A world entirely without law would be a dreadful place. It is one aspect of God's restraining grace that nations have laws, however imperfect, which to some extent limit sins such as murder and theft. They are in place because society needs them. And it is because we need them that God has given us *His* commands. Among the effects of the Fall is ignorance – in particular, about how we should behave; we need boundary lines to mark out the limits of acceptable behaviour. In kindness, God gave Israel the moral law, in the form of the Ten Commandments. Paul points out that “the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Rom 7:12). Charles Hodge makes the connection: “The law of God is a transcript of His own nature – holy, just and good”.¹ And so the Commandments are of permanent validity; they have not lost their authority, and they never will.

As the Scriptures have been circulated to various parts of the world, these commands have provided those who received them with the exact boundary lines they needed. And, however ignorant of God's law some peoples may yet be, they do have some residual sense of the need to restrain their behaviour. But Western society is in a dangerous position as it turns its back on God's law, thinking its own ideas better than the revelation given by an infinite mind. The Lord pronounces a solemn “woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil” (Is 5:20). Ungodly people may be unwilling to admit it, but it is good for us to be restricted by God's law.

The particular commandment referred to in the context is the Tenth: “Thou shalt not covet . . .”. It is good for us not to covet, to be content with our circumstances; this will keep us from many another sin. But all the commandments are good for us. Most people today see the command to “remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy” as unreasonable, restricting them from doing what they consider perfectly legitimate. But it is a great blessing for us to be able on one day in seven to leave everything else, as far as possible, and focus on our spiritual needs.

We should also bear in mind that “the commandment is exceeding broad” (Ps 119:96). The reach of each commandment is very great, taking to do with

¹ *A Commentary on Romans*, Banner of Truth Trust, 1983 reprint, p 226.

every aspect of human life. It not only takes to do with our outward actions and what we say – what everyone else can see or hear – it takes to do with our thoughts and motives. So, for example, when Jesus refers to the Seventh Commandment, He adds, “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Mt 5:28).

The principle lying behind Jesus’ statement applies to every commandment. The First not only forbids outward worship of a false god and taking part in the activities of a false religion; it is so broad that it forbids every defect in our practice of the true religion. In particular, the refusal to believe in Jesus Christ is a sin against this commandment; so is every shortcoming in the faith of God’s children. Again, the Fourth Commandment not only forbids blatant outward transgression of the sanctity of the Sabbath, but also all unnecessary conversation and thoughts about worldly things.

To gain further light on the great breadth of the commandments, let us notice *The Larger Catechism* answer to the question: “What are the sins forbidden in the Third Commandment?” It lists them as follows: “The not using of God’s name as is required; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning, or otherwise using His titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; murmuring and quarrelling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God’s decrees and providences, misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the Word, or any part of it, to profane jests, curious or unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or any thing contained under the name of God, to charms, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or any wise opposing of God’s truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or backsliding from it” (Ans 113).

For a further example from the same source, let us take Answer 141: “The duties required in the Eighth Commandment are, truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce between man and man; rendering to every one his due; restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof; giving and lending freely, according to our abilities, and the necessities of others; moderation of our judgements, wills and affections concerning worldly goods; a provident care and study to get, keep, use, and dispose these things which are necessary and convenient for the sustentation of our nature, and suitable to our condition; a lawful calling, and diligence in it; frugality, avoiding unnecessary lawsuits, and suretyship, or other like engagements; and an

endeavour, by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own”.

It may also be a help us to comprehend the breadth of God's law if we consider the rules, given in Answer 99 of *The Larger Catechism*, which “are to be observed for the right understanding of the Ten Commandments”:

1. That the law is perfect, and bindeth everyone to full conformity in the whole man unto the righteousness thereof, and unto entire obedience for ever, so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin.
2. That it is spiritual, and so reacheth the understanding, will, affections, and all other powers of the soul; as well as words, works, and gestures.
3. That one and the same thing, in divers respects, is required or forbidden in several commandments.
4. That as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden; and, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded; so, where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included; and where a threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included.
5. That what God forbids is at no time to be done; what He commands is always our duty; and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times.
6. That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded, together with all the causes, means, occasions and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto.
7. That what is forbidden or commanded to ourselves, we are bound, according to our places, to endeavour that it may be avoided or performed by others, according to the duty of their places.
8. That in what is commanded to others, we are bound, according to our places and callings, to be helpful to them and to take heed of partaking with others in what is forbidden them.

It is not superficial obedience that God demands; it is, as indicated above, perfection. When the lawyer asked Jesus about the first commandment in the law, He answered, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Mt 22:37). It is wholehearted obedience, from every part of our being, that God looks for; everything short of that perfect standard is sin. But for us fallen creatures to reach God's perfect standard is impossible. Hodge states, immediately after the previous quotation about the law, “The clearer our views of its extent and excellence, the deeper will be our sense of our own unworthiness”. And God teaches us not to look to ourselves for deliverance from sin.

Nothing is hidden from Him, however deep down in our hearts it may be. We should always be conscious that “God shall bring every work into judge-

ment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecc 12:14). If God’s law takes to do with all the details of human life – and it does, for it is “exceeding broad” – then when Christ will sit in judgement on the whole human race at the last day, the standard of judgement will be the moral law, in all its details and all its implications.

Where then can we unworthy sinners turn in our need? We must look to Him who could say, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart” (Ps 40:8), for Christ’s was a heart where perfect obedience reigned. He could do, perfectly, what no mere human being since the Fall could ever do. In coming into the world, He humbled Himself by coming under the law. Not only did He come to pay, on behalf of a countless multitude of unworthy sinners, the penalty of a broken law, but He also made Himself responsible for keeping the law in their place.

So Christ, as man, came under an obligation to love the Lord His God with all His heart and with all His soul and with all His mind – to obey the whole law in all its exceeding breadth, to keep all the commandments in all their details and all their implications, both positive and negative. He could confidently challenge His enemies with the question: “Which of you convinceth Me of sin?” (Jn 8:46). Of course, none of them had anything to raise against Him from observing His outward life as He went in and out among them. His whole life was perfectly consistent with wholehearted love to His Father; indeed, all His obedience flowed from that love.

And supposing His enemies had been able to see into His heart, discern His thoughts and analyse His motives, they would have seen nothing but what was characterised by perfect love and holiness. What is more, God could see all the actions and words and thoughts of His own Son, as He went about this world in our nature, and could declare, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”. He could so speak, not only at Jesus’ baptism and at His transfiguration, but always – and especially when the work of redemption was completed.

These words represented God’s view of Christ as He kept the law on behalf of His people. He did so perfectly, so that there is a righteousness which can be imputed to every sinner who believes in Jesus. How sad when individuals ignore the gospel message and continue attempting to work out a righteousness of their own – an attempt that is doomed to dismal failure! But how wonderful is the salvation which results from obedience to the gospel call: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31); it is a salvation which provides a righteousness that matches the exceeding breadth of God’s holy law and will even stand the most searching scrutiny on the Day of Judgement.

The Benefits of Affliction¹

A Sermon by Archibald Alexander

Psalm 119:71. *It is good for me that I have been afflicted.*

Man is born unto trouble as the sparks fly upward.” Manifold are the afflictions humanity suffers; and from these the godly are not exempt. “Many are the afflictions of the righteous.” Christ said to His disciples: “In the world ye shall have tribulation”. The rich spiritual blessings to which believers have become heirs are consistent with much suffering; indeed the afflictions of the righteous are a part of their heritage. They are necessary as a means to their greatest improvement and happiness. It is therefore written: “Blessed is the man whom Thou chastenest”. “Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver. I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” Let us inquire then what benefits may be derived from affliction.

1. Afflictions have often been made the means of bringing careless and impenitent sinners to serious thought, which leads them to repentance and a thorough reformation of life. This effect is produced by cutting off the person from his sinful indulgences. A spell of sickness or a sore bereavement interrupts him in his course of worldly pursuits. It has a tendency to show him the unsubstantial nature of all worldly possessions and enjoyments. Under the pressures of affliction, he feels his dependence. Pain urges him to seek relief, but human help is vain. When sorely distressed he begins to cry unto God. Multitudes now in heaven can say, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted”, for “before I was afflicted, I went astray”.

We know indeed that affliction, like other means of grace, does not of itself produce any beneficial effect on those who are subject to it. It requires the influence of the Holy Spirit to render it effectual to the conviction and conversion of sinners. But its tendency is to lead to serious reflection and to a change of life; and often, we believe, the Spirit of God does accompany His chastening rod, so that it is made the means of bringing men and women, not only to serious thought, but to repentance not to be repented of.

One instance from Scripture is that of Manasseh. The case is very remarkable on two accounts: first, because he was one of the greatest sinners who ever lived; and second, he was an old man when his conversion took place. The history of this event is found in 2 Chronicles 33:11-13: “Wherefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the host of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh among the thorns, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon. And when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his

¹Reprinted, with editing, from Alexander’s *Practical Sermons*.

God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, and prayed unto Him; and He was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem, into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord He was God.”

2. Afflictions are made eminently beneficial to the pious by preventing them from fixing their affections unduly on earthly things. There is too strong a tendency in all minds towards the things which are present and visible. These worldly objects become a snare to many; by pursuing riches or honours too strongly, they become involved in many difficult situations and often pierce themselves through with many sorrows. A season of sore affliction may be a real blessing, by preventing inordinate attachment to the world.

Or when the affections are already placed too strongly on some earthly object, it is often the method of providence to remove that object. Even the dearest earthly relatives may become snares to the soul of the pilgrim. Children may be too much loved, in comparison with the Saviour, and if they are snatched away from the tender embrace of their parents, the discipline, though painful, is often salutary, and even necessary. When God thus disciplines His children, He causes them to see why He thus afflicts them; and commonly they are enabled, after a while, to say, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted”. For although “no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby”.

3. As affliction is often used to prevent the saints from wandering; it is also the usual method by which backsliders are reclaimed. When Christians have declined considerably from the lively exercises of religion, they are little affected by the warnings of the Word. It is to them like a tale often told. They are asleep and have only a dreamy notion of the realities of eternity.

From this sleep of carnal security, into which even the pious are liable to fall, they are commonly awakened by the application of the rod. Some severe dispensation of providence overtakes them, and they are brought to a stand. Serious reflection is, as it were, forced upon them, and their eyes are opened to see how far they have wandered from the right path. By affliction the heart is softened, and the truths of the Word now sink deep into the inmost soul. Deep contrition is produced, and the soul lies humbled in the dust under the chastising strokes of his Father in heaven. He mourns in bitterness over his folly and unfaithfulness, and writes bitter things against himself; scarcely believing that God can be reconciled to such an ungrateful wretch.

God speaks in the language of lovingkindness, “Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings”; “Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto Him, Take away all iniquity”, heal our backslidings

and love us freely, and let Thine anger be turned away from us. The mercy of the Lord appears even more wonderful in receiving the backslider on his return than in his first conversion. Convinced at length of the lovingkindness and tender mercy of the Lord, the penitent backslider responds to the kind invitation: "Come, let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn and He will heal us; He hath smitten, and He will bind us up".

4. Affliction serves as a furnace to purge out the dross which still lurks in the regenerate heart. Just as precious metals are separated from their dross by being cast into a furnace heated seven times, so the people of God are purified as by fire. The furnace not only serves to purge out the dross, but to test the genuineness of the metal. Not every thing which glistens is gold, says the proverb. The ore must be tried in the fire, and if it contains pure gold, the precious metal will shine forth brightly while the dross is consumed. Thus afflictions also test the genuineness of our piety. If there is nothing in us that will stand the fire, we may be certain that our religion is no better than a counterfeit. The Apostle Peter makes a striking use of this similitude: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ".

Affliction not only serves as a test to try the genuineness of our religion, it provides an opportunity of exercising some of the most excellent graces of the pious heart. Before it is tried, faith cannot certainly be known to be faith; but when the dark cloud of adversity lowers over the soul, faith, when it exists in the soul, comes forth with vigour and supports the soul ready to sink, by laying hold of God's promises. It also provides an opportunity for submission to the will of God to be manifested. It is easy to say, "Thy will be done", while we bask in the sunshine of prosperity; but when the pressure of affliction is sorely felt, there will be a struggle.

Self-love makes us restive at first and tries to throw off the burden; but where there is a principle of piety, the soul bows in submission after a short conflict and says, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good". Though a spirit of rebellion is felt, it is subdued and the soul quietly acquiesces in the divine appointment. It even kisses the rod by which it is smitten, saying, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted". And even when it does not see the good to be derived from bereavement, the believer, knowing from whom the stroke has proceeded, is still. He is like Aaron when his two oldest sons were smitten dead before his face; he held his peace.

Patience is another excellent Christian virtue which has no room for exercise except in a state of suffering. This grace is often strongly set forth in the Holy Scriptures, and its exercise tends to show all observers the excellence

of true religion. The saints never, in any circumstances, glorify God more than when they let patience have its perfect work while they are suffering in the furnace of affliction. Paul gloried in tribulation, because it wrought patience. "In your patience," says Christ, "possess ye your souls." And Paul exhorts to be "patient in tribulation". "Be patient," says James, "unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient."

Affliction is in its nature painful; so it is the opposite of joy and it might seem, at first view, inconsistent with this state of mind. But while we suffer tribulation we may rejoice. Paul says, "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost". Now the heart in which the love of God is shed abroad must be full of joy; and this is experienced in the midst of tribulations. We are commanded to rejoice always, and therefore we are bound to rejoice in the midst of affliction.

Internal peace is often most perfect when the person is under the pressure of external affliction. The experience of real Christians testifies that their seasons of richest spiritual enjoyment are not days of outward prosperity, but dark days of adversity. Indeed, in order to receive true spiritual peace, it seems necessary for the heart to be reduced from that state of hardness or indifference which prosperity naturally induces, to a state of sensitivity, which is often the result of affliction. The joy of the Lord requires a heart deeply conscious of its own weakness and unworthiness, which, in the truly pious, is produced by having it pierced by arrows of adversity.

One effect of affliction on most people is to urge them to seek God's help. Even the ungodly will often pray earnestly for deliverance from a painful affliction, but affliction almost always has this effect on those who are sincerely pious. They pray in prosperity, but their prayers often become formal; their souls are not stirred up from the bottom; they do not go forth in warm desires. But the rod arouses the soul from its apathy and stimulates it to call on God with fervent cries and supplications. The spirit of prayer which is aroused by adversity is not merely for deliverance from the pressure of the particular affliction under which it labours, but it is thus brought to a lively feeling of its own sinfulness, and its urgent need of stronger faith and more perfect patience and submission. It is led to enquire why it is thus afflicted. It searches for hidden and neglected sins and can commonly see reason enough for the severity of God's dispensations; it can often trace the affliction to some particular transgression or the neglect of some particular duty.

Affliction often opens up to someone's view a depth of iniquity not perceived before. Thus it serves to humble the soul in deep penitence, which is the very temper suited to prayer. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." Affliction not only is a powerful means of promoting the knowledge of our own hearts and of the depth of iniquity which lodges there; it furnishes an opportunity for a more experimental knowledge of the wisdom, faithfulness and mercy of God in His treatment of His children. He brings them into deep waters, that He may manifest the truth of His promises, which are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

Man's extremity is God's opportunity, says the proverb. When hope is nearly extinct, and the distressed soul is sinking as in miry clay where there is no standing, help from God is experienced. It may be delayed to let the person try his own wisdom and strength to obtain relief, but when all other resources fail, God is pleased to speak comfortingly to the troubled heart. God, as it were, takes him by the hand, and extricates him from the horrible pit and miry clay, sets him upon a rock, establishes his goings, and puts a new song into his mouth, even of praise to God, for delivering mercy. Knowledge of the faithfulness and loving-kindness of his heavenly Father, thus obtained, is far more valuable than the mere theory of these truths without experience. On his deathbed, an eminent theologian said to those around him: "I have learned more of God in these few days that I have been confined to this bed of sickness than I ever knew before, with all my laborious study".

Affliction is not always chastisement. It is sometimes for trial, and to manifest faith's power to endure with patience the burden which may be laid upon it. Thus Job's overwhelming calamities were sent to try his sincerity and faith. So also, in the case of Abraham, when he was required to offer up his beloved son Isaac. And we have no right to infer, as Job's friends did, that when God lays grievous afflictions on anyone, it is evidence that he is a great sinner.

Afflictions may seem severe, but they are often the means of preventing much greater evils. We cannot fully appreciate the benefits which arise from them; yet we may know, by reflecting seriously on our own experience, that providence has interposed to open our eyes to the danger to which we were exposed. When we were gradually approaching some dangerous temptation which would in all probability have overcome us, providence has prevented the fall by laying us on a sickbed or by a sore bereavement, and the snare in which we were entangled has been broken. Not only may affliction be the means of preventing the believer's fall into sin, but one affliction may be the occasion of warding off another which would be much greater. How often

such deliverances occur no mortal can tell, because we cannot know the consequences of events which never took place. God only knows how much we are all indebted to our afflictions for escaping awful crimes or overwhelming calamities. The children of God would undoubtedly apostatise were it not for the restraints laid upon them by the external dispensations of His providence as well as by the internal operations of His grace.

Once more, God often uses afflictions to prepare the saints for heaven, by causing them to desire rest from their protracted sufferings. Our affections are naturally attached to earthly objects, and although grace changes the current of our thoughts, yet there is an undue attachment to these objects. Here we have a home where we may have lived for a long time and every object around us is prized above its real value. Besides, we are surrounded by dear relatives with whom we are naturally unwilling to part: a wife who, it may be, has become helpless, and young dependent children. They may, as we suppose, need our assistance, and we cannot see how they can be provided for and rendered comfortable if we should be taken away from them. We naturally ask, What will become of them when we are gone? Who will take care of them? In addition, the future is covered with darkness. We cannot understand how we shall exist in that untried state, and what our emotions will be.

A strong faith will indeed counteract these earthly influences, but such a faith is aided by afflictions which show us the emptiness of all worldly possessions and enjoyments. Under the pressure of long continued disease, the desire of deliverance and rest becomes strong enough to counteract our attachment to earth and make us willing to leave friends and possessions so that we may be free from the pains which we endure.

Some Christians have been distressed because they have been so little afflicted, fearing lest they were not the children of God – because, as Scripture says, all sons receive chastisement. Let such not be troubled on this account, for their time of adversity may not yet have arrived. Some families, for many years, appear exempt from strokes of adversity; numerous children grow up in health and there is no breach among them. But this cannot last. The longer adversity is in coming, the broader is the mark for its arrows. These children, however healthy for a season, may sicken and die. Do not be impatient for affliction, it will come soon enough. It has already been remarked that there are internal afflictions which fill the soul with unspeakable anguish when no external cause exists. These are often among the severest afflictions, and are as real as those which are outward.

The use I would make of what has been said is to exhort God's afflicted.

(1.) Recognize the hand of God in every affliction. Do not look to second causes: do not look to the persons who may have been the instruments of

your sufferings. If the wicked have reviled and slandered you, follow the example of David and say, The Lord hath bidden them – that is, the Lord has permitted this affliction for your chastisement.

(2.) Never murmur at the dealings of divine providence. Nothing can befall you apart from God’s ordering. Do not fret therefore at what He does, for however dark the dispensation, wisdom and mercy guide the stroke. Say then: “I know that Thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.”

(3.) Try to obtain benefit from your afflictions by exercising patience and submission. God has a sovereign right to dispose of you and yours. Do not rebel against Him. He has promised that all these things shall work together for your good. More, He has declared that these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

(4.) Consider that this is not your state of rest; that state is to come. Here you are subjected to various trials but, when you have suffered a while, you shall have an abundant entrance administered to you into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Christ.

Amyraldianism: Devaluing the Atonement

4. Its Effects on English and Scottish Churches¹

Rev Neil M Ross

H*ypothetical universalism in England.* In England, a form of hypothetical universalism was espoused by some Puritans prior to the publication in 1634 of Amyraut’s form of this doctrine in his *Treatise on Predestination* – a fact which Jonathan Moore ably demonstrates in his *English Hypothetical Universalism: John Preston and the Softening of Reformed Theology*. It was held not only by John Preston, but also John Davenant, James Ussher, Edmund Calamy and Richard Baxter. However, their form of hypothetical universalism did not have all the ingredients of Amyraut’s system. Ian Hamilton, in his enlightening paper *Amyraldianism – Is it Modified Calvinism?* says that those “hypothetical universalists . . . by and large, held to the orthodox understanding of the order of the decrees, something Amyraut vigorously opposed”.² However, there are certain similarities between their views and those of Amyraut.

In 1650 Davenant published his *Dissertation on the Death of Christ*, in

¹Last month’s article took “a closer look at Amyraut’s teaching”.

²*Amyraldianism – Is it Modified Calvinism?*, 2003, p 2. At <http://www.chelmsfordpres.org.uk/resources/articles/Amyraldianism.pdf>.

which he taught a type of universal atonement. Davenant (1572-1641), renowned as a good and gifted man, was in fact highly influential in promoting hypothetical universalism, and was arguably the leading member of the group of English deputies who were members of the Synod of Dort. As Ian Hamilton notes, “Many of the English delegates at the Synod of Dort (1618-19) advocated universal, if hypothetical, redemption. Bishop Davenant taught that ‘Christ died for all on condition that they believe, and He will intercede for all if only they believe’.”³

Later, in the Westminster Assembly (1643-1649), a number of the divines, led by Calamy, were of the Davenant party. With regard to the Assembly debate concerning “the redemption of the elect only”, the minute refers to “a small body of men [in the Assembly] whose convictions lay in the direction of a modified Calvinism which had been lately promulgated by Cameron and Amyraut for the express purpose of finding a place for a universal redemption in the Calvinistic system”.⁴ They did not succeed in having their views adopted by the Assembly or incorporated in the Assembly’s new Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

Some have argued that they were not altogether unsuccessful, in that chapter 3:6 of the *Westminster Confession* supposedly gives way to them to some extent. We fail to see how that is so when, as already quoted, that section categorically states that “God hath appointed the *elect* unto glory”, and, “they who are *elect*, being fallen in Adam, are redeemed by Christ”, and, “Neither are any other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified, and saved, but the *elect only*” (italics ours). Warfield rightly states, “The result of the debate [in the Westminster Assembly] was a refusal to modify the Calvinistic statement in this direction – or perhaps we should say, the definitive rejection of the Amyraldian views and the adoption of language which was openly framed to exclude them”.⁵

Rev Donald Beaton wrote, “Whatever efforts may have been made to give an interpretation to chapter 3, section 6, of the *Confession* favourable to the views held by the followers of Davenant and Ussher, there can be no doubt that the teaching of chapter 8, section 8, leaves no loophole for this teaching. [It states]: ‘To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption He doth certainly and effectually communicate the same’.”⁶ “This sentence”, said Rev Hugh Cartwright at one of our theological conferences, “is emphasising

³*Amyraldianism – Is it Modified Calvinism*, footnote, p 1.

⁴Quoted in Ian Hamilton, *The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy – Seceders and Subscription in Scottish Presbyterianism*, p 59.

⁵Quoted in Ian Hamilton, *The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy*, p 60.

⁶*The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 43, p 43.

the unity within the decree, of election, redemption, effectual calling and so on, the same unity which we see in Romans 8:28-30, which David Dickson calls ‘the golden chain which cannot be loosed’. . . . This sentence in the *Confession* is intended definitely to exclude Hypothetical Universalism and Amyraldianism, which maintained an election which followed upon a universal love and a universal redemption. Westminster Calvinists may be Supralapsarians or Infralapsarians, but they cannot but believe in the particular redemption of those, all those, and only those, embraced in God’s eternal, electing love.”⁷

Richard Baxter (1615-1691), is justly renowned as the author of *The Reformed Pastor* and *A Call to the Unconverted*, but in his theological writings he postulated a form of Amyraldianism. In his paper, *Richard Baxter*, Rev K D Macleod quotes Baxter saying that Christ “purchased all men from the legal necessity of perishing that they were in, into His own power, as their owner and ruler, that so He might make over reconciliation, remission and salvation to all if they will believe, and might send forth sufficient means and help of grace to draw all men towards Him, resolving to draw His elect infallibly to Him”.⁸ Mr Macleod comments, “Yet Christ’s work of redemption, according to such teachings, avails nothing for those who never come to faith, even though the claim is made that He actually suffered unto death for them”. Indeed, as Mr Macleod further says, quoting again from Dr Packer, Baxter was “convinced that the Bible makes it as clear as the light that Christ died for all”.⁹

Baxter’s formula, explains Dr Curt Daniel, an American Baptist theologian, (in an online lecture) “was that Christ died for all but not equally for all or with the same intent, design or purpose. He said there was a double intent for the atonement. The atonement was the same for all people but it was the intent that was different. There was intent in the atonement for the non-elect, that is, to leave them totally without excuse, but there was a special intent for the elect and for the elect alone, and that was to guarantee their salvation.”¹⁰

Some have argued that Baxter was not an Amyraldian. Smeaton, for example, says, “The celebrated Baxter has been often unfairly claimed as an Amyraldist”.¹¹ Some colour is given to this view by Baxter’s statement in opposing John Owen for his doctrine of a definite atonement: “In the matter

⁷*The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 113, p 112.

⁸Quoted in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 113, p 73, from J I Packer, *The Redemption and Restoration of Man in the Thought of Richard Baxter*, Paternoster Press, 2003, p 223.

⁹*The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 113, p 73; quotation from J I Packer, *The Redemption and Restoration of Man*, p 231.

¹⁰<http://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/histtheocalvin.html>.

¹¹*The Apostle’s Doctrine of the Atonement*, Edinburgh, 1870, p 542.

of the extent of redemption, wherein I am most suspected and accused, I do subscribe to the Synod of Dort, without any exception, [or] limitation".¹² Nevertheless, says Nicole, "Richard Baxter openly avowed that he espoused Amyraldian views, and he listed other English divines who did so too ([in his] Preface to *Disputations of the Right to the Sacraments*, 1657)".¹³

Forms of Amyraldianism in Scotland. In Scotland, says Rev Donald Beaton, "Amyraldianism was introduced . . . by the posthumous work by the Rev James Fraser of Brea in the Black Isle".¹⁴ In that work, *A Treatise on Justifying Faith* (published in two volumes, 1722 and 1749), Fraser asserts, says James Walker, "that 'Christ obeyed, and died in the room of all, as the head and representative of fallen man:' that 'men are all fundamentally justified in Him and by Him:' and 'that Christ died for all'. But, then, are all men saved? No; God did not mean to save any but His chosen. What, then, was the effect of that one indivisible sacrifice for all which God's Son offered on the cross? Well, first of all, to lay a real foundation for the gospel offer. For every man satisfaction was rendered, and every man might appropriate it as something subjectively real. . . . It comes to this in short; Fraser plainly states it: that Christ dies for reprobates that they may come under a more tremendous doom; as, on the other hand, He dies for the elect that theirs may be an all-transcendent blessedness."¹⁵

Fraser's book had serious effects, particularly within the Cameronian (Covenanter) and Secession (Burgher and Anti-Burgher) churches. Thomas Mair, an Anti-Burgher minister, was investigated by his Presbytery in 1753, when it was known that he favoured Fraser's teachings. This resulted eventually, says Ian Hamilton, "in the Act of the Associate Synod (commonly called Anti-Burgher) at Edinburgh, April 18th 1754, containing an assertion of some gospel-truths . . . 'That our Lord Jesus Christ hath redeemed none others by His death, but the elect only . . .' and that 'He died in one and the same respect, for all those for whom He in any respect died'".¹⁶

But the Amyraldian "middle way" was not killed off by this measure. Conflict arose again, this time in the United Secession Church. We refer to the Atonement Controversy (1841-1845), of which Ian Hamilton writes,

¹²Quoted in *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 43, p 45.

¹³*Standing Forth: Collected Writings of Roger Nicole*, p 328. Dr Nicole was both an acknowledged authority on Amyraldianism and an able defender of the inerrancy of Scripture, but he is to be consulted with caution as he was awry in interpreting Scripture on the position of women in the Church and also advocated women ministers – as appears from internet links sent to us.

¹⁴*The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 42, p 448.

¹⁵*Theology and Theologians of Scotland*, pp 81,82.

¹⁶*The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy*, p 60.

“The initiator of the Controversy was Andrew Marshall of Kirkintilloch. He charged the Church’s two senior professors, John Brown and Robert Balmer, with departing from the Confession’s teaching on the atonement, arguing that their emphasis upon the general and universal nature of the atonement contradicted the teaching of the Church’s doctrinal standards.”

A committee of Synod pronounced that the Atonement Controversy was mainly a misunderstanding over imprecise wording, and that, in fact, scriptural harmony prevailed in the Church. Marshall was dissatisfied with the Synod’s decision and eventually he “accused Brown of teaching five theological propositions contrary to the Church’s Standards and Scripture”. Mr Hamilton adds, “The most important was the third, ‘that Christ has not died for the elect only, but that He has died for all men, and made atonement or satisfaction for the sins of all men’. The Synod acquitted Brown of every charge. Brown’s ‘double-reference theory’ was accepted as not being contrary to the Church’s Standards.”

“The effect of the Atonement Controversy,” Mr Hamilton continues, “was further to loosen the attachment of Scottish Presbyterianism to the theology of the Westminster Standards. It was not therefore surprising that the United Presbyterian Church in 1879 framed and passed a Declaratory Act which effectively qualified its commitment to the precise Calvinism of the Westminster Standards. It was now accepted, at least in the Secession Churches, that total subscription to the *Westminster Confession of Faith* was an unreasonable burden to impose on its ministers.”¹⁷

Declaratory Act 1892. The United Presbyterian Declaratory Act of 1879 led eventually to the Free Church of Scotland Declaratory Act of 1892, which occasioned the ecclesiastical Protest of Rev Donald Macfarlane, and his consequent departure, with Rev Donald Macdonald, several divinity students and thousands of people from the Free Church in 1893 to form what became known as the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

The Amyraldian roots or modified Calvinism of the 1892 Act can be seen in several of its statements, for example: “This Church most earnestly proclaims, as standing in the forefront of the revelation of grace, the love of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to sinners of mankind, manifested especially in the Father’s gift of the Son to be the Saviour of the world, in the coming of the Son to offer Himself a propitiation for sin”¹⁸ – an apparently innocuous but subtle statement, cleverly framed to protect those in the Church who favoured teaching, such as Amyraut’s, about God’s indiscriminate love for all.

The 1892 Act also says that the *Westminster Confession of Faith* is not to

¹⁷*Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology*, T & T Clark, 1993, pp 43,44.

¹⁸*History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland 1893-1970*, p 394-6.

be held to teach “that God may not extend His mercy for Christ’s sake, and by His Holy Spirit, to those who are beyond the reach of those means, [the gospel] as it may seem good to Him, according to the riches of His grace.”¹⁹ Again we are reminded of the Amyraldian idea that the heathen can be saved without the preaching of the Word.

Since then, the baneful effects of Amyraldianism have been evident in many professedly Calvinistic churches. The real danger of the subtle and plausible system is something we hope to show in the next and final instalment.

Preach the Word

Rev G G Hutton

Some time around 64-66 AD, when the New Testament Church was still in its infancy, the Apostle Paul addressed a most solemn charge to a young minister: Timothy. That charge has been providentially preserved for all generations, providing all who occupy the Church’s pulpits with a divinely-inspired directive: “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom; Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim 4:1,2).

In order to stress to Timothy the importance of his solemn calling, the Apostle confronted him with his personal accountability to the final Judge, who would pass judgement on his ministry. It is obvious from the following verses that Paul was not expecting Timothy’s ministry to crown him with popularity. He charged Timothy to be steadfast in his ministry, knowing that he would encounter temptations to dilute the Word and even deviate from it. Ministerial faithfulness demanded from Timothy a personal conviction about the substance of his preaching. His messages must all originate from one clearly-identified source of truth. If he had any uncertainty about this, Timothy would be vulnerable to the temptation to compromise the truth, and to imagine that popularity with one’s hearers is evidence of a successful ministry – pressures to which preachers remain subject to this day.

Thus Paul’s charge to Timothy is precise and transparent: “Preach the Word”. Timothy is not advised to apply his intellect in order to discover a fountain from which he might draw information which would be interesting for his hearers. He is not afforded licence to use his own discretion in sourcing material for his preaching. The charge from the glorified Head of the

¹⁹*Catechism of the History and Principles of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland*, 2013, p 43.

Church, through Paul the experienced apostle, confines him strictly within the bounds of divine revelation: “the Word”. Paul was simply reiterating the sentiment God expressed to the Old Testament preachers, the prophets: “He that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully” (Jer 23:28).

In order to fulfil his calling to the ministry, Timothy was required to master God’s Word. So must every Christ-sent minister of the Word; no book will be of greater importance to him than his Bible. Commentaries on the Bible may be illuminating, theological works developed out of controversy about the teaching of the Bible may be helpful, but nothing can be a substitute for the Word of God as the source for his sermons. The gospel minister must daily live in his Bible, while its contents must live in his heart. Preaching the Word demands the most diligent and ardent study of the Word in order to ascertain what God is saying, to whom He is saying it, and why He is saying it.

It is always “Thus saith the Lord” which clothes the preacher with the mantle of authority. Therefore he needs to be confident that he is conveying the mind of God to his hearers when he addresses them. When the preacher’s mind is directed to a particular portion of divine truth and the Spirit of God opens it up to him as he prayerfully studies it, he can proceed with the same divine warrant as God gave to Jonah, when He sent him to preach to Nineveh: “Arise, go . . . and preach . . . the preaching that I bid thee” (Jnh 3:2). Jonah was not in a position to decide what he would preach to the people in Nineveh. God had a particular message for this people, and Jonah was required to deliver it accurately, without abridgement, addition or embellishment.

When Christ, the living Head of the Church, appoints a spiritual shepherd over a congregation, it is to feed them “with knowledge and understanding” (Jer 3:15). If they are to grow spiritually, the flock of God needs to know biblical facts, but they also require a spiritual understanding of those facts. Thus it is the chief business of the preacher to explain the spiritual meaning of divine truth. When the Holy Spirit directed Philip to accompany the Ethiopian eunuch, as recorded in Acts 8, the eunuch was reading a portion of Scripture. Philip obediently joined him and enquired, “Understandest thou what thou readest?” When the eunuch replied, “How can I, except some man should guide me?” Philip seized the opportunity to explain its meaning, much to the Ethiopian’s spiritual edification.

In the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, when God’s law had been largely forgotten in Jerusalem, it is recorded that men who knew the Scriptures “caused the people to understand the law So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading” (Neh 8:7,8). These incidents testify to the need for the Word to be expounded.

God, who created man, knows best what is required to sustain spiritual life in him. He taught the Israelites that “man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live” (Deut 8:3). Man is so constituted that his spiritual well-being depends upon him spiritually ingesting the words of the Lord. The written Word contains the spiritual nourishment which God knows man needs. Only as the preacher feeds the minds of his hearers with the Word of God can he hope that it will penetrate their innermost souls with life-giving and life-sustaining power.

Many churches today are offering their adherents religious entertainment, emotional excitement and social togetherness, while promising them holistic well-being. Through the use of psychological manipulation, “counsellors” and “leaders” take the place of preachers and succeed in increasing the number who attend their ministry, enhancing the reputation of their particular church as a desirable venue for weekly religious socialising. Sadly, the long-established ministry of exposition appears to have little appeal to this generation, so that faithful ministers of Christ find themselves ever less favoured among church-goers.

Although no servant of Christ deliberately sets out to be unpopular, gospel ministers are required to persevere like Timothy, “instant in season, out of season”; they must have the conviction that enabled Paul to endure in spite of difficulties: “It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor 1:21). If perishing sinners are to be saved by the grace of God, then the Church of Christ must maintain the preaching office. God’s people must pray earnestly for a divine reviving of Spirit-anointed, God-centred preaching in this wayward generation. Back in the days of the prophet Hosea, the Lord drew attention to the prevailing ignorance among His people: “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hos 4:6). Whenever the teaching ethos is lost in the Church, not only is the great commission of Matthew 28:19,20 neglected, much to the dishonour of Christ, but doctrinal ignorance among the people is the inevitable result.

Those whom Christ has called to the ministry of the Word are required to “labour in the Word and doctrine” (1 Tim 5:17); they are to labour both in the Word and in instruction. Although the preacher, being human, may not be consistently successful in this respect, he must make every effort to give sound instruction, with a desire that his congregation will improve in its understanding of divine truth. The servant of the Lord does not occupy the pulpit in order to make suggestions to his hearers; he is not authorised to express personal opinions, however profound; his bounden duty is to “preach the Word” – to announce and expound God’s unchangeable Word.

Although the minister of the Word cannot transform hearts, he is under a

solemn charge to instruct the minds of his hearers. It is his duty to stir up the minds of his congregation to think (2 Pet 3:2). Because the mind, however, is naturally in darkness, the conscience functions in ignorance, while the will operates under an inherent enmity to God. Thus, while the gospel preacher must expound the Word, it is God alone who produces spiritual fruit – or as Paul stated it, “giveth the increase” (1 Cor 3:6,7). This sobering fact must be acknowledged both by ministers of the Word and those who attend their ministry. Nevertheless a particular responsibility lies upon all who hear the Word: “Remember them . . . who have spoken unto you the Word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation”. How solemn it is for us all to remember that both preacher and hearer must finally account to the God of the Word for their stewardship of it.

Receiving the Lord's Supper¹

2. Self-Examination

Thomas Houston

Diligent self-trial is so necessary to the right observance of the Lord's Supper that both the words of the original institution and the standards of the Reformed Churches describe it as an eminent part of the preparation for communion. “Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat.” *The Larger Catechism* asks, “How are they that receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to prepare themselves before they come unto it?” (Q 171). It answers, They are “to prepare themselves thereunto, by examining themselves of their being in Christ, of their sins and wants; of the truth and measure of their knowledge, faith, repentance, love to God and the brethren, charity to all men, forgiving of those that have done them wrong; of their desires after Christ, and of their new obedience; and by renewing the exercises of those graces, by serious meditation and fervent prayer”.

The work of self-examination is always necessary and, like spiritual meditation, it should be associated with all religious duties, and it is a special duty for those who propose to come to sealing ordinances. Scripture refers to it as judging ourselves, communing with our hearts, judging them before God. Self-trial is a reflex act of the mind, by which we call to account our past life and consider seriously the present state of our hearts, with the principles and objects of our actions, by the rule of His Word. If we would attempt this duty aright, we must set apart time for performing it properly, retire from the

¹Taken, with editing, from Houston's volume, *The Lord's Supper*. The first article, last month, dealt with the question, Who ought to go to the Supper?

world, pray for direction and the aid of the Holy Spirit. We must aim to concentrate our thoughts and to excite conscience to witness faithfully. We must judge ourselves as before God, that we be not judged and condemned with the world.

Special self-examination as a preparation for the Lord's Supper involves various important subjects, and each of these should form a distinct matter of solemn inquiry. All right preparation for the sacrament of the Supper consists of (1) *habitual* preparation, the possession of grace in the heart, and of (2) *actual* preparation, the present exercise of grace in the spirit and life. So our special self-trial for partaking of the Lord's Supper should, first of all, be directed to our spiritual state. We should earnestly inquire, as in the sight of Him who searches the heart, whether we have been spiritually enlightened and savingly convinced of sin, whether we have been born again and brought into a new covenant relation to God, and whether we have been bringing forth the fruits of a living faith, penitence, love, meekness and devoted obedience. We should examine ourselves whether we are in the faith and give all diligence to ascertain our calling and election. Thus we may prove to ourselves that Christ is in us and that we are not reprobates.

Again, self-examination relates to the *frame of our spirit*. It should take account of our sins and their aggravations – of our spiritual wants, of our purpose in coming to the sacramental feast, and especially of the exercise of holy graces in the soul. In preparing for the ancient Passover, the Jews were enjoined, under a severe penalty, to search their houses for leaven and to cast it out; so we should search and try our ways, and put away the “old leaven of malice and wickedness” (1 Cor 5:7). And knowing the difficulty of detecting sins hidden in the heart and the danger of indulging secret sin, we ought often to pray fervently: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting” (Ps 139:23,24).

In coming to the large provision of the covenant, we should seek to be conscious of our spiritual needs that we may bring them to the source of gracious supply. A communion season is a time when the King admits His people to the audience chamber and delights to hear their requests and answer them. These they should aim to present separately at the throne of grace, looking up and expecting an answer. The Lord of the feast, in His matchless condescension, speaks to the weak and impoverished and helpless as the King did to Esther: “What is thy petition? And it shall be granted.” They should give definite expression to their felt necessities, not doubting that their covenant God is more ready to give than we are to ask and that He, for the glory of His name, will do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think.

God's people should examine carefully their purpose in coming to the Lord's Supper: Are they prepared to offer a ready obedience to the Saviour's dying command? Do they cherish a loving, grateful remembrance of Him, and are they prepared to show forth His death to God, to angels and fellow-saints, to the world and their own consciences? Do they intend to enter anew into covenant with God in Christ, to have fellowship with His people, and to get grace increased in their hearts, obtain foretastes of heaven, and be quickened in the life of godliness?

This self-trial should consider especially the spirit and graces which characterise true religion in the soul. In *The Shorter Catechism*, it is said to be required of communicants "that they examine themselves of their knowledge to discern the Lord's body, of their faith to feed upon Him, of their repentance, love, and new obedience, lest coming unworthily, they eat and drink judgement to themselves" (Ans 97). Those who partake of the Lord's Supper must not only have a competent knowledge of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and of its nature and ends, but they should also possess a measure of saving, experimental knowledge of God in Christ – which is the essential element of eternal life.

Communicants should specially examine themselves of their *faith* to appropriate Christ and the blessings of salvation. Without this grace in habit and exercise, we have no right to a feast which is prepared for the children of God, nor can we enjoy that fellowship with God which it is designed to exhibit, nor can we derive sanctifying and comforting virtue from it. The ordinance is eminently the feast of faith, designed to exercise and invigorate this leading grace of the Spirit, by which true believers receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls. In examining themselves about their faith, believers may ascertain that it is saving, if it works by love, purifying the heart and overcoming the world. By being exercised on appropriate objects, it will be increased and strengthened, so as to realise things hoped for, and result in the joyful assurance of future happiness.

Repentance unto life, the fruit of faith, is seen in the working of a contrite spirit and in godly sorrow for sin. It is wrought in the heart by looking to the cross of Christ, and it brings forth its genuine fruits in holy hatred of sin, constant watchfulness and turning from all iniquity. As the Passover was to be "eaten with bitter herbs", so true repentance is an essential part of preparation for the Lord's Supper. When we duly partake of it, all the emotions of true penitence will be the more excited into lively and habitual exercise. In examining ourselves concerning our love, we should see that it is supreme towards God, that we have a delight in His saints – the excellent of the earth – and a love of benevolence towards all men, and that we have desires of

heart after the Word and ordinances, and submission in the way of divine leading in providence.

The *new obedience*, about which we should finally inquire, is produced by faith in Christ and is constrained by the love of Christ. It springs from a new heart, which is created in us by the Spirit of God; it arises from new principles in the heart, the fear and love of God; it is regulated by a new rule, the law of God; and it is directed to a new end, the glory of God. Its language is: "All the commandments of my God, I purpose to obey"; "I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart". Walking in this course of holy obedience, we obtain evidence of fitness for peculiar privileges in the Church on earth, and we acquire meetness for the heavenly inheritance. "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jn 15:14). "Where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honour" (Jn 12:26). "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev 22:14).

Revival in Northampton 1740-42 (2)¹

Jonathan Edwards

One difference from what took place in the towns five or six years before was that conversions were frequently wrought more visibly; the impressions were stronger and more manifest in their external effects; the progress of the Spirit of God in conviction, from step to step, was more apparent; and the transition from one state to another was more obvious and plain; so that in many instances it might be, as it were, seen by bystanders. The preceding season had been very remarkable on this account, beyond what had been before; but this was even more remarkable. And in this season, these visible conversions (if I may so call them) were more frequently in the presence of others, at religious meetings, where the appearances of what was wrought on the heart fell under public observation.

After September 1741, there seemed to be some abatement of these extraordinary appearances, yet they did not wholly cease, but there was something of them, from time to time, all winter. About the beginning of February 1742 Mr Buell² came to this town. I was then absent from home, and for about a

¹The final part of a letter written on 12 December 1743, from Northampton, the New England town where Edwards' church was, to a minister in Boston. Taken with editing from *Select Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol 1. The first part appeared last month.

²Samuel Buell, who had recently been licensed to preach.

fortnight afterwards. Mr Buell preached almost every day in the meeting-house. I had left to him the free use of my pulpit, having heard before I went from home that he intended to visit. He spent almost the whole time in religious exercises with the people, either in public or private, the people continually thronging him. When he first came, a number of zealous people came with him from Suffield, who continued here for some time. Mr Buell's labours had very extraordinary effects; the people were exceedingly moved, crying out in great numbers in the meeting house, and a great part of the congregation commonly stayed on in the house of God for hours after the public service.

Many also were exceedingly moved in private meetings where Mr Buell was. Almost the whole town seemed to be in a great commotion, day and night, and there was indeed a very great revival of religion. But it was principally among professing Christians; the appearances of a work of conversion were in no measure as great as they had been the summer before. When I came home, I found the town in very extraordinary circumstances, such as, in some respects, I never saw it in before.

Mr Buell continued here a fortnight or three weeks after I returned; great appearances still attended his labours, many in their religious affections being raised far beyond what they had ever been before. And there were some instances of persons lying in a sort of trance, remaining perhaps for a whole 24 hours motionless, with their senses locked up, but in the mean time under strong imaginations, as though they went to heaven and had there a vision of glorious and delightful objects. But when the people were raised to this height, Satan took advantage, and his interposition, in many instances, soon became very apparent; and a great deal of caution and pains were found necessary to keep many of the people from running wild.

In the month of March, I led the people into a solemn public renewal of their covenant with God. To that end, having made a draft of a covenant, I first proposed it to some of the principal men in the church, then to the people in their several religious associations in various parts of the town, then to the whole congregation in public, and then I deposited a copy of it in the hands of each of the four deacons, that all who desired it might resort to them and have opportunity to view and consider it. Then the people in general that were above 14 years of age first subscribed the covenant with their hands; then, on a day of fasting and prayer, all together presented themselves before the Lord in His house and stood up and solemnly manifested their consent to it, as their vow to God.

In the beginning of the summer of 1742, there seemed to be an abatement of the liveliness of people's affections in religion, but yet many were often

in a great height of them. And in the fall and winter following, there were at times extraordinary appearances. But in general, people's engagedness in religion and the liveliness of their affections have been on the decline; and some of the young people especially have shamefully lost their liveliness and vigour in religion and much of the seriousness and solemnity of their spirits. But many walk as becomes saints, and to this day there are a considerable number in town that seem to be near to God and maintain much of the life of religion and enjoy many of the sensible tokens and fruits of His gracious presence.

With respect to the late season of revival of religion amongst us for three or four years past, it has been observable that in the former part of it, in the years 1740 and 1741, the work seemed to be much purer, having less of a corrupt mixture than in the former great outpouring of the Spirit in 1735 and 1736. Persons seemed to be conscious of their former errors and had learned more of their own hearts, and experience had taught them more of the tendency and consequences of things. They were now better guarded, and their affections were not only stronger but attended with greater solemnity and greater humility and self-distrust, and greater engagedness after holy living and perseverance, and there were fewer errors in conduct.

But in the latter part of it, in 1742, it was otherwise: the work continued purer till we were infected from other places. Our people heard of, and some of them saw, the work in other places where there was a greater visible commotion than here and the outward appearances were more extraordinary. They were ready to think that the work in those places far excelled what was amongst us, and their eyes were dazzled with the high profession and great show that some made who came hither from other places.

That those people went far beyond them in raptures and violent emotions and a vehement zeal and what they call boldness for Christ, our people were ready to think was owing to far greater attainments in grace and intimacy with heaven; they looked little in their own eyes in comparison with them and were ready to submit to them and yield themselves up to their conduct, taking it for granted that every thing was right that they said and did. These things had a strange influence on the people, and gave many of them a deep and unhappy tincture, from which it was a hard and long labour to deliver them, and some of them are not fully delivered from it to this day.

The effects and consequences of things among us plainly show the following things. The degree of grace is by no means to be judged of by the degree of joy or zeal; indeed we cannot at all determine by these things who are gracious and who are not. It is not the degree of religious affections but their nature that is chiefly to be looked at. Some that have had very great raptures

of joy and have been extraordinarily filled (as the common phrase is) and have had their bodies very often overcome have manifested far less of the temper of Christians in their conduct since then than some others that have been still and have made no great outward show. But then again, there are many others that have had extraordinary joys and emotions of mind, with frequent great effects upon their bodies, that behave themselves steadfastly, as humble, amiable, eminent Christians.

It is evident that there may be great religious affections in individuals which resemble gracious affections and have the same effects on their bodies, but are far from having the same effect on the temper of their minds and the course of their lives. Likewise there is nothing more manifest, by what appears amongst us, than that the good state of individuals is not chiefly to be judged by any exactness of steps and method of experiences in what is supposed to be the first conversion. But we must judge by their spirit the effect wrought upon the temper of the soul in the time of the work and remaining afterwards.

Though there have been very few instances known to me, among those who profess religion amongst us, of what are ordinarily called scandalous sins; yet the temper and the behaviour that some of them show, together with some things in the nature and circumstances of their experiences, make me much afraid lest a considerable number have woefully deceived themselves. Though, on the other hand, there is a great number whose temper and conversation confirms the charity of others towards them, and not a few in whose disposition and walk there are amiable appearances of eminent grace. Notwithstanding all the corrupt mixtures that have been in the recent work here, there are not only many blessed fruits of it in particular persons that yet remain, but some good effects of it upon the town in general.

A party spirit has more extensively subsided. I suppose there has been less appearance these three or four years past of that division of the town into two parties, which has long been our bane, than there has been at any time during the preceding 30 years. And the people have apparently had much more caution – and a greater guard on their spirit and their tongues – to avoid contention and unchristian hearts in town meetings and on other occasions. And it is a matter of great rejoicing that the people very lately came to a final agreement in their grand controversy about their common lands; which has been, above any other particular thing, a source of mutual prejudices, jealousies and debates for 15 or 16 years past. The people also seem to be much more conscious of the danger of resting in old experiences, or what they were the subjects of at their supposed first conversion, and to be more fully convinced of the necessity of forgetting the things that are

behind and of pressing forward and maintaining earnest labour, watchfulness and prayerfulness as long as they live.

“Come Unto Me”¹

John Newton

Jesus says, Come; that is, *believe*, as He Himself expounds it: “He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst” (Jn 6:35). See how his promises suit the state you are in.

1. Are you heavy laden with guilt? The gospel message is: “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin”.

2. Are you groaning under the power of indwelling sin? Hear His gracious words: “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live”. And to the same purpose the Prophet: “He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.”

3. Are you striving in the fire to keep the law? “Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?” Forego the vain attempt. Is it not written: “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth”?

4. Are you in temptation? He that says, “Come unto Me,” has been tempted Himself and knows how to pity you. He has power over your enemy and can deliver you with a word. Did He not thus dispossess Satan in the days of His humiliation? And if then, surely He is no less able now; for since that time He has gloriously triumphed over the powers of darkness. And as His arm is not shortened, neither is His ear heavy. He has said, without exception, “Him that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out”. Thousands who have been in your distress have successively found that promise fulfilled: “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly”.

Book Reviews¹

A Personal Appreciation of D A Macfarlane, by J Cameron Fraser, published by Guardian Books, paperback, 62 pages, £5.50.

Rev D A Macfarlane was a highly-respected minister in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and is still fondly remembered by some readers of this Magazine. Born in 1889, he became in 1914 minister of the joint congreg-

¹The conclusion of a sermon on Matthew 11:28. Taken, with editing, from Newton’s *Works*, vol 2.

¹Publications reviewed here are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

ation of Lairg, Bonar Bridge, Dornoch and Rogart. In 1921 he moved to Oban, and in 1930 began his long ministry of 43 years in Dingwall and Beaully, which lasted till he retired. He died in 1979.

This little volume does not profess to be a full-scale biography; the author explains that “it is intended primarily for my own family and those who continue to treasure my uncle’s remarkable ministry”. Mr Macfarlane’s life and work are summarised concisely; the remainder of the book consists largely of personal reminiscences.

The book includes notes of a prayer meeting address by Mr Macfarlane on the words: “He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself” (1 Jn 5:10). It gives a flavour of how encouraging his preaching could be for those who feared, wrongly, that they were still outside the kingdom of God. After his retirement, as quoted in this “Appreciation”, his Kirk Session recorded that “his pulpit services were marked by rich Christian experience, wide reading of the works of the great divines of a past age, and especially by the prayerful study of God’s Holy Word, from which he unfolded each Sabbath treasures of divine grace”.

It is good that such a man should continue to be remembered.

Hymns Most Perfect, An Essay on Psalmody, by William Romaine, published by Elbium Publications, 130 pages, hardback, £13.00; paperback, £7.95. Romaine (1714-1795) was a noted Anglican minister in London. He was strongly opposed to the introduction into public worship, during that century, of non-inspired hymns composed by poets such as Isaac Watts. This book, now attractively reprinted, was originally published in 1775 in support of the practice of singing psalms.

The core of Romaine’s attitude may be gleaned from his claim that he lacked “a name for that man who should pretend that he could make better hymns than the Holy Ghost”. Romaine insists that Psalm-singing is an ordinance of God and that the Psalms are the Word of God. If they are not sung, he says, the members of the Church will lose the blessings that are promised to those who sing them. He points out that Christ made use of the Psalms and that the churches of Corinth, Ephesus and Colosse sang them in public worship. He explains that the words, *psalms*, *hymns* and *songs*, as used in the Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, translate Hebrew words used in various titles of the Psalms. Indeed Romaine sometimes uses the word *hymns* to refer to the Psalms as a whole.

He lays down some Scripture rules for singing the Psalms aright; these include: we must be filled with the Spirit; there ought to be melody in our heart. He also warns against discordant, undisciplined singing.

While it is clear that some Psalms speak very clearly of Christ, Romaine goes further and claims that “the whole volume [of Psalms] throughout is concerning Him”, which goes beyond what is justified. But it would be good if Romaine’s book was used to bring individuals and congregations back to singing the songs which God has appointed to be used in public worship.

Preaching that Gets Through, God’s Word and Our Words, by Stuart Olyott, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, booklet, 38 pages, £2.00.

The author’s purpose is to encourage preachers to communicate scriptural truth effectively. He emphasises the power of words but is conscious that “words are powerless to raise the spiritually dead unless they are accompanied by the omnipotent energy of the Holy Spirit”. However, the words can be presented poorly and carelessly to a congregation, or the work can be done well. And it is to encourage preachers to take all legitimate steps to do their work well – with the Apostle Paul as an example – that Mr Olyott writes.

He refers to the blessed effects of John Livingstone’s preaching on the Monday of the Kirk of Shotts communion in June 1630. Livingstone wrote afterwards: “There is sometimes somewhat in preaching that cannot be described, either [as] to matter or expression, and cannot be described what it is, or from whence it cometh, but with a sweet silence it pierceth into the heart and affections, and comes immediately from the Lord; but if there be any way to obtain such a thing it is by the heavenly disposition of the speaker”. But it is also true that the service that day followed a night spent in prayer by God’s people who had gathered.

Protestant View

Protestant Blindness to the Identity of the Antichrist

Gone are the days when the Protestant church at large believed the Papacy to be the antichrist. Before the present Pope was elected, John Piper, a well-known Calvinist minister who “believes in justification by faith alone apart from any works”, said that his prayer was this: “O Lord of truth and mercy, put in place a Pope most willing to reform the Catholic Church in accord with your most holy Word”. Does he think that it is possible that this monolithic system, entrenched in its centuries-old gross error of salvation by works, and anathematising all who believe otherwise, will cast away its error and reform itself – or that a new pope will so reform it?

Now that the Pope is enthroned, many flattering words are spoken about him by religious leaders who are labelled as Protestant. He was acclaimed

as a “beacon of hope” by many prominent religious leaders and politicians at the Protestant Kirchentag in Hamburg. At this bi-annual Church Day congress in May, Nikolaus Schneider, the leader of the Protestant Churches in Germany, pointed to “elements of faith he shared with Francis”. How such men can think of themselves as the successors of Luther is beyond comprehension. They obviously are blinded by the hollow glory of the Papacy and cannot conceive of it as the antichrist, that spiritual whore condemned by Scripture.

May the eyes of the professing church be opened to see her true identity. “Upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth” (Rev 17:5). *NMR*

Notes and Comments

Humanism and Marriage

An increase in the popularity of the atheistic philosophy of humanism is one symptom of the decline of vital godliness in our land. Secular humanism is a comprehensive world view embracing reason and naturalism while advocating an altruistic morality. It rejects supernaturalism, faith and all religions as superstitions, while claiming that human beings have the right to give meaning to their lives and to adopt moral values through reason. Well-known humanists include media personality Stephen Fry, and Ken Livingstone, former Mayor of London. Solemnly, their rejection of God, heaven and hell, judgement, and of course original sin leaves them and their followers in a perilous place. All their philosophical wisdom will prove ultimately to be folly. “The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God” (Ps 14:1).

Recent press reports have suggested that their influence is gaining ground in many sectors of our society, including marriage. A record 2975 humanist weddings were performed in Scotland last year, a 26% increase on 2011. God instituted marriage in the Garden of Eden before Adam sinned and this has been reflected over centuries in Christian countries by the majority of couples holding a religious wedding. In 1971 two-thirds of weddings in Scotland were held in churches; however, over the last few decades traditional church marriage has been increasingly rejected in favour of “non-religious” celebrations, most of them conducted by civil registrars. In 2010 the Church of Scotland performed just over 5000 ceremonies but only 4500 in 2011, a lower proportion of the 29 135 marriages taking place in Scotland that year.

The Registrar General authorised humanists to conduct weddings in 2005, when they married only 82 couples in Scotland. In England and Wales a

second ceremony, by a minister or civil registrar, is still required to make it legal but in Scotland legislation allows the Humanist Society of Scotland to perform a marriage without any additional ceremony. The floodgates are opening and, even when people reject God and religion, they still search for some “spiritual” dimension in their ceremonies. Into this vacuum steps the Humanist Society offering weddings as well as funerals and baby-naming services. Indeed the Society claims that, by 2015, humanist ceremonies will become more popular than traditional church services. One of their spokesmen, Tim McGuire states, “We share many of the same values as traditional faiths, but we like to make up our own minds and not be restricted to what a faith teaches. Many couples see this and while they want to have a traditional service, which we provide, they also want to share the experience in their own words, not those set down by a traditional faith.” Can we hear echoes here of the serpent’s subtle voice to Eve in the Garden of Eden?

Ironically, marriages carried out by humanist celebrants at present are classed as “religious” in spite of their beliefs being totally irreligious. And the Scottish Government, sadly ever eager to accommodate the secularists, plans to introduce a third type of marriage under the draft Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill. This new category of marriage is called “belief” and would be added to the existing religious and civil marriages. Our Government is clearly catering for the humanist as well as the homosexual lobby in this notorious bill. We need the Lord to overturn those evil counsels and bring humanists, and indeed every one of us, to have real religion and saving faith in Jesus, the Saviour of lost sinners. *KHM*

Margaret Thatcher’s Legacy

It is not the place of the Church to delve into party-political issues, but such was the late Mrs Margaret Thatcher’s influence on our national life that we feel that a few comments may be made on the legacy of her time as Prime Minister. Mrs Thatcher, it is fair to say, exhibited much courage and resolution in the discharge of her premiership. Whatever one’s view of her political and economic policies, we ought to be grateful to the Most High that she was raised up, along with President Ronald Reagan of the United States, to stand fast against communism in Eastern Europe until that godless tyranny was peaceably overthrown in God’s providence. She also came to see very clearly the great dangers posed by European federalism to our national sovereignty and liberty.

We feel, however, that in tackling the damage done by secular humanism and hedonism to the moral fabric of our society, Mrs Thatcher’s administration was far less thoroughgoing. The ultimate reason for this, we believe, is that

she attempted in the main to use economic and political methods to rectify problems which were fundamentally of a spiritual nature. No mere political philosophy can adequately address the deepest needs of individuals and communities. The great deliverance this nation still awaits is that of emancipation from the shackles of sin and ungodliness in every department of life. Civil government is incapable of bringing that about, for it can only be accomplished by the Holy Spirit blessing the preaching of the gospel to “the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor 10:4,5).

We are thankful for Mrs Thatcher’s explicit endorsement of Christian moral principles and particularly of the Establishment Principle during her time in office, as exemplified in her speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1986, and we would wholeheartedly agree with many parts of that speech. On that occasion she declared, “Ideally, when Christians meet, as Christians, to take counsel together, their purpose is not, or should not be, to ascertain what is the mind of the majority but what is the mind of the Holy Spirit – something which may be quite different”.

May the time be hastened when both churchmen and politicians will indeed take counsel in accordance with the teachings of God’s Word more consistently than Mrs Thatcher herself was able to. Her commitment to the Sabbath, for example, was greatly lacking, as her endeavours, in 1986, to liberalise laws regulating trading on the Lord’s Day so sadly proved. It is worth noting that, although her party won the next General Election with a reduced majority, her own political strength ebbed away in the years following this attempt to undermine the law of God. We were also sorry to hear that Mrs Thatcher’s mortal remains were subjected to the unbiblical practice of cremation.

AWM

Circular RNA

Recent discoveries in the study of RNA, a vital component of human cells, have brought consternation to evolutionists. The “traditional” view in the 1960s was that RNA acted as a messenger in living cells and transmitted information about DNA to the ribosomes, which produce proteins. Mutations in the DNA led to changes in a protein, and natural selection could then “choose” the animal or person who had the best protein for survival or reproduction. This view is essentially the one put about by Richard Dawkins, but it is now regarded as hopelessly simplistic and old-fashioned.

One reason for its modification was the discovery in more recent years of various other forms of RNA, including micro-RNA which “blocks” certain

parts of the RNA and prevents that part of the information being transmitted to ribosomes. Thus there is a mechanism for preventing random mutations in the DNA from interfering with protein production. This makes it less clear how natural selection could favour the mutated DNA over the original.

These various forms of RNA are all linear and have ends or “tails”, but in the last few months it has been announced that most human RNA is circular or looped and therefore has no tails. It has hitherto been missed by the detection process geneticists use, because the detection process was explicitly looking for tails. The circular RNA turns out to be ten times more common than the linear RNA and thus the geneticists are in the painful position of admitting that they know very little about RNA and protein production, notwithstanding 50 years of confident assertion. It is clearly much more complex than was previously realised: for example the circular RNA seems to block the activity of the blocking micro-RNA, showing that there is a further level of regulation in protein production beyond what was imagined.

The more complicated that things turn out to be, the more difficult it is for evolutionists to think of plausible pathways by which “chance” has brought such highly ordered objects into existence; and the more difficult it is to cram all the necessary changes into the rather limited time-scale that they have at their disposal.

DWBS

Church Information

Rev Fraser Macdonald

Mr Macdonald passed away to his eternal reward on Monday, April 29 at the age of 88. He was ordained to the ministry in North Tolsta in 1952 and moved to Portree in 1966, where he served until he retired in 2006. We extend our sympathy to his widow and the rest of his wider family.

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, June 4, at 12 noon.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, June 18, at 11 am.

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, June 18, at 2 pm.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Wednesday, June 19, at 4 pm.

At Edinburgh, on Friday, July 19, at 6.45 pm for the induction of Rev David Campbell. Public worship to begin at 7 pm.

College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the first of two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations during June.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracondale:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Breascelote:** 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. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (weekly). 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. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (except first Sabbath of month). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh, Sheilebost, Strond** and **Geocrab** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Rev D Campbell MA, F P Manse, North Tolsta, HS2 0NH; tel: 01851 890286.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacPherson; tel: 01569 760370.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9HY; tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis):** **Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 672251.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.
- Vatten:** Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Glendale, Waternish:** As intimated. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Rev K M Watkins, 1 North Street, Barnoldswick, BB18 5PE; tel: 01282 850296.
- 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, 1055 FM 646 West, #1021, Dickinson, Texas 77539; tel: 409 927 1564.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev G B Macdonald; tel: 02 9627 3408.

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:sydneypchurch@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 pm. Contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen; tel: 075443677.

Wellington: 4 Rewa Terrace, Tawa. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; 3rd Wednesday of the month (not secondary school holidays) 7.30 pm. Contact: Mr Hank Optland, P O Box 150, Carterton, 5743; tel: 02 7432 5625.

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30 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 Levytsky; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytsky@gmail.com.

Zimbabwe

Bulawayo: Lobengula Township, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo. Rev S Khumalo, F P Manse, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131, e-mail: skhumalo.byo@gmail.com.

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

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

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