

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:** Larne, North Uist, Zenka.

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

April: Second Sabbath: Leverburgh, Maware, Staffin; **Third:** Gisborne, 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: 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; **Second:** Chesley; **Third:** Bulawayo, Santa Fe, Tauranga.

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A Flourishing Scotland?

A book has recently been published with the subtitle: *What Scotland Needs to Flourish*¹. It no doubt returns an answer which is thoroughly secular. But let us first of all ask, What does it mean for Scotland to flourish? Does it mean that unemployment would be drastically reduced, or that there would be a huge improvement in the health of the people, or that the quality of life for older people would see a significant advance? Undoubtedly, these would all be highly desirable. Or does it mean a large increase in economic activity as measured by, say, national GDP – leading to much higher wages and salaries, throughout the country? Certainly such an increase might lead to the previous three objectives being achieved but, whatever other forms of idolatry people in Scotland are guilty of, there is no doubt that – led on by our parliamentarians – many are guilty of idolising money and the possessions that money can buy.

Not least at the end of another year, we should be conscious that our existence in this world is decidedly temporary. It will not last indefinitely; indeed we may have only a very few days left to live, and we cannot promise ourselves even that long. So we would be wise to take to heart the fact that our existence will not end at death; it will stretch on for ever and ever. And if we think of the Scottish people flourishing – or, for that matter, the people of any other nation – we would be distinctly unwise to consider only their lives in this world. How soon the length of time we have spent in this world will fade into insignificance in comparison with the endless eternity into which we will have entered at death! Yet the period spent on earth will always remain significant, because it will determine where we will spend that endless eternity. But will it be in heaven or in hell?

Christ's question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mk 8:36), should make us realise that there is no comparison between, on the one hand, a life that is hugely successful in material terms but leads on to a lost eternity and, on the other, a godly life which, however lacking in this world's goods, leads on to the blessedness of

¹This is in no sense a review of the book; I have not read it. But the subtitle has set off a train of thought.

heaven. It was a truly Christian perspective that led John Hooper to say, the night before his martyrdom, during the fearful persecution in England during the reign of Queen Mary: “Life is sweet, and death is bitter, but eternal death is more bitter, and eternal life is more sweet”.² If the words of Psalm 92: “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree”³ (v 12), were remarkably fulfilled in Hooper’s life, they have been even more remarkably fulfilled in heaven, notwithstanding the painful route that brought him to paradise.

The Bible gives much advice about riches and, needless to say, it is all good advice. It does not tell us that it is wrong to be rich, but it does make plain: “If riches increase, set not your heart upon them” (Ps 62:10) – in other words, do not idolise them. Further, “riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven” (Prov 23:5). Accordingly, we cannot afford to set our hearts on riches; they may not last. But we can never, in this life or in eternity, lose spiritual riches, if we once obtain them. No wonder the Saviour said, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness” – the true riches. Yet He immediately went on: “All these things [food, drink and clothing] shall be added unto you” (Mt 6:33).

So what do Scotland and other countries need if they are to flourish *spiritually*, for this is the flourishing that really matters? Scotland needs to hear the gospel. But, in Paul’s words, “how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Rom 10:14). Yet possibly there is not a parish in Scotland but is visited by a preacher at least once a month. But immediately Paul goes on to ask, “How shall they preach, except they be sent?” Otherwise the preacher will have no genuine authority, and probably will not bring the real message of salvation: the truths that the Son of God became man, to suffer and die in the place of sinners, and that “whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:15).

If Scotland is to begin to flourish spiritually, there must be a willingness on the part of the people to listen to the Word of God, particularly as proclaimed by sent preachers. But, as David sang to the praise of the Most High: “Thy people shall be willing *in the day of Thy power*” (Ps 110:3). In every age, God will have a people whom He has made willing to follow Him. First, He makes them willing to pay attention to Him, speaking directly through His Word or as it is proclaimed by His ambassadors, the preachers He has sent forth. These people recognise that God is altogether holy, that He can in no way clear the guilty, and that they themselves are among the guilty.

² Quoted by Matthew Henry, in his exposition of Mark 8:36.

³ J A Alexander points out, in his *Exposition* of the Psalms, that “as trees in general are natural and common emblems of a prosperous existence, so the same idea is conveyed with still more emphasis by the noblest species”.

And they are brought to see the tremendous seriousness of their condition as sinners, who must face death, judgement and a lost eternity. Then the Spirit opens the eyes of their souls so that they see Jesus Christ as a Saviour suited to them and their needs, and they are made willing to receive Him as their Saviour. They are likewise made willing to have Him as their King, to be their leader and commander.

Indeed in all these aspects of the Spirit's activity, He must make sinners willing *to listen* to God's voice speaking through His Word. As we look around us, it appears highly unlikely that any great number of people in our time will become willing to listen to God's voice. Whatever human means God may be pleased to use to attract the attention of individuals, it would seem that a remarkable work will, in God's providence, be necessary to make people in significant numbers willing to listen to God's Word. But He *is* able; we must never underestimate His power to spread the gospel everywhere, to make people become willing hearers and so bless the truth that multitudes are gathered into His kingdom. Whenever this will take place in Scotland, it will be clear that the country is flourishing spiritually.

The eighteenth century in Scotland had its dark side: there was the unbelief and carelessness of the many Moderate ministers and there was the ignoring of God that arose out of the so-called Enlightenment. On the other hand, various parts of Scotland flourished spiritually, especially because there was a considerable number of able, godly, God-sent preachers, including Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, John Willison, James Robe, and William M'Culloch of Cambuslang, whose preaching was much blessed.

M'Culloch wrote to George Whitefield in April 1742, when the work of the Holy Spirit in revival was evident in his parish: "Help us, dear brother, to praise [God] for His goodness and for His works of mercy to perishing sinners that are everywhere made to taste of His distinguishing goodness, and particularly in this place of late. To the praise of His own mercy and grace be it spoken: I believe that, in less than three months past, about 300 souls have been awakened and convinced of their perishing condition without a Saviour, more than 200 of whom are, I believe, hopefully converted and brought home to God and have been at times filled with joy and peace in believing; and the rest are earnestly seeking for Jesus and following on to know the Lord."⁴

How the Lord's people should seek the return of such days, so that not only would Cambuslang and other once-favoured places flourish, but the whole of Scotland, indeed that the whole earth, would be filled with His glory!

⁴D Macfarlan, *Revivals of the Eighteenth Century*, Free Presbyterian Publications reprint, 1988, p 53.

Almost a Christian¹

A Sermon by R M M'Cheyne

Acts 26:28. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

Paul was here permitted to preach before three persons of high rank. The first was Bernice, the sister of King Agrippa, a woman of great beauty, but living at that very time in open profligacy. The second was Festus, the Roman governor, a soldier and a heathen man of great ignorance. The third was Agrippa, the son of that Agrippa who was smitten of God for his pride and blasphemy. He too was a proud and wicked man, though well read in the law and the prophets. It is curious to see the different ways in which these three sat under the preaching of the Word from the lips of Paul.

Bernice, the lovely but wicked Bernice, sat silent. She had no interest in the Word. She may have been thinking about some new scheme of pleasure or of sin. Her heart was like the hard footpath; the Word could not enter in; the devil carried all away. How many hearing me this day are like Bernice! We may speak of heaven or hell; it does not matter; you have no ears to hear!

Festus, the blinded heathen, listened with unbelieving wonder. He heard of Paul's strange conversion; he heard of the risen Saviour and that all must turn to Him or perish. The proud Roman could hear no more. Festus said, with a loud voice, "Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad". O how many are like Festus in this! You hear us telling you of the need of conversion: that God alone can do it for you – that Christ has sent us to open the blind eyes, that sinners may receive the forgiveness of sins. How many proud hearts would gladly say, "Thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad". If we are mad, it is because we are so dead and cold when we beseech you to turn and have life. It is you who are mad – walking about easy in mind without forgiveness, happy while you are the heirs of hell, prayerless, Christless, godless; yet smiling, happy and careless about your souls! It is you who are mad.

Agrippa, the proud and wicked Agrippa, was much moved by Paul's discourse. Even the wicked may be moved by the preaching of the Word, the earnest manner of the preacher stretching out his hand, the account of his conversion, his tender appeal to the conscience of Agrippa: "Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." All these things moved his heart. For the time, he felt the misery of being lost, the need of being converted, the happiness of being forgiven; and he cried out, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian".

¹Taken, with editing, from *Revival Truth*, which contains eight of M'Cheyne's sermons.

Are there none among you who have been moved under the preaching of the Word? It is for your sakes then that I have chosen these words this day, that I may show you, by the help of God, *the utter folly of being only almost persuaded to be a Christian.*

Some are moved under the preaching of the Word, so that they are almost persuaded to be Christians. So it was with Agrippa. He was sitting under the preaching of the Word, God's chosen instrument for converting souls, and his inmost soul was moved under it. So it is with many. When they hear the conversion of others described, when they hear the need they have of being converted, when they hear of Christ being a risen Saviour who is willing to save all that come to Him, when they see the earnestness of the minister as he presses these matters home to their own conscience – they feel almost persuaded.

Surely it is true, they say, that I must be converted or perish! Surely it is true, they say, that they are happy who are brought to the forgiveness of sins. I wish it were my case. Nevertheless, it would be rash to yield just now; I would not like to leave all my pleasures and my companions in sin. Besides, another day may do as well. "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." So it was with Agrippa; so it is with thousands. Is this your case? If so, how utterly foolish you are!

Consider that you may never hear another sermon – you may die tonight! Thou fool, this night thy soul may be required of thee. If you are moved to flee from wrath, flee now. If you are melted by the thought of Christ, flee to Him now. You may never have another offer of salvation through His blood and righteousness. And if you do hear the Word again, it is likely you will be less moved by the next sermon. When iron is often heated, it becomes harder every time. When a surgeon sees many wounds and sores, he is much moved at first, but he soon becomes used to it. So you may be much moved at first, by hearing of Christ and His love, but you will soon turn hard if you are not converted now.

If any of you feel pricked in your conscience, do not content yourself with saying, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian". The devil tempts you to say this, so that you may remain where you are. If you feel the least need of conversion, go to Christ at once, and He will make you, not almost, but altogether a Christian.

Some are moved in a time of affliction to be almost Christians. Affliction is one of God's strongest means for bringing sinners to feel their need of Christ. He comes into godless families like a lion; he tears and carries away, so that many souls may say, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord". Times of affliction are times for seeking the Lord. It is a hard, hard heart that is

unmoved in a time of affliction in the home! “Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more.” Some unconverted people are much moved in a time of distress. The long-neglected Bible is sought out; the knee that hardly knows how to bend begins to kneel; the minister is listened to; the mind is filled with solemn thoughts about death and hell and judgement! For the moment it appears good to be a Christian.

But the sun breaks through the clouds, the tears are dried off the face, prosperity comes back to the dwelling; and where is its Christianity now? Alas, it has fled. Christ speaks to those in affliction. God is pleading with you face to face. Remember, to be brought into the bonds of the covenant is no easy matter. Do not be contented to be made serious and gloomy for a day or two; that is not conversion. Be altogether, and not almost a Christian.

Christ speaks to those who have come out of affliction and sorrow. See what utter folly it is to be only almost a Christian. Your affliction has lost its kindly purpose. It was sent to bring you to Christ. It almost brought you – that was all. If you have already resisted God’s mightiest instruments, affliction and the Word, there is little hope that you will ever be a Christian indeed. God must do one of two things with you. Either He must persevere with you, send deeper waters of affliction, greater losses, sorer pains, more heart-rending bereavements to drive you to Christ, or He may leave you alone. “Ephraim is joined to his idols, let him alone.” He may give you your heart’s desire, and send leanness into your soul.

Some are moved in a time of awakening to be almost Christians. There are times of awakening in congregations and in families, and in such times there are always some who are almost, but not altogether, persuaded to be Christians. When one in a godless family is brought to the Saviour, there are many who will chide and scoff and mock. What need of all this work about the soul? they will say. What need of all this searching of the Bible and continuing in prayer?

They little know, poor souls, what is going on within the awakened bosom. But if many chide and scoff, there are often some who are touched in the heart. Often a brother, a sister, a companion is moved to cling to them, saying like Ruth, “Where thou goest I will go”. O it is happy when companions lead companions to Christ. But how often they drop away before coming to Christ!

Some of you who have been truly converted may remember some who once wept with you and prayed with you and spoke of Christ and salvation with you, who have gone back to the world; they were almost, but not altogether, persuaded to be Christians. Some of you know that this is the case with your own souls. See then the folly of being almost Christians. Your com-

panions are in Christ; you are out of Christ. If it was reasonable in you to flee with them, it is still more reasonable to persevere till you get into Christ. How will you feel in the day of Christ when you see them crowned with glory at the right hand of Christ, and you standing with devils on the left? You will say, I went so far with them; I was almost one of them; but I went back. The saddest place in hell will be for the almost Christian.

Some are moved to flee from hell, yet still are only almost Christians.

Some people are really awakened by the Spirit of God to flee from the wrath to come. They forsake their old pleasures of sin, their old companions, their old ways; they live in anxiety and dread; still they will not come to Jesus Christ in order to have life. They are almost, but not altogether, persuaded to be Christians. This arises from many things.

Sometimes it arises *from pride*. They are afraid of hell, but they think they shall escape by some way of their own: by tears or prayers or reformation. They hew out cisterns for themselves; they kindle a fire for themselves and walk in the light of their fire, and in the sparks that they have kindled (Is 50:11). They will not come to Jesus Christ and let Him be their light and salvation. How sad to be so near being saved, and yet to be lost! How sad to be almost Christians, and to be kept from being altogether Christians by soul-ruining pride!

Sometimes it arises *from enmity to God*. Christ is the Saviour whom God has provided. The way to honour God is to flee to Jesus Christ, but some awakened souls have so much enmity to God that they will not honour Him by believing on Jesus Christ. How mad it is to fight against God and your own soul! How mad to be almost Christians!

Sometimes it arises *from mistaken views of God*. Some anxious souls are suspicious of God. They dare not believe that He has such an infinite depth of pity as to provide a Saviour. No, it cannot be for me, they say; it may be for other sinners, but it cannot be for me. And so they will not come to Jesus Christ. How mad not to believe what God has said of Himself and of His Son! Such people are almost Christians. See here the folly of being almost a Christian.

All your anxiety to flee from hell will do you no good if you are only *almost* a Christian. You have trembled much and wept much and prayed much for your poor soul. Still, if you are not brought to Jesus Christ, it is all in vain. If you were swimming for your life – if you had breasted many a dashing wave and were now close to the shore, just within reach of the rock – still, if you did not stretch out your hand to clasp the rock, you would be drowned; all your former pains and labours would be vain. A man may drown within reach of the rock just as well as a thousand miles out at sea. So, after

all your anxiety, hearing, praying and tears, you may perish where you are, just as surely as those who are out of sight of God.

It is vain to flee toward the ark if you do not flee into it. A man might drown clinging to the ark. You must be shut in! It was vain for Lot's wife to flee out of Sodom, for she never got into Zoar; just so vain is it to be almost, but not altogether, a Christian.

Your sin is far greater than that of others. Agrippa's sin was far greater than that of Festus or of Bernice. He was moved to flee to Christ, yet did not flee. They saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him. So it is with you and the world. If a man was not in search of pearls and passed by the pearl of great price, no one need wonder at it; his eyes were busy with other things. But suppose a man is really seeking goodly pearls, going from place to place, searching for them night and day, and when the pearl of great price is offered to him, he looks at it, turns it round and round, and after he is told its value, that it is worth all that he has, he lays it down and proceeds on his anxious search. Ah, that is the man who despises the pearl most of all!

So you are they who despise Christ most of all; other people tread Him under their feet, because they do not know Him or desire Him; but you, as it were, take Him into your hands and examine His value, and yet you lightly esteem Him. In thus lightly esteeming Christ, your sin is far greater than all the sins you ever committed before. When Judas despised mercy through the Lamb of God and hanged himself, it was a greater sin than betraying the Saviour. So your turning away from Christ is a greater sin than all that ever you did against Him. O may God open your eyes, that you may not be almost a Christian, but a Christian indeed!

The deepest place in hell will be for almost Christians. In strict justice it will be so. The more sin, the greater guilt and the deeper hell. And who has so much sin as the soul that comes nearest to Christ, yet is not ravished with His beauty and attracted to Him by His loveliness? In the nature of things, the hell of the almost Christian will be more severe than that of others. To be almost saved and yet to be lost, to be not far from the kingdom of God and yet to fall into the kingdom of wrath, O that will be an awful thought to all eternity! Many a one will say in that day, I was once very near being in Christ; I was made anxious for my soul; I wept and prayed and searched the Scriptures. I listened with anxiety to the preached Word. I felt it was the power of God. I felt myself condemned by the law. I was quite different from my worldly friends; they did not understand my sorrow – they could only laugh me to scorn. I fled from them. I fled from my old sins. I was not far from the kingdom. I almost stretched out my hands to accept from Christ. I was almost persuaded to be a Christian. And where am I now?

The higher you cast a stone into the air, the deeper it will fall into the sea; so the nearer you are to Christ and heaven, the deeper you will fall into hell. If you come just up to the gate of heaven and see the streets of shining gold and the happy faces of the glorious ones who walk there; if you hear their songs of glory, loud as the voice of many waters, sweet as the harpers harping on their harps; and yet if the gate is shut against you and Christ says, "I know you not . . . depart from Me", what words of man can tell the agony with which you will go away to lie down in sorrow, to lie down in hell? If there will be one wailing cry from that sad abode more dismal, more heart-rending, than another, it will be the bitter wailing of him who was *almost*, but not *altogether*, a Christian.

Do not be content with half-work! Do not be sluggish in seeking converting grace! There is hope for every one of you. I would to God that all who are hearing me this day were both almost and altogether such as Paul was, except his bonds.

The Fall of Man (3)¹

Rev Donald Macdonald

(4.) The Consequences for the Human Race. Let us recall the answer to Question 19 in *The Shorter Catechism*: "All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under His wrath and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever". The words, *all mankind*, are significant; they mean the whole of the human race, from Adam onwards, are involved in this event – all of his descendants in every age and generation. This takes in the federal headship, imputation of sin and the solidarity of the race. It should be noted that this particular aspect of the subject would require a separate paper to do it justice.

The following points are from John Murray's book on *Imputation*:

(a) *The Federal Headship of the Race*. God constituted Adam the head of the human race. Paul consistently makes the contrast in Scripture between Adam and Christ as the legal representatives of the race. The first Adam was the natural head of the whole human race, not just naturally but federally – within the covenant of works. Each of us is therefore a party in the covenant of works. We sinned in Adam, and so we fell with him in his first transgression. While Adam was the root of all mankind, his federal headship rests solely on God's sovereign appointment.

¹The second part, printed last month, of this Theological Conference paper, dealt with the third section: The Fall itself and what was involved. This is the final article in the series.

(b) *Imputation*. This is a legal term. It describes the reckoning of Adam's first sin to his posterity. They "sinned in him, and fell with him, in his first transgression". By one man's disobedience the many were constituted sinners (Rom 5:19). "In Adam all die" (1 Cor 15:22).

Robert Shaw states that the *Confession* points out "the consequences of the sin of our first parents in regard to their posterity. These consequences are restricted to those 'descending from them by ordinary generation'. This restriction is obviously introduced in order to exclude our Lord Jesus Christ, who, as man, was one of the posterity of Adam, but did not descend from him by ordinary generation. . . . But the effects of Adam's first transgression extend to all his natural posterity; and, according to our *Confession*, the guilt of this sin is imputed, and a corrupt nature is conveyed, to them. This is what is commonly called *original sin*. Though that phrase is often restricted to the corruption of nature derived to us from Adam, yet, in its proper latitude, it includes also the imputation of guilt.

"The doctrine of original sin was universally received by the Church of God until the beginning of the fifth century, when it was denied by Pelagius. He maintained 'that the sins of our first parents were imputed to them alone, and not to their posterity; that we derive no corruption from their fall, but are born as pure and unspotted as Adam came out of the forming hand of his Creator'. . . .

"Another branch of original sin is the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first transgression. This is rejected by many who admit original corruption. By the imputation of Adam's first sin, it is not intended that his personal transgression becomes the personal transgression of his posterity; but that the guilt of his transgression is reckoned to their account. And it is only the guilt of his first sin, which was committed by him as a public representative, that is imputed to his posterity, and not the guilt of his future sins, after he had ceased to act in that character. . . .

"We do not see how the universal corruption of mankind can be accounted for, without admitting that they are involved in the guilt of his first transgression. It must be some sin which God punishes with the deprivation of original righteousness; and that can be no other than the first sin of Adam. The doctrine of imputation is clearly taught in Scripture; particularly in Romans 5 it is so plainly stated, so often repeated, and so formally proved, that it must be acknowledged to be the doctrine of the apostle. In support of this doctrine, we might appeal to the universality of the effects of sin, especially to the death of infants. The apostle affirms, in the most express terms, that death is the effect of sin (Rom 5:12); and experience as well as Scripture shows that death passes upon all men. It passes even upon those

who are incapable of committing actual sin; for ‘death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression’ (Rom 5:14).”²

Conclusion. I have tried to outline this subject of the Fall, a subject that has such relevance and consequences for us all. To study it shows – particularly in examining the Word of God – that our history, destiny and experience are inseparably bound up with the two Adams (see Rom 5:12-19, 1 Cor 15:20-22). Particularly there is a union with both Adams.

We cannot properly appreciate such important concepts as the covenants and imputation apart from the union involved, our fallen state in Adam by nature, and the state of grace in Christ Jesus according to the new covenant. The spiritual and moral wilderness that we are now in flows from the discrediting and rejecting of the Word of God, particularly the Book of Genesis. Society is reaping the bitter fruits of evolutionary theory, and large sections of the visible Church have imbibed the poison. However, what has also affected the Church in this country is Arminianism, which has watered down the doctrine of the Fall and man’s total ruin and helplessness, and so his total inability to recover himself. We hardly need to state that recovery can only come by getting back to basics, and the book of beginnings which our Westminster doctrine is founded on.

Angus MacLeod¹

Angus MacLeod was the third son of Angus MacLeod, an elder in Strathy Point. Young Angus, as he was usually named, was a bright and shining light, although his light was seen only by a small circle of friends. This was due partly to the fact that he was of a shy disposition, and partly because he was more or less an invalid since the great change in his life took place. He was naturally quite above the average in intelligence. He followed closely the various movements which took place in the Churches during the last 18 years, and it is not too much to say that many of his friends were indebted to him for light on these matters. It was hardly possible to meet anyone who saw better through ecclesiastical subtleties than he did.

Angus was the subject of religious impressions from his youth. A few weeks before he died, he was asked if godly Mr Christopher Munro of Strathy “preached to sinners”. He said that, when a young lad, he used to be

²Shaw, *Exposition of the Westminster Confession of Faith*, on chapter 6, sections 3-4.

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 14. It is an example of the biographical material to be found in such volumes of this Magazine; see also page 380 of this issue. The article is signed, AM.

riveted to his seat in the Strathy Church, under Mr Munro's searching eye, and to feel within himself that he was "the man" [whom Mr Munro was addressing]. He had a profound regard for Mr Munro's memory and often used to say that it was a remarkable thing that the people of Strathy should go astray as they did after having so recently enjoyed the services of such a godly minister.

Angus was a long time labouring in the dark. The writer remembers going in his company, about nine years ago, to Portskerra – a village three miles from Strathy – and on the way Angus began such a powerful discourse on the vanity of life, and the necessity of knowing God, that his companion was very much affected by his arguments. When he was afterwards spoken to about this discourse, he said, "That was all head knowledge". And so it was, for he was then "without God and without hope in the world". He was, however, like Samson, moved at times, by the Spirit of the Lord, in the camp of the enemy.

The writer often conversed with him before the change about spiritual matters, and he always seemed so pleased to have such a conversation; in fact, it was easy to do so, as he almost invariably introduced the subject himself. One often felt cheered by the hope that he was "not far from the Kingdom". To his poor, dark soul, however, matters were only becoming darker and darker, until at last he found out that man, by wisdom, cannot know God, and he ceased to look any more to himself for salvation. Like Paul, he could now say, "The commandment came, sin revived, and I died".

It was an autumn evening, about four years ago, when he first spoke about the great change which then took place. We were both sitting alone in his father's house, and there was an unusual, solemn expression on his face as he said, "I have had a wonderful experience lately". When asked if he could describe his experience, he replied that he had not been so well some days before then and that, on one of these days, as he lay in bed, a most wonderful light shined into his mind which gave him quite a different conception of the Almighty; he had seen such a view of the goodness and blessedness of God that he was powerless for the time being. "I was so overpowered," he said, "by the glory of God that, when my mother brought me some milk to drink, I could not ask a blessing on it – I felt everything was blessed."

He was asked further if the light came through any portion of Scripture being opened up to his mind. He said that it was not through any particular passage the light had come, but that when the light came, everything seemed to open up to his mind; and that the verse in Romans 5 which says, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us", was opened up in a wonderful way. He said, "I saw the wonder-

ful love of God to sinful creatures; I saw that He had done everything and I was overpowered by the revelation”.

He was then asked if he now saw Christ to be the only ground of acceptance with God. He replied that he now understood so well how everything was through Christ, but that it was not so much the glory of Christ which affected him as the glory of God the Father who had given His Son to die for sinful men and who was commending His love to them in such a glorious manner. This conversation was the occasion of much joy and left the distinct conviction that Angus had experienced what it was to be born again. All things had become indeed new to him, and the more one saw of him afterwards the more attractive he became.

For two or three weeks before he died the writer had the privilege of conversing with him almost every day. It was clearly seen that he was fast ripening for the garner. When he was asked if he now thought he was converted, he replied that he would be guilty of denying the Lord's work if he said he was not. In his last illness he often spoke about head knowledge, remarking, “Head knowledge can go very far”. Reminded how well he could speak himself about religion before he knew the Lord, he would answer, “Isn't that how I know [about head knowledge] so well?” But, to do him justice, although he would speak about religion in his former days, he would always end by saying, “I am ignorant myself, although I speak in this manner”. With all his head knowledge, he was not a hypocrite. On the contrary, he seemed to be an earnest searcher after a true foundation upon which to build his hopes for an endless eternity.

Although his faith was strong to the end, he was no stranger to the corruption of his heart. There was, however, a rare beauty about his disposition, afflicted as he often was by bodily weakness and mental darkness. One could not but envy his trust in the Lord as he talked one afternoon about the awful corruption of the human mind, and remarked as follows: “Many a night I go to bed thinking I will never see the morning, and my mind will be troubled with all the folly imaginable, so that I cannot think of anything good. But I leave myself in the hand of the Lord, knowing that there can be no fear although I should die during the night, for He can do all things.” Such was the faith and hope of our beloved friend. He also spoke often about the freeness of the gospel; he had learned in a remarkable degree the lesson that salvation is altogether of free grace. He would say, “If sinners would only come to the Lord, making use of the means He has set up and blessed to others, He would do everything for them”.

He followed the interests of our Church with a zealous regard from the very beginning, and in his last illness he used to speak in a very encouraging

way of the future prospects of the Church. Unlike many who speak about these things, he did not speak at random, but spoke by faith.

His health broke down about five years ago, and latterly his trouble developed into a consumption which ended his brief, but bright, career on Sabbath morning, 20 June 1909, at the comparatively early age of 42. The deepest sympathy is felt for his aged parents and their family in their sore bereavement. Parents could not have a more dutiful son than Angus, but their loss is his gain. "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder" (Ps 107:14).

Peace with God¹

A Sermon Outline by *John Kennedy*

Ephesians 2:14. *For He is our Peace.*

Those here who claim Christ as their peace are believers both of Jews and Gentiles. This includes the Apostle himself.

The Claimants. They were all dead in trespasses and sins spiritually.

They were children of disobedience to God, prodigals.

They were children of wrath, under sentence of the law.

They were convinced of their need of Him.

The Holy Spirit showed them this by the commandment.

He enlightened them to know Christ; they were renewed and sanctified.

Christ is their Peace. This He could not be unless He was Mediator.

It was God who devised and provided this peace.

The Son of God became flesh and suffered to secure this peace.

In His flesh He slew the enmity and made reconciliation.

Thus opening a way for salvation to Jew and Gentile.

Divine law and justice are satisfied with His atonement.

He is our Peace. This is so only in the light of His personal glory.

It is something not to be separated from His Person.

The righteousness of His Person as Surety.

He maintains the peace as the one High Priest.

He is the perpetual and vital peace of all who are in Him.

He is the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

Application. Believer, does Satan threaten you with his temptations?

How can he take away your peace?

Sinner, will you be so mad as to reject Christ?

What if peace is not yours to all eternity?

¹Preached in Creich, Sutherland, on 20 August 1882, and edited.

Eastern Europe Mission News

Rev D A Ross

Last June, I went to Odessa accompanied by Mr Edward Ross. We were able, in the kind providence of the Lord, to visit our Mission there for two Sabbaths. Having received the usual hearty welcome from our friends in the congregation, we soon got down to work. We had some Field Committee meetings in which – we trust with the guidance of the Lord – decisions were made for furthering the Mission's work.

Considerable time was taken up in discussing our publishing programme – Russian books in print, others to be printed and new translations in progress. We have finished the translation of *Memoir and Remains of the Rev Donald Macdonald*, Shildaig, and printing is under way. Among the advantages of now having our own place of worship is that we have excellent storage space for books in the basement – Mr Igor Zadorozhnyi kindly stored them at his home previously.

The children's book, *Line Upon Line*, which we published in Russian a few years ago, is frequently requested by pastors of other churches for their young people. A reprint will be required shortly. It has been decided to translate the *Catechism of the History and Principles of the Free Presbyterian Church*. We have thought for some years past that this Catechism was suitable for translation and distribution, and we were glad when the Religion and Morals Committee edited and published it in English. This makes it easier for the Field Committee to proceed, and the new edition is now in the hands of the translator, Mrs Natasha Hopkins, to be translated into Russian.

Progress continues to be made with producing a metrical version of the Psalms. Mrs Inna Levitskyy, who is carrying out this work, with input from other members of the congregation, is at present in Lewis with her family and hopes to find time to proceed more rapidly with the work. More than 80 Psalms, or parts of Psalms, are already in use; they are bound in folders for use in public worship. Several able helpers have given advice and assistance, but all too often the result is a paraphrasing of the psalms; so their contributions have had to be abandoned. The principal translator of most of the books we have published has described Mrs Levitskyy's work as excellent. Our intention is eventually to publish a Psalmody, containing both Psalms and tunes, which will then be available for other churches also, though most of them only use an occasional Psalm with their hymns.

Mr Igor Zadorozhnyi has discovered that he can purchase large-print Russian Bibles locally, for free distribution, at no more than half the price of the same edition elsewhere; so we purchased 500 copies. There is quite

a demand for this Bible from older people who need and like the large print.

We had a first-hand report from Mr Zadorozhnyi about the Mission's new five-door Lada car, which is used to bring some of our people to church. He is very pleased with it, not least because it enables him to carry out his literature distribution more easily.

Because Mr Levitskyy and his family are presently in Scotland, the Mission residential flat is unoccupied. It has therefore become necessary to put the whole building under high security to prevent burglaries.

The main reason for our visit was, of course, to preach the gospel, and we are thankful we were able to do that, but the numbers at the services were not as many as on our last visit. On this occasion 15 attended on the communion Sabbath. It was interesting to meet again one lady who used to worship with us regularly in the early days, but who, along with her family and others, stopped doing so when the Mission was under threat from the local City Council (which regarded us as foreigners who had no right to preach in the Ukraine). Since then her husband and one of her sons have died. It seemed that she was as happy to see us as we were to see her. We trust that such renewed contacts will bear fruit for eternity. Her husband, when we knew him, was an alcoholic, but she told us that he had given up his habit and had died a believer. She mourned that her son who died was not a believer.

The usual number of communion services were held – two each day, with one on Saturday and one on Monday. There were no new members. Mr Kusmich, one of the members and of Jewish birth, had to leave his home in the city to live in Moldova under the care of his son, because of old age. Mr Zadorozhnyi tried to make arrangements for him to come and stay in Odessa during the communion season but it proved too difficult for him to come. He is deeply missed by the few who gather on Sabbath and weekday.

May the Lord graciously bless these efforts to spread abroad the Word! We trust that, in the not too distant future, Mr Dmytro Levitskyy will be in a position to undertake the work of preaching Christ to the people there, and that he will be a great help in the work which Mr Zadorozhnyi is presently engaged in. We need no other authority than that which Christ gives: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15).

A little grace at first conversion may reform an ill life, but it must be a great deal of grace that must reform an ill heart. A little grace may make a man victorious over outward gross sins, but it must be a great deal of grace that must make a man victorious over inward sins, secret sins, spiritual sins, heart sins.

He who refrains from sin, and whose heart rises more against sin, because of the purity of the law which forbids sin than because of the severity of the law which condemns sin, is certainly under the power of renewing grace.

Thomas Brooks

Family Life and the Role of Mothers¹

That the divine institution of the family is under very severe attack in the present day has often been identified in this report and by many other organisations besides the Christian Church. The laws passed in our Parliaments over the past 60 years, since World War II, have increasingly eroded family life. Very many children are now reared in homes where marriages have broken down, two or more partners become identified with the family and where increasingly the biblical role of a mother is all but obliterated. The education system and employment changes, together with a revolution in the ethics of matters surrounding fertility and birth control, have all contributed. A particularly pervasive and successful feminist agenda in the 1970s and 1980s has reaped this fruit in the present generation.

Some social commentators are beginning to see signs that this movement is facing something of a reversal in more recent times. It is now more common for young mothers to recognise openly the fallacy of the dogma that a woman is repressed when she acts in the role of a mother and home-maker rather than as a career-driven professional or money-maker. This is certainly a welcome trend if it is finding wider acceptance. It is particularly interesting that this trend is found among highly educated and otherwise employable young women. However, it is clear that much more biblical teaching is needed to break down the decades of destructive legislation and social engineering in our society.

The time and labour invested in the apparently trivial concerns of the home and around infants and young children is indeed a worthy trading with God-given talents and will be sure to find a gracious recompense when performed as unto the Lord. The security and comfort of a home in which the mother is always found and to which she gives all her talents and gifts and time will be a legacy that children will treasure long after their mother is removed from time into eternity. The absence of a mother from that most fulfilling and yet most difficult and taxing of roles will be felt by every child who suffers that loss. We therefore most earnestly encourage young women to value and cherish these years of motherhood if and when God blesses them with children.

It is neither patronising nor repressing to be instructed from divine truth in matters of such high importance for the future of the Church of Christ and of the nation in which we live. Being a mother is not incompatible with a good, complete university education. The prayerful care of a mother cannot be replaced with any other benefit in the lives of children, and if the time to

¹A section from this year's Religion and Morals Report.

give it passes, it will not be reclaimed later. Mothers are therefore to pay no heed whatever to the clamouring calls of a godless age to throw off what it calls repression and bondage but what the Word of God describes in the most honourable of terms.

“Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants’ ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates” (Proverbs 31:10-31).

The Righteousness of God¹

W K Tweedie

Isaiah 46:13. *I bring near My righteousness; it shall not be far off, and My salvation shall not tarry: and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory.*

How shall man be just with God? is the question which the awakened conscience clamours to have answered. And God Himself answers it, saying, “I bring near My righteousness”. Not the fallen creature’s – that is

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

tainted and cannot justify. Not an angel's – he has none to spare. Not the righteousness of the just made perfect – to which of the saints can we look? But *My righteousness*. Jehovah our righteousness “shall not be far off”.

Moreover, “My salvation shall not tarry”. Goaded by an accusing conscience, man may be urgent, impatient and restless; he may wish to set a time to the Supreme, as if the creature could dictate instead of praying. But unmoved by all that, the Eternal conducts His kingdom according to His own wise and holy will, and meanwhile the soul may be assured of this: salvation shall not tarry – that is, it will come at the set time. And when it comes, the soul will clearly see that this was the best time both for the Holy One's glory and the sinful one's humbling.

Further, “I will place salvation in Zion for Israel My glory”. In the Church, the blessing shall be enjoyed, for that is the channel, as Jehovah is the fountain. “In the mount of the Lord it will be seen”, and “I will glorify the house of My glory”. Whether the sinner loves them or not, the Lord loves the gates of Zion. There He meets with His people to gladden them; there He unfolds His mind; there He explains the mysteries of providence and the deeper mysteries of redemption. “Of Zion it shall be said, This man and that man was born in her, and the Highest Himself shall establish her.” “All my springs are in thee.”

Are you, my soul, one of God's Israel, His glory? The Lord's portion is His people. Are you among their number? Has He made you to differ – a vessel meet for the Master's use, or for the inheritance of the saints in light? Then rejoice and be exceeding glad. Enter even here on the joy of your Lord, and let your life be a hymn to His praise.

Book Reviews¹

The Life of Martyn Lloyd-Jones 1899-1981, by Iain H Murray, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 476 pages, £11.00.

The opening words of Iain Murray's preface explain his purpose in writing another book on Dr Lloyd-Jones: “This book is a recast, condensed and, in many parts, rewritten version of my two volumes *D Martyn Lloyd-Jones: The First Forty Years* (1982) and *The Fight of Faith* (1990). Since those dates, the life of Dr Lloyd-Jones has been the subject of comment and assessment in many publications and I have taken that into account. The main purpose of a further biography, however, is to put Dr Lloyd-Jones' life before another generation in a more accessible form” (p xi).

¹The books reviewed here are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Mr Murray has compressed the 1190 pages of the two-volume work into just 458 pages in the book under review. It is not an easy matter to condense material and still retain a balanced biography. This he has achieved admirably. The period embraced in *The First Forty Years* (1899-1939) had 381 pages, in the abridged edition it has 183 pages, while the period covered in *The Fight of Faith* (1939-1981) had a massive 809 pages and is now dealt with in just 275 pages. It will be seen from this that the most extensive abridgement has taken place in detailing the latter half of Lloyd-Jones' life, yet it is in this period that Mr Murray has interacted most with the literature produced since he completed *The Fight of Faith* 23 years ago.

As a biographer Mr Murray's skill consists in not only detailing the history but also bringing out what is heart-warming and edifying. The now well-known outline of Lloyd-Jones' life is retold: his upbringing in mid-Wales, his antipathy to boarding school, his father's bankruptcy and the move to London, where the family set up a dairy business. Mr Murray then outlines his short but distinguished medical career, in which he eventually became Chief Clinical Assistant to Thomas Horder at St Bartholomew's in London. This is followed by his call to the gospel ministry, which began in an industrial part of South Wales at Forward Movement Calvinistic Methodist Chapel, Aberavon. After a ministry of just over 12 years at Aberavon, which witnessed many conversions, he became the assistant to George Campbell Morgan, the minister of Westminster Chapel, London. Following Campbell Morgan's retirement in 1943, Lloyd-Jones was the sole minister at the Chapel and from that vantage point in the capital of the United Kingdom he was to have a decisive influence on the recovery of the Reformed faith in England and Wales until his death in 1981.

Mr Murray explains how Lloyd-Jones, in the last 50 years of his life, was at the centre of almost all the organisations that were at the heart of the change in English and Welsh Evangelicalism; these included student work with the Inter-Varsity Fellowship, the beginning of London Bible College, the Evangelical Library, the Puritan Conference, the commencement of the Banner of Truth Trust, the Evangelical Movement of Wales, the Bala Ministers' Conference, the Westminster Ministers' Fellowship and in later life the setting up of the London Theological Seminary. Considerable attention is given to the events leading up to his call for Evangelical unity in October 1966 at Westminster Central Hall, when he and Rev John Stott were in open disagreement. The chapter dealing with this has been extensively revised in the light of further publications since *The Fight of Faith* was published in 1990. In addition, Lloyd-Jones' view of the ecumenical movement and his opposition to Romanism and its dangers are fully detailed.

As one might expect there is a considerable emphasis in the biography on sermon preparation and preaching and there are many testimonies to Lloyd-Jones' outstanding ability as a preacher. In 1942 he delivered an evangelistic sermon, with the raising of Jairus' daughter as its theme, at Trinity College, Cambridge. The Master of Trinity, the historian G M Trevelyan in cap and gown, was present along with a colleague, Professor G D Broad. After the address, Trevelyan made his way to the speaker and, removing his cap, said with considerable emotion, "Sir, it has been given to you to speak with great power". Broad, less impressed, was later to tell a student, "If the Master hears that man much more he is going to be converted" (p 229). An Anglican testimony regarding Lloyd-Jones' preaching is from R V G Tasker, Professor of New Testament Exegesis at King's College, London, whose life had been revolutionised by hearing Lloyd-Jones in 1947. After hearing him preach at Westminster Chapel, he commented, "This is preaching on a grand style; by the time we Anglicans have concluded our little homilies the Doctor is just emerging from his introduction" (p 333).

The biography concludes with a moving account of the way Martyn Lloyd-Jones faced death. During a visit to him shortly before he died, Iain Murray spoke to him about a believer that he knew who all his life had been like Bunyan's Mr Fearing yet passed on with great joy. Mr Murray then commented to the Doctor, "How wonderful it would have been if he had lived like that". Lloyd-Jones response had an element of disapproval: "But don't underestimate dying! *Death* (with great emphasis) is 'the last enemy'. Men may live well who do not die victoriously" (p 446).

Whilst we welcome the volume as an important addition to the growing literature on Dr Lloyd-Jones, of which Iain Murray has made the most significant contribution, a note of caution must be made. Lloyd-Jones' witness was, in a number of areas, quite different from that of the Free Presbyterian Church. We merely list some of these areas with little or no comment:

1. His doctrine of the Church was far different from that of Scottish Presbyterianism (see pp 380-381). This is also highlighted in some detail in Appendix 3 to *The Fight of Faith*, pp 789-791. Westminster Chapel had no elders and, though a Congregational church, few decisions were taken by the church meeting.

2. Lloyd-Jones held to a "second-blessing" type of theology (see pp 426-431). In 1986 the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church sounded a clear note of warning against this defective aspect of his teaching (see *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 91, pp 201-202).

3. His willingness to co-operate with Arminians (see p 329). This appears to have been a significant factor in Lloyd-Jones' disagreement with Professor

John Murray on whether the early Leicester Conference should leave Arminianism as an “open question” if the Conference were to draw up a creedal statement (see *The Fight of Faith*, pp 499-501).

4. Though Lloyd-Jones opposed Billy Graham, this was due only to his disagreement with calling for public decisions and co-operation with modernists and not his Arminian theology (see p 337). This is in very marked contrast to the article by Rev Donald MacLean who opposed Dr Graham on his Arminianism as well as his calling for decisions and co-operation with liberals (see *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 71, pp 3-8).

5. His approval of uninspired hymns and organ music in public worship (see pp 301-304).

6. The celebration of Christmas (see pp 258-259).

7. The approval of women praying at public prayer meetings (see p 252).

It is rather surprising that Mr Murray has not interacted far more with R T Kendall’s autobiography² which contains, from the reviewer’s perspective, far more damaging comments on “the Doctor” than the statements in some of the books that Mr Murray has chosen to controvert.

This condensed life of Dr Lloyd-Jones meets the Banner of Truth’s usual high standards of production and has a remarkably low price for such a large and sturdy paperback. If you possess the two-volume life, it is still worthwhile to buy this updated, condensed edition. For those coming to Lloyd-Jones for the first time, this book would be a good place to start. However, Iain Murray’s two-volume biography still remains the definitive life of Dr Lloyd-Jones and it would be a great pity if the larger work were to be replaced by this volume.

Roy Middleton

Old Paths, by J C Ryle, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 408 pages, £15.00.

Many of us will already be familiar with an older edition of this book and can fondly recall reading messages on such subjects as Inspiration, Our Souls, Few Saved, Dead or Alive, The Holy Ghost, The Heart, Faith and Repentance. The great hallmarks of J C Ryle, vicar of Stradbroke in Suffolk from 1861 to 1880 and Bishop of Liverpool from 1880 to 1900, is his simplicity of language and his clear and earnest application. His concern for the truth and for the salvation of his fellow sinners comes out very power-

²See R T Kendall, *In Pursuit of His Glory*, Hodder & Stoughton, 2002, pp 23-34. Iain Murray reviewed this book in the *Banner of Truth Magazine*, issue 486. The review, which is excellent, heavily critiques Kendall for the way he changed Westminster Chapel from what it was in Lloyd-Jones’ day. He does not, however, interact significantly with the assertions of Kendall in the pages highlighted.

fully in those 19 messages, which he believed would be more likely to be read if put in a single volume than if put out as individual tracts.

It is difficult to choose an extract out of the wealth of riches in those papers, but a typical example of Ryle's writing is to be found in the paper entitled, "Our Hope":

"Let us beware of supposing that any hope is good which is not founded on Christ. All other hopes are built on sand. They may look well in the summer time of health and prosperity, but they will fail in the day of sickness and the hour of death. 'Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ' (1 Cor 3:11).

"Church-membership is no foundation of hope. We may belong to the best of churches, and yet never belong to Christ. We may fill our pew regularly every [Lord's Day] and hear the sermons of orthodox, ordained clergymen, and yet never hear the voice of Jesus, or follow Him. If we have nothing better than church-membership to rest upon we are in a poor plight: we have nothing solid beneath our feet.

"Reception of the sacraments is no foundation of hope. We may be washed in the waters of baptism, and yet know nothing of the water of life. We may go to the Lord's table every [Lord's Day] of our lives, and yet never eat Christ's body and drink Christ's blood by faith. Miserable indeed is our condition if we can say nothing more than this! We possess nothing but the outside of Christianity: we are leaning on a reed.

"Christ Himself is the only true foundation of a good hope. He is the rock, His work is perfect. He is the stone, the sure stone, the tried corner stone. He is able to bear all the weight that we can lay upon Him. He only that buildeth on Him shall not be confounded (Deut 32:4, Is 28:16, 1 Pet 2:6)."

This reprint is warmly recommended. It will be of special help in establishing those who are young in the faith in the doctrines which Ryle deals with.

(Rev) *W A Weale*

Protestant View

NHS Pays Roman Catholic Church for Hospital Visits

Ministers of the gospel visit those who belong to their congregations when they are hospitalised and seek to offer what spiritual help they can. They rightly receive no extra remuneration for doing so, either from their congregations or the National Health Service. The case is different for certain Roman Catholic priests who visit their parishioners in hospital. It has emerged that NHS Lothian has agreed to pay the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St

Andrews and Edinburgh £30 000 per year for the provision of “out-of-hours spiritual care” – which is mainly administering the last rites to critically ill Roman Catholics.

Not only is the Roman Catholic Church the only religious organisation with which the Health Board has such an agreement, but it was receiving even greater payments for many years. It is reported that NHS Lothian has stated that a previous arrangement, “in which Roman Catholic chaplains were on the NHS payroll at a cost of £56 000, had been scrapped due to ‘poor on-call RC service delivery’”. Hence the reason for the new and less expensive agreement which took three years to reach.

While the NHS is legally required to offer spiritual care through its chaplaincies to hospital patients, it is not obliged to pay churches to do so. It is prodigal, and an imposition on taxpayers, when NHS Lothian hands their money over to the immensely-wealthy Roman Catholic Church, especially at a time when hospitals are crying out for more resources and staff. “He that giveth to the rich, shall surely come to want” (Prov 22:16). *NMR*

Notes and Comments

Sabbath Airplanes

Hearing commercial airplanes disturbing the peace of the Sabbath as they come in to land, one thinks of the passengers, the aircrews, and the ground staff. Instead of “calling the Sabbath a delight”, as the people of God are striving to do, the passengers have subjected themselves to all the worldly distractions, the enjoyments perhaps and vexations of air-travel: the queuing, the security, the delays, the televisions, the final calls for other passengers, the free newspapers etc.

Perhaps some of the passengers would rather not be travelling that day. They may be under pressure to attend engagements needlessly arranged for the Sabbath or early on Monday morning, and they may come from backgrounds where people “would not understand” if they travelled on Saturday for a Monday meeting. Others may be utterly ignorant of the Sabbath, and others again brazen, like those on Lewis who vied to be on the first Sabbath flight out of the island. The child of God does not envy any of them: “for a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness” (Ps 84:10).

Probably many of the staff too would prefer not to be working on that day. They would rather be at home with their families, but they would not have their jobs unless they were prepared to work on the Sabbath. The “love

of money” prevails in business and politics, and while our rulers make a show of deploring slavery in the past, they have no conscience over compelling other people to break the Sabbath. Satan is a cruel taskmaster. There is no necessity for Sabbath flights, as the Icelandic volcano showed in April 2010. European airspace was closed for six days, but the main impact, according to a Wikipedia article, was on sporting and “cultural” events, on the travel of politicians and celebrities, and on the travel industry itself.

The heart of the believer is elsewhere on the Sabbath. He may fly frequently and happily on other days of the week, and enjoy the Divine presence in doing so, but on the Sabbath he has other and more important business than is conducted in airports. He has a meeting, which he does not want to miss, with Christ and with his own heart and with “the great congregation”. He wants renewed experiences of the indwelling of the Spirit, of godly sorrow, of the hope of salvation, of the peace of God ruling in his heart, of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, of a care for the people of God and for the cause of Christ throughout the world. He yearns for the “high places of the earth” from which better views can be seen than from any airplane. “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off” (Is 33:17). *DWBS*

Church Representation on Education Committees

An attempt is being made in the Scottish Parliament to stop religious representatives being appointed to the education committees of Scottish local authorities. John Finnie, an MSP for the Highlands and Islands, has submitted a private member’s bill seeking to abolish what is presently a legal requirement – that the membership of each education committee include three representatives from churches in the region and that they be allowed to vote. Such an arrangement has been in place since 1872, when schools were handed over to local authorities by the Churches which had established and run them.

John Finnie claims that such representation is wrong because unelected individuals have voting rights. The fact remains, however, that the churches, as founders and past managers of the schools, were given the legal right to participate in the running of the new system and continued to make valuable contributions. In any case, these representatives, although not elected by the public at large, have been chosen by their churches.

Behind the opposition to such religious representation are organisations such as the National Secular Society. A spokesman has condemned the influence exerted by religious representatives and vows that the Society’s campaign to cancel the arrangement will increase throughout the country.

Supporters of the proposed bill, including the Chairman of Edinburgh Secular Society, claim that democratic principles lie behind it, but it seems that the mainspring is a strong aversion to biblical Christianity.

To the dismay of many, opponents of God's Word are becoming more vociferous and their influence is increasing in government circles. All the more reason to plead with God to preserve what remains of Christian principles in national life. In any case, whatever victories the adversaries of biblical truth may obtain, Scripture assures us that the triumphing of the wicked is short and that the Lord will prevail against His enemies. *NMR*

Prince George's Baptism

On October 23, Prince George Alexander Louis, the first-born son of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, was baptised by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rev Justin Welby. Prince George is third in line to the throne; if spared, he will one day become King and, as the law presently stands, Defender of the Faith. He will be Supreme Governor of the Church of England, a role his great-grandmother Queen Elizabeth II holds today. Yet, controversially, his grandfather, Prince Charles, has stated that, should he ascend the throne, he wants to be called Defender of all Faiths, not just of Christianity.

As could be expected, though it was a relatively simple service lasting around half an hour, there was some ritual attached to it. The water was taken from the River Jordan. The Prince's forehead was marked with the sign of the cross and the water was sprinkled on it three times. "Christening" oil was also put on the baby's head. The Chapel Royal in St James's Palace, a place steeped in tradition and history, was chosen as the venue. It was here that the Duchess of Cambridge was confirmed, according to the rites of the Church of England, before her marriage in 2011.

It is reported that, in his address, Rev Justin Welby had much to say about Christ and he is to be commended for that. He instructed the small group gathered to "make sure [the Prince] knows who this Jesus is. Speak of Him, read stories about Him, introduce Him in prayer". The Prince must also learn to look towards Christ, he added, "He is the only place to go to for the resources George will need so that he is everything he can be, so that he becomes more fully the person God has created him to be. Without Me, says Jesus, you can do nothing."

Defining the sacrament of Baptism, the Archbishop said, "Baptism at its heart is about the gift of God, about God's gift of life . . . physical life, but also the offer of spiritual life to all of us, so life for ever". However, there seemed to have been some significant omissions – no reference to the fall of man, the need of forgiveness of sins or the washing of regeneration by God's

Spirit. Mr Welby also appeared to indicate that Prince George had the life of Christ in him (was this supposed to be by virtue of his baptism?) when he continued, "Prince George is to share the life of Christ, which is in him, regardless of whom he meets, their faith or nature or habits, so that others find life". The Archbishop would appear to be promoting the false doctrine of Universalism or, at least, Baptismal Regeneration.

Mr Welby also quoted beautiful words which, he said, had their origin in the Church of Scotland: "For you Jesus Christ came into the world. For you He lived and showed God's love. For you He suffered the darkness of Calvary. . . . For you He triumphed over death and rose to new life. For you He reigns at God's right hand. All this He did for you, though you do not know it yet." But can those words be applied to Prince George? Surely they cannot be applied specifically to anyone who does not yet know the Saviour. Certainly if the word *sinners* was substituted for "you", the gospel door is wide open, and every soul who trusts in Christ (but only those) would have the right to use the word "you".

The danger of a liturgical, ritualistic form of worship is that it will remain just that. The internal, vital, spiritual place where true religion struggles and grows is often ignored. Some feared that this was the case at the wedding of the Duke and Duchess, where some truth was spoken amidst the pomp and ceremony. Yet they were addressed as "children of God" though it was well known that they were co-habiting up to the time of their marriage. It is this failure to declare the whole counsel of God which deceives people for eternity, whether it is at a baptism, wedding, funeral or an "ordinary" church service.

We all need to search our own hearts and humbly pray to the Lord to give us true light and heart religion, for "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Lk 16:15). *KHM*

"The Noise of Thy Songs"

The Lord, through the prophet Amos, rebuked pleasure-seekers in Israel who were lifted up with pride and worldly prosperity and did not care for the oppressed people of God. Among other sins that Amos witheringly condemned was the abuse of music and singing, especially when it was accompanied with drunkenness. "Take away from me the noise of thy songs, for I will not hear the melody of thy viols". He referred also to those "that lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall; that chant to the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instruments of music, like David; that drink wine in bowls and anoint themselves with the chief ointments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph" (Amos 5:23; 6:4-6). It is thus the

duty of the Church of Christ in every generation openly to warn against anything that is not conducive to spiritual wellbeing; activities which cannot benefit our spiritual wellbeing need clearly to be highlighted as empty, delusive and highly dangerous.

Writing this note half-way between the time of the National Mod in October and the ungodly festivities of Christmas, we feel that the professing Church in Scotland is being compromised more than ever by a desire to appease this pleasure-seeking generation. Hence, rather than standing out in opposition to such festivals, it is being drawn to countenance and even to support them. This is evidenced when Presbyterian ministers participate in ecumenical worship services connected with such events, usually accompanied by a Roman Catholic priest. This not only grieves the godly, but is offensive to the Lord Himself who tells us unambiguously in His Word that “the friendship of the world is enmity with God” (Jas 4:4).

Furthermore, such conduct only serves to undermine the broad wall of separation that ought to exist between the Church of God and the profane world lying under the power of the wicked one. This can only serve to diminish the spirituality of the Church; besides it can only harden the ungodly in their sin, lessen any notion they may have of the Christian faith as a holy and heavenly religion and confirm them in their rejection of a Saviour who delivers His people out of the ways of this present, evil world. AWM

Church Information

Rev J A T van Dorp

Rev Johannes van Dorp was for about 40 years minister of Gisborne congregation in New Zealand, until he retired in 2011. Sadly, he passed away on 9 November 2013 after many months of illness. We express sympathy to his wife and family.

Free Presbyterian Publications

Bound volumes of volume 12 and of volume 13 of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* are now available in hardback at a cost of £18.75 each.

The *Works* of Ebenezer Erskine have been out of print for some time. This fine three-volume set should be again available before the end of 2013, DV.

College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the second of the year’s two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations in December.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

2013

Volume 118

Editor:
Rev Kenneth D Macleod

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

Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

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

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

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, 10 Achary Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.

Dornoch: Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **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. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

North Tolsta: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.

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. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.

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, 5222 Kendal Glen Court, Rosharon, Texas 77583; 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.by@gmail.com.

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

Mbumba: Church and Hospital: Postal Address: Mbumba 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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