

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

Contents

Gifts from God to His Church.....	161
The Transfiguration	
A Sermon by James Begg.....	164
Attendance at Public Worship	
Rev D W B Somerset.....	172
Law and Gospel (3)	
Rev J R Tallach.....	174
Christ’s Temptation	
1. The Identity of the Assault (2)	
Hugh Martin.....	178
Peter’s Fall	
J C Ryle.....	182
John Maclean, Greenock	
Rev Neil Cameron.....	183
Our Gospel Work in Africa and Israel	
Rev N M Ross.....	185
Book Reviews	
More Pocket Puritans.....	187
Notes and Comments.....	188
Church Information.....	192

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Moderator of Synod: Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9JX; tel: 01470 562243.

Clerk of Synod: Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Avenue, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623, e-mail: JMacL265@aol.com.

Assistant Clerk: Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.

General Treasurer: Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283, fax 0141 332 4271, e-mail: wc.fpchurch@btconnect.com.

Law Agents: Brodies WS, 15 Atholl Crescent, Edinburgh, EH3 8AH; tel: 0131 228 3777.

Clerks to Presbyteries:

Northern: Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.

Southern: Rev H M Cartwright, MA, 8 Colinton Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5DS; tel: 0131 447 1920.

Western: Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.

Outer Isles: Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.

Skye:

Australia and New Zealand: Rev J A T van Dorp, 14 Thomson Street, Gisborne, New Zealand; tel: 06 868 5809.

Zimbabwe: Rev S Khumalo, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo; tel: 00263 9407131.

Zimbabwe Mission Office: 9 Robertson Street, Parkview, Bulawayo; tel: 002639 62636, fax: 002639 61902, e-mail: fpchurch@mweb.co.zw.

Residential Care Homes:

Ballifeary House, 14 Ness Walk, Inverness, IV3 5SQ; tel: 01463 234679.

Leverburgh Residential Care Home, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520296.

Website of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland: www.fpchurch.org.uk.

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Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Ferry Road, Leverburgh, Isle of Harris, HS5 3UA. Tel: 01859 520271; e-mail: leverburgh@lineone.net. Unsigned articles are by the Editor.

Editorial Board: The Editor, Rev H M Cartwright, Rev N M Ross, Rev D W B Somersett.

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Communions

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

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

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

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

May: First Sabbath: Aberdeen, London; **Second:** Achmore, New Canaan, Donsa, Kinlochbernie; **Third:** Edinburgh; **Fifth:** Auckland, Chiedza.

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

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

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

September: First Sabbath: Breascleite, Chesley, Larne, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Mnaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Barnoldswick, Ingwenya, North Uist.

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

November: Second Sabbath: Glasgow; **Third:** Santa Fe; **Fourth:** Aberdeen; **Fifth:** Chiedza.

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

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Vol 114

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No 6

Gifts from God to His Church

On 10 July 1509, almost exactly 500 years ago, one of God's greatest gifts to His Church was born. This was John Calvin, whose life began in Noyon in northern France. His father held several important positions in the town, some civil and some ecclesiastical; his mother – who died when John was no more than 6 – faithfully brought him up in the Romish ceremonies. John's abilities were obvious and his father gave him a good university education. Little information has survived about his conversion, but by at least 1533 he had been delivered from the formal, superstitious religion in which he had been brought up, and he was now trusting in Christ alone for salvation. But someone with his robustly-Protestant outlook could not remain in France and be safe; he had to flee. After various wanderings, he reached Geneva in 1536, intending to spend only one night there. However, William Farel, whose work in Geneva had resulted in the city embracing the Reformed faith, put Calvin under severe pressure to join him in his work, and that one night stretched on to the day of his death – apart from three years of exile in Strasbourg after his expulsion from Geneva.

William Cunningham describes Calvin as “by far the greatest of the Reformers with respect to the talents he possessed, the influence he exerted and the services he rendered in the establishment and diffusion of important truth. After all that Luther, Melancthon and Zwingli had done, there was still needed someone of elevated and comprehensive mind who should be able to rise above the distraction and confusion of the existing contentions, to survey the wide field of scriptural truth in all its departments, to combine and arrange its various parts and to present them, as a harmonious whole, to the contemplation of men.

“This was the special work for which God qualified Calvin, by bestowing upon him both the intellectual and the spiritual gifts necessary for the task, and this He enabled him to accomplish. God makes use of the intellectual powers which He bestows upon men for the accomplishment of His own purposes, or rather He bestows upon men those intellectual powers which may fit them naturally, and according to the orderly operation of means, for

the purposes which He in His sovereignty has assigned to them to effect. He leads them, by His grace, to devote their powers to His glory and grace; He blesses their labours, and thus His gracious designs are accomplished.”¹

Cunningham particularly refers to “the systematisation of divine truth and the full organisation of the Christian Church according to the Word of God” as Calvin’s special achievements.² In speaking of systemising divine truth, Cunningham has, of course, particularly in mind Calvin’s *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, which he describes as “the most important work in the history of theological science”.³ It has never gone out of date. Calvin’s commentaries, on most of the books of the Bible, also continue to be available today. However, more of Calvin’s sermons have been published in English within the last 40 years than possibly ever before – certainly since the sixteenth century.

All this means that John Calvin was a great gift, not only to the Church of his own time, but also to the Church of every succeeding generation. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul refers to the Psalmist’s description, in Psalm 68, of Christ rising to heaven bearing the blessings of redemption: “When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men” (Eph 4:8). And the particular gifts Paul mentions are the Church offices from “apostles” to “pastors and teachers” (v 11).

Calvin was, of course, a pastor and teacher, and we may quote his comments on verse 11: “The apostles did not appoint themselves, but were chosen by Christ; and, at the present day, true pastors do not rashly thrust themselves forward by their own judgement, but are raised up by the Lord. In short, the government of the Church, by the ministry of the Word, is not a contrivance of men, but an appointment made by the Son of God. As His own unalterable law, it demands our assent. They who reject or despise this ministry offer insult and rebellion to Christ its Author. It is Himself who gave them; for, if He does not raise them up, there will be none. Another inference is that no man will be fit or qualified for so distinguished an office who has not been formed and moulded by the hand of Christ Himself. To Christ we owe it that we have ministers of the gospel, that they abound in necessary qualifications, that they execute the trust committed to them. All, all is His gift.”⁴

The Church today very much needs such gifts. John Calvin was no doubt a unique gift, but every generation needs spiritually-minded men in the ministry who will expound the truth, speak to the consciences of sinners,

¹*The Reformers and the Theology of the Reformation*, Banner of Truth reprint, pp 293-4.

²*The Reformers*, p 294.

³*The Reformers*, p 295.

⁴The translation is that of the Calvin Translation Society.

feed the flock of God and resist error – and the Church needs men who can write as well as preach. But they must all be men who live godly lives, have a sense of God’s glory and a desire to see that glory advanced throughout the world. Many others may enter the ministry, particularly in an age like this when the Church as a whole no longer seems to care about the standards God has set for those who would become preachers. While these others may live upright lives, they do not feel their need as sinners; they do not know God; they are not dependent on His grace; they seek their own glory rather than His. Because God did not call them to the ministry, we cannot think of them as God’s gifts to His Church and we cannot expect that He will use them to the advancement of His cause.

There is no doubt that Calvin had, in Cunningham’s words, a “special work” to do, and that God had endowed him with particular abilities so that he could carry out that work. And if we saw a significant number of such men – conspicuously-godly men with obvious intellectual abilities and leadership qualities – entering the ministry, we might expect that God had a great work for them to do. That has indeed been the case at various points in the history of the Church. But the Church in every generation also needs ministers whom, without disparagement, we might describe as men of ordinary abilities – but truly born again and called by God Himself to the work of the ministry. The Church cannot expect to have many Calvins, but in a generation when most people seem intent on rushing down the broad way that leads to destruction, there is tremendous need for *many* men to go out as ambassadors of Christ to make known clearly and unashamedly the whole doctrine of Scripture, and particularly the basic facts of sin and salvation. And Christ’s followers are under obligation, today as much as in any other age, to pray “the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth labourers into His harvest” (Lk 10:2).

But we must bear clearly in mind that, while men such as Martin Luther, John Calvin and John Knox were given both grace and abilities to fit them to do a great work in Reformation times, they were only instruments in the hand of Almighty God. But the Holy Spirit did bless their preaching and writing to the spiritual good of their hearers and readers – and blessed also the work of a multitude of lesser men, then and in more recent times. Equally, today’s preachers and writers, whatever their abilities, need the same divine power if their work is to be effective. We may be painfully conscious that, in comparison with the need of the world, God is sending out few men in our time to preach the gospel. But what should concern us even more is the extent to which the Holy Spirit is denied in these days. How much God’s children need to pray for an outpouring of the Spirit so that the work of Christ’s ambassadors would once more be blessed on a large scale!

The Transfiguration¹

A Sermon by James Begg

Luke 9:30,31. *And, behold, there talked with Him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who appeared in glory, and spake of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem.*

The transfiguration of Jesus Christ was intended to teach clearly the doctrine of His supreme divinity. This is the inference which the Apostle Peter made: “We have not followed cunningly devised fables when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of His majesty. For He received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to Him from the excellent glory, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

God in human nature. I have often directed your attention to the vast importance of this doctrine. I regard it not merely as a most amazing truth – that the very Being who spoke all things into existence has walked in human nature on this earth. It forms the pledge of our eternal safety. If the God who made the heavens is on our side, who shall be against us? He created this vast universe and, if He is resolved to save, He is without doubt able to destroy all our spiritual foes. He is able to accomplish all the purposes of His grace, to carry forward to perfection His glorious work and present the redeemed creation perfect in the view of all the universe.

Great care was therefore taken that this preliminary truth should be fully established. It was not enough that the prophets had spoken in exalted terms of the surpassing glories of a coming age, when the Son of God should become a sojourner in this world. It was not enough that a star from heaven should announce His coming, and that the hosts of heaven should proclaim His birth on the plains of Bethlehem, in songs of praise. Men were apt to forget, when they beheld a lowly son of Adam, that they beheld that glorious Being whom unnumbered angels adored in heaven; even His disciples did not understand the dignity of their Master. He therefore not merely put forth His omnipotent power continually, displaying His unsearchable wisdom, manifesting the most unheard-of benevolence. To impress the truth indelibly on their minds and make it plain to all future generations, He took with Him three chosen disciples and, instead of His glory merely shining in rays through the chinks of that covering of flesh with which He was clothed, the covering

¹A communion sermon preached when Begg was minister of the Middle Church in Paisley. It is reprinted with editing from *The Scottish Pulpit*, vol 3. A number of articles commemorating the two-hundredth anniversary of Begg’s birth appeared in *The Bulwark* for July-September 2008.

itself was removed and His whole glory blazed forth as it does from that glorious throne on which He shall sit throughout eternal ages.

Rather than attempt to describe the glory of this scene, we must learn lessons from it. The inspired writer has left us nothing to do but wonder and adore. He has set before us the Redeemer surrounded, on a lofty mountain, by the representatives of both worlds – the Church on earth and in heaven – engaged in deep conversation on the most important event of all time. Men shall never understand what is meant by this glorious transfiguration till their spirits are brought into God's presence, where they shall see His majesty and all His bright spirits face to face – knowing as they are known.

Still there are many important truths to be learned from this wonderful display of glory. Let us not suppose, for example, as we are apt to do, that this was the most astonishing event in the Saviour's history on earth. It was far more astonishing that His glory should have been obscured so long – that it should have been obscured at all. For 4000 years before He came into our world, He had been arrayed in the same majesty, behind the screen which separated the eternal world from human view. From eternal ages, before the foundations of earth were laid, He had been the same glorious Being. And during all the eternity to come, He will be the object of all worship, the glorious Ruler of the universe.

A glimpse into heaven. The appearance of Moses and Elias, and their conversation, teach us important lessons suited to our present circumstances. Moses and Elias, then glorified spirits, stood before the disciples in their distinct personalities. In reflecting on eternity, one is apt to wonder if all the souls of men in heaven will recognise each other amid the mighty throng of angels; whether those who have gone down to the regions of despair will recognise, among the vast crowd, their companions in wickedness; whether exalted friendships will endure in heaven; whether deep-rooted dislike will continue to boil and fill the lost with eternal wretchedness.

Now the glimpse into the invisible world which this and other passages of Scripture give us proves that all this will be the case. Although we cannot understand how spirits stand apart from each other with marks of individuality, we know that all angels are distinguishable; so Michael is not confounded with Gabriel. And when the last trumpet shall sound, Christ will descend with a whole crowd of spirits all distinct, all hasting to join the bodies arising from the earth. Here on Mount Tabor we behold two men, after hundreds of years mingling with the spirits in heaven, now standing with all their marks of identity, as distinct as when previously they sojourned on earth. Therefore, when any of your friends go into the eternal world, do not think they are lost in the crowd of spirits or that, when your spirit enters eternity, you will fail

to recognise those whom you knew on earth and be recognised by them. That spirit which you imagine to be invisible will have some distinct marks of identity which spirits can discern; and you and I and all men will find ourselves distinct objects of attention in heaven or in hell.

This is not merely curious speculation; it is fitted powerfully to stimulate to duty and deter from sin. There is nothing, for example, sweeter on earth than friendship; and though all the dear ties of this life must be broken by the ruthless hand of death, yet if we are united by the more sacred tie of Christianity, we shall be joined again by a tie which shall never be dissolved, when we reach the glorious paradise of God. There we shall be purified and made more glorious than eye has seen or ear heard or has entered into the heart of man to conceive. In heaven there will be the welcome of friends, the rapturous meeting with those glorious men who stand prominent among the saints – which no grief shall cloud, no pain interrupt, no death destroy. But there will also be the fearful meeting of sinners who taught each other to sin; their ruined souls will haunt each other with eternal terror. Let sinners in Zion be afraid; let trembling seize the hypocrites.

The appearance of Moses and Elias. Why did two glorified spirits come down to meet the Saviour on this mountain? It was to indicate the deep interest of heaven in what was soon to take place on Calvary, and to rebuke the awful indifference which reigned in Judea. The merchant was continuing his trade, the labourer his toil; the high priest arrayed in his glorious garments was continuing to slay the sacrifices, to carry their blood within the veil, ignorant that the great sacrifice had come and that all these emblems were about to vanish away for ever. Even the disciples who had been left at the base of the mountain had not penetrated the meaning of these events, while those who stood in the presence of the heavenly visitors only gazed with wonder and spoke what they did not understand.

Moses and Elias came down to manifest the deep interest which heaven felt in an event now imminent, for which all the saints had longed, in the faith of which they had died, and towards which their whole gaze was still directed. Nothing is more remarkable than the striking contrast between the displays of feeling on earth and in heaven. Men have always been steeped in profound security before the plans of God, before the affairs of heaven above and of hell beneath, and even those events in the spiritual world which have taken place before their eyes. Thus angels and spirits of men in the regions of blessedness, beyond the possibility of change, must come down to awaken them from their lethargy, to consider the glories of salvation.

But why did all the spirits in heaven not come down to meet the Saviour on this mountain? Or if only a deputation must be sent, why did Abraham,

the friend of God, not come? Or Joshua, who led the people into the promised land? Or Caleb, who followed God fully? Or Samuel, for whom all Israel mourned when he died? Or David, the man after God's own heart, whose harp had long before resounded the praises of the Messiah? Or Isaiah, who described in such glowing terms the glories of the coming age? Or Jeremiah, who longed that the transgressions of Judah might cease and that the glory of the latter day might shed its radiance on desolate Jerusalem?

Very little consideration is necessary to convince us that Moses and Elias, though in some respects less distinguished than many of the rest, stood far above them by their exalted offices. The Old Testament is divided into two parts: the Law and the Prophets. "The law and the prophets were until John; from this time the kingdom of God is preached." That whole dispensation, with all that was done and said under it, may therefore be ranked under these two heads; while the New Testament is ranked under one – the everlasting gospel revealed in all its clearness to every nation and kindred and tongue and people by Jesus Christ and His Apostles. Now on Mount Tabor we have representatives of all the three. The whole line of priests and ceremonies may be traced up to Moses, the whole train of prophets to Elias; while in Christ Jesus we have the beginning and the ending of the plan of divine love. We have therefore by far the most significant group that could possibly have assembled, the most fitted to reflect light on the pages of inspired Scripture.

Their conversation. It must be highly significant to ponder their subject, for all the priests were represented there in the person of Moses, all the prophets in the person of Elias, all the Apostles in the person of their great Master. It was therefore a full muster of the Church of God in all its parts, and under both dispensations. What is the subject of their discourse? "They spake of [Christ's] decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

From this we are to learn the important lesson, that God's object, from the foundation of the world, has been to set forth the atonement of Jesus Christ. As if to confute all those blind high priests, who were continually offering sacrifices whose meaning they could not understand – as if to cover with eternal confusion all those foolish interpreters who have laboured so long to darken the counsel of God and heap up useless learning to prove that the Jewish ritual had no reference to Christ's atonement – Moses himself was brought down from heaven after two thousand years and, from a mountain in Judea, pointing to the cross of Christ as what explains all the strange ceremonies, the apparent enigmas, of his mysterious law. As if to confound all those foolish students of sacred prophecy who then laboured to darken counsel by words without knowledge – and who, in after ages, have used their cumbrous erudition to rob man of his only hope by claiming that the prophets of God

did not speak of an atonement – we find Elias coming down from his eternal rest to declare that the cross formed on earth the subject of all his preaching and was now in heaven the foundation of all his joy.

And, as if to preclude the possibility of those awful perversions of the false seducers who should afterwards arise – even denying the Lord that bought them and endeavouring to banish out of the world the recollection of that death by which alone men can be saved – we have the Saviour openly disowning such, and setting forth the decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem as the great event in His history on earth, fitted to inspire sinners with courage and joy.

The great lesson which we are to learn from the text is that the death of Christ is what gives meaning to the whole Old Testament dispensation, to all the predictions of the prophets; especially on this day we should bear it in mind. The economy of Moses was evidently only a full development of the promise made to Abraham. Let everyone consider the temple at Jerusalem, its priests, its washings, its sacrifices, the blood which was constantly shed, without which no one could approach God in peace. Then let him compare them with the full disclosure made of Christ under the New Testament and he will see that they accord exactly with the statement that the Apostles spoke “none other things than those which . . . Moses did say should come, that Christ should suffer” to secure salvation for man.

We cannot imagine what idea anyone can have of God who could dream for an instant that it was otherwise. What advantage could there have been in slaying so many thousands of innocent creatures? They were God’s property, and it would have only been an aggravation of man’s offence to slay them if this had not been appointed to direct the thoughts of the Jews forward to the sacrifice of Christ. Besides, what favour could have been shown to the Children of Israel in bringing them into Egyptian bondage, in detaining them for so many years in the wilderness of Arabia, in loading them with a burden of ceremonies which they were almost unable to bear, and forcing them to slay their flocks in sacrifice, unless an important meaning was conveyed which was hidden from the inhabitants of other lands – unless all this was fitted to point to the atonement which would blot out their sins, and secure for them everlasting habitations? When viewed in this light, all is consistent, all is glorious; otherwise it is an unmeaning riddle.

Let no one ask why God permitted so much time to elapse before the great Redeemer came. It taught men, by its awful consequences, how evil and how bitter sin was. It exercised the faith of the ancient saints in the truth of God’s promise, and it was consistent with other works of the Almighty. When He created the world, darkness brooded at first over the face of the deep, then

there was the dim twilight and, last of all, He placed the sun in the heavens. So, from the time of the Fall, God had thoughts of love towards men and never left them without a witness of this. He set up a school in Judea, and by pictures and symbols He trained up a family for heaven – making the light which first glimmered in paradise gradually become brighter and the truth clearer, until at last the Sun of righteousness arose, with healing in his wings. And, as Noah opened the window of the ark, sent out first one messenger, then another and at last came forth himself on the surface of the earth, which had just emerged from the waters of the deluge – so Christ sent messenger after messenger, and set up representation after representation, until He Himself shook all nations and suddenly came to His temple.

Truth brought to our senses. The object of the whole dispensation of Moses was to set the truths of Christianity before the human mind through the senses. It is impossible to understand it unless we have this in view. And we are not to suppose that it cannot now contribute to our instruction. The veil of the temple, with its cherubims, still exhibits the curious workmanship of Israel's God. The pictures used in the Jewish school still form a great gallery of figures of strange device, which every Christian would do well to ponder with solemn thought. And, as he casts his eyes around them, he may see all the articles of his creed portrayed. The long line of priests ended in Christ, the great High Priest of our profession; the long line of sacrifices ended in Christ, "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world".

The whole race of prophets, represented by Elias, equally pointed to the decease which Christ accomplished at Jerusalem. We only remind you how one declares that He was to be wounded for man's transgressions and bruised for his iniquities, and another that the Messiah was to be cut off, but not for Himself. The Old Testament not merely points forward to Christ Jesus as a dying Saviour, but exhausts every figure whereby His glory may be illustrated. "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into Thy lips: therefore God hath blessed Thee for ever. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows. All Thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made Thee glad. Kings' daughters were among Thy honourable women: upon Thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir." "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength?"

Every object in the world is called in to illustrate the glory of the coming Saviour. The whole gorgeousness of eastern imagery is employed to sound His praise. The kings of the earth and its chief princes are set forth as nothing

in comparison with Him. The glorious sun which enlightens all the world, wine that gladdens the heart of man, bread that strengthens him, the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley, rivers of water in a dry place, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land – these are some of the figures which Old Testament prophets used to point out the Saviour of the world. His name is said to be like ointment poured forth; He is said to be as glorious as the curtains of Solomon, comely as Jerusalem, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense and all the powders of the merchant; He is declared to be the chiefest amongst ten thousand and altogether lovely.

The man who can read the writings of all the prophets without seeing Jesus Christ set forth in all His glory – dying, rising, ascending as the Saviour of sinners – must be willfully blind, for this truth was spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. They all enquired and searched diligently, “searching what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow”.

I suppose it is unnecessary to dwell on the truth that the decease which Christ accomplished at Jerusalem was His objective in coming to this earth. It had been recorded that, without shedding blood of infinite value, there could be no remission of sin; and Christ assumed our nature that He might have somewhat to offer. If we could suppose He did not die, Moses and Elias and all the redeemed must have been driven out of heaven, for they had entered it only because of the future propitiation, in which they all believed. They entered the inheritance before the price was paid, for God had decreed that it would be sufficient to satisfy every claim.

The Old Testament dispensation was about to vanish away, and types and prophets were no longer necessary, now that the age of full revelation had begun to dawn. The Saviour announces the grand truth: as Moses had lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so the Son of Man was to be lifted up, that whosoever believed on Him might not perish but have everlasting life.

Remembering Christ's death. You are today to commemorate the decease which Christ accomplished at Jerusalem. You may think of the eternal God in human nature enduring the penalty of His own violated law; the countless multitudes to be saved from eternal misery and crowned with endless glory; the myriads to be punished for ever for despising it; the intense interest it excited among angels and the spirits of just men made perfect when it did happen, and indeed among all the spirits of darkness; the innumerable multitudes that have in all ages spread the glory of it amidst all ranks of men; the myriads of communion tables that have been spread in honour of it; and the certainty that it will be celebrated till the end of time. All these

considerations point it out as the most amazing event in the whole universe.

It should fill us all with holy joy and praise to recollect this. If anyone here feels no interest in this death, does not daily give thanks to God because it took place, he must look forward to a fearful reckoning on the day of judgement. To be without holiness and stand exposed to the eternal indignation of God is fearful, but to feel no interest in the means by which these awful evils may be averted marks out a hardened reprobate. To be exposed to all the storms of heaven is lamentable, but to turn obstinately away from a refuge indicates daring infatuation. To be blind is a fearful calamity, but if we obstinately shut our eyes against the light of everlasting truth, we deserve to stumble and fall and be snared and taken. To be enemies of God in our minds and by wicked works, and hasting on to eternal ruin, is fearful. But when Christ comes down, endures the punishment of sinners, and sets before us a full and free redemption; when he sends messengers to speak to us of the decease which He accomplished at Jerusalem and warn, exhort, implore us to be reconciled to God – then to turn away those messengers, and to refuse those warnings, is go on the highway to everlasting ruin.

If any soul in this assembly continues to do so, then as the Lord liveth, before whom I stand, omnipotence itself cannot save that soul. There is only one fountain in the universe in which a sinner can wash, and this man turns stubbornly away from that fountain. There is only one gate by which to enter the realms of glory, and this poor deluded sinner flees away from that gate.

Who then among you is the wise merchant that esteems the great Redeemer as this pearl of great price? Who among you acts in the world as the saints in heaven, rejoicing in a crucified Saviour? Let such come to a communion table and behold again this great sight: the Lamb of God. Christ has done all, suffered all, taken all your infirmities, finished the great work of redemption for you. Let Him be the joy and the rejoicing of your hearts.

If He is your Shepherd, what can you want? If He is the master of the feast, to whom the universe belongs, shall He not make your table abundant, your cup of prosperity run over. You are prone to err; He is the way to heaven. You are prone to doubt; He is the truth. You are prone to faint and die; He is the life, the strength, the everlasting joy of all who trust in Him. He died once; He lives and reigns, for the keys of hell and of death are His; pardon, peace, all blessings are at His command. He has accomplished a glorious decease; many saints are enjoying its blessed fruits in heaven. And if, at His table, you fix your eyes on Calvary and sincerely implore the forgiveness and grace of the eternal God, your place of defence shall be the munition of rocks; you shall see the King in His beauty and the land that is afar off. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Attendance at Public Worship

Rev D W B Somerset

One of the effects of conversion is a new desire for the public worship of God. In regeneration, the Holy Spirit joins the soul to Christ, and through Christ the soul is united to all other believers, as members of the same body. The soul now finds itself drawn to the place where prayer is “wont to be made” – where “two or three” are gathered together in Christ’s name, where Christ Himself is in the midst of them (Mt 18:20). “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord” (Ps 122:1). The child of God loves the habitation of His house and the place where His honour dwelleth (Ps 26:8). The public worship of God is better to him now than all else besides: “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).

This desire for public worship continues with the people of God all their lives, to a greater or lesser extent. Sometimes they feel it strongly, especially on the Sabbath day, when they see the ungodliness and Sabbath-breaking all around them, and the world lying “in wickedness”. The house of God becomes a place of refuge to them. When David fled from Saul it was to Nob, the city of priests and the place of the shewbread and the ephod, that he went (1 Sam 21:1,4,8). “In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me” (Ps 27:5). Their souls long for Christ and for the company of His people as a bird seeks to flee to her mountain (Ps 11:1). They are glad, in the place of worship, to see even one or two others who fear the Lord and who think upon His name (Mal 3:16). Their fellow believers may be of little consequence in the eyes of the world, but they are God’s jewels, sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty, and they bring the savour of heaven with them. “They that fear Thee will be glad when they see me; because I have hoped in Thy word” (Ps 119:74).

Another time when the desire for public worship may be strong is when they are deprived of it by providence – whether through persecution, or ill-health, or on account of their lawful calling, or because of the place where their lot is cast. David in the wilderness longed for the worship of God: “As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?” (Ps 42:1-2). When John was banished “to the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ,” he was “in the Spirit on the Lord’s day” (Rev 1:9-10).

It is a bad sign, therefore, when people are losing their desire for the public worship of God, and when they readily find excuses for absenting themselves from the Sabbath services and from the prayer meeting. We should be exhorting others to attend, rather than falling off in our own attendance: "Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is" (Heb 9:24-5). A declining attendance may be a sign of a believer losing his "first love", or it may be a mark of an unbeliever whose religious convictions are wearing away.

In a sermon on Hosea 6:4: "Your goodness is as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away," M'Cheyne describes the sinner, first awakened, and then sinking back into indifference: "He is an arrested hearer; he drinks in the words of the minister; he is lively in his attendance on the Word; if there be preaching in the week-evening, he puts by his work in order to be there. But when his concern wears away, he begins to weary first of the weekday service, then of the Sabbath; then perhaps he seeks a more careless ministry where he may slumber on till death and judgement. Ah, this has been the course of thousands in this place."

A very different case is described in *Records of Grace in Sutherland* (pp 222-3). A man, William Mackay, who had walked 16 miles to the church in Tongue on a day of drifting snow, when there was no road, was asked by the minister why he had ventured out, when only people in the near neighbourhood were at the service. In reply he stated that there were three things that moved him to attend the house of God: "First, the Lord had given him strength and he considered it his duty to wait on Him in public worship. Secondly, he came to add to the number in the congregation and thus encourage the minister when he knew that many would absent themselves. Thirdly, he came so that if the Spirit of God should be moving in the church that day, He might not find his pew empty."

The Spirit of God is sovereign and we do not know when He will work. The revival under Hezekiah "was done suddenly" (2 Chr 29:36). The outpouring of the Spirit on Monday, 21 June 1630, at the Kirk of Shotts communion was unexpected. Probably there were some among the people of God who were slothful and missed the blessing, and regretted it. Thomas was absent on the evening of the first Christian Sabbath and he did not meet the risen Christ (John 20:24). No one should be absent from public worship unless it is unavoidable, least of all the people of God. "Make conscience of the prayer meeting", the present writer was advised some years ago. The Psalmist envied the sparrows and swallows because they had made their house and their nest in God's altars (Ps 84:3). The child Samuel had his bed

“in the temple of the Lord” (1 Sam 3:3). The heart of the believer ought to dwell in “the gates of Zion” (Ps 87:2). David’s crowning joy was the thought that he would be there for ever: “In God’s house for evermore my dwelling-place shall be” (Ps 23:6).

Law and Gospel (3)¹

Rev J R Tallach

Law, Gospel and the Believer. Three uses of the law are commonly identified in relation to the believer: (1) the civil use, (2) the law as schoolmaster, (3) the law as a teacher.

(1) *The civil use of the Law*. In commenting on Galatians 3:19, Luther writes: “The first use of the law is to bridle the wicked. This civil restraint is very necessary, and appointed by God, as well for public peace as for the preservation of all things, but especially lest the cause of the gospel should be hindered by the tumult and seditions of wicked, outrageous and proud men”. The powers that be are ordained of God; the command is: “Let every soul be subject to the higher powers” (Rom 13:1). These powers are to bear the sword and to bear it in such a way that evil, defined as a breach of the moral law, is suppressed and righteousness is encouraged.

The Puritan Samuel Bolton writes: “Blessed be God that there is this fear upon the spirits of wicked men; otherwise we could not well live in the world. One man would be a devil to another. Every man would be Cain to his brother, an Amnon to his sister, an Absalom to his father, a Saul to himself, a Judas to his master; for what one does, all men would do, were it not for a restraint upon their spirits.”² God’s whole purpose in appointing these powers is that they should be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to true piety and religion in society. This would be of real benefit to a nation, for “righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people”.

(2) *The law as a schoolmaster*. This purpose of the law is to discipline and to educate – to hold up the mirror of the Word to the sinner and to sin, and thus to induce repentance and a sense of spiritual need. So Luther writes on Galatians 3:10: “The right use and end of the law therefore is . . . to reveal to a man his sin, his blindness, his misery, his impiety, ignorance, hatred and contempt of God, death, hell, the judgement and deserved wrath of God”. The law brings the sinner away from what are merely social norms and con-

¹The previous section of this paper appeared last month. The headings were: “Law, Gospel and Moses” and “Law, Gospel and Christ”.

²Quoted by E C Reisinger, *The Law and the Gospel*, p 165.

ventions and from his own fond esteem of himself and brings him in guilty before God. Calvin writes, “So long as the sinner is permitted to appeal to his own judgement, he substitutes a hypocritical for a real righteousness. But after he is forced to weigh his conduct in the balance of the law, he renounces all dependence on this fancied righteousness; he sees that he is at an infinite distance from holiness and, on the other hand, that he teems with innumerable vices of which he formerly seemed free.”³ The law never brings a sense of peace but creates a sense of need, which mercy alone will satisfy and Christ alone can fill.

After conversion, the law continues to have this schoolmasterly role. In its spiritual character it demands much more than the believer is capable of. The law also stirs up sinful desires. Paul says that he had not known lust unless the law had said, “Thou shalt not covet” (Rom 7:7). This effect of the law has been likened to the effect of the rays of the rising sun falling on a dunghill. The warmth generated causes the odour of the dung to rise and spread. So the effect of the law is to generate a hatred of the God whose law it is. In this respect the law is no different to the gospel. The gospel, without grace, is a savour of death unto death. The sinner therefore, being admonished and chastened by the law, must of necessity come again to the blood that cleanses from all sin and to the Advocate with the Father. The Spirit describes in the Word the Church’s progress as “coming up out of the wilderness leaning on her beloved”.

Our Confession of Faith states, “True believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned” (19:6). When the first Adam, as representative of mankind, was tested, he failed in his conformity to the moral law as a covenant of works and as a rule of obedience. Mankind then fell under the curse, “Thou shalt surely die”. The second Adam saw that there was none to deliver, and His own arm brought salvation. He did so by putting Himself under the law, discharging all its duties and bearing all its penalties on behalf of His people. As the law cannot twice exact punishment for the same sin, Christ’s death, while bearing His people’s sins, is the death imposed by the law as a covenant of works (see Gal 4:4-5).

Paul uses the illustration of the obligation of the wife to her husband. This obligation lasts only as long as the husband lives (Rom 7:2). When the husband dies, his wife is no longer bound. In the same way, the relationship of the believer to the law as a covenant of works ended with the death of Christ. When Christ died, the sinner’s husband – that is, the moral law as a covenant of works – also died; thus the sinner was then free from any obligation to the moral law as a covenant. Christ on their behalf had discharged their duties

³*Institutes*, 2.7.6.

and paid their debts under the law. The bond of marriage to the law was broken by Christ's death on their behalf (Rom 7:4).

Being thus justified, the work of sanctification begins. The believer is then prone to two errors in relation to the moral law. On the one hand, a return to legalism, as Paul charges the Galatians: "Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (3:3). On the other hand there is the danger of falling into Antinomianism, which affirms that believers are not under the moral law, even as a rule of life; it may even go as far as the appalling conclusion of these antinomians of Paul's day: to "continue in sin, that grace may abound" (Rom 6:1).

In the hand of the Spirit, the law is a plough to break up the fallow ground of the natural heart. The awakened sinner is brought to see something of the infinite holiness, justice and majesty of God. The sinner gains a sense of the divine authority and majesty of the law of God. The sinner likewise acquires something of the knowledge of sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom 3:20). He learns also something of the wrath that is revealed from heaven against the transgressions of sinners and feels the justice of God in condemning them to a lost eternity. Thus the sinner is brought to see his great need of the righteousness of Christ offered to him in the gospel.

(3) *The law as a teacher.* While believers are not under the moral law as a covenant, they are under Christ as their king. During David's time in the wilderness, some sought him out and, by the Spirit, told him: "Thine are we, David, and on thy side, thou son of Jesse". So Paul said of the Lord, by whom he was justified: "Whose I am and whom I serve". On His part, Christ says, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments". Since God is holy, His commandments, as an expression of His holiness, must be holy too. Legalism reflects on the completeness of Christ's work of redemption – implying that something is lacking, and we must make up the deficiency. Antinomianism reflects on the holiness and authority of the King we profess to serve and on the holiness of the laws of His kingdom. It is clean contrary to the purpose of God's calling: "This people have I formed for Myself; they shall show forth My praise"; "Be ye holy, for I am holy".

The believer's first husband – the law as a covenant of works – is dead, and he is united in a marriage bond to Christ. Primarily he receives a heart consonant with this covenant, according to God's Word: "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezek 36:26). It is under the influence of this new heart that the sinner, in response to the gospel enquiry, "Wilt thou go with this man?" says, "I will go". The new heart has God's holy law written on it, which is both the evidence and the affirmation that this sinner is now the Lord's.

In Old Testament times, a fruitful marriage was a sign of God's favour, and barrenness a sign of His disfavour. This spiritual union is never without fruit. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom 7:4). "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John 15:5). There is liberty in the new marriage bond. "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." The sinner was without strength under the law but now all things are possible to those that believe. No longer is the sinner attempting to pay his debt by good works to God but, because he is indebted to Christ for all, he lives by the faith of the Son of God, who loved him and gave Himself for him.

Turretin writes, "The law is necessary in many ways to Christians: (1) With respect to the covenant of grace (under which believers live), which contains not only the promise of grace and salvation on God's part, but also carries with it the stipulation of obedience on man's part, so that, just as God promises to be our God in love and protection, we in turn are His people by worshipping and obeying Him (Jer 31:33, 2 Cor 6:16,17).

"(2) With respect to God the Father, who receives us into His family and holds towards us the relation of Father and Lord, to honour and worship whom we are indispensably bound (Mal 1:6, 1 Pet 1:15,16).

"(3) With respect to Christ, who, as He sustains a twofold person towards us (of surety and priest, to satisfy for us by fulfilling the law; and of head and king, to work and fulfill the law in us by His Spirit), so He demands a twofold virtue from believers to be united and conformed to Him (faith, which embraces the promise of grace and the merit of the surety; and love, which imitates the holiness of the Head by obeying His commands). Hence His death is not only the price of our redemption, by which He made a most full satisfaction for us, but also the model for our imitation, which is set before us 'that we should follow in His steps' (1 Pet 2:21).

"(4) With respect to the Holy Spirit, who consecrates us for temples to Himself in which He may dwell (1 Cor 3:4); who has the name and office of Consoler and Sanctifier, that as, by the office of Paraclete, He consoles us against the curse of the law, so as the Spirit of sanctification, He confirms and sanctions the necessity of obedience to the law."⁴

In this new relationship, chastisement replaces the condemnation of a broken law. "If they break My statutes and keep not My commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod and their iniquity with stripes . . ." (Ps 89:30-35). The Lord withdraws Himself until the believer

⁴Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol 2, p 142.

says, “I will go and return to my first husband for then it was better with me than now” (Hos 2:7). As surely as the law is holy and the believer retains an unholy principle in his members, there will be need for correction.

As surely as the law had its glory, the gospel has a “glory that excelleth”. “The law came by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17). “But do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law” (Rom 3:31).

One of Thomas Watson’s rules for the right understanding and use of the law states: “Though we cannot, by our own strength, fulfil all these commandments . . . the Lord has provided encouragement for us. . . . Though we have not ability to obey any one command, yet God has, in the new covenant, promised to work that in us which He requires. . . . Though we cannot perfectly fulfil the moral law, yet God, for Christ’s sake, will mitigate the rigour of the law. . . . He will see the faith and pass by the failing. . . . Wherein our personal obedience falls short, God will be pleased to accept us in our Surety. . . . That very service which God’s law might condemn, His mercy is pleased to crown, by virtue of the blood of our Mediator.”⁵

Christ’s Temptation¹

1. The Identity of the Assault (2)

Hugh Martin

Now it is not merely the same sonship that is assailed in you; the circumstances in which it is assailed, the grounds of the assailant’s hope and the style of the assault are the same. Baptized, or engrafted, by faith into Christ, you are a son of God in His Eternal Son. And the whole evidence of your sonship is spiritual. It consists, subjectively, in the seal and witness of the Spirit and, objectively, in the Word and call of the Father. When baptized into Christ, you have the same evidence of your sonship as He had of His when baptized into you. On the one hand, “because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your heart, crying, Abba, Father” – testifying also with your spirit that you are a son of God (Gal 4:6, Rom 8:16). On the other hand, “behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed

⁵*The Ten Commandments*, pp 47-48.

¹This is a further slightly-edited extract, aimed particularly at believers, from Martin’s *The Abiding Presence*. Crucial to this discussion is Martin’s view of Christ’s baptism as “a sign and seal of His engrafting of the Church unto Himself and communicating to her the benefits of the new covenant and His engagement to be hers”. In the earlier part of this section, printed last month, the author has been preparing to demonstrate the correspondence between Satan’s assault on Christ’s Sonship and his assault on the believer’s sonship.

upon us that we should be called the sons of God" (1 Jn 3:1). Inwardly you have the Spirit's seal, and outwardly the Father's Word. These are the evidences of your sonship when united to Christ – as they were of His when united to you.

But clearly in your case, as in His, these evidences are spiritual; they do not belong to the realm of the material and temporal. And being spiritual, they are hidden – often hidden from yourself, being seen only by faith; and your faith is not always strong and clear. But whether hidden from you, through unbelief or not, they are always hidden from sense. You are entitled to maintain your sonship – indeed, to maintain it with all boldness, as a present and a sure prerogative in Christ: "Now are we the sons of God" (1 Jn 3:2). We "are" the sons of God. We are His sons, even "now".

But you must grant that "it doth not yet appear what" you shall be (1 Jn 3:2). A sure and present prerogative, it is far from being an obvious one. It is by no means apparent. The realm of the visible and earthly furnishes no proof of it whatever. Rather all that transpires with you there might seem to go against the truth of it.

Yes, if I am united to the Son and sealed by the Spirit and acknowledged by the Father, I must admit that my sonship is nevertheless not apparent; nor can I point to any tokens or badges of it discernible to the eye of sense. Though I claim to be a son of God, I must admit that, all things considered, it does not look like it to the carnal mind. I have no visible fairest robe upon me to point to as my Father's gift and compel the world's acknowledgment. I have no material garments for beauty and for comeliness, no crown of glory sitting on my brow, no palm of victory waving in my hand.

High is the rank and lofty the renown implied in being sons to the King of kings and Lord of hosts. When the world demands some proof of our claim, it might be expected that we should be able to point to some grand and faith-compelling demonstration.

But no. "It doth not yet appear." Frankly must we own that no perceptible priestly robes, whiter than the snow, adorn us – and no fair mitre, made after any pattern shown in the mount, to certify that we are priests. No throne, no sceptre, no regalia have we, in proof that Christ has loved us and made us kings. And no Mahanaim of the Lord, no visible angelic hosts, encompass us on either hand proclaiming: "Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour". Nor do the forests clap their hands at our approach, nor the mountains and the hills break forth into singing in welcome to the sons and heirs of the King of glory.

Rather, the whole creation groans because our sonship is hidden, waiting for the manifestation of it (Rom 8:19). There is a shameful cross lying heavy

on our shoulder rather than a graceful diadem shining on our head. No palm of victory is ours, but the trembling and the toil of battle. Diseases grapple with our frame, having no respect to our adoption. And manifold afflictions fall on us – even more than on other men (Ps 73) – and the sighings thereof clash rudely on the ear of sense with our high claim to be the family and seed-royal of heaven. And death at last confronts us and makes it far more manifest that we are victims of the loathsome grave than sons of God and immortality, as if we must say unto corruption, not to God, Thou art my father, and to the worm, Thou art my sister – rather than the Son of God call us his brethren. Verily our sonship is concealed. “Our life is hid.”

But “our life is hid with Christ in God”. Our sonship is concealed, with the Only-begotten Himself, in the bosom of the Father. Hence it is to Satan an object of assault, as Christ’s was. Or rather, it is assailed in us, exactly as in Him. We continue with Him in His temptations, and in all our afflictions He is afflicted. It must be so. For the sons of the adoption and the Eternal Son are mutually baptized into each other, sealed by the same Spirit of peace and attested in the one utterance of the Father. And the common sonship, alike circumstanced in Him and in them, sustains the one same reiterated or prolonged assault.

Mark the sameness of the assault as sustained by you. And mark the sameness of the enemy’s threefold stroke as he aims to pierce or cleave your shield of faith. For your sonship – your filial life of faith – as a sonship concealed, as a hidden life, presents itself in these three aspects: it is a life of sonship whose security is perfect, its seclusion profound, its manifestation or disclosure postponed. In each of these, its three great conditions, the enemy assails it.

(1) This sonship of yours – this filial life in the favour of God – the tempter would have you doubt its security. He hints that it is in the utmost peril. He points to your poverty, your infirmity, your humble situation, your heavy cross, your utter want of obvious evidence of any such prerogative, and the strong presumptive evidence against it. And, with subtle malice, tempting you outside the spiritual sphere, in which your life is safe and your evidence of sonship all-sufficient, he proposes carnal methods to secure its safety, as if it appertained to this present transitory world: “Command these stones that they be made bread”.

No, you reply, in the Eternal Son – or He in you. Its safety is not endangered. For it is a sonship to be realised in faith (John 1:12, Gal 3:26), a life that I must live by faith. And “faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” – “Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God”.

(2) But if it is so secure as this, you need not keep it so secluded. Bring it forth in its glory from its quiet, unpretending retreat. If its safety is so perfect and its evidence so sufficient in the supernatural realm that transcends space and time – why be in bondage to the laws of space and time? Surely you can make free with them, O son of the great King, as you profess to be. Cast yourself down from this height. Alight, as on the up-bearing wings of the angelic hosts, on Jerusalem's thronging streets, or in the crowded court of worshippers below. And compel from them, by such a token, their credence of your sonship to God.

No; you reply, in the Eternal Son – or He in you. The unbroken seclusion of my filial life shall not thus be invaded. The Lord shall hide me in the secret of His presence. He shall cover me with His feathers, and under His wings will I trust. I will not tempt the Lord my God.

(3) But see how long your inheritance is delayed, how drearily the manifestation of your sonship is postponed. Why should you scruple to anticipate, to force out, a demonstration – to hasten the revelation of your glory? Assume the dominion promised you as a son, as the heir of all things. Cut short the weary painful route, in which alone – by patience and obedience and suffering and shame and death – does the crown seem likely to be reached or the promised glory unveiled. Accept at my hand, by a trifling concession, the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. Receive your satisfying portion from me. For hope deferred makes your heart sick.

No, you reply, in the Eternal Son – or He in you. My hope makes not ashamed; my hope is an anchor of my soul sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil, where the glory is. And if I hope for that I see not, then do I with patience wait for it. In God's own time the "manifestation" of His sons and their glory shall come; and the whole creation, now groaning in sympathy with their affliction during the concealment of their sonship, "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God" (Rom 8:21). My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation, is from Him. How long, O enemy, wilt thou imagine mischief against me. Thou only consultest to cast me down from mine excellency; thou delightest in lies (Ps 62). "Get thee behind me, Satan."

Thus in union with Christ – Christ present with you in this portion of the Gospel history, in this entrenched camp in the wilderness – you are assaulted, firstly, as to the security of your sonship. But it is safe. And you abide in peace, not faithless but believing, living by your Father's word (that word which He has already said to the Eternal Son in you, and to you in Him): "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased".

The attempt is made, secondly, to invade the seclusion of your sonship,

and you are tempted to bring it out in collision with the conditions under which you are placed in this world. But you maintain its secrecy notwithstanding. You cultivate an unseen fellowship with God. You abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

You are tempted, thirdly, to anticipate the manifestation of your sonship. But you oppose the suggestion with your patience. You have continued with the Son in His temptations, and He has appointed unto you, in communion with Himself, the kingdom which the Father hath appointed unto Him. You can therefore refuse to be indebted to the enemy for anything whatever. You will endure no proposed compromise with him. You defy him. And you discard him. "Get thee behind me, Satan."

In every point of view then, is not the assault on you exactly a prolonging of the assault on Christ? And is it not prolonged just because Christ is with you in this entrenched camp in the wilderness? It is, in fact, the presence of the King that draws down upon you His adversary's wrath – "As it is written, *for Thy sake* we are killed all the day long". Nevertheless, "in all these things we are more than conquerors" also "*through Him that loved us*" (Rom 8:36,37).

Peter's Fall¹

J C Ryle

We should mark the amazing degree of weakness that may be found in a real Christian. We see this exemplified, in a most striking manner, in the conduct of the Apostle Peter. We see that famous disciple forsaking his Master and acting like a coward – running away when he ought to have stood by His side, ashamed to own Him when he ought to have confessed Him, and finally denying three times that he knew Him. And this takes place immediately after receiving the Lord's Supper – after hearing the most touching address and prayer that mortal ear ever heard, after the plainest possible warnings, under the pressure of no very serious temptation. Lord, we may well say, "what is man that Thou art mindful of him?" "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall (Ps 8:4, 1 Cor 10:12).

This fall of Peter is doubtless intended to be a lesson to the whole Church of Christ. It is recorded for our learning, that we may be kept from like sorrowful overthrow. It is a beacon mercifully set up in Scripture to prevent others making shipwreck. It shows us the danger of pride and self-confidence. If Peter had not been so sure that, though all denied Christ, he never would, he would probably never have fallen. It shows us the danger of laziness. If

¹Comments on John 18:12-27 reprinted from Ryle's *Expository Thoughts on John*, vol 3.

Peter had watched and prayed, when our Lord advised him to do so, he would have found grace to help him in the time of need. It shows us, not least, the painful influence of the fear of man. Few are aware, perhaps, how much more they fear the face of man whom they can see, than the eye of God whom they cannot see. These things are written for our admonition. Let us remember Peter and be wise.

After all, let us leave the passage with the comforting reflection that we have a merciful and pitiful High Priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and will not break the bruised reed. Peter no doubt fell shamefully, and only rose again after heartfelt repentance and bitter tears. But he did rise again. He was not left to reap the consequence of his sin, and cast off for evermore. The same pitiful hand that saved him from drowning, when his faith failed him on the waters, was once more stretched out to raise him when he fell in the High Priest's hall. Can we doubt that he rose a wiser and better man? If Peter's fall has made Christians see more clearly their own great weakness and Christ's great compassion, then Peter's fall has not been recorded in vain.

John Maclean, Greenock¹

Rev Neil Cameron

John Maclean was born in the parish of Duirinish, Skye. He lived carelessly in the ways of the godless world till he was close upon 40 years of age. The Lord visited him then with a sore rod: three of his children were removed by death within the space of two months. This made a deep and lasting impression on his mind. He took to the constant reading of the Word of God and to private prayer. So diligent was he in searching the Scriptures that his friends and wife were afraid that he would impair his eyesight. The seriousness which took hold of his mind then never left him. Being a very reticent man, we could gather nothing of the experiences he had passed through at that time. But no one who heard his prayers, or his speaking to the question, could come away without realising that he knew much of the awful corruption of human nature, and of the streams that flow from it in thoughts, words and actions. Indeed, we felt often refreshed by his exercises, especially in prayer.

In 1893 he, along with a considerable number of the Free Church people of Greenock, hailed the separation from the rationalistic party in that Church with great delight. That separation was to many of the godly in Scotland an

¹Reprinted from the *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 16. Two small paragraphs, more appropriate to the time of original publication, have been omitted.

answer to their prayers for many years, both in private and in public. It was very painful for such as feared God to be connected with a Church which promoted to the highest positions men whose work was to destroy, so far as they could, the integrity of the Bible and the *Confession of Faith*. He continued to the last a firm upholder of the Free Presbyterian Church, not only by his influence but also by giving to support the cause, so far as his means could afford it. He was several times asked to become an elder in the Free Church before 1893, but he always refused to take office in it. There was an election of elders in 1894, and he accepted office unhesitatingly. This office he adorned till he passed away.

He worked as a surfaceman on the railway. Many years ago he was asked to go out with his squad of men on the Sabbath day, but he refused, telling his master that he did not consider it either a work of necessity or mercy, and consequently could not incur the guilt of breaking the Fourth Commandment. He was told then that his services would be no longer required, but that would not make him sin against God and his conscience. But instead of being paid off, as he fully expected, he was sent for again, asked to go to his work, and was never asked again to work on the Lord's day. Not only that, but his pay was continued while he was able to go out, even although he could not work. The hand of the Lord should be acknowledged in this. No man ever lost by being faithful to God and his conscience; and further, the Lord makes the consciences of other men, however careless they may be, to admire integrity towards God and men. We have met with a few such noble examples in our day, always with good results in the long run.

About four years ago he had a severe attack of influenza. He never got strong again. His memory became very deficient about all worldly matters, but when he engaged in prayer no one could know that there was any such weakness. He could quote Scripture as correctly as ever, and all his petitions were correctly expressed and in good order.

His love to the Lord's people was one of his strongest features as a Christian. It was very evident to all that they were his people and that he delighted much in their company. He made extraordinary efforts to be present at the worship of God in public, showing thereby how much his heart was in the house of God. His presence is sadly missed by all in that congregation. But being a man of prayer, he will be greatly missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. The Free Presbyterian Church is much poorer by his demise, and the world at large will not know till the last day their indebtedness to such godly persons. We feel much that we have lost a true friend in him, in whom we could trust with all confidence.

He died at the age of 75 years, on 13 February 1911, and was buried in

the Greenock Cemetery, where a large number of the Lord's people await the blast of the last trumpet.

“So man lieth down, and riseth not; till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.”

Our Gospel Work in Africa and Israel

Rev N M Ross

Zimbabwe: The economic situation in Zimbabwe remains extremely serious. However, our mission work in Ingwenya, Mbumba, Zenka, Bulawayo, New Canaan and other places in Zimbabwe continues under the gracious provision and protection of the Most High.

Mr Hugh Mackenzie, Mission Co-ordinator, returned from Zimbabwe at the beginning of April. He reports that huge increases in utility bills are expected, following the collapse of the Zimbabwean dollar and the legalising of the use of foreign currency. However, a good harvest is anticipated throughout the country. If the Mission funds set aside for famine relief will not be required this year, God willing, then the savings thus made will offset some of the increased costs.

Miss C M Macaulay returned to Zimbabwe at the end of April for some months to continue translation work. Miss Catriona Fraser, who is hoping to graduate as a teacher this year, has agreed to help at the school at Ingwenya for six weeks from the beginning of June. Similarly Miss Jacqueline Freeke and Miss Naomi Rowland, who hope to graduate this year (Jacqueline in mathematics and Naomi in nursing), are to go out in September, DV, to work at Ingwenya for a year. Three people were interviewed for the post of Administration Officer at Thembeiso Children's Home, Bulawayo. The successful applicant was Mr Clifford Moyo, who used to be a finance officer in our administration office in Bulawayo.

At Ingwenya, the visiting Dutch workgroup of six enthusiastic young people have skillfully renovated the school's kitchen premises, painted a Scripture text on a wall in each of the classrooms, installed a new electricity main switchboard, professionally reorganised and restocked the mission stores, and trained local men in store-keeping and tiling.

Many of our staff there, in the midst of their constant work in teaching young Zimbabweans, caring for the sick, and maintaining mission facilities, prayerfully desire that their efforts would be a real support to the all-important work of preaching the gospel by our ministers there. Especially they wish that precious souls would be brought into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Kenya: The visit of the Church deputies from the Foreign Mission Committee, Rev Neil Ross and Mr R A Campbell, to the Mission at Sengera took place in February and March. They were encouraged to see that the work of preaching and teaching the truth and operating the Health Centre was continuing steadily. However, they were concerned about the heavy burden that has to be borne by Rev Keith Watkins, Mission Superintendent, who is in indifferent health. Although Mr Ploeg is the Mission Treasurer, there is still a pressing need for a Mission Administrator to be appointed.

The Committee not only agreed that it is most desirable that Mr Watkins have a ministerial colleague, but also decided that an administrator for the Mission and a matron for Omorembe Clinic be sought urgently. Meantime, Mr Ben Fiddes, an accountancy student, who worked for a brief spell at the Mission last year, is to return for three months this summer to perform administrative tasks.

As the project for the proposed new church building and tutorial rooms is at a standstill, the Committee feel that the best way forward, after the architect's plans are prepared and approved, is to have a European "hands-on" builder go out to supervise the whole project.

There is a pressing need for helpers in Sengera. It is a great blessing to have those who are "helping together by prayer" (2 Cor 1:11), but it is also essential to have those who would help in other practical ways as well, as did Priscilla and Aquilla, who were "helpers in Christ Jesus" (Rom 16:3).

Israel: Rev John Goldby is now working in Jaffa and is involved with others in the translation of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* into Hebrew and the revision of the Hebrew New Testament. As the Trinitarian Bible Society is involved in the revision work, the Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee has given it a donation of £1000. May the day speedily come when, through the reading of the New Testament and the Westminster divines' wonderful summary of the faith, many Jews will say, "We have found the Messiah."

[Christ] obeyed the precept and endured the penalty of the law in human nature, but still His obedience was that of a divine person. Though all that he did and suffered was directly and formally the effect of His will as man, yet His whole service originated in His will as God. It was according to His divine will that, in the eternal covenant, He engaged to do the will of God in man's redemption, and it was according to it that, in the fulness of time He came into our world and took upon Him the form of a servant. Besides, every act of His will as man, in accomplishing the work given Him to do, was accompanied with a corresponding exercise of His will as God, and this diffused infinite value and dignity through the whole of His obedience. The righteousness which He wrought out in human nature is the righteousness of God, not only as devised by God, but as fulfilled by a person who is God, and therefore of infinite value for our justification.

George Stevenson

Book Reviews

More Pocket Puritans

Four more titles have been added to this new series published by the Banner of Truth Trust. These little paperbacks cost £3.25 each and are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom. They all state that “minor editorial adjustments have been made to the original text: for example, the modernising of some words and the supply of Scripture references”.

Repent and Believe, by Thomas Brooks, 94 pages.

This very worthwhile book contains two extracts from *Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices* (itself available in paperback) and a brief life of the author by S M Houghton. The first extract provides effective answers to the following danger: “Satan persuades the soul that the work of repentance is an easy work, and that therefore the soul need not worry too much about the matter of sin”. Among the many discerning points that Brooks makes are these: “He that turns not from every sin, turns not aright from any one sin”; “Repentance is not only a turning from all sin, but also a turning to all good; to a love of all good, to a prizing of all good, and to a following after all good”.

The second extract deals with “Satan’s devices to stop sinners believing on Jesus Christ”. The author’s main aim is to point sinners to the Saviour, for “till men have faith in Christ, their best services are but glorious sins”.

United We Stand, by Thomas Brooks, 60 pages.

This little book provides 12 remedies against another of “Satan’s devices” against the saints: “By working them first to be strange, and then to be bitter and jealous, and then to ‘bite and devour one another’.” Brooks provides helpful remedies, counselling believers “to dwell upon those commands of God that do require you to love one another”, and “to make more care and conscience of keeping up your peace with God”. One further quotation: “Humility will make a man bless him that curses him and pray for those that persecute him. A humble heart is a habitation for God, a scholar for Christ, a companion of angels, a preserver of grace and a fitter for glory.”

At the same time, readers should bear in mind another vital strand of truth exemplified by Brooks’ warnings against false teachers which appear slightly later in his *Precious Remedies*. False teaching and unscriptural practice will, inevitably, more or less interfere with the union which Brooks is justifiably so anxious to promote.

Binge Drinking, by John Flavel, 65 pages.

The greater part of this book is a solemn warning against the sin of drunkenness, taken from Flavel’s “A Caution to Seamen”. Among the author’s

arguments are: “It degrades a man from the honour of his creation”, and, It has “a great retinue and attendance of others sins waiting on it”. The book also contains a piece by C H Spurgeon satirising drunkenness – from his *John Ploughman’s Pictures*.

Sinful Speech, by John Flavel, 91 pages.

This is a warning against “the evil of the tongue”. One section, on “idle words” and swearing, is taken from “A Caution to Seamen”. Among the helps Flavel suggests are: to think before you speak, and to commit “your tongue to God every day and beg Him to guide and keep it”. In the second section, from “The Reasonableness of Personal Reformation”, Flavel writes against the sins of swearing and blaspheming. But he emphasises that it “is not only a lawful, but a religious, act” to swear “by the name of God in a righteous cause, when called thereto by due authority”. Always faithful to the souls of his readers, Flavel warns solemnly: “If it be your custom to blaspheme, it is God’s custom to damn blasphemers”.

If, by God’s grace, the readers of this book and the previous one are preserved from these sins, these little volumes may prove a source of powerful, scriptural arguments in speaking to those who are guilty of them.

Notes and Comments

Rebuilding Babel

The confounding of language and the scattering abroad of the inhabitants of the earth was the Lord’s response to the attempts made by a sinful human race to consolidate their position independently of God by building a central city and a tower whose top would reach to heaven (Gen 11:1-9). The Day of Pentecost, when every man heard the apostles speak in his own language (Acts 2:6), demonstrates the fact that it is by the gospel that human beings, who may continue to be separated by race and language, are brought together in one, in their allegiance to God and dependence on His grace. The current trend towards the harmonisation of “faiths” is part of a modern attempt to secure coexistence in a way that is indifferent to the exclusive claims of God for the allegiance and trust of His rational creatures. Like the earlier attempt to build Babel it is doomed to failure, as God will put to confusion every scheme based on theoretical or practical denial of the one living and true God.

Our previous Prime Minister has established his “Tony Blair Faith Foundation”, which “aims to promote understanding about the world religions and show how faith is a powerful force for good in the modern world”. In

announcing that his foundation was co-operating with Yale University to establish a “Faith and Globalisation seminar”, Mr Blair affirmed that “these are times of tumultuous change. The twentieth-century order is history; and the forces of globalisation are pushing all of the economies of the world – and all of the citizens of the world, with their great diversity of religious faiths – more closely together. Global interdependence is a reality. And faith is inextricably linked to that interdependence.” For Mr Blair, “faith” embraces initially Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism, but does not exclude other religions. Our objection is not to co-operation among human beings in endeavours such as the defeat of malaria, one of the Faith Foundation’s aims. Our objection is to the false premise that these religions have enough in common, despite their distinctives, so that they can work together as religions, with mutual respect.

Prince Charles, the head-in-waiting of the Church of England, has recently met with the Pope at the Vatican, his wife being required to wear a black dress with matching veil. During his visit to the Middle East, the Pope has proclaimed his respect for Islam and his desire to build bridges. Many of our political leaders wish to destroy the nation’s legal and exclusive commitment to Protestantism, and eventually to Christianity, so that all religions will be equal in the eyes of the state. Sad to say, there are even professed Evangelicals who profess the uniqueness of Christ in a pluralistic world but believe that within false religions, among people who are quite ignorant of the gospel of Christ, there are those who seek after God and His mercy and are saved.

That all individuals are equal before the law is an undeniable principle, for the implementation of which we should be ready to contend. That we should love our neighbour as ourselves, whatever kind of person he may be, is a fundamental requirement of God’s law. But that all religions should be equal before the law is contrary to the present legal position in the United Kingdom. It is also completely inconsistent with the Bible’s insistence upon the uniqueness of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to regard all religions as equally valid. Referring to the founders of his nation, Justice Joseph Story, in his *Commentaries on the Constitution of the United States* (1833), wrote: “An attempt to level all religions, and to make it a matter of state policy to hold all in utter indifference, would have created universal disapprobation, if not universal indignation”. But this is now the principle effectively operating in our own nation, which – avoiding Erastianism on the one hand and Voluntaryism on the other – has embodied in its legislation the principle that the state ought exclusively to recognise the unique claims of Christianity as the religion revealed in the Holy Bible.

National and international peace and harmony will not be secured by denying the essential incompatibility of the Christian faith with all other religions. We are not advocating what is usually described as theocratic government here and now, nor denying legitimate toleration, when we suggest that the harmony professedly sought among men will only be found in the terms set out in Revelation 11:15, when “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ”. Instead of endeavouring to rebuild the tower of Babel, the Church must adhere to the commission of her ascending Lord: “All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world” (Matt 28:18-20). *HMC*

The Luis Palau Campaign in Inverness

Luis Palau was born in Argentina in 1934 and has lived in Oregon, USA, since 1960. He is a mass-evangelist in the mould of Billy Graham. He first heard Graham in 1950 and he worked for him for a while as a Spanish translator and assistant evangelist. In 1970, Graham gave him the money to start his own ministry. He has largely modelled himself on Graham but in the last ten years he has added attractions such as music and sport to his meetings in order to draw people in. He claims to have proclaimed the gospel to over a billion people and to have seen nearly a million “registered decisions for Jesus Christ”.

One of Luis Palau’s grandfathers was Scottish and he expresses a “tremendous love” for Scotland. He conducted a previous evangelistic campaign in Scotland in 1979-81, with meetings in Glasgow, Aberdeen, Wick and many other places. This month he is due to hold a campaign centred on Inverness. It is billed as the “largest and most significant outreach to the people of the Highlands of Scotland since the Lewis Revival sixty years ago”. The Chairman of the campaign is Lord Mackay of Clashfern, and 80 churches round Inverness, including the Free Church and the APCs, are supporting it.

There are numerous reasons why we find this campaign objectionable. One is that Palau’s doctrine is thoroughly Arminian. In particular he rejects the sovereignty of God in the work of regeneration. In the literature from his previous Scottish campaign he says that “Jesus Christ waits outside the door of your life. He will not force his way in. He waits to be asked in. The handle is on the inside; only you can open the door.” Such assertions are both false and staggering. What about Saul of Tarsus? Did not the Saviour

“force” his way into Saul’s life when He appeared to him on the road to Damascus? Saul was most unwilling before Christ appeared to him, but he was made willing by Christ “in the day of His power” (Ps 110:3). Saul was born again, not because he had made a “decision for Christ”, but because of the sovereign work of God, shining in his heart “to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Cor 4:6).

Scripture is consistent and insistent in its teaching on this point. Faith is “not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Eph 2:8). It is “the faith of the operation (working) of God” (Col 2:12). The children of God are born, “not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God” (Jn 1:13). The denial of God’s sovereign work in regeneration is dishonouring to God, and especially to the Holy Spirit, who performs that work. It is also dangerously misleading, deluding men into thinking that the power to turn to God lies with them, to be exercised whenever they please, when in fact they have no such power. They are kept from realising just how desperate their state is.

This dangerous error leads on to another one which is equally dangerous: an utterly superficial view of conversion. Conversion, according to Palau, consists basically in a decision – “deciding for Christ”. The present writer has never heard Luis Palau in the flesh but he heard Billy Graham in Bristol in 1987. The main impression created at that meeting was that one had a moral duty to “go forward to the front”, and immense moral pressure was put on people to do so. To remain in one’s seat was to be disobedient. But suppose that a person did “go forward”. There he would meet a steward, to whom he might acknowledge that he felt he was wrong in not being a Christian, and to whom he would admit that, in some ways, he would like to become a Christian. The steward would then try to prevail on him to recite a “prayer of commitment” and, if successful, would register another “decision for Christ”.

But what would this have signified in spiritual terms? Absolutely nothing – just that an ignorant, uninstructed person, perhaps with some religious background, had been persuaded to leave his seat, to express an interest in religion, and to make an insincere and ill-considered commitment to the Saviour. In reality the process was religious deception, first in inventing the unscriptural “duty” of “coming forward”; then in manipulating those who did so to say the prayer; then in persuading them that they must, therefore, have been converted; and lastly in trying to coax them, now they were “Christians”, into living some sort of better and more religious life. Such spurious “conversions” are the direct fruit of the doctrinal error on regeneration. And such “converts” either fall away, and are left in a far worse

spiritual state than they were before, or else they continue in the Church as worldly, unregenerate “Christians” who are trying to drag the Church down to their own level.

Another objectionable feature of this campaign is the gimmicks that are used to attract people to the meetings. The advertising speaks of “musicians, athletes and children’s entertainers”, of “skateboard and bicycle stunt teams”, of “top musicians” sharing their faith, and of “extreme sports athletes” sharing their testimonies. Most or all of these people, if they were living truly scriptural lives, would put away these vain and self-glorifying activities. There were musicians, athletes and entertainers in New Testament times but the Church made no use of them in her evangelism. Christ might have gathered a crowd by casting himself “down from the pinnacle of the temple” but that was not the way that God had appointed; it was not the way of the cross. The kingdom of God is advanced by the plain, simple preaching of Christ crucified, and by the humble, gracious lives of believers; not by God’s professing people conforming to the world and showing off in front of it.

Other points might be made, but enough has been said to indicate why we do not support or welcome this campaign. We long for the revival of true religion in Scotland and for the conversion of multitudes of sinners. But God is sovereign in conversion, and our great concern in evangelism should be to employ biblical methods, leaving the outcome in His hands, while praying fervently and unceasingly that He would bless the means of His own appointing. The tendency of unscriptural methods is to weaken the kingdom of God. Some people may indeed be converted through such truth as there is in a defective gospel, but how many others will be deceived and hardened through the errors, and confirmed in their unholiness by the foolish public behaviour of professing Christians? The people of God are, above all, to be holy. “Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance: but as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation” (1 Pet 1:13-15). *DWBS*

Church Information

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.

Bracadale: **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev W A Weale; tel:01470 562243.

Breasclete: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm.

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 Achary 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. Rev Hugh M Cartwright MA, Napier House, 8 Colinton Road, Edinburgh, EH10 5DS; tel: 0131 447 1920.

Farr, by Daviot: Sabbath 12 noon and 6 pm. Prayer meetings: Thursday 7.30 pm in **Farr, Stratherrick** or **Tomatin** as intimated. 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.

Glendale: Sabbath 12 noon (fortnightly). **Vatten:** Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Waternish:** As intimated.

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, Northton, 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, 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. Manse tel: 01738 442992. Contact Mr J N MacKinnon; tel: 01786 451386.

Portree: Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel:01470 562243.

Raasay: Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7. Manse tel: 01478 660216.

Shieldaig: Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744207. 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 9UX; tel: 01470 562243.

Stornoway: Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Sandwick:** Last Tuesday of month 7.15 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.

England

Barnoldswick: Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Haslington and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Contact Mr R Middleton, 4 Rhodes Close, Haslington, Crewe, Cheshire, CW1 5ZF. Tel: 01270 255024. Manse tel: 01282 851782.

Broadstairs: Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peters Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.

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

Northern Ireland

Larne: Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Manse, 23 Upper Cairncastle Road, Larne BT40 2EF. Tel: 02828 274865. Contact: 02828 273294.

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. Rev L T Smith. Tel: 409 925 1315; e-mail: lyletsmith@gmail.com.

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev E A Rayner BA, 23 Nairn Terrace, Junction Hill 2460 (mail to: PO Box 1171 Grafton, 2460). Tel: 02 6644 6044.

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Information contact: Mr C MacKenzie, P O Box 5, Riverstone, NSW 2765. Tel: 02 4730 2797. E-mail: cal.01@optusnet.com.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. For further information contact Mr C van Kralingen, 3 Earls Court, Manurewa. Tel: 09 266 7618.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday and Saturday 7.30 pm. Rev J A T van Dorp, 14 Thomson Street, Gisborne. Tel: 06 868 5809.

Tauranga: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm. For information contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen, Tel: 075443677.

Wellington: 4 Rewa Terrace, Tawa. Sabbath 11 am, 4 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. For further information contact Mr N Hicklin, 117 Woodman Drive, Tawa, Wellington. Tel: 04 232 7308.

Israel

Jaffa:. Rev J L Goldby, P O Box 27082, Jaffa, Tel Aviv. Tel: 00972 36597871. For services please contact Mr Goldby.

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30pm; Wednesday: 7.45pm. Room: "Tanglin I/II" (Level 2), 60 Stevens Road, Singapore 257854. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822. Tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

Ukraine

Odessa: Contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levitskiyy; tel: 00380 482326685; e-mail: dmlév@eurocom.od.ua.

Zimbabwe

Bulawayo: Lobengula Township, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo. Rev S Khumalo, F P Manse, Stand No 56004, Mazwi Road, Lobengula, PO Magwegwe, Bulawayo. Tel: 00263 9407131.

Ingwenya: Church and Secondary School. Rev A B MacLean. Postal Address: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo. John Tallach School tel: 00263 85343.

Mbumba: Church and Hospital: Postal Address: Mbumba Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo. Hospital tel: 00263 898291.

New Canaan: Church: Rev Z Mazvabo. Postal Address: Private Bag 615, Zvishavane. Tel 00263 512196.

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

Kenya

Sengera: Rev K M Watkins, PO Box 3403, Kisii; e-mail: watkinskenya@access350.co.ke. Tel: 00254 733 731002.

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