

Report on Declension Within the Bounds of the Outer Isles Presbytery

The Outer Isles Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met at Stornoway on Tuesday, 5th March 2013, considered a report on the spiritual declension evident in these islands and of various evangelistic methods adopted in Presbyterian Churches. The Presbytery wishes to express its strong disapproval of the increasing prevalence of unscriptural, Arminian methods of evangelism directed towards young people, such as used by the *Challenger Bus* active on Lewis in recent years. Amongst other things, the use of drama, unscriptural worship and the idolatrous portrayal of the Cross in presentations used by the *Challenger Bus*, in addition to the false doctrines of Arminianism in DVD shows, are highly dangerous to the souls of the young. The Presbytery exhorts and warns parents of younger children and teenagers to be particularly vigilant in finding out beforehand what material will be used when the *Challenger Bus* visits local schools and strongly advises that young people be discouraged from attending this Bus in the evening sessions over the summer months.

The Presbytery, while fully desiring to encourage Biblical evangelism among young people and all others, takes the view that such flawed teachings and methods dishonour the Holy Spirit, in having a tendency to counterfeit His blessed work in regeneration, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh, but that which is born of the Spirit is spirit' (John 3:6). Such unbiblical practices often produce the bitter fruit of false converts to a false gospel, many of whom renounce their former profession and apostatise from Christianity to their eternal ruin.

Furthermore, the Presbytery desires to voice its concern at the increasingly lax manner in which the privilege of communicant membership is extended in Presbyterian churches within these islands. The Presbytery notes with dismay how Biblical separation from many worldly practices has come to be so little enforced by Kirk Sessions, thus weakening the testimony of the Church before the world 'that lieth in wickedness'. In particular, the Presbytery take the view that the use of public transport on the Sabbath Day by professing Christians ought to be a matter for Church discipline, as should their participation in the activities of dance-halls and public houses and attending professional sporting events.

The Presbytery takes this opportunity to warn the people of these islands that worldly living clothed in a profession of faith in Christ is as sure a route to everlasting destruction as open ungodliness if persisted in. 'Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him' (1 John 2:15).

Finally, the Presbytery, painfully conscious of the lowness of vital religion within our own congregations, seeks in a spirit of brotherly charity and humility to exhort all sincere believers in Jesus Christ throughout these islands to steadfast adherence to the Gospel of His grace and to the old paths of Biblical holiness in heart and life.