

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The Foundation for Faith

We must all die; we must pass into the eternal world, into heaven or into hell. One question which may exercise our minds is this: Is my faith strong enough to meet with death?

Yet the fundamental question is: Do I have faith? More specifically, Do I have true, *saving* faith? No doubt everyone has faith of one kind or another; there is something operating in most minds which prevents them from plunging down into deep despair. Often it is just the assumption that life will go on into the indefinite future, in much the same way as at present – that everything will go on in a way that will, more or less, prove reasonably satisfactory. But such a faith has no foundation; people are closing their eyes to the fact that life will *not* go on indefinitely. The Most High has made an appointment for us, one which cannot be broken. It is an appointment with death. How necessary that we should be ready! It is significant how solemnly Jesus spoke about cities which would reject the message of His disciples: “Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgement, than for that city” (Mt 10:15).

If we consider also the uncertainty of time, we should surely realise that we ought to be ready *now*, however long it may please God to spare us yet in this world. Besides, it is surely highly inappropriate – indeed irreverent – to wish to go on in a course of sin and unbelief for as much of our lives as possible, and then to slip into heaven just moments after conversion. God directs us to live to His glory, which means that we are to live holy lives, seeking to flee from sin, *throughout* our lives. The thought that one can turn to God at some future date, rather than now, involves a form of faith which has no foundation – certainly a foundation which is altogether insecure. And faith most surely does need a secure foundation.

Others may exercise what is often described as historical faith, the belief that the Bible is true – that, in particular, the incidents recorded there are part of actual history. The question is not merely: Do these people believe that Jesus is an actual historical figure? It is this: Do they believe in Him as the Saviour of lost sinners? Yes, no doubt they do believe in His existence and

that He did all that is told about Him in, for instance, the Gospels. But do they trust in Him as the One who died for sinners and is now “exalted . . . a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance . . . and forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31)? Are they willing to receive Christ, and salvation through Him, as a free gift? It is one thing to believe that the various statements made in Scripture are true; it is another matter altogether to *trust* in the One who is there revealed as the Saviour of sinners. Critically, those who have nothing more than historical faith do not treat Christ as a sure foundation for their guilty souls to rest on. And Christ most certainly is a sure foundation for the guiltiest of sinners.

What then is saving faith? *The Shorter Catechism* sums up the teaching of Scripture with characteristic conciseness: “Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation, as He is offered to us in the gospel” (Ans 86). Saving faith not only receives Scripture testimony about Jesus Christ as true, but receives Christ Himself as He is made known in that testimony. Faith receives Christ as the One whom God the Father provided as the Saviour of sinners, the One who satisfied divine justice in their place – when the righteous One took the place of the guilty. Thomas Boston speaks of faith receiving Christ (1) “as a Prophet to be our Teacher, Guide and Leader, renouncing our own wisdom”; (2) “as a Priest, renouncing all merit and confidence in oneself, [one’s] duties and sufferings, and betaking oneself to Christ, His obedience and death”; (3) “as a King, renouncing all strange lords and receiving Him for absolute Governor in the soul and over the whole man, yielding to bear the yoke of His commands and the yoke of His cross”.

Boston follows the same scheme in speaking of resting, or trusting: “The soul has a burden of weakness and ignorance and therefore rests on [Christ] as a Prophet; a burden of guilt, but rests on Him as a Priest, laying the weight on His blood; a burden of strong lusts and temptations, but rests on Him as a King. Boston also states that “the spiritual marriage-tie betwixt Christ and the soul is made” by faith. “Christ gives His consent in the gospel offer, and the sinner gives his by faith closing with the offer.”¹ Boston is clear that Christ is the foundation on which faith rests, for such is the testimony of Scripture: “Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste” (Is 28:16), a verse that is quoted in two places in the New Testament, including 1 Peter 2:6. This verse is part of Peter’s teaching that the “spiritual house” – that is, the Church – is built on this sure foundation, Jesus Christ.

¹*Works*, vol 2, pp 403-4.

But who truly rest on this foundation? Jesus Himself answers, “Whosoever heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock” (Mt 7:24,25). It is to a wise man who built his house on a solid foundation that Jesus compares those who believingly obey what He has said. The wise man, Jesus emphasises, not only listens to the truths of Scripture, but also obeys its commands.

The Saviour contrasts this wise man with a foolish man who built his house on sand. So, however solid the foolish man’s house seemed, it could not withstand a deluge of rain accompanied by strong winds, resulting in severe flooding. The force of strongly-flowing water must inevitably undermine the walls of a house without a sound foundation – a picture of the one who hears what Christ says but does not obey. In particular he does not obey the call of the gospel; there is no saving faith. So when strong winds of temptation blow, or floods of troubles flow against such people with tremendous force, they are not able to stand; their faith is undermined and they fall into sin or unbelief.

How clear it should be that we need to rest on a sure foundation! And there is only one safe foundation, “for other foundation can no man lay”, Paul stresses, “than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:11). Christ is the only foundation on which a sinner can rest and be safe, in view of our solemn passing, through death, into the eternal world, or in view of the varied temptations and difficulties we experience in this world. Day by day we must trust in Christ if we are not to be overwhelmed by the temptations and difficulties that confront us all, in one degree or another.

At the beginning of the Christian life, the sinner is enabled to yield obedience to the command, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). And a further command follows believers until they reach the gateway to heaven: “Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength” (Is 26:4). Here is strength (or, a rock) which will support everyone who trusts in the Lord. So those who, by God’s grace, go on obeying the call to trust in Him will be safe even amid the fiercest of temptations and the most disconcerting of troubles. What is more, they will be brought at last into the perfect safety of heaven, where they will eternally enjoy the presence of the One of whom they will then be able to say without the least degree of doubt: “Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Gal 2:20). Then, of course, it will not be a question of strong faith or weak faith – though believers are to seek earnestly to have their faith strengthened – for then faith will have passed into the wonder of perfect sight.

Christ's Agony in the Garden (1)¹

A Sermon by Alexander Grierson

Luke 22:44. *And being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

The original institution of the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was very close in time to the sufferings of Christ which it was intended to foreshadow. In an upper room at Jerusalem, and around the table of communion, Jesus had distributed to His disciples bread and wine as emblems of His body to be broken and His blood to be shed for the remission of sins. There He had delivered to them that most tender address, in chapters 14-16 of John's Gospel, with eyes uplifted to heaven; there He had presented that most sublime and affecting prayer recorded in chapter 17 of the same Gospel and He had joined them in singing a hymn.

But now, Jerusalem is exchanged for the solitude of Gethsemane, the upper room for a garden, and the sacramental cup for that cup of agony which was filled from "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God". Then Jesus "went forth with His disciples over the brook Kedron" (Jn 18:1). The brook Kedron was a shallow, mountain stream which flowed on the east of Jerusalem between the city and the Mount of Olives. Its name, which signifies *dark*, was probably derived from the gloom of the shady hollow through which it flowed in its course towards the Dead Sea.

After crossing this brook, Jesus and His disciples came to a place called Gethsemane, "where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples". Gethsemane was a solitary, sequestered spot at the foot of the Mount of Olives; it was shut in by the mountain on the one side, and on the other was the brook Kedron, which separated it from Jerusalem.

The scene has been thus described by a modern traveller who recently visited the spot: "We descend the steep broken path . . . into the valley of the Kedron, and crossing its dry bed by a small arch, reach a group of singular and memorable objects. First, on our right, is a stony plot of ground surrounded by a low wall, and enclosing eight olive trees of very great antiquity, gnarled and time-worn, where was the Garden of Gethsemane. There is something very impressive in the spot, shady and silent as it is, shut in by the high dead wall of the temple on one side, and the woody heights of Olivet on the other. The hum of the insect, a distant cry or occasional footfall seems to deepen its profound quietude, which is almost like the loneliness and stillness of the desert. Through an opening in the trees is seen an angle of the wall

¹Taken, with editing, from a posthumous volume of the preacher's *Sermons*. Grierson (1817-1880) was Free Church minister of Irongray, just west of Dumfries.

hanging above the sepulchral valley of Jehoshaphat, while melancholy cliffs close in the view.”

The silence and seclusion of the spot rendered it particularly suitable for getting away from people. After spending the day teaching in the temple, “Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with His disciples”. But the Garden of Gethsemane is now indissolubly associated with Christ’s last visit when, in its deep seclusion under the shade of night, those mysterious sufferings began which were to end the following day on the cross. Its entrance on this occasion was to Him, as it were, the entrance of “the valley of the shadow of death” (see Luke 22:40,44). “When He was at the place, He said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me; nevertheless, not My will, but Thine be done. And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven, strengthening Him. And being in an agony, He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

As the original institution of the supper fitly preceded and prepared the way for the sufferings of Christ – prefiguring His sufferings and death, then future – so a brief meditation upon Christ’s agony in the garden may, by God’s blessing, prepare your minds for a right observance of that solemn ordinance which commemorates the same sufferings and death now past.

I propose to speak (1) of the outward expressions and indications of the Saviour’s agony, (2) of the causes that produced it, (3) of the prayer with which it was accompanied. Let us seek to approach the subject with that deep reverence with which it becomes us to think and speak on a theme so sacred; let us remember that on a subject so mysterious as the sufferings of the God-man, our thoughts can only be as the feeble conceptions of childhood, our words but as the lisplings of infancy; and let us plead to be inwardly enlightened by the Holy Spirit, so that we may obtain an insight into the deep and awful mysteries of redemption. And as we turn aside, like Moses, to see this great sight, why the bush burns and is not consumed, we may also feel, like him, that the place where we stand is “holy ground”.

1. The outward expressions and indications of the Saviour’s agony. We are told by Matthew that, when Jesus had reached the place, He “began to be sorrowful and very heavy”. We are not to conclude that this was the first occasion on which Christ suffered. For the main object of the Son of God in assuming our nature, and appearing in our world, was to suffer; and His whole history from the manger to the cross was one continued course of suffering. The lowliness of His birth, the poverty of His condition, the toil and weariness through which He had to pass, “the contradiction of sinners”, the hardness

of their hearts, their determined resistance to all His benevolent attempts to promote their welfare, accompanied oftentimes with the deadliest personal malignity to Himself – these constantly grieved His holy soul and rendered Him in very deed, as described by the prophet, “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief”.

But all this was as nothing to what now awaited Him. His people experience, during life, crosses and cares, disappointments and trials; but these are to be followed, as they well know, by something far more repulsive, from which nature shrinks far more sensitively – from the solemnities of a death-bed and the agonies of a mysterious dissolution. It is not the trials of their earthly lot, but the fear of death, that keeps them all their lifetime “subject to bondage”. Similarly all the humiliation and trial that Christ had yet experienced were but preparatory to what He had now to undergo, when the crisis of His suffering was drawing near. It was now, in the Garden of Gethsemane, that the Saviour’s bloody passion, properly so called, began. The grief with which He had formerly been acquainted became anguish now; His sufferings were now converted into agony.

(1.) Let us listen to the words of the sufferer Himself. Having taken the three disciples apart from the rest, He revealed to them that inward conflict which could no longer be repressed. The hidden anguish which had been as a burning fire shut up in His heart, now burst forth. Jesus said to them: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful”. He told them that the arena of conflict was within His soul, that His soul was sorrowful – full of sorrow, exceeding sorrowful, so full as to overflow with sorrow. And as if even this was inadequate, He adds, “even unto death”, intimating that “the sorrows of death compassed Me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon Me”.

(2.) Let us next consider the terms in which the inspired historians describe His sufferings. Matthew tells us that “He began to be sorrowful and very heavy” (26:37); and Mark says that “He began to be sore amazed and very heavy” (14:33). These terms are all descriptive of inward suffering and mental anguish of the most intense and fearful kind, so intense as to fill His soul with consternation and amazement, indeed with sore amazement. The cup then given Him to drink was “wine of astonishment”. The expression employed by Luke, when he says that Christ was “in an agony”, is still stronger and more expressive. It was used to denote the deadly strife of two antagonists in the arena when striving for the mastery. It is in fact the strongest word in the language and is employed here to set forth how great the death struggle was which had already begun in the Redeemer’s soul.

(3.) But the intensity of His anguish at this time was such as no language – neither His own or that of the inspired apostle – can fully express. Four

circumstances are recorded which may aid our thoughts on this awful subject.

The *first* of these circumstances is that, in this hour of mortal agony, Jesus was attended only by Peter, James and John. As that agony reached its climax He retired even from them, that He might suffer alone. This was not a matter of accident but of choice on Christ's part, and it seems a choice full of meaning. It appears that all His disciples except Judas accompanied Him to Gethsemane, but that when they reached the gate of the garden He suffered none of them to enter save Peter and the two sons of Zebedee. To the rest He said, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder", as if feeling that His sufferings were to be so intense that the presence of all His disciples would be a burden and a restraint to Him.

But that He might not be left altogether alone He took along with Him the three disciples with whom He had been most familiar, who had witnessed His glory on the Mount of transfiguration. He disclosed to them His inward anguish, as if appealing to their sympathy. Yet knowing well how little succour their sympathy could yield Him, He asked for only their watchful presence. "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with Me". But as His sufferings increased, and His holy soul was rent with anguish, even their presence was felt as a restraint, and He retired into the deep solitude of the garden, that He might be alone with God and pour out prayer into the ear of His Father, speaking in the bitterness of His soul. "And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down and prayed."

May believers not discern in all this the workings of their own nature in a time of trouble? Should some dark and cloudy day overtake them, it will not be a promiscuous company, even of their friends and fellow Christians, that they will desire to see, but only a select few, to seek their presence and sympathy. In a time of difficulty we may feel that even the tenderest human sympathy is unavailing, and we may desire to be left altogether alone, so that we may lift up our soul to God, from whom comes our help and our salvation.

A *second* circumstance which throws additional light on Christ's sufferings is His prayer to the Father. "O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt." We shall afterwards consider this prayer a little more particularly. In the meantime, we refer to it only as indicating the depth of Christ's sufferings. The prayer is indeed offered with perfect submission to the Divine will, but it indicates at the same time how sensitively His nature recoiled from the suffering that He had begun to experience and how anxious He was to escape from it, if that had been within the compass of what was possible even with God.

We remember the composure with which the martyrs have often met even

the most cruel and violent deaths. We remember too how Paul, when going bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem did not know the things that should befall him there, save that the Holy Ghost witnessed in every city that bonds and afflictions awaited him; yet he could add, "But none of these things move me". How intense then must have been that anguish which wrung from Jesus the agonising prayer, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me". How different both in nature and degree from any that was ever endured by man!

A *third* circumstance is very expressive. After His prayer to the Father, "there appeared to Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him". How amazing this interposition of an angel on behalf of Him who is Lord of all their hosts! The eternal Son of God, "whom [the Father] hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; who, being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power . . . being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they" (Heb 1:2,3), is strengthened by an angel! When the Father "bringeth in the first begotten into the world, He saith, Let all the angels of God worship Him". After His temptation in the wilderness, the angels came and ministered unto Him.

Now "there appeared unto Him an angel from heaven, strengthening Him". Assuredly it would be presumptuous to profess to explain this great mystery fully; but there seem to be three conclusions which we may warrantably draw from the plainly-recorded fact. (1.) It was His human nature alone that was, or required to be, strengthened by the angel. (2.) The sense of the sustaining energy of the Divine nature seems at this awful hour to have been withdrawn from Him, as we know it afterwards was, when He exclaimed on the cross, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (3.) But for the interposition of the angel infusing new energy into His soul, His human nature would have been crushed and overwhelmed by the burden imposed upon Him. But Christ could say, "In the day when I cried Thou answeredst me, and strengthenedst me with strength in my soul" (Ps 138:3). Now, when we bear all this in mind, and remember that the angel was not sent to share or relieve His suffering, but to strengthen Him for the endurance of it, what a view is given us of the intensity of the Redeemer's anguish.

The *fourth* circumstance that may aid our conceptions on this subject is the effect His inward struggle produced on His bodily frame. "His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Such is the mysterious, but most intimate, connection between mind and body that they mutually act and react upon one another. Any violent passion or emotion of the mind may produce a cold sweat over the body. But how violent must have been that inward conflict which produced such a sweat as that described

in the text. The perspiration pressed out through the pores of His skin by the unnatural violence of His soul's agony, was mingled with blood and resembled it in colour. So profuse was it that it collected in great drops, which fell to the ground.

All this took place when He was protected by no dwelling, but exposed to the chilling influence of the open air on a cold night. The disciples had felt its influence, for, only a little afterwards, when Peter came into the palace of the High Priest, "the servants and officers stood there who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold, and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them and warmed himself" (Jn 18:18). It was when prostrated on the cold damp ground of the garden, and exposed to the chilling atmosphere of that cold night, that Gethsemane was not only watered with the Redeemer's tears, but bedewed with His blood. What then shall we say of the cause that produced such an effect? For the great drops of blood that fell from His body were but the outward expression of the anguish of His soul.

2. The causes that produced this agony, whose outward indications we have just been considering. The sufferings that we have been attempting to illustrate were not His principal sufferings; they were reserved for the cross, when He was to "bear our sins in His own body on the tree". But His sufferings in the garden were caused by the near prospect of His last sufferings, a sense of which seems to have been impressed upon His mind by the immediate power of God. That His sufferings might be perfectly voluntary, it was necessary that He should have a foretaste of them. Hence it was that, before the horror of great darkness fell upon Him on the cross, He had to pass under its shadow in the garden; before He was cast into the furnace He had to look in and see the glow of its burning heat; and before drinking from the cup that had been prepared for Him, He had to taste its bitterness.

The word *cup* is often employed in a figurative sense in Scripture, to denote the portion assigned to anyone, whether good or evil. Thus the Psalmist refers to the multiplied blessings God had bestowed on him: "My cup runneth over" (Ps 23:5). Again, referring to the wrath that shall overtake the wicked, he says, "Upon the wicked [God] shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps 11:6). The same word is employed by Christ here to denote His sufferings, and it seems to indicate that the cup of suffering assigned Him was composed of various ingredients. What these ingredients were, the sufferer Himself very distinctly intimated.

1. One ingredient in that bitter cup was supplied by the wickedness of *men acting in concert with the treachery of Judas*, and the weakness of *the other disciples*. Twice He had even found the chosen three asleep on His

return from prayer, although He had said to them: “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here and watch with Me”. “And He went a little further, and fell on His face and prayed. And He cometh unto the disciples and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. He went away again the second time and prayed . . . and He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy.” Though His remonstrance to them was gentle, and His apology for them was kind, yet such apparent unconcern on the part of those whom He had so specially chosen, to whose sympathies He had appealed, and whose watchfulness He had requested, could not fail to be an aggravation of His suffering.

But there was more than this, for when He came to the disciples a third time He saith unto them, “Sleep on now, and take your rest; behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that doth betray Me” (Mt 26:45,46). Thus Christ intimated to them His full acquaintance with the dark plot that had been concocting in the city, and the foul bargain into which Judas had entered with the chief priests and elders, to betray Him for thirty pieces of silver. Already the gleam of lanterns and torches is seen through the darkness as the multitude advance, led on by the traitor. And the traitor’s voice is recognised as he says in a whisper, “Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; hold him fast”.

Well did Jesus know what all this meant: that He was to be apprehended as a thief would be, falsely accused, unjustly condemned, mocked, buffeted, spit upon, and at last crucified and slain by wicked hands; and all this at the instigation of the Jews, who were His brethren according to the flesh. He was betrayed by one disciple, denied by another and forsaken by all. Even the three whom He had chosen to attend Him in His agony fell asleep first, and then joined the rest when “they all forsook Him and fled”. Thus deeply was Christ wounded in the house of His friends. How appropriate the words of the Psalmist: “It was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me, then I would have hid myself from him: but it was thou a man mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.” (Ps 55:12-14).

True assurance distinguishes itself from presumption by its humbling the soul, making the conscience tender and the heart heavenly.

It is the undervaluing of the Scriptures that makes people so little to study and seek into them.

Thomas Boston

The Covenant of Grace¹

2. The Feast of the Covenant

Rev Roderick MacLeod

The visible Church is made up of those who profess the true religion and their children. Baptism, one of the sacraments of the visible Church, is a seal of the covenant of grace. The gracious provisions of the Covenant are represented in the water used in the sacrament and in its application. The preaching of the gospel is an exposition, in the visible Church, of the Covenant that is sealed by Baptism. The provision of this covenant is spoken of as a feast; in Luke 14 we read: “A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready” (vv 16,17).

1. *The doctrine of the gospel is a spiritual feast for perishing sinners.* It is assumed first that man is perishing with a particular kind of hunger. Bodily hunger is a sensation of need which is only removed by eating suitable food. But the Saviour is here speaking about spiritual hunger. A sense of sin and guilt, for example, is a pang felt in the soul which no ordinary food can remove. Bread and water are great mercies in a cursed world, but they cannot reach the painful sensations of an awakened conscience. No ordinary drink can quench the painful feeling of thirst in the soul of a man who knows that divine justice has passed a sentence against his sins.

The doctrine of the forgiveness of sins, as taught in the Holy Scriptures, is spiritual bread and wine that can reach the pangs felt in the depths of the soul of an immortal creature who is perishing because his sins have not been pardoned. A sinner who stands in constant danger of having to render an account for his sins to avenging Justice must, if aware of his situation, say, I have bread and water enough to satisfy the needs of my body, but as a spiritual being, in possession of a guilty immortal soul, “I perish with hunger”. But here is good tidings of great joy for guilty sinners perishing for want of salvation.

The God of the covenant supplies “waters in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen” (Is 43:20). In the Song of Solomon, the Bridegroom uses the same figure to speak of salvation: “Eat, O friends; yea, drink abundantly”. Jesus preached, “If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink”. Isaiah spoke in the same way: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

¹Last month’ section of this Conference paper dealt with “The Grace of the Covenant”.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness” (Is 55:1,2).

2. *The preaching of the gospel includes an invitation to this spiritual feast.* The parable of the feast speaks of the gracious way in which the feast is proposed to the perishing: God sends His servant at supper time to say, “Come; for all things are now ready”. The servant represents Christ’s servants, the preachers of the gospel. Supper time is the time of gospel ordinances. The call to come to the feast implies that, in the Church, there is a universal and indiscriminate call to sinners; it is an invitation to them to feast their perishing souls on this spiritual food. And no further preparation is required, “for all things are now ready”. Neither conscience or reason can propose any legitimate objection; all objections are answered by the great invitation, “Come; for all things are now ready”.

3. *It is a great feast.* It is great because of how it relieves sinners. And it achieves great things for sinners because of how it is prepared. Solomon illustrates the preparation made for the gospel feast: “Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars: she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table”. When preparations were complete, “she hath sent forth her maidens: she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding” (Prov 9:1-6). There can be no doubt that this refers to the gospel offer of salvation to sinners on the basis of the prepared feast.

This gospel invitation rests on the preparation referred to in these texts. There would be no feast for the perishing soul if God had not prepared a feast. He has prepared the feast of forgiveness for the guilty sinner. This involved a sacrifice, a most dreadful substitutionary work, in which Christ satisfied divine justice. He bore the sins of those for whom the feast was prepared. In Solomon’s words: “Wisdom hath killed her beasts, she hath furnished her table”.

Nothing can satisfy offended justice for the offence of sin – which is an infinite evil – but a sacrifice of infinite merit. Nothing short of a sacrifice possessing the entire excellence of the divine nature will satisfy offended justice. The sacrifice (which provides the feast for the guilty sinner) must possess this infinite, eternal and unchangeable glory in an absolute and undiminished way. The Son of God must become the Lamb of God. He must be roasted with the fire of the holy, avenging justice of God, so that His flesh will be meat indeed and His blood drink indeed for sinners who are perishing

with the pangs of this spiritual hunger. The human soul of the fairest of men – the mysterious Immanuel, the Son of God – must be poured out unto death, in a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice.

This is the great feast to which we are invited. O what a Lamb was killed! O what a feast is this! “Come with me to the sacrifice”, Samuel said to the household of Jesse, and they went and feasted together. This is what the invitation in this text is: an invitation to feast, not on the paschal lamb in Egypt, but on the Lamb of God at Calvary. Christ says, “My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed”. That is: the doctrine of My death, as a sacrifice made to satisfy divine justice, is perfectly adapted by infinite wisdom to reach the pangs of spiritual hunger caused by your sins.

Come, for all things are now ready.

Prayer¹

4. Different Kinds of Prayer

Charles Hodge

As prayer is converse with God, it includes these spiritual exercises – goings out of the soul to God in thought and feeling – in reverence, gratitude, sorrow for sin, sense of dependence and obligation. In this sense, the man who lives and walks with God always prays. He fulfils to the letter the injunction, “Pray without ceasing”. It is our duty and high privilege to have this constant converse with God. The heart should be like the altar of incense, on which the fire never went out.

It is, however, a law of our nature that we should clothe our thoughts and feelings in words. Therefore prayer is speech. Even when it is not audible, words are present to the mind as the expression of inward states. There is power in articulate words; the thought or feeling is more distinct and vivid even to ourselves when audibly expressed. Prayer, in this sense, is usually distinguished as: (1) secret (2) social and (3) public.

1. *Secret Prayer*. It would be a great mistake for a Christian to assume that the life of God in his soul can be adequately preserved by that form of prayer which consists in habitual communion with God. To maintain his spiritual health and vigour, the believer needs regular, stated seasons of prayer, as the body needs its daily meals. The direction the Lord gave is: “When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret,

¹Taken, with editing, from Hodge’s *Systematic Theology*, vol 3. Last month’s article listed seven conditions for acceptable prayer.

shall reward thee openly” (Mt 6:6). The Bible presents the people of God, and the blessed Lord Himself, as an example for us in prayer. We read that Christ often retired to pray, and not infrequently spent whole nights doing so. If the spotless soul of Jesus needed these seasons of converse with God, none of His followers should dare neglect this important means of grace. Let each day, at least, begin and end with God.

2. *Social Prayer.* Social prayer includes family prayer. As man’s nature is social, he must have fellowship with his fellow men in what concerns his inward and outward life. No one lives, or can live, for himself, in religion or in any other relation. As the family is the most intimate bond of fellowship among men, it is vitally important that it should be hallowed by religion. All the relations of parents and children are purified and strengthened when the whole household gathers regularly, morning and evening, to worship God. There is no substitute for this means of promoting family religion that God has appointed.

It assumes that the head of the family is able to read the Scriptures as well as lead in the prayer. All who are subject to the watch or care of the Church should be required to maintain in their households this stated worship of God. The character of the Church and of the state depends on the character of the family. If religion dies out in the family, it cannot be maintained elsewhere. A man’s responsibility to his children, as well as to God, binds him to make his house a Bethel [a house of God]; if it is not a Bethel, it will be a dwelling place of evil spirits.

When the mass of the people were so ignorant as to be unable to maintain religious services profitably in their families, it was natural and proper for the church to open its doors daily and call the people to matins and vespers. It was far better to have this opportunity for daily worship than that this stated service should be neglected. It is not wise, however, to continue a custom when the grounds on which it was introduced no longer exist, or to make a church ordinance the substitute for a divine institution.

3. *Public Prayer.* The public services of the sanctuary are designed for worship and instruction. The former includes prayer and singing; the latter, reading the Word of God and preaching². These elements should be preserved in due proportion. In some churches instruction is made entirely subordinate to worship; twice the time being devoted to the latter that is allotted to the former. This seems to be contrary to the Scriptural rule. Knowledge in the Bible is represented as the essential element of religion. There can be no true worship of God without adequate knowledge of God; there can be no repentance, faith or holy living unless the truths, on which these exercises

²But these too should lead us to worship (Ed).

and this living are dependent, are understood and are present to the mind.

Religion is a reasonable, or rational, service, and ignorance is incompatible with it. Christian ministers are therefore always called *teachers* in the New Testament. The great commission they received from Christ was “to teach all nations”. The Apostles therefore went everywhere preaching. Paul says that Christ did not send him to baptize, or to perform mere religious services, but to preach the gospel, which he declared to be the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation. No human authority could have transformed Paul from a preacher to an offerer of prayers. It was not until pagan ideas of worship began to pervade the Church, and ministers were transmuted from teachers into priests, that the teaching element was made so entirely subordinate to that of worship, as it has been for ages in the Church of Rome.

Teaching should be the prominent object in the services of the Lord’s Day, as it clearly was during the apostolic age, yet the importance of public prayer can hardly be overestimated. This, it is often said, is the weak point in the Presbyterian Sabbath service. This is probably true. That is, it is probably true that there are more good preachers than good prayers. The main reason for this is that the minister devotes a great part of the labour of the week to the preparation of his sermon, and not a thought to his prayers. It is therefore no wonder that the one should be better than the other.

In order that this part of divine service should be conducted to the edification of the people, it is necessary that:

1. The officiating minister should have a truly devout spirit, that the feelings and desires expressed in his prayers should be in exercise in his own heart.

2. His mind and memory should be well stored with the thoughts and language of Scripture. Holy men of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Their utterances, whether in adoration, thanksgiving, confession or supplication, were controlled by the Spirit of God. Hence they express the mind of the Spirit; they are the most appropriate vehicles for the expression of those feelings and desires which the Spirit awakens in the minds of God’s people. Therefore no prayers are more edifying, other things being equal, than those which abound in the appropriate use of Scriptural language.

3. The prayer should be well ordered, so as to embrace all the proper parts and topics of prayer in due proportion. This will prevent it being rambling, diffuse or repetitious.

4. It should also be suited to the occasion, whether that be the ordinary service on the Lord’s day, the administration of the sacraments, or a special service on days of thanksgiving or of fasting and humiliation.

5. The language employed should be simple, solemn and correct. It is hardly necessary to say so.

6. The prayers should not be long. Undue length here is generally due more to useless repetitions than to diffuseness.

“That Old Serpent”¹

Henry Law

Genesis 3:1. *The serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field.*

Evil is universally present. It lives in every clime, in every age, in every heart. No place is exempt. While great diversity marks the intellect and powers and characters of men, each and all breathe this common atmosphere.

The thought naturally arises, How could this monster first spring into life? Who is the author of its being? It is, however, the part of wisdom quickly to check enquiries which might exercise our search for ever, but answers must for ever elude us. The mystery of sin’s birth is shrouded in impenetrable clouds. It lies beneath unfathomable depths. It sits above heights inaccessible. The secret is not unveiled on earth. It is vain then to grope in darkness. It is folly to speculate, when the utmost gain must be disappointment. Thought and time are lost when we pursue a fleeting phantom. They who pass from guess to guess, on this subject, find that their progress is from ignorance to ignorance. How sin gained its first breath must be unknown until the day of larger revelations.

But while we give no heed to speculations, which only darken knowledge, it becomes us to ponder reverently the revelations of the Bible. We have a record of sin’s descent upon our world. Its introduction into man’s heart is told us. The story indeed is brief. Only a few black lines are drawn. The full portrait is not filled up. But the awful transaction is disclosed, and it affects us too closely to permit indifference. Let us then draw near, with solemn minds. And may the one great Spirit of eternal truth guide our feet into rich pastures of sanctifying wisdom!

Creation, springing from the Creator’s hand, was perfect. It was worthy of the all-good Maker. “God created man in His own image: in the image of God created He him” (Gen 1:27). “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Gen 1:31). The wisdom, love and power of God could not have raised a fairer fabric.

Thus Eden’s garden was beyond improvement. Our first parents – pure in holiness, rich in every grace, the unsullied reflection of God’s own nature – moved amid perfect scenes. The glory of their state was this: they were the image of God. This was the glory of their dwelling: God pronounced it to be

¹Taken, with editing, from Law’s *Beacons of the Bible*.

“very good”. Thus earth needed no accession of delight. Man joyed in all around him, all within him, all above him. Around was every charm; within was happy innocence; above was a kind Father. God was everywhere and in everything. But, believer, while you marvel at this dazzling brightness, remember there is something inconceivably better in store for you; bless God for this heavenly hope.

Eden’s sun is soon eclipsed. This bright day soon darkens, Into this Paradise the Serpent comes. Simple are the words which introduce the monster. “Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made.” He appears, and his work soon betrays him. The work is subtle evil. This fact alone establishes that he is more than his assumed form pretends. He resembles one of the beautiful creatures in this garden’s paths. Yet they are irrational, gifted only with limited powers of instinct. But here is one, who, seeming to be a serpent, uses speech, reasons with consummate skill, and evidences the depths of evil. He must be more than a mere serpent who has more than a serpent’s powers and wiles. Thus we must conclude that the devil, to accomplish his vile ends, hides himself beneath this mask, clothes himself with the unsuspected features of a creature of Paradise.

The Spirit of God attests this fact. Speaking of the devil, He names him “that old serpent”. Unveiling some of the terrific wonders of the last days, He says, “The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan” (Rev 12:9). And again, “I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand: and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years” (Rev 20:1,2). The Spirit, foreshowing Satan’s ruin, names him as the creature in whose form he here appears. The old serpent which crept into Paradise is the devil. Paul adds his heaven-taught confirmation. Surely the devil is before his eye when he warns the Corinthians “lest, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety,” so their minds should be corrupted (2 Cor 11:3).

Thus the disguise drops; the mask falls; the veil is withdrawn; the deception is detected; the plot is discovered; the treachery is disclosed; the craft is visible. This is no innocuous creature. This is not one of a beautiful tribe, ignorant of evil. Here is the devil, that apostate spirit, that accursed being, that arch-rebel, that daring adversary of God, that merciless foe of man. Eden’s serpent truly is the devil. His work declares him. God’s Word denounces him. Taking our stand on this indisputable fact, let us humbly pray the great Teacher of the Church to impress upon our hearts the obvious warnings.

1. The devil is a *real person*. This account is no myth, no dream, no vision, no fable, no allegory. It narrates the real conduct of a real person. It is not

amusement for imaginative minds. All is historic truth and unvarnished fact. Here are the doings of an actual living being. As God truly is, and Christ truly is, and the Holy Spirit truly is, and we truly are, just so the devil truly is. Works prove a workman. Acts show an agent. So real performances stamp a real devil.

These are days in which proud reason sneers at ancient truths, and regards Bible statements as materials for the construction of airy palaces of conceit. Do not be deceived. As the serpent beguiled Eve, so now he beguiles unstable minds. As he persuaded her to view him as a friendly counsellor, so he persuades them to regard him as a shadowy semblance of some vague mystery. Do not listen to such dreams. The Bible does not begin with enigmas. It is not constructed to puzzle and perplex. Do not trifle with the faithful statement, but be assured that there is no truth more tremendously true than the existence of a personal devil. Watch then and pray. He is always personally near, for he "walketh about seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet 5:8). Bar the doors of your heart. He seeks to make that heart his personal home. He is the "spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph 2:2).

2. The devil is *a hater of God*. Who hates God most? Surely he who most contravenes His will. Of the devil's original rebellion, nothing should be said, for nothing can be proved. But here a patent fact evidences his enmity. He aims directly to upset God's plans. He arms himself in bold opposition. He sees God's arrangement, and he sets himself to disarrange it. He views creation bright in every beauty, and he plots to soil it. He marks the birth of an eternity of pure delights, and he arises to infuse the element of misery. God had made man in His own likeness. Satan comes forward to destroy the holy image, and to transform the heavenly work into fuel for his hell. He seems to reason thus: Man is formed to show forth God's praise and to be His delight. But this benevolence shall fail. Man shall be robbed of innocence; he shall be debased into a rebel as fallen as I am, an object meet only for abhorrence. Thus he schemes; thus he lifts up his arm boldly to fight against God. See then how he hates God.

Reader, if you profess to love God, where is your evidence? Do you abhor the fiend, who from the beginning has strained his every power to subvert God's kingdom? Do the warm feelings of your heart respond: I hate him who hates my God; God's foes are my foes; His friends my friends; I avow myself to be His soldier and His servant; I march beneath the banner of the God of heaven against the legions of the god of this world?

3. The devil is *a hater of mankind*. Who hates them most? Surely he who most contrives their misery. In Eden there was sweet bliss. Every faculty was the inlet of God. Every thought was full of Him, was only joy. The

morning dawned to bring God near. The day advanced to bring Him nearer. The closing evening closed not the communion. Sinless man lived in the raptures of heavenly converse. His breast was cloudless sunshine. Satan beholds and writhes. What, shall man share the peace which himself has lost, and joy in joys which never can be his again? Such bliss is torture to him. He will not rest till he uproots it. Such happiness stings him as a gnawing worm. He must destroy it. He dwells in wretchedness, and he now comes to drag others down to his level. Earth had never heard a sigh or seen a tear until this enemy of happiness appeared. Since that day pains and anguish have run a ceaseless course. His aim was to create misery, and mercilessly he succeeded.

Sad that the sons of men should lend their ears so gladly to their deadliest foe and drink so readily this viper’s poison! What madness to court the embrace of such an enemy, to admit this murderer to our abode, to open the door to the known robber! This is their madness who receive this hater of our race.

4. The devil is *most daring*. Truly nothing daunts him. His case is hopeless; therefore he is reckless. Paradise was divinely pure, but he undaunted rushes in. When man was heavenly as heaven, boldly he addresses him. Is he more timid now? Far otherwise. There is no place so pure that his foot fears to tread it. There is no holiness so holy that he does not venture to touch. His hand will open the sacred gate; his foot will pass the boundary of every sacred enclosure. The sanctity of Jesus scared him not. No heaven-appointed ordinances repel his step. He whispers to the praying saint. He mounts the pulpit steps. He joins the worshippers in hallowed courts. He comes to sacramental feasts. Sacred is the saint’s dying chamber, but he shoots his arrows there. His daring cannot be exceeded.

Believer, labour to grow in grace. Each day put on more of the Lord Jesus. Agonise for nearer conformity to His image. Fly with quicker wing to the heights of holiness. But bear in mind that, as you rise, the tempter will pursue you still.

5. The devil is *consummate in skill*. He watches for the fit opportunity, and then applies the fit snare. Eve is alone; then he is by her side. Mark the artfully-constructed snare. The object is to introduce sin. Sin is transgression of God’s command. Our parents had free permission for full enjoyment. In this permission there is no door for disobedience. But there is one – one only prohibition. If guilt can enter, it must be by this path. The trial shall be made. The seducing words are few; but they comprise all art.

A doubt is first insinuated: “Hath God said?” Is it truly so? There may be some mistake. A spark to kindle discontent next falls: “Ye shall not eat of every tree”; is this consistent with unbounded kindness? Why this arbitrary limit? A bold denial of danger follows: “Ye shall not surely die”; it is a futile

threat. A promise of abundant gain completes the lure: "Your eyes shall be opened". The skill is perfect.

Reader, beware. He who tempts you this day has not declined in subtlety. No, the experience of long age sharpens, if possible, his cunning. The school of incessant practice teaches him to cast the net more craftily. He ever has been, and ever will be, matchless in cunning.

6. The devil *does not shrink from the blackest sin*. His first appearance shows that there is no iniquity so foul but he will handle it, no depth of evil so profound but he will fathom it. He commences with trampling down all truth: "Ye shall not surely die". He rises upon earth the meridian orb of crime. He blushes not nor trembles nor pauses nor scruples. His earliest words are the lie of lies. So now he allures each victim to the extremity of evil. He never will forbear, while he can plunge them deeper in sin's abyss. The vilest iniquities are most congenial to his nature. Do not go one step with him. There is no finality in his downward course.

7. The devil *has awful power*. Weak agents fail. Difficulties baffle them. But he is not baffled. His first victory was hard to win. But he quickly won it. Eve had no inward proneness to yield. No inborn corruption betrayed the entrance of her heart. Her citadel was firm in walls and bars of innocence. But still he succeeded. He gained admission and set up his throne of conquest. Can there be clearer proof of his transcendent powers?

Reader, beware. All his mighty arts plot your destruction. The innocent fell when attacked only from without. How can you stand, when a legion of traitorous desires are ready to surrender? His outward solicitations are aided by your inward lusts. If you escape, a stronger than this strong one must befriend you.

Such is the Serpent's aspect in Eden. Here the description ceases. Other Scriptures unfold a lengthened roll of his malignant might. As man's history advances, his cruelty and wiles swell into more frightful form. His annals are a vast catalogue of his foul exploits. The first picture presents only this broad outline. But it is a clear display of Satan's reality, his hatred to God and man, his daring, his skill, his deep iniquity and his tremendous power.

Believer, this conqueror is conquered. Captivity is led captive. The spoiler is spoiled. This strong one is bound. You are rescued. You are safe. True, he will oft assail, affright, roll you in the mire, and wound your peace; but he cannot destroy. His might is great, but your Almighty deliverer is far greater. His hosts are many; your one Jesus Himself is infinitely more. He indeed desires to have you and his efforts are terrible and incessant; but your Jesus ever lives to pray for you, and His prayers are ever heard.

Therefore, go forward, strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

“Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand” (Eph 6:13). Fear not. Christ is with you. Do not be dismayed; He is your God. Resist this foe and he will flee (Jas 4:7). Raise the banner of the cross and he will tremble. Wash in the blood and he cannot touch you. Cry to the Captain of Salvation and all heaven aids you. Thus go on your heavenward way rejoicing. “The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly” (Rom 16:20).

In Christ you may victoriously shout, “O thou enemy, destructions are come to a perpetual end”. Thou hast wounded, but Christ has healed. Death was brought in by thee, but eternal life brightens through Christ.

“Be Ye Also Ready”¹

Rev J S Sinclair

Andrew Mackay was a native of the little village of Inver, near Tain, Ross-shire, where he was born on 25 November 1870. He was thus only 38 when he died. He came to Glasgow to work about 15 years ago, and during this time he married Margaret J Gibson, but she died after a short period of married life, leaving him with a little girl who is now over five. Owing to the difficulty of finding employment, Andrew went to Canada in 1907 and eventually settled in a good position in the flourishing city of Winnipeg.

It appears that he was under religious impressions from his early years. Even as a boy he was given to meditating on divine things. These impressions and convictions continued with him to manhood, and when he came to Glasgow, those who knew him well regarded him as one who feared the Most High. He was circumspect in his life, and scrupulous to a degree in all his dealings with others. He had a very keen mind and was able to take a comprehensive grasp of any subject that he had thought about.

From conversations with him, however, the writer gathered that he was almost constantly in doubt as to his spiritual standing in the sight of God. He sometimes felt raised up in his soul and very happy in meditating on some portion of God’s Word, but at other times – and these were many – he walked in darkness and had no light, and felt as if he should question altogether whether he ever possessed a spark of grace. It troubled him much that he could not recall any marked transition in his experience from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. His concern, however, was not that of Pliable, and so he continued to attend the means of grace regularly with his face towards the Celestial City.

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In this dark and doubtful frame of mind, he left his native country for Canada and, strange to say, the deliverance he did not get at home he obtained in a distant land amid fewer outward advantages. In November 1908, the writer had a letter from him; he stated that one day, while much cast down in mind, as if the Lord was never to remember him, these words came to him: "For the needy shall not alway be forgotten" (Ps 9:18). He derived sweet comfort from them for a few minutes, but the thought quickly came that these were the Lord's needy, and what evidences did he have that he was one of them? This plunged him into darkness again.

A second letter, received in April, 1909, gives a brief account of how he obtained the clear deliverance he had so long desired and prayed for. It seems that on Saturday, March 20, "being wretched" – as he might say he had always been – he "purposed to devote the following week to seeking the Lord in prayer, reading the Word and other books" that would be helpful. He carried out this resolution, and he observed the Thursday of that week as a fast day from early morning to evening. It proved to be "the greatest day of my life".

He began with prayer, and afterwards read the second chapter of Habakkuk. The third and fourth verses specially arrested his attention, and the fourth became "the battle ground": "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith". And the struggle was "to get on the ground where the just lives" – faith on the Son, Jesus Christ. About nine in the evening he threw himself down on the bed in despair but, after a minute or two, he said to himself: "I cannot rest here, and where I shall go or what I shall do, I know not". It was then suggested to him that the Lord could give faith. He answered, "Yes, but He is sovereign". Then it was said, "Ask and it shall be given you." And with this, hope revived, and he betook himself anew to pleading in such words as these: "I have come to seek Thee these days, and what have I found? I have discovered that I was a devil. Thou mayest let me sink into perdition and have the glory of the justice. But Thou delightest in mercy, and I throw myself into Thy hands and shall wait there."

The Lord did not appear at once, and the tempter suggested that all was over now, this being his last chance. But Andrew was enabled to silence him with the words, "Abraham's only Isaac was called for, yet he hoped against hope, and so shall I hope against hope". Andrew went to bed for the night in hope, and the Lord graciously manifested Himself about three the following morning – he does not relate in what manner or words – and several times during the following day. He asks forgiveness at the end of his letter for devoting so much space to his own matters

More than five months later, Andrew Mackay was called unexpectedly to

enter eternity. It was Saturday evening, 4 September 1909, and he and a close young friend were walking from his lodgings to the lodgings of the other. When they came to this house, Andrew took out his watch and said, “It is only half-past nine, and as our conversation is not unprofitable; you better come for a little walk yet”. “So”, his companion recalls, “we went for that little walk which meant so much.” Andrew was telling his friend some of his spiritual experiences and how, “lately, I have never seen so clearly that Christ needed to be divine, so that sinners might be saved, though many in our day despise such a doctrine. But he complained that, “the last few weeks, I seem to feel worldly, not that I am anxious to make money,” or anything of that sort.

“It was just when he had finished saying this”, his companion proceeds, “and we were crossing Broadway, the next thing I knew was myself lying on the ground, and an automobile at my side”. The friend got up and saw Andrew lying unconscious and blood streaming from his nose. Both of them were thrown a considerable distance, but Andrew’s companion escaped, in God’s mercy, with only a few scratches. Andrew never regained consciousness. He was taken to a city hospital in the car, but in a quarter of an hour a doctor came to say that he was gone – gone, we believe, to be with Christ, which is far better! It would appear that those experiences which might seem to us to be fitting him for usefulness in this present life were designed to prepare him for the enjoyment and service of God in heaven.

He was a loyal supporter of the little cause of truth in Winnipeg, and his removal is much lamented there. Truly the voice is very loud, solemn, and affecting. “The Lord’s voice crieth unto the city.” “Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.” “Watch, therefore; for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh” (Mt 25:13).

“Neither Poverty nor Riches”¹

W K Tweedie

Proverbs 30:8,9. *Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full and deny Thee, and say, Who is the Lord? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain.*

What is enough? is a question which has never yet been answered except where the grace of God has enabled people to say, “I have all and abound . . . My God shall supply all your need according His riches in glory by Jesus Christ.” The Christian alone can answer the question, and he

¹Taken, with editing, from *The Christian’s Daily Companion*.

does so by saying, That is enough which my God is pleased to send. It was somewhat in this spirit that Agur offered up his prayer.

When the Lord Himself came in the flesh, He taught His followers to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread" – that is, to be contented in a state of constant dependence on God. So His servants who longed for His coming prayed, in a similar spirit, for a competent portion of the good things of this life and desired nothing more. They did not ask for poverty, for that would have been praying for trial and suffering, which the believer is scarcely free to do. They did not pray for affluence, for that would have been asking God to surround them with snares and temptations, but they besought God to grant them things convenient. They left the nature and extent of these to Him who judges righteous judgement, and spoke as if they felt that their happiness consisted in being what God had appointed and in enjoying what God sent.

Everyone who knows his own heart will feel the suitability of this prayer? No sooner does God load us with the bounties of providence than we begin to put them in His place, to deny Him and say, "Who is the Lord?" What is created, the gift, is preferred to the Creator, the Giver. And, when they are torn from us or take to themselves wings and flee away, the heart of many becomes disconsolate, like the man who once cried, "Ye have taken away my gods, and what have I more?"

See the wisdom of Agur's prayer. He wished to be kept from creature dependence, and therefore he asked that his God would, in mercy, neither visit him with poverty as a trial, or with affluence as a temptation. And how countless are the temptations which befall the rich! On no point is Scripture more explicit, for on none is man more prone to err. "The love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." "Mortify . . . covetousness, which is idolatry." "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "The wicked . . . blesseth the covetous, whom the Lord abhorreth." These are some of the passages in the Word of God which unfold His mind on that universal passion, the love of money.

On the one hand, how solemn is the thought that so many in this nominally-Christian land are guilty of this idolatry, saying "to the pure gold, Thou art my confidence!" On the other hand, how wise the prayer, "Give me neither poverty nor riches". In other words, Keep me by Thy providence in the golden mean, where my soul shall neither be oppressed by poverty, or elated by wealth.

But while the child of God leaves to his Father everything connected with the riches that perish in the using, there is one kind of riches concerning which

his soul is insatiable: the unsearchable riches of Christ. The believer’s heart longs for them with a desire which increases from day to day. Greed here is a virtue, ambition has free scope. While the riches of earth elate and make people feel independent of God, the riches of Christ make them humble, for they feel that they have nothing which they have not received. The riches of earth drown men in perdition; the riches of Christ lift men to glory and fit them for it. The riches of earth often render man more unhappy the more he has amassed; the riches of Christ constitute the very fulness of joy. The riches of earth must all be dropped at the grave’s edge; the riches of Christ pass with us into eternity and unceasingly grow more precious there.

Who then, that has learned to weigh things in the balance of the sanctuary, would not covet earnestly Christian riches? Which is preferable: the riches that prompt us to ask, Who is the Lord that He should be a God to us? or the riches which make God Himself our portion, the riches which load us like thick clay and sink us at last into a deeper grave, or the riches that make good our title to heaven, the righteousness wrought out for us by the Son of God?

There can be no question as to which of these a believer’s soul would prefer; reason, religion, self-interest and the Spirit of God all conspire, in various ways, to show that he is not rational, and most certainly not religious, who prefers what he must relinquish at death to what he can carry with him into eternity. Say then which you prefer? Is it Christ or mammon? Is it the creature or the Creator? Would you have the riches which covetousness gathers, grasps and hugs – or the riches which rank among the things which God Himself has taught us to covet earnestly? By setting God and mammon over against each other as He does, the Judge of the quick and the dead would teach us that both cannot be served. Which then are you serving? In this matter, life and death, blessing and cursing, are set before you, and God says, Choose. Have you chosen, and is your choice such as the hour of death and the Day of judgement will approve? Have you laid up treasure on earth or in heaven?

Further, see how unmistakably God often shows His displeasure even on earth against the love of money. Have not some men, with thousands at their command, been so deprived of judgement as to deny themselves their daily bread and necessary clothing, lest they should diminish their idol hoards by the value of the smallest coin in the realm! Have not others been driven to madness because they had been stripped of their gold, which was in fact their god? Have not the children of miser parents often squandered in profligacy the ill-gotten gains of their fathers – so that, if man may interpret providence, parent and child have perished by the same law!

Now if we will take the Bible for our guide, may we not see in these

things a protest from the God of providence against the abuse of what He has created? May we not infer the need of grace from God to help us to pray, and to act upon the prayer, “Give me neither poverty nor riches . . . ?”

Book Reviews

Prepared by Grace, for Grace, The Puritans on God’s Ordinary Way of Leading Sinners to Christ, by Joel R Beeke and Paul M Smalley, published by Reformation Heritage Books, paperback, 311 pages, £13.99 from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

This book was written in reaction to attempts by academic writers in secular universities – notably Perry Miller – to explore the idea of preparation for conversion in Puritan writing. Miller, who died in 1963, was a professor at Harvard. This volume refers to his argument that the Puritan emphasis on the doctrine of preparation – when under conviction of sin – was an attempt to get around the doctrine of divine sovereignty and “give human effort a place in the predestined world” (p 10). But how can people who have never experienced the saving work of the Holy Spirit write helpfully on that work?

One question that arises is, Where do the common operations of the Holy Spirit end and His saving work begin? Or, What is preparatory to conversion? Perhaps the best answer comes in a quotation from Wilhelmus à Brakel: “If one were further to ask if he must and can know the moment when he exercised faith for the first time, I would answer that he neither has to know this time nor is able to know this with certainty. If he were to begin with the first serious conviction, in all probability he did not have faith as yet. If he were to begin with the moment when, for the first time, he exercised faith consciously and in a most heartfelt manner, he would reckon too late, but in all probability he already had faith. I maintain that one cannot, or rarely can, know the precise moment when faith begins and when regeneration occurs. It is also not necessary to know this, and it is sufficient if, upon good grounds, from God’s Word and from a proper knowledge of one’s heart and deeds, one may conclude that he believes and is regenerated.”

And Thomas Hooker is quoted: “That soul which was secured by any other means, save only by Christ, was never truly wounded for sin. . . . But if the soul were truly wounded for sin, then nothing can cure him but a Saviour to pardon him, and grace to purge him.”

There are many other helpful quotations from a wide selection of Puritan writers, and the authors themselves provide a balanced discussion of an important subject. There is certainly a place for refuting inaccurate analyses

of religious writings from the past, yet we may perhaps derive more spiritual benefit by reading the actual books, when these are currently available, which were produced by the godly writers of previous centuries.

Power in the Pulpit, by Henry C Fish, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, booklet, 27 pages, £1.50, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian bookroom. Fish may not be this reviewer's favourite writer, but this is an excellent booklet. He fully acknowledges the need for the truth to be applied by the Holy Spirit if it is to be effective, but here he focuses on "the conditions of power in the pulpit, in its human aspect".

He refers first to the *matter* in preaching; it must be "religious truth". He advocates the use of actual Scripture in sermons and emphasises that the preacher must "dwell much" on man as a sinner and Christ as the Saviour, if there is to be power in his preaching.

The author's second main point is the *manner* of preaching, referring both to the structure and the delivery of the sermon. He stresses the need for plainness, simplicity and directness.

The final point is the *man* himself. Fish quotes an old divine: "A minister's life is the life of his ministry". He must have piety, knowledge, courage, experience, industriousness, sympathy, earnestness, prayer and faith.

The book closes with a "note on preaching and prayer", from the interesting book by Owen Jones: *Some of the Great Preachers of Wales* (republished by Tentmaker Publications). The men referred to in this note were well known for their prayerfulness and for their power in the pulpit. May this booklet not only encourage ministers to seek the powerful influences of the Holy Spirit to accompany God's Word, but also to cultivate these other aspects of their work which the Lord has often been pleased to use.

Protestant View

Always the Same

To believe that the Papacy is not fundamentally changing for the better is regarded by many as overly cynical. But those who are familiar with the workings of Rome would agree with this view – for example, relatively objective journalists who cover the Vatican.

Nicole Winfield, Vatican correspondent for the Associated Press, who is a Roman Catholic, is so regarded. Anthony Hatcher, Associate Professor of Communications at Elon University, North Carolina, believes that "she is tougher and more balanced than most of the Italian press". At the Vatican,

she has covered three Popes, including the present one, and has, we are told, “unique insights into each papacy”.

In a recent address to the Society of Professional Journalists in Elon, she said that some of the Pope’s quotes have been misconstrued by many to make him seem like “something other than a conservative Catholic”. She added, “Don’t let Francis’ positive appeal mislead you; he’s a conservative Catholic. He doesn’t care for a lot of ‘small-minded rules’, but there are some rules that form the core of Church doctrine. Those won’t change. He is still against abortion and gay marriage.”

In any case, Rome will continue to live up to her motto, *Semper Idem* (Always the Same). Apparent changes which took place at, say, the Second Vatican Council, were not changes for the better but strategic steps to entrench the Papacy’s position further. The leopard’s spots remain. *NMR*

Notes and Comments

The Intolerance of the Promoters of Tolerance

The homosexual lobby not only insists on tolerance for its constituency but also projects itself as the champion of tolerance. A recent incident in the USA shows otherwise. It concerns Brendan Eich, a brilliant software engineer, the creator of JavaScript, a computing language, and co-founder of Mozilla, the company that owns the internet browser, Firefox.

Eich was recently appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Mozilla Corporation, but the news of his appointment outraged many members of the so-called gay community. His crime in their eyes was that six years ago he privately donated \$1000 to the campaign for California Proposition 8, which stated, and aimed to protect, the orthodox Christian position on marriage, and thus was in opposition to same-sex marriage.

So great was the outcry at his appointment, some of it from Mozilla executives who had been angered by his support of Proposition 8, that he was forced to resign after less than two weeks as CEO. Despite endeavours to conciliate those who objected to his appointment by reminding them that he did not bring his views on same-sex marriage into the workplace and had never discriminated against homosexual employees, the clamour increased and he was forced to step down.

So much for the tolerance of the champions of tolerance. Tolerance of diversity, sexual orientation and even religion is increasingly required of employees in business corporations, universities, health services and government departments but, on the other hand, the Christian worldview is tolerated less and

less. Righteous Lot reasoned with those who wanted toleration for their sinful lust, but they intolerantly threatened him: “Stand back. . . . This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them.” Christians cannot but expect to face bigoted attitudes when the advocates of sin are in the ascendancy. *NMR*

Chinese Christians Defend their Church

An extraordinary event has occurred among Protestant Christians in Wenzhou, a city in south east China. Thousands of them have gathered to protect a church from being demolished by government authorities, who have painted on it the words: “Illegal construction”, and, “Demolish”.

The building belongs to Sanjiang Christian Church, which is registered with the authorities but not affiliated with the “Three-Self Patriotic Movement” of Protestant churches, controlled by the Communist Party. The people of the huge congregation, joined by Christians from other congregations in the city, have camped in and around the church to guard it. The basic reason for the demolition order is evidently the displeasure of Party officials at the speedy growth of Christianity in the city, which is known as “The Jerusalem of the East”.

Some members of the congregation have told the press that the construction of the church was not against the law but that it came under the scrutiny of officials because Xia Baolong, the provincial Party chief, objected to a church which could house thousands of worshippers. One Christian protester told the *South China Morning Post*: “We are not seeking a violent confrontation. We are holding a peaceful sit-in, praying to God for help.” May He be their shield and cause the light of the knowledge of His glory to spread throughout that great nation of almost 1.4 billion souls – nearly a fifth of the world’s population. *NMR*

The Big Bang

An article in *Time* magazine boasts that a recent scientific discovery – of “ripples” in the “microwave radiation that pervades the cosmos” – has, if it is correct, “nailed down the Big Bang, eliminating the few other remaining scientific theories about how the universe began”. We very much doubt that the claim is true, even on its own terms. Probably the proponents of these other theories will do just what the proponents of the Big Bang do with every difficulty that they encounter: jiggle their equations a bit to fit the new data, and carry on.

But there is another “theory” that is not eliminated by the new discovery, namely that of special Creation in the recent past by an Almighty God: “in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth”. God created the universe

either with this ripple or in such a way that this ripple would be apparent at this present time. Such a “theory” is not easy to eliminate. Indeed the useful “test” theory that the universe was created one second ago is not easy to eliminate either, and it shows the limitations of science in establishing what happened in the past.

The fact is that what happened in the past is strictly history rather than science, and while scientific methods may be useful in limiting possibilities and in suggesting areas of research, they will seldom establish with certainty the occurrence of any complex event. The course of the missing Malaysian passenger plane was not deduced purely from currently repeatable observations but required also the knowledge of historical “pings” which had been recorded by a satellite during its flight. Scientific methods were applied to these “pings” but the “pings” themselves could not be reproduced.

The *Time* article says that scientists at other research centres will now try to replicate the observations which led to the discovery of these microwave ripples. By so doing they may verify the existence of the ripples, but they will not establish that the Big Bang happened. To do that would probably require replicating the beginning of the universe! Meanwhile we have an accurate historical account of its beginning in Genesis 1, and we know from it that the physicists are wrong. Their new discovery may well be useful for some other purpose but not for determining the origin of the universe. *DWBS*

Abortion Liberalisation

Disturbing reports have trickled down through the media on increasingly-liberal abortion practices being implemented in the UK. Since the notorious 1967 Abortion Act was introduced, the floodgates have opened, resulting in more than 8 million unborn babies being killed. However, safeguards were built into the Act inception there and terminations were supposed to be carried out only in certain extreme situations. The Act required cases to be certified by two registered practitioners, after consultation with the mother. These doctors were meant to assess the medical risks to her “in good faith” to ensure that certain conditions were met.

The Labour government of 1999 made the position very clear by stating: “Under the Abortion Act of 1967, pregnancies are terminated to protect health. Other than in an emergency to save a woman’s life, medical practitioners must give their opinions on the reasons under the Act for the termination, following consultation with the woman.” While these conditions were sometimes flouted and several hospital doctors were found guilty of signing off abortions illegally, without seeing the mother, the legal position remained the same.

However, we now hear of an attempt by a Government minister, apparently

by the back door, to dilute these conditions. In July 2012 Andrew Lansley, the then Health Secretary, is said to have issued guidance to abortion providers, that it was not necessary for two doctors to assess the mother in order to proceed to termination. This was done without informing or consulting parliament. Four years earlier, Mr Lansley, as Shadow Health Secretary had proposed, unsuccessfully, an amendment to the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill which would have abolished the “two doctors rule”. And in government he took the opportunity to promote his liberal views.

It was not until January 2013 that these “interim procedures” were put onto the Government website under the new Health Secretary, Jeremy Hunt. By then it became clear that Mr Lansley did not require the mother to consult even one doctor, as the following quotation from these procedures shows: “We consider it good practice that one of the two certifying doctors has seen the woman, though this is not a legal requirement”. The interim procedures eventually came up for consultation in November 2013 with the additional proviso, “Members of a multidisciplinary team can play a role in seeking information from the woman”. This would imply that it would suffice for a nurse, or even someone with little or no medical experience, to talk with the mother. Doctors would merely sign the consent forms, having had no contact with the patient.

This consultation has now ended and the guidelines are about to be published by the Department of Health. Dr Peter Saunders of the Christian Medical Fellowship states, “At that point Lansley’s new interpretation of the Abortion Act – that no doctor need see a woman before authorising an abortion – will be set in stone without Parliament ever having debated it and with most government MPs not even being aware that it has happened right under their noses”. Abortion is abhorrent, except when the mother’s life is in danger, and it is an abomination in the eyes of God – whoever sanctions it. Yet having some safeguards, and the requirement of two doctors to discuss the matter with the mother, just may save the lives of a few unborn children. Now even these safeguards are set to be taken away if the new procedures are officially legalised.

The further demeaning of life, at its most vulnerable, in the womb, shows the degree of cruelty in our society and is bringing further guilt on our nation. Truly “the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel” (Prov 12:10). *KHM*

“The Right Thing to Do”

Maria Miller, Culture Secretary in the UK Government, was responsible for piloting the Bill legalising same-sex marriage through the House of Commons. This legislation, she then claimed, was “the right thing to do”, though she

was, in fact, trampling on the divine institution of marriage. More recently, discrepancies in her claims for housing expenses have come to light. She made an apology, widely perceived to be somewhat perfunctory, to the House and has repaid an agreed amount of what she had claimed as expenses. Clearly, to put it mildly, she did not have God's blessing on her parliamentary work. She has now resigned from her ministerial position, remarking that this was "the right thing to do". God in His providence has shown that He still reigns. May He so work that all ungodly legislation will be repealed and multitudes brought to live in His fear. He is able to do so.

Church Information

Meeting of Synod

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland will meet in St Jude's Church, Glasgow, on Tuesday, 20 May 2014, at 6.30 pm, DV, when the retiring Moderator, Rev N M Ross, will conduct public worship.

(Rev) John MacLeod, Clerk of Synod

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, June 10, at 11.30 am.

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, June 17, at 2 pm.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway, on Tuesday, June 24, at 11 am.

Southern: At Glasgow, on Tuesday, June 24, at 1 pm.

Bookroom Manager

Applications are invited for the post of Bookroom Manager, which is expected to be vacant shortly. The successful applicant will be involved in selling directly to the public and by post to contacts in the UK and abroad; he/she will also be responsible for ordering the Bookroom's stock. The Bookroom also handles the distribution of Free Presbyterian Publications. He/she should have a pleasant personality, possess reasonable computer skills and apply good management principles to his/her work.

The person appointed will be accountable to the Publications and Bookroom Committee and must be in full accord with the Committee's commitment to promote the sale of Reformed Christian literature. He/she must be in full sympathy with the standards of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Applications, and requests for further information, should be sent to the Committee Clerk, Mr Roy Middleton, 2 Emerald Drive, Sandbach, CW11 4ND.

Home Mission Fund

By appointment of Synod, this year's special collection for the Home Mission Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during May.

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 J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Babblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Achany Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nnmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Farr** (by Daviot); Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (weekly). Contact Rev G G Hutton; tel: 01463 712872.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** 40 East Hamilton Street. Sabbath 2.30 pm.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am, 5 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Wick:** Church; **Thurso:** Church; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (as intimated). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh**, **Sheilebost**, **Strond** and **Geocrab** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Sabbath 12 noon. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacPherson; tel: 01569 760370.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9HY; tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- Ullapool:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Manse: Quay Street, IV26 2UE; tel: 01854 612449.
- Vatten:** Sabbath 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). **Glendale, Waternish:** As intimated. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

England

- Barnoldswick:** Kelbrook Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Friday 7.30 pm; Wednesday 8 pm, alternately in Sandbach and Gatley. **South Manchester:** Sabbath 6.00 pm, in Trinity Church, Massie Street, Cheadle (entry at rear of building). Rev K M Watkins, 1 North Street, Barnoldswick, BB18 5PE; tel: 01282 850296.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

- Larne:** Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J L Goldby MA, 23 Upper Cairncastle Road, Larne, BT40 2EF; tel: 02828 274865.

Canada

Chesley, Ontario: Church and Manse, 40 Fourth Street SW. Sabbath 10.30 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

Toronto, Ontario: Church and Manse. No F P Church services at present.

Vancouver, British Columbia: Contact: Mr John MacLeod, 202-815 4th Avenue, New Westminster, V3M 1S8; tel: 604-516-8648.

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith, 5222 Kendal Glen Court, Rosharon, Texas 77583; tel: 409 927 1564.

Australia

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

Sydney, NSW: Corner of Oxford and Regent Streets, Riverstone. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. 02 9627 3408; e-mail:sydneypchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J D Smith, 9 Pedlar Place, Conifer Grove, Auckland; tel: 09 282 4195.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact: Dr G Cramp; tel: 02 7454 2722.

Tauranga: Girl Guide Hall, 17th Avenue, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Thursday 7 pm. Contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen; tel: 075443677.

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

Singapore

Singapore: Sabbath: 9.30am and 5.30 pm; Beacons International College campus, 1A Short Street, Level 2, Room L2---A, Singapore 188210; Wednesday: 7.45 pm, #03-04A, SCN Industrial Building, 11 Sims Drive, Singapore 387385. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822; tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

Ukraine

Odessa: F P Mission Station, 3 Pestelya Street, 65031. Contact Mr I Zadorozhniyy, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levysky; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevysky@gmail.com.

Zimbabwe

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

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

Mbumba: Church and Hospital. Rev N Sibanda. Postal Address: Mbumba Mission Hospital, Private Bag T5406, Bulawayo.

New Canaan: Church.

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

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