

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

## Contents

<b>Taking God at His Word</b> .....	33
<b>What Paul Preached: Christ Crucified</b>	
A Sermon by Alexander Dyce Davidson .....	36
<b>John Wycliffe – the Scottish Connection</b>	
<b>3. To the Reformation and Beyond</b>	
Rev K M Watkins .....	44
<b>The Evil Heart of Unbelief</b>	
Mackintosh Mackay .....	50
<b>Learning from Christ’s Riches</b>	
Thomas Brooks.....	52
<b>Learning About Providence</b>	
Thomas Boston.....	56
<b>Obituary</b>	
Mr Donald Mackenzie.....	57
<b>Protestant View</b> .....	59
<b>Notes and Comments</b> .....	60
<b>Church Information</b> .....	64

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## Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

**July: First Sabbath:** Beaulay; **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.

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

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

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

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

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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## Taking God at His Word

Faith takes God at His word. The believer treats what God says as truth. Yet it is not as if someone listened to a lecture on, say, the planet Saturn, found it very interesting, and then went away feeling perfectly free to forget all that was said. What God has revealed in the Scriptures demands a response from us; it ought to influence our behaviour. This is because God has supreme authority over us; He created us, and it is our duty to obey Him. The fact that so many in this generation refuse to believe that the universe – and mankind in particular – is the result of God’s creative activity makes it easy for them to reject God’s right to direct them as to how they should live. Those who promote evolution have much to answer for.

In particular, we must take God at His word when He speaks to us about salvation, and about Jesus Christ as a Saviour. We must not treat what God has said about salvation as merely what is interesting. It demands a response, the response of faith – saving faith, not what is described as historical faith. Historical faith accepts the facts that, for instance, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, grew up in Nazareth, went about preaching to multitudes and performing many miracles, was crucified at Calvary and rose again on the third day. People who only have historical faith are still rejecting Christ as Saviour; they only assent to the accuracy of the facts about Him. Saving faith includes this assent but also something more significant. In the words of John Colquhoun of Leith, “saving faith is a real persuasion, or belief, of the revealed truths of God concerning Christ, and a cordial trust in Christ, and in God through Him, for all His salvation”.<sup>1</sup>

Those who have saving faith in Christ not only accept the facts of biblical history and doctrine but also trust in Him for salvation. They not only receive as true Jesus’ words: “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”; they actually believe *in* Him. So when Paul and Silas had to answer the Philippian jailer’s desperate question, “What must I do to be saved?” they

<sup>1</sup>John Colquhoun, *Saving Faith*, Free Presbyterian Publications reprint, 2010, p 20. Colquhoun (1748-1827) was one of the most noted Scottish ministers at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century.

not only declared to him “the word of the Lord” so that he would have the necessary information, but they directed him to “believe *on* the Lord Jesus Christ”. Believing *on* the Saviour means to *trust* on Him, and the same is true of believing *in* Him. That is required of everyone who hears the gospel, the good news concerning Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Scriptures and made known in preaching. And believers receive God’s testimony that Christ has proper authority for His work of salvation, that “the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world” (1 Jn 4:14).

Faith in Christ receives as true the testimony of the Bible concerning Christ in His Person and work. The Bible testifies that Christ is both divine and human: that the eternal Son of God took our nature in the fullness of time so that He might bear the guilt of those who are to be saved and keep the law on their behalf. But the Saviour must also be divine, so that He might be able to endure the punishment of sin and that His work might have merit before God His Father. In carrying out this work of satisfying divine justice, Christ was acting on behalf of His people – as their substitute.

The individual who believes on Christ also receives as true the testimony of the Bible concerning human sin, that he or she has offended against God by transgressing His holy law and by coming short of the perfect obedience which is due to that law. Further, not only are they guilty – justly liable to punishment for their sin – but they are also sinful, for sin “is an evil thing and bitter” (Jer 2:19); it is not only bitter in its terrible consequences but also evil in itself.

Lying behind the teaching of the Bible about sin is the fact that God is holy, that He has authority over us as our Creator – that He has a right to demand our obedience – and that He has revealed His law, which, like Himself, is perfectly holy. Further, because God is just, He *must* punish sin. So, at last, He must send away the unbelieving to endure the punishment of their sin in a lost eternity.

Now faith receives such truths with application to oneself; the individual acknowledges that *he* is a sinner against the holy God, who has authority *over him*, who is the just God that must punish *his sin*. Faith receives God’s testimony about human inability; the individual acknowledges that he cannot believe, that he needs the Holy Spirit to work in his heart to make him able and willing to believe in Christ.

We are obliged, before God, to receive the whole testimony of His Word. God is speaking, and we should trust everything that He says. We are warned: “He that believeth not God hath made Him a liar” (1 Jn 5:10). We are to believe God’s testimony about eternity, that there is a heaven and a hell, and to believe what He tells us about the characters of those who go to these

places. So, treating these aspects of His testimony seriously, we are to examine ourselves as to whether or not we have saving faith – as to whether or not we are trusting in Christ, and in Christ alone, for salvation. Let us always remember that we are to receive the testimony of God’s Word with application to ourselves.

We are to receive God’s testimony about the *blessings* of salvation. God’s children, in particular, are to receive His testimony about justification, adoption and sanctification. They are to take to heart that God declares that His justice is perfectly satisfied with believers, because of what Christ did in their place; they are justified. He will not deal with them according to their sin; it is forgiven. In fact they are treated as if they had always kept the law of God perfectly, because of what their Substitute has done in their place. Again, they are adopted; God has taken them into His family; He treats them as His children, with all the privileges that this suggests. And they are being sanctified; this is an ongoing work that will only be completed when the soul passes into glory. It is the work of the Holy Spirit, whereby God’s children “are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness”.<sup>2</sup>

Believers are not merely to treat these doctrines as information, but to apply them to their situation in a practical way. They are to remember their privileges as those who have been justified and adopted and, by faith, they are to feel encouraged accordingly. In spite of their continuing sinfulness, they are to recognise that the Spirit will not leave His work incomplete but will continue to sanctify them to the end (see Ph 1:6). Yet they are to be conscious of their responsibility to live holily and to pray the Lord to keep them from evil throughout their lives.

We have referred only to a small selection of the Bible’s teachings. There are many other doctrines we have not considered, including God’s eternal purposes; Christ’s offices as Prophet, Priest and King; the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. But faith is to receive all God’s teachings and, by grace, make a practical use of them. Not least, we are to worship Him – wholeheartedly – in the light of the doctrines He has revealed.

It is true, especially at the beginning of spiritual life, that believers may understand very little of such teachings. And the question of how little people need to know if they are to be saved is one that does not need an answer. God knows; that is what matters. Our duty is to learn as much as possible, not merely by way of receiving information; we are to seek a God-given faith to take Him at His word whatever He says – making a practical use of all these truths – so that we might walk on safely towards heaven.

<sup>2</sup>*The Shorter Catechism*, answer 35.

# What Paul Preached: Christ Crucified<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by *Alexander Dyce Davidson*

1 Corinthians 2:2. *For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.*

These words carry us back to the time when the Apostle resolved to go to Corinth to preach the gospel, when he was considering how he would most effectively discharge the duties of the Christian ministry. There was something in the circumstances of the Corinthians that must have made it somewhat difficult for the Apostle to decide what particular method might secure for the truth the greatest influence among them. When the gospel was first proclaimed to the Corinthians, their city was the seat of knowledge and luxury. All those pursuits which most involve imagination and taste flourished there under the fostering hand of wealth and refinement. To gain the ear of the Corinthians and make an impression on their hearts, one would need, it might seem, to proclaim truth with all the graces of eloquence.

As Paul journeyed towards that city, he might well ask himself, How am I to get access to the hearts of a Corinthian audience? Will they listen to such plain, unadorned statements as I have made to others about the way of salvation by a crucified Redeemer? If my labours among them are to be successful, must I not try to meet their prejudices, and conceal those parts of the truth which are most likely to prove offensive to them? But Paul knew that, underneath the glittering surface of polished society, there were depths of depravity which the human eye could not measure, that the wisdom on which the men of this world pride themselves is foolishness in the sight of God, and that the blood of Jesus is the only way in which the human soul can be purged from the guilt and defilement into which it has sunk. Remembering these things, he determined to know nothing among the Corinthians “save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”.

And how necessary it is for those who are now entrusted with the sacred office of ambassadors for Christ to do so! In the midst of the difficulties and temptations to unfaithfulness which assail them, how necessary it is for them, at the very start of their ministries, to entrench themselves within the ground marked out by the experience of such a man as Paul!

You will see that the text concentrates all the topics which come within the range of the Christian ministry in this one topic: “Jesus Christ, and Him

<sup>1</sup>Abridged from *Lectures and Sermons* by Alexander Dyce Davidson (1807-72). This was the first sermon Davidson preached, on 8 May 1836, after moving to the West Church. He spent his entire life in Aberdeen, ministering first in the Church of Scotland and, after the Disruption, in the Free Church.

crucified". This was the great subject of Paul's preaching and must therefore be the leading theme of all who are commissioned to turn men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. In the remainder of this discourse I wish to show that the preaching of Christ crucified is precisely the great topic which meets the necessities of mankind. By making known the Redeemer in His death and sufferings for sin, and pressing Him on the acceptance of our fellow creatures, we adopt the only plan which can be pursued for promoting their well-being both in time and in eternity. At the risk of being charged with often repeating the same things, and of having the gospel represented as false, we must, like Paul, be determined to know nothing among our people but Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

1. The preaching of Christ crucified is *the great doctrine suitable for man as a guilty being in God's sight*. Scripture testifies that this is the natural condition of the human race, and conscience corroborates its testimony. "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." It is unnecessary to multiply quotations; no one can look into the Word of God without finding in it the strongest statements about man's guilt. Some imagine that this guilt is only contracted by positive violations of God's law; on the contrary, it adheres to us as a consequence of Adam's breach of the first covenant. We bring it into the world with us, but we augment it by our actual transgression of God's commandments; yet we cannot remove it by any obedience of ours.

This point concerns each of us closely. Many people believe that mankind is placed simply in a state of probation in this world: if they discharge their religious duties – secret prayer and church attendance – and act towards their fellow creatures with tolerable honesty, they have nothing to fear, because God is merciful and gracious, and Christ has died for sinners. In other words, they hold that no one will be condemned at last but the most heinous and obstinate offenders – those who have set at nought divine and human laws. Is it possible, they ask, that individuals who have passed through life quietly and inoffensively, who have displayed so many amiable qualities, are to lie under the wrath of God? Yes, this is what the unerring record of the God of truth declares. There are indeed differences in the amount of guilt, but we are all guilty, on account of Adam's transgression, and therefore liable to punishment. The Bible finds us in a guilty state; it does not cast us into it.

Think of your solemn circumstances: God Himself charges you with guilt – guilt which no acknowledgement of yours can change, and no future action of yours can atone for. Yet the execution of the sentence is delayed for the present. Death, which brings the soul to God's tribunal, seems at a distance at present; there seem to be visions of happiness, almost endless, between

you and the threatenings of Scripture and the trump of the archangel. But these visions will pass away: death will come, judgement will come, the sentence will come, and the punishment of guilt will come, to all who have refused God's gracious invitations.

What is the duty of the ambassadors of Christ in these circumstances? Are they to try to gain the applause of their perishing fellow creatures by displaying from week to week the depth of their learning, and the extent of their researches, while the great matter of reconciliation with God is left altogether untouched? Are they to make flattering statements to please those who listen to them, when this will only make their spiritual slumber more sure? Are they to set before them only the requirements of the law, as if the deeds of the law could justify them before God – as if those requirements should not bring guilt home to everyone's conscience, compelling him to feel that he needs a remedy? No, in dealing thus with those committed to their charge, they would either be saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," or they would be tormenting them before the time.

What remedy are they authorised to propose? Just what Paul brought to the Corinthians: Jesus Christ crucified. Look to the suffering Redeemer, and you at once see justice avenging the broken covenant and mercy going out towards offenders. Does the law denounce a curse against everyone who does not continue in all things written in it? That curse was executed upon Christ, for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree". Was death threatened as the penalty of the first transgression? Christ submitted to death, and endured the penalty instead of His people; so the question now is, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is Christ that died." Is a sentence recorded against every soul of man that does evil? Christ has removed the handwriting that was against us, and has taken it "out of the way, nailing it to His cross".

Do our consciences reproach us for past sins, remind us that there is a day of reckoning, and force us to anticipate future wrath? Christ's sufferings for sin disarm the conscience of its power, for there is "no condemnation to them that are in Jesus Christ"; and "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ". Is death clothed with terror to the guilty soul, bringing it in to a state where God must be met face to face, and where punishment will no longer be delayed? Christ has destroyed death and him that had the power of it; He has enabled His people to say in the dark valley: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The knowledge of Christ crucified is precisely what man as a guilty sinner

needs to receive. If we ask those who appreciate that knowledge how they obtained their peace of conscience and hope in God, they will answer that it was by being brought to believe that their sins were transferred to Christ and that He atoned for these sins on the cross. They were thus convinced that God no longer had any controversy with them, but was well pleased with them for the sake of Christ's righteousness. Is this not your experience, if you have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before you in the gospel? Was it not the apprehension of Christ reconciling God to man, and man to God, by the blood of His cross, that erected the foundation on which you could build your hopes for eternity? Was this not what dispelled the cloud that cast a gloomy shadow over your greatest enjoyments? Is this not what you cling to as your hope in all the trials of this life? And if you were asked what should form the beginning, the burden and the end of a Christian ministry, would your answer not be: "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified"?

2. The preaching of Christ crucified is ***the only doctrine suitable for man as a being who must be raised to holiness if he is to be fitted to enjoy God.*** We cannot number the declarations of Scripture that we must be born again before we can dwell in God's presence. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "Evil shall not dwell with Thee. The foolish shall not stand in Thy sight; Thou hatest all the workers of iniquity." Yet, even if the Word of God had not spoken so explicitly, we might have concluded that, defiled by sin, the human soul could neither relish the society or the enjoyments of the blessed spirits who surround God's throne.

How is holiness to be transfused into a soul dead in trespasses and sins? The question is all-important. If in an ordinary case we wished to bring a disposition into someone's mind, we would point to the excellence of that disposition, and produce the best examples we could find of it. Will this plan succeed in urging the claims of holiness upon mankind? No, describe holiness as you will; speak of its beauty, dignity and excellence to the human heart alienated from Christ; and your efforts will be as unavailing as if you presented the finest combination of colours to the blind, for, the Scripture says, "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God". Or if, using an example to gain your end, you take the character of God, who is holiness itself, your attempt will be equally fruitless, for the very purity of His nature – His abhorrence of sin, and His righteous determination to punish it – makes Him an object of terror and hatred to His creatures.

Is it possible, you may ask, that God is an object of terror and hatred to anyone? Yes, "the carnal mind is enmity against God", and the language of the unrenewed heart is, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of Thy

ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him? And what profit should we have, if we pray unto Him?" Are these striking passages from Scripture not verified by experience? Is anything more painful, to a man ignorant of Christ, than to think of God as the God of holiness and justice? Is there any thought he is more anxious to banish from his mind?

Holiness then will not be produced in man by any description of it, or by exhibiting God's character, the only perfect example of it. Will he be driven to cultivate holiness if we work on his fears? No, set before him all the solemnities of the judgement to come and the terrors that await the wicked; urge the truth as powerfully as possible that, unless men depart from their wickedness and cultivate holiness, these torments will be theirs for ever; but the only effect will be to fill them with deeper enmity against the holy God.

How then can holiness be brought into a soul dead in trespasses and sins? As previously, the answer is to be found in the text: the preaching of Christ crucified. Bring the truth to bear on the mind that God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son a ransom for sinners, and let this truth, by the working of the Spirit, be believed, and you provide at once for the production and growth of holiness. When God's justice is seen to vindicate itself in the agonies of the Redeemer; when the truth of God is contemplated enforcing on Him, to the very letter, the punishment threatened on account of sin; when God's holiness is seen shutting up the streams of divine complacency from the Beloved of the Father because the iniquities of His people were laid on Him; God's character assumes a new aspect.

The sinner, who used to regard God as his enemy, looks on Him as his friend; he is melted by God's goodness when he sees Him not sparing His own Son, but giving Him up to death for the guilty. The root of enmity is destroyed and he, who could neither be softened by eloquence or subdued by fear, is led captive by believing the truth that God is reconciled to him through Christ crucified. Then he habitually delights to think of God. As he formerly tried to banish God from his mind, he now strives to keep Him constantly before him. He delights to feel God's presence with him; instead of saying, Depart from me, for I desire not the knowledge of Thy ways, he says, "My soul thirsteth for God, my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God". He values the Scriptures, which reveal God's purposes and His will; he values prayer as opening up a channel through which he may hold communion with God, and the other ordinances of religion as presenting so many means of raising his soul from earthly things toward God.

Thus the desires are banished which had dominion over him when the old nature was supreme, and are replaced by others more congenial to fellowship with God. His tastes and habits acquire a new, heavenly colouring; his affec-

tions are set on the things of God. Briefly, sin is mortified within him, and the image of God is gradually impressed on his soul. Such is the transformation effected by the believing reception of the truth that Christ suffered for the sin of His people, thereby magnifying the law and satisfying the justice of God and opening up a way by which He might give vent to His love in consistency with all His perfections. The resemblance to God generated in the souls of His people on earth is what qualifies them for the happiness of heaven; without it they cannot see God, and could not be happy even if they were admitted to His presence. When you reflect on this, you will surely once more admit that the beginning, the burden and the end of the Christian ministry ought to be: "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified".

**3.** The preaching of Christ crucified is *the only subject suitable for impressing a man with his duty*. Man is constitutionally active, and the Word of God describes the duties he is to perform. Now the performance of these duties are a test of the genuineness of his religious profession; the growth of holiness in the heart is indicated by the fruits of righteousness in the life. So it is a most important question how man may most effectively be influenced to comply with God's commands. The methods are various: we may speak to his fears, describe the punishment of disobedience, and warn him, as he values his immortal soul, to keep to the paths God has marked out in His Word. Such an argument may partially succeed with some; they may abstain from certain sins and perform certain commanded duties.

Or we may address his pride, pointing out the dignity that always attaches to virtue. Perhaps this line of argument may lead some to obey God's law to a degree. But will this obedience be as extensive as it ought to be, or will it be acceptable to God, who sees the secrets of the heart? To God it cannot be acceptable, because it does not proceed from love to Him. If you have not yet been converted, I appeal to your conscience: Does the amount of outward duty you render – be it prayer, or deeds of kindness – come from any desire to glorify God? Or is duty in general a burden to you? Everyone who knows his heart will acknowledge that this is a true picture.

Now there is only one way to overcome these tendencies and bring men to delight in their duty. It is to receive Jesus Christ as their Saviour. When the sinner is once convinced that God loves him and that, instead of consigning him to everlasting misery, He has sent His Son to die for him, so that through His death the gates of heaven might be opened, he asks how he can show his gratitude to his Redeemer. He then regards the law, not as the imperious dictates of a master who has no care for his servants' happiness, but as the gentle requirements of One who has loved them. The question no longer is, How can I do these things, denying myself pleasures, while others

are free to enjoy themselves as they please? but, Can I ever do enough for Him who for my sake endured the cross, despising the shame? It is not a constrained but a willing service that the children of God render, because such service is the fruit of love and gratitude, not of fear.

It has often been asserted that it encourages sin if we make Christ crucified the chief topic of preaching and set forth faith in Him as the instrument of the sinner's justification before God. To assert this, however, reveals deplorable ignorance of the Bible and of the human heart. The Bible declares, in innumerable passages, that men are justified, not by the deeds of the law, but by faith in Christ. And it reveals ignorance of the heart, for how would you be most likely to bring an individual to comply with your wishes even when you were absent. Would you seek to tie him down by terror? You may succeed when you are watching him. Love, on the other hand, will influence him whether you are present or absent, and under its power he will even strive to anticipate your wishes.

Love then is the principle by which God binds His people to obedience. He presents the Saviour to them bearing their sins in His own body on the tree, and tells them to believe that His anger against them is pacified for Christ's sake. Receiving this truth kindles in them a corresponding love to God. The believing soul begins to ask, "What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits?" He rejoices to have an opportunity to testify his gratitude to Him that bought him with His blood, and he abounds in holy obedience. Christ crucified is the theme which pacifies the guilty conscience, secures growth of holiness, provides for the discharge of duty. Therefore it should be all in all, to ministers and people. Once more let me ask you: Should this not form the beginning, burden and end of the Christian ministry?

By the grace of God then, as I am accountable to Him for discharging the stewardship He has entrusted to me, I purpose, like the Apostle of the Gentiles, to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified – to hold forth the Redeemer as the only ground of the sinner's hope and sanctification, and providing, by His sufferings and death in the place of the guilty, the only motive that can effectually induce men to live, not unto themselves, but unto God. I am well aware that the preaching of Christ will here, as elsewhere, arouse the opposition of some. Wedded to their sins and determined to enjoy, as they express it, the hour while it lasts, they reject the Saviour's entreaties and His servants' warnings. But we must not allow their opposition to turn us from our path; and if they are resolved to treasure up wrath to themselves against the day of wrath by despising God's offered mercy, we are equally resolved that their blood shall be upon their own head.

I am also aware that when a minister of the gospel makes Christ crucified

the leading topic of his ministry, and interweaves it as far as possible with every other topic he presents to his people, he runs the risk that people will think he lacks variety. But when, almost every week some are in church for the last time, I do feel that ministers of Christ ought every Sabbath to speak to sinners about Christ's salvation. They should not always use the same language, arguments and illustrations, but the same great truth must be pressed: "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners". Can a Christian minister find any other truth which, in all circumstances, so suits this purpose?

When called to awaken an obstinate sinner from his deadly lethargy and flee from the wrath to come, what weapon can I use to reach his heart but the truth that Christ submitted to the cross for sinners? The terrors of the law will never soften the heart apart from the proclamation of the love of God in Christ. But that love, when felt through the influence of the Spirit, will draw forth the tears of penitence and the fruits of holiness from those who appear most hopeless to the human eye. When I am called to administer hope and comfort to the doubting believer, where shall I find an argument to remove his doubts, to invigorate his hopes, and to send him on his way rejoicing, unless I draw it from the fact that He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, shall with Him also freely give us all things?

When I wish to arouse people to deeds of sympathy and plead the cause of the poor who have nothing to help them, or of the heathen who are perishing for lack of knowledge, whence shall I select the views that will most readily excite Christian benevolence, except from the fact that Christ, who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich? When I am called to fortify those whom God has been pleased to afflict, either with sickness or trials, and to address to them the lessons of patience and quiet submission to His will, where shall I find an argument for my purposes so fit as this: Christ also suffered, the just for the unjust?

When I am called to see a fellow creature lying on a deathbed, and to encourage the soul in that trying hour, what comfort can I give, but what flows from the love of the Redeemer? What hope can I point to but the fact that His atonement extends even to the chief of sinners? And when I am called to sympathise with the bereaved, whose earthly friends have died with the well-grounded hope of a glorious resurrection from this state of sorrow, sin and trial, where shall I find consolation if not here: Jesus who died rose again and will come again to change the vile bodies of His people?

And now, while it is the duty of every Christian minister to preach Christ crucified, let me remind you that it is your duty to believe on Him. This is the commandment of God, that you believe in Him whom God has sent.

# John Wycliffe – the Scottish Connection<sup>1</sup>

## 3. To the Reformation and Beyond

*Rev K M Watkins*

By the end of the fifteenth century, the truth of the gospel as taught by Wycliffe had taken root especially in the south west of Scotland. Resby and Crow, the Lollards martyred in 1407 and 1433 respectively, “had not died in vain. The simple evangelical doctrines of Wycliffe had spread in various districts of the country, and in no place so widely as the central part of Ayrshire called Kyle.”<sup>2</sup>

In 1494, Blackadder, Archbishop of Glasgow, accused no fewer than 30 persons before the King, nearly all from Kyle. Among them were men and women of the gentry. It is clear from the 34 “articles”, for which they were accused, why they were called the *Lollards of Kyle*. A few articles selected from the list given in full by Knox<sup>3</sup> will demonstrate the direct connection from Wycliffe to Kyle.

Wycliffe witnessed against the pope; so do the Kyle articles: “12. The pope is not the successor of Peter, but where he said, Get behind me, Satan. 13. The pope deceives the people by his bulls and his indulgences. . . . 17. The pope exalts himself against God, and above God. . . . 32. The pope is the head of the Kirk of Antichrist.”

Wycliffe witnessed against Romanist idolatry; so do the articles: “1. Images are not to be had, nor yet to be worshipped. 2. The relics of saints are not to be worshipped. . . . 28. We should not pray to the glorious Virgin Mary, but to God only.”

Wycliffe witnessed against the mass; so do the articles: “6. Christ ordained no priests to consecrate. 7. After the consecration in the mass, there remains bread; and . . . not the natural body of Christ. . . . 14. The mass profits not the souls that are in purgatory. . . . 23. True Christians receive the body of Jesus Christ every day. . . . 31. Such as worship the Sacrament . . . commits idolatry.”

Wycliffe witnessed against pardon of sin being placed in the hands of men; so do the articles: “15. The pope and the bishops deceive the people by their pardons. . . . 18. The pope cannot remit the pains of purgatory. . . . 26. The pope forgives not sins, but only God.”

Wycliffe argued for the priesthood of all believers, with direct access to

<sup>1</sup>This is the third and final part of a paper given at the Theological Conference in October 2014. The first two parts outlined Wycliffe’s life and witness and the spread of his doctrine to Scotland during the first half of the fifteenth century.

<sup>2</sup>John Macpherson, *A History of the Church in Scotland*, Paisley, 1901, p 70.

<sup>3</sup>John Knox’s *Works*, edited by D Laing, Wodrow Society, 1846, pp 8-10.

God through Christ; so do the articles: “10. Every faithful man or woman is a priest.”

Wycliffe argued against the Church having equal authority to Scripture; so do the articles: “30. We are not bound to believe all that the doctors of the Kirk have written.”

Some of the other articles were unjust accusations. Knox has been followed by others in demonstrating that, on the contrary, the Lollards of Kyle maintained Scriptural views of these matters,<sup>4</sup> but as for those that are fairly stated, and which strike against Romanist corruptions, rightly does Calderwood say: “By these articles may appear that, in the time of greatest darkness, the Lord made the light of His truth to shine to some few, when prophecy and sound of preaching of the Word in public had decayed”.<sup>5</sup> Knox had noted divine providence in the articles being recorded: “By these Articles, which God of His merciful providence caused the enemies of His truth to keep in their registers, may appear how mercifully God hath looked upon this Realm, retaining within it some sponk<sup>6</sup> of His light, even in the time of greatest darkness”.<sup>7</sup> “The men who held these views,” says Hay Fleming, “had travelled a long way on the road which led to Protestantism.”<sup>8</sup> Workman stated, “They had not departed widely from Wycliffe’s teaching”.<sup>9</sup>

As for the trial itself, Adam Reid did most of the speaking for the Lollards, and was given Wycliffe-like wisdom against their adversaries. “Adam Reid appears to have taken the chief part in the defence, and to have answered with such spirit, point, and humour, as to amuse [King] James, and baffle the bishop, completely.”<sup>10</sup> MacEwan cites an example: “Blackadder charged Reid with not believing that God is in heaven, to which Reid retorted that he believed that God was both in heaven and on earth, whereas Blackadder and his faction believed not that God was on earth: otherwise they would not play the proud prelate and neglect the charge of Christ to preach the gospel”.<sup>11</sup> Echoes of Wycliffe’s voice are unmistakable.

<sup>4</sup>Knox, *Works*, pp 8-11.

<sup>5</sup>David Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, Wodrow Society, 1842, p 51.

<sup>6</sup>Sponk “literally meant a spark of fire, but its early uses in Scots were largely figurative” for “a spark . . . a trace . . . of something”. *Perspectives on the Older Scottish Tongue*, ed Christian J Kay and Margaret A Mackay, Edinburgh University Press, 2005, p 14.

<sup>7</sup>Knox, *Works*, vol 1, p 10.

<sup>8</sup>D Hay Fleming, *The Reformation in Scotland*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1910, p 26.

<sup>9</sup>Herbert B Workman, *John Wyclif, a Study of the English Medieval Church*, vol 1, Clarendon Press, 1926, p 11.

<sup>10</sup>William M Hetherington, *History of the Church of Scotland*, Edinburgh, 1843, p 11.

<sup>11</sup>Alexander R MacEwan, *A History of the Church in Scotland*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1913, vol 1, p 384.

Their spirited defence, along with the fact that some of them were known to the King<sup>12</sup> meant that they escaped punishment. Besides, “the young King . . . was not of the stuff of which inquisitors are made, and he good-naturedly contrived to end the trial in a jest”.<sup>13</sup> They were set free, with a warning to be content with the Church’s teaching, and not to adopt any of the new doctrines. Calderwood ascribes all to the grace of God: “The Lord inclined the King’s heart to favour them . . . The Lord also assisted them with boldness and courage, to answer to their accusers with liberty.”<sup>14</sup>

Archbishop Blackadder feared where this would lead. From his point of view, his fears were not groundless. “This was a signal triumph to the Lollards. The trial made their principles better known in the country than ever they had been before; and . . . mightily quickened their progress.”<sup>15</sup> “They were the real progenitors of the great reformation which, in a little more than half a century, was to raze to the ground the whole structure of the Romish Church in Scotland.”<sup>16</sup>

So by the advent of the Reformation century, Wycliffe’s scriptural teachings of the gospel had already spread in Scotland. “The Lollards of Kyle in Ayrshire were claimed by Knox as the forerunners of the Scotch Reformation.”<sup>17</sup> “To these Lollards of Kyle John Knox looked back as to his spiritual ancestors.”<sup>18</sup> David Calderwood, speaking from the vantage point of the seventeenth century, put it like this: “We may see, that Luther is not the first author of our new religion, as the Papists call it, nor Mr Patrick Hamilton the first that professed it”.<sup>19</sup> Of course, no one claims that Lollard light was equal to Reformation light. “It was the teaching and death of Hamilton that . . . decisively marked the beginning of the Reformation in Scotland.”<sup>20</sup> Still, the followers of Wycliffe set the backdrop for the sixteenth-century Reformation.

One of the named Lollards of Kyle, George Campbell of Cessnock, had a son called John who was himself “notable . . . for his uncommon piety”, and had a chaplain “who used to read and expound the New Testament in the vernacular to him and his family”.<sup>21</sup> Possessing the Bible in the common

<sup>12</sup>Knox says they were his “great familiars”. Knox, *Works*, vol 1, p 11.

<sup>13</sup>Hume Brown, *History of Scotland*, Cambridge, 1902, vol 1, p 9.

<sup>14</sup>Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol 1, p 53.

<sup>15</sup>William Marshall, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, Edinburgh, 1884, p 99.

<sup>16</sup>Macpherson, *A History of the Church in Scotland*, p 71.

<sup>17</sup>*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 1902, entry on *Lollards* by T M Lindsay, downloaded 21 October 2014 from: <http://www.1902encyclopedia.com/L/LOL/lollards.html>.

<sup>18</sup>Hume Brown, *History of Scotland*, vol 1, p 303.

<sup>19</sup>Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol 1, p 55.

<sup>20</sup>Hume Brown, *History of Scotland*, vol 1, p 373.

<sup>21</sup>From the letter by Alexander Ales (also known as Alesius) to James V in the 1530s, in

tongue, along with New Testament exposition, firmly places John Campbell in his father's Wycliffite tradition.

Sometime around 1500, this John Campbell, together with his wife and chaplain, were put on trial for heresy, during which he appealed to the King. John Campbell, however, had not been blessed with the gift of ready utterance, and, joined with a timidity of character, he could put his defence only weakly. However, the King then turned to his wife. Says Alesius: "So clearly and convincingly, by quotations from Scripture, did she disprove the charges made, that the King not only acquitted . . . all accused, but even rose and embraced the lady, greatly praised her study of Christian doctrine, and sharply chid the monks, threatening to take severe measures against them if they ever afterwards caused trouble of that sort to honest and innocent people".<sup>22</sup> Says D'Aubigné: "The brave Scotchwoman had fought a battle . . . and sounded the prelude to the Reformation."<sup>23</sup> And how had she done it? By reading the Bible for herself in her own tongue – one of Wycliffe's key contentions.

The Campbells of Cessnock were not "the only family which had a written copy of the New Testament in the vernacular".<sup>24</sup> A man called Murdoch Nisbet, of Hardhill, again in Ayrshire, imbibed Lollard doctrine about 1500. He fled overseas, probably to Germany, 13 years later, taking with him a copy of Wycliffe's version of the New Testament modified into the Scots language. He had appended to it a translation of Luther's prologue to his German Bible. On his return to Scotland, Nisbet had a vault dug under his house, where he read his book and instructed those who came to him. It would not be long before Tyndale's New Testament would arrive in Scotland, but already the seed of God's Word was being sown in the south west, thanks to Wycliffe's endeavours. "Thus in Scotland, as well as in England and Bohemia, Wycliffe's life-work was linked on with the larger reformation of which he was in popular opinion the 'Morning Star'. Wycliffe's revolt was not the 'isolated movement' without lasting effect which some historians have represented it to be."<sup>25</sup>

It is no coincidence that Wishart and Knox were later to find such a ready audience for Reformation doctrine in Ayrshire. "It is not without desert of due commendation," Calderwood comments, "that Mr Knox, in his *History*,

Hay Fleming, *The Reformation in Scotland*, pp 27-29. Alesius was won to the Reformation cause by Patrick Hamilton's arguments and martyrdom.

<sup>22</sup>Quoted in Hay Fleming, *The Reformation in Scotland*, p 28.

<sup>23</sup>D'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation in the Time of Calvin*, London, 1875, vol 6, p 27.

<sup>24</sup>Hay Fleming, *The Reformation in Scotland*, p 30.

<sup>25</sup>Workman, *John Wyclif, a Study of the English Medieval Church*, vol 1, pp 11-12.

calleth Kyle ‘an old receptacle to the servants of God’”.<sup>26</sup> Hume Brown says: “It was in Ayrshire that George Wishart and [John Knox] were one day to find the quickest response to that teaching which was to issue in the ruin of the ancient Church”.<sup>27</sup> Wishart preached there; and in his visit to Scotland in 1556, Knox preached in a number of houses in Kyle and in Ayr itself. In several places he even found people to whom he could dispense the Lord’s Supper in a scriptural manner.

Another circumstance in the south west takes us all the way to the Second Reformation in the seventeenth century. Samuel Rutherford was to find a welcome for his gospel labours there, and even that was connected with Wycliffe. Included among Rutherford’s correspondents were the Gordons, of Earlston. It is recounted that hidden in a wall at the old castle of Earlston was found a copy of Wycliffe’s Bible. “It seems,” writes A A Bonar in his “Sketch of Rutherford’s Life” prefaced to his edition of the *Letters*, “that the Lollards of Kyle . . . had brought it to Earlston. We know that there were friends and members of the family of Earlston who embraced the gospel even in those days.”<sup>28</sup> Wodrow confirms this: the Gordons of Earlston “used to entertain the disciples of Wycliffe, and had a New Testament in the vulgar tongue, which they used in reading at meetings in the woods about Earlston House”.<sup>29</sup>

Bonar makes the connection clear: “In the sixteenth century, some of the ancestors of Viscount Kenmure are found holding the doctrines of Wycliffe, which had been handed down to them. May we not believe that the Gordons of Earlston, in after days, were not a little indebted to the faith and prayers of these ancient witnesses who hid the sacred treasure in the castle wall? . . . Their faith and patience were acknowledged in after days by the blessing sent down on that quarter, when the Lord, in remembrance of His hidden ones, both raised up the Gordons of Earlston, with many others of a like spirit, and also sent thither His servant Samuel Rutherford, to sound forth the word of life, and make the lamp of truth blaze, like a torch, over all that region.”<sup>30</sup>

It should also be noted that a number of the sufferers for Christ’s crown and covenant in the second half of the seventeenth century could trace their roots to Lollard ancestors in the south west. John Nisbet, a great-grandson of Murdoch Nisbet of Hardhill, mentioned above, fought at Rullion Green,

<sup>26</sup>Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol 1, p 55.

<sup>27</sup>Hume Brown, *History of Scotland*, vol 1, p 303.

<sup>28</sup>*Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, Banner of Truth reprint, 1984, p 2.

<sup>29</sup>Quoted by J C Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, New York, 1908, p 268.

<sup>30</sup>*Letters of Samuel Rutherford*, p 2.

Drumclog and Bothwell, before being martyred at the Edinburgh Grassmarket in 1685. Likewise, William Gordon, “lineally descended from that famous Alexander Gordon who entertained the followers of John Wycliffe” at Earlston, mentioned above, was persecuted for his faithfulness to Christ. In 1667 he “was turned out of his house and all” before he was killed 12 years later.<sup>31</sup> Thus Wycliffe’s influence on Scottish faithfulness can be traced even into covenanting times.

Fife was another part of Scotland where Lollardy took hold before the Reformation. John Andrew Duncan was the son of the laird of Airdrie, in Fife. He was taken to England, to Beverley in Yorkshire, where he imbibed Wycliffe’s doctrines and became a Lollard. On his return to Fife he was very close to Patrick Hamilton. As a result, it has been argued, “Hamilton was strongly prepossessed in favour of the new doctrines”<sup>32</sup> – that is, the Wycliffite doctrines for which Hamilton was soon to give his life. Thomas M’Crie maintains that Duncan made an unsuccessful attempt to rescue Hamilton from his captors, saying that “in Fife the [Lollards] were so numerous as to have formed the design of rescuing Patrick Hamilton by force on the day of his execution”<sup>33</sup>.

M’Crie also wrote, “We have been accustomed to suppose that Patrick Hamilton was the first who introduced the Reformed opinions into Scotland, that he acquired them abroad, and that they were embraced by very few of his countrymen previously to his martyrdom. This opinion requires to be corrected. Before that youthful and zealous Reformer made his appearance, the errors and corruptions of Popery had been detected by others, who were ready to co-operate with him in his measures of reform. The more the subject is investigated, the more clearly, I am persuaded, it will appear that the opinions of Wycliffe had a powerful and extensive influence upon the Reformation. Even in Scotland they contributed greatly to predispose the minds of men to the Protestant doctrine.”<sup>34</sup>

Wycliffe the Englishman never set foot on Scottish soil. But his influence most certainly did, preparing the way for the Reformation in Scotland, the purest of them all. “Link by link the Lollard influence in Scotland can be traced back to the very days of Wycliffe himself.”<sup>35</sup> Thus our scriptural testimony today can be traced back more than 600 years, to what the Lord did through Wycliffe, that godly man of the 1300s.

<sup>31</sup>John Howie, *Scots Worthies*, Edinburgh, 1870, pp 403-409.

<sup>32</sup>Marshall, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, pp 100-101.

<sup>33</sup>Thomas M’Crie, *Works*, Edinburgh and London, 1856, vol 2, p 405.

<sup>34</sup>M’Crie, *Works*, vol 2, p 4.

<sup>35</sup>Carrick, *Wycliffe and the Lollards*, p 268.

# The Evil Heart of Unbelief<sup>1</sup>

*Mackintosh Mackay*

Hebrews 3:12. *Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.*

“**T**he heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according the fruit of his doings” (Jer 17: 9, 10). No one had more deep experience of the human heart than the Apostle Paul. He was a chosen vessel to the Lord; and the Lord tried him, and proved him, and made him jealous over himself with godly jealousy. It is he, we have every reason to believe, who is here addressing the “brethren” by inspiration of the Spirit and giving them this salutary warning from God.

It is strange, indeed unaccountable, that while we may be convinced of our own natural unbelief and feel its evil and guilt and cry to God for deliverance from it, we may still cherish unbelief at the same time. The human heart is as the chambers of imagery the prophet saw in vision. After he had seen many evils, his omniscient guide leads him onward, saying, “Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do” (Ezk 8:13). When God’s gracious voice and commandment reach the soul, offering Himself in Christ to be our God and Redeemer, and when the soul, acknowledging its own guilt and its need of an Almighty Saviour, turns to the Lord Jesus, then the heart feels its unbelief and its inability to trust in Christ. It seeks to be delivered from the power of this unbelief and seeks grace to overcome it, and God’s enlightening revelation shows the soul the glory and all-sufficiency of the Saviour.

Every believer has cause to bless God that this revelation is given in such measure as to keep the soul waiting upon Him. But while God is so gracious, how unworthy are the responses made, even by believers, to His loving-kindness and His tender mercies – not to speak of the numerous backslidings which they have to lament and which hinder the growth of their souls in spiritual life and holiness, even at their best state and in their best frames. How much remains with them of a self-righteous tendency! The object of faith is Christ, and it is surely unbelief which leads the mind to take comfort from any other object or source.

But there is such unbelief in them that it will break forth when they are little aware of its existence. They cherish it unknown to themselves, and if God was not indeed the God of infinite compassion and of longsuffering –

<sup>1</sup>An evening meditation, taken with editing from *The Christian’s Daily Companion*. Mackay (1793-1873) was, at the time of writing this piece, a minister in Dunoon.

if their Surety in covenant and their Intercessor in heaven was not their *merciful* High Priest – their own deceitfulness of heart would consume them and bear down the life of godliness in their souls. It would reduce them, while outwardly professing the faith of Christ, to a dead formality, an unworthy and base hypocrisy of spirit. While they complain, with good cause, of the weakness of their faith, the darkness or dimness of their views, there is in their hearts what would treat their complaints and longings as having merit.

And suppose that tendency to depart from the living God, as He is revealed in Christ, should be permitted to have the ascendancy in His people's hearts, and they permitted to build on any other foundation than that which is already laid. Then their souls would be lost; the waters would cover them; they would sink beneath the stream or be carried away by this evil current of their own unbelief and natural pride of heart.

The soul must be continually aware of this its own evil tendency; watch unto prayer against it; wait on the Lord for increase of grace and for the enlightening power of the Spirit of truth. The soul must wait on the Teacher and Comforter to abide upon it; to show to it more and more clearly and largely the glory of the Saviour; to reveal to them His covenant; to bring them within its bonds in the experience of their souls, as the only place where there is liberty, and where their souls can really prosper in the knowledge and experience of faith and hope. This tendency of the heart, as the power of evil still existing in them, ever and unweariedly seeks its opportunities to act – to have its own unholy dominion. How great is believers' need to be upon their watch-tower, and jealous of their hearts with a godly jealousy.

But though unbelief takes this special shape with those who are quickened to follow after God, how many other shapes does it also appear in! It is so deeply seated and rooted in the soul that, however often rebuked by the manifestations of God's goodness, it will still again spring up and trouble them. In the times of the believer's prosperity, whether temporal or spiritual, it will seek to turn him aside. The world will come in and claim dominion again in the affections. This will deaden the soul and darken the understanding. In times of adversity and trial, unbelief will tend to overwhelm the soul with suspicions, doubts and fears. In the hour of temptation it will tend to divert the mind entirely from God and from every believing view of Him which the soul has ever received. Its shapes are so many, its places in the heart so hidden, its power is so subtle that we may be sure that it is exercising its power whenever we are unaware of its presence and not watching against its movements and wiles as we experience them.

It is that principle on which the author of evil lays hold, claims as his own, and knows to be his own in the believer's spirit. But the blessed and

omnipotent Saviour has a stronger claim, and He has full authority to assert His claim to the soul which He has redeemed by His own blood, and He will shortly bruise Satan under His people's feet. Many have been the promising appearances destroyed by this spiritual blight. True, it cannot destroy the "incorruptible seed" of the kingdom, when that is sown by the great Husbandman. But how are we to know whether the seed is really in us?

It must be proved by its growing up, by our being drawn nearer and nearer to Christ, as our all and in all. "Faith which worketh by love" is the principle of spiritual life in the soul. It draws the soul to Christ; it quickens it into filial obedience. It makes the soul quick-sighted in detecting in it what is contrary to His honour and glory, that which dishonours Him. How great is the soul's need to have this principle strengthened, watered, refreshed and invigorated every day and hour, by the Spirit's influence and power through the truth applied to the heart. How near does Christ bring Himself to the soul! And how necessary that He should come in and take up His abode in the heart – that He might be honoured as continually present there, and that we might truly know His blessed name and be devoted to His service and glory. Nothing but the Spirit's testifying power can make the heart even desire this. And when the heart does not desire it, surely it is the evil heart of unbelief that prevails, in departing from the living God.

O my soul, what have you been seeking and desiring most this day? What have you chiefly been engaged in? Have I not cause to dread the power of this powerful and destructive enemy? Has it not been assailing my spirit? Have I not been ensnared by it? "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief." Destroy the evil heart; renew it by Thy gracious power. Draw me, that I may run after Thee. "Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned." Let not this sin rule over me, but let grace reign through righteousness, abounding toward me, and setting my soul free.

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## Learning from Christ's Riches<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas Brooks*

**3** If Christ is so rich, then take heed of three things. (1.) Take heed of sitting down dejected and discouraged under any losses or troubles that have happened or shall happen to you for the name of Christ. He is universally rich; He is able to make up all your losses and needs: "But my God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus

<sup>1</sup>Some points of application, as edited, from Brooks' book, *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, in *Works*, vol 3.

(Phil 4:19). The fountain has no less water for the vessel it fills; so the Lord Jesus Christ has never a whit the less for what He gives to His saints.

When Zedislaus, a Polish general, had lost his hand in the King's service, the King sent him a golden hand. Ah, Christians, when you lose this or that for Him, He will send you a golden hand; if you lose a penny for Him, He will give you a pearl. Christ will not live long in any man's debt; if He did, He would lose His glory.

(2.) Take heed of despairing by reason of your sins. I confess, the least sin should humble the soul, but certainly the greatest sin should never discourage the soul, much less should it work the soul to despair. Read 1 Timothy 1:13-15, and (I had almost said) despair if thou canst. Despairing Judas perished, while murderers of Christ, believing on Christ, were saved. Despair is an exceeding vile sin; it is a word of eternal reproach, dishonour and confusion; it declares the devil a conqueror; and what greater dishonour can be done to Christ than for a soul to proclaim, before all the world, the devil a crowned conqueror?

A despairing soul is "magor missabib", a terror to himself; his heart a hell of horror; his conscience an "aceldama", a field of black blood. He has no rest at home or abroad, at bed or board, but is as if infernal devils followed him in fearful shapes, terrifying and tormenting his perplexed soul. An eternity of misery, feared or felt, begets that monster which, like Medusa's head, astonishes with its very aspect and strangles hope, which is the breath of the soul. Other miseries may wound the spirit, but despair kills it dead.

(3.) Take heed of presuming. Take heed of taking encouragement to sin because Christ is rich in grace and mercy. Christ is a lion as well as a lamb; He has a sword as well as a sceptre. To argue from the riches of mercy to liberty in sin is the devil's logic. A soul that thus reasons is a soul left by God, a soul that is on the last step of the ladder, a soul that Satan is leading by the hand; and only the eternal God knows where Satan will lead him. What the women sang of Saul and David, that Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands (1 Sam 18:6,7), I may say of despair and presumption: Despair has slain her thousands, but presumption has slain her ten thousands.

"Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom 6:1,2). Rather the shining of God's mercy on us should extinguish sin in us, as the Apostle argues in Romans 2:4. Christ seems to say to souls, as Theseus said once, "Go and tell Creon, Theseus offers you a gracious offer, yet I am pleased to be friends if you will submit. This is my first message, but if this offer does not prevail, look for me to be up in arms." Ah souls, if you shall abuse the

riches of grace by sinning presumptuously against Christ, Christ will take up arms, and you shall die for it.

4. If Christ is so rich, open to Christ when He knocks. Christ knocks by His Word; He knocks by His rod; He knocks by His Spirit; He knocks by His messengers; and He knocks by conscience. O open to Him, for He is very rich. Though you shut the door against a poor man, yet you will open it to one that is rich; and why then not to Christ, who would fain have entrance? "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me" (Rev 3:20).

*"Behold, I stand."* I that am the King of glory, I that am King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Ps 24:7-9, Rev 17:14). I that am rich in mercy, rich in goodness, rich in grace, rich in glory, I stand at the door and knock. I that have gold to enrich you, I that have eyesalve to enlighten you, I that have glorious apparel to clothe you, I that have mercy to pardon you, I that have power to save you, I that have wisdom to counsel you, I that have happiness to crown you, stand at the door and knock.

*"If any man open."* If the master will not, yet if the servant will; if the mistress will not, yet if the maid will; if the parent will not, yet if the child will; if the rich man will not, yet if the poor man will; if the Pharisee will not, yet if the publican will; I will come in and sup with him, and he with Me.

Jesus Christ has the greatest worth and wealth. As the worth and value of many pieces of silver is in one piece of gold, so all the heavenly excellencies that are scattered abroad in angels and men are united in Christ, indeed all the whole volume of perfection which is spread through heaven and earth is epitomised in Christ. They say it is true of the oil at Rheims that, though it is continually spent in the inauguration of the kings of France, yet it never wastes. Christ is a pot of manna, a cruse of oil, a bottomless ocean of all comforts and contents that never fail. A saint may say, In having nothing, I have all things, because I have Christ; having therefore all things in Him, I seek no other reward, for He is the universal reward.

5. If Christ is so rich, sit down and wonder at His condescending love: that One so rich should fall in love with those that are poor, wretched, miserable, blind and naked (Rev 3:17-21), that One so high should look so low as poor we, that One so great, that One who is the Lord and heir of all, should match with us that have nothing at all! O the breadth, the length, the depth, the height of Christ's love to unlovely souls, to those that had neither external or internal worth which might in the least draw His love towards them (Heb 1:2-4, Eph 3:17-19, Ezek 16:6). They were indebted to God for the clothes they wore, the bread they ate, the houses they lived in, the air they breathed

in, the beds they lay on, and the ground they trode on. Now for Christ to love such people and to be willing to bestow Himself upon such nothings, how should this work on them to spend their days in admiring and contemplating His kindness!

6. If Christ is as rich as you have discovered, prize Him above all. As the people prized David above themselves, saying, "Thou art worth ten thousand of us" (2 Sam 18:3), so should saints lift up Jesus Christ above themselves, and above everything else. He that does not lift Christ up above all has no interest in Christ at all; he that does not set Christ above all is not one of His disciples: "If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Lk 14:26). Surely they do not truly love Christ who love anything more than Christ. Other saints have lifted up Christ above all their lands, relations and lives, as you may see in Hebrews 11, and so did a multitude of the martyrs. As Pharaoh set up Joseph above all and made him governor of the land, and as Darius set up Daniel over all, so you must prize Christ and set Him up above all.

Remember a few things, that this may stick the better upon your hearts.

[1.] A Christ highly prized will be a Christ greatly delighted in. Every soul delights in Christ as he prizes Christ and no otherwise. The reason of reasons why Christ is no more delighted in is because He is no more prized among the sons of men. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my Beloved among the sons. I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste" (Song 2:3). To see this object delights the eye of a believer; to hear this object delights the ear of a believer; to enjoy, to possess this object delights the heart of a believer.

The apple tree is delightful for shadow; so is Christ. He is a shadow to poor souls when they are scorched with troubles within and terrors without. "And a man [that is, Christ] shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Is 32:2).

The apple tree is delightful for pleasantness of fruit; so is the Lord Jesus for those pleasant fruits of righteousness and holiness that grow upon Him.

And the apple tree is delightful for varieties; so is Christ, for there are all varieties of excellencies in Him. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell" (Col 1:19). We delight in persons and things as we prize them, and no otherwise. Jonathan highly prized David and delighted in him accordingly. Jacob highly prized Rachel and delighted in her answerably. You will delight in Christ as you prize Him; if you prize Him but a little, you will delight in Him but a little.

[2.] A Christ highly prized will be a Christ gloriously obeyed. Every man obeys Christ as he prizes Christ, and no otherwise. The higher price any soul sets upon Christ, the more noble will that soul be in his obedience to Christ. If Christ were more prized in the world, He would be more obeyed in the world. A soul that prizes Christ highly is better at obeying than at disputing any command of Christ. If Christ will command such a soul to step over the world's crown to take up his cross, the soul will do it, as you may see in Moses (Heb 11:24-26). He sets a higher price on Christ's cross than on Pharaoh's crown. When Christ's cross and the world's crown stood in competition, Moses stepped over the world's crown, at God's bare command, to take up Christ's cross. He chose "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season".

So Abraham, at God's bare command, left his country and his near and dear relations. He wholly resigned himself up to God; he put his hand into God's, and was willing that God should lead him whither He pleased and do with him what He pleased.

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## Learning About Providence<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas Boston*

1. Beware of drawing an excuse for your sin from the providence of God. Every sin is an act of rebellion against God, a breach of His holy law, and deserves His wrath and curse. It therefore cannot be authorised by an infinitely-holy God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity without detestation and abhorrence. Though He has by a permissive decree allowed moral evil to be in the world, yet that has no influence on the sinner to commit it. For when men commit sin, they do not intend to fulfil God's decree – which is an absolute secret to every mortal – but to gratify their own lusts and perverse inclinations.

2. Beware of murmuring and fretting under any dispensations of providence you meet; remember that nothing falls out without a wise and holy providence, which knows best what is fit and proper for you. And in all cases, even amidst the most afflicting incidents that befall you, learn to submit to the will of God, as Job did when he said, in consequence of a train of the heaviest calamities that happened to him: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). In the most distressing case, say with the disciples, "The will of the Lord be done" (Ac 21:14).

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Boston's *Works*, vol 1. These are some exhortations which conclude a chapter on "the providence of God".

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3. Beware of anxious cares and diffidence about your provision in the world. The Lord has cautioned His followers against this: "Take no thought [that is, no anxious and perplexing thought], saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?" (Mt 6:31). Never let the fear of man stop you from duty, but let your souls learn to trust in God, who guides and superintends all the events and administrations of providence (Mt 10:28,29), by whatever hands they are performed.

4. Do not slight means, seeing God works by them. He that has appointed the end orders the means necessary for gaining the end. Do not rely on means, for they can do nothing without God (Mt 4:4). Do not despond if there are no means, for God can work without them, as well as with them. "I . . . will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen" (Hos 1:7). If the means are unlikely, He can work above them; Abraham "considered not his own body now dead . . . neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb" (Rom 4:19). If the means be contrary to the desired end, He can work by contrary means, as He saved Jonah by the whale that devoured him. The fish swallowed up the prophet, but by the direction of providence, it vomited him out on dry land.

5. Happy are the people whose God the Lord is, for all things shall work together for their good. They may sit secure, exercising faith in God, come what will. They have ground for prayer, for God is a prayer-hearing God; He will be inquired of by His people as to all their concerns in the world. And they have ground for the greatest encouragement and comfort amidst all the events of providence, seeing they are managed by their covenant God and gracious friend, who will never neglect or overlook His dear people and whatever concerns them. "For He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5).

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## Obituary

### Mr Donald Mackenzie, Leverburgh

Donald Mackenzie was born in 1931 in Leverburgh, in the Isle of Harris, to Simon and Catherine Mackenzie. His father grew up in the hamlet of Achmore, on the shores of Loch Broom in Wester Ross, and his mother in the village of Leacklee in Harris. Donald used to recall the ministers of the Church who were entertained in the family home in his youth, when they came to hold services when the congregation had no minister of its own, or to take part in communion seasons. Donald and his brothers continued the family business which included retail sales and rearing livestock.

He began to think seriously about eternity as he watched by his mother's deathbed in hospital. He was brought to seek salvation in Christ Jesus, in whom alone it is to be found; he sought and he found. He often expressed appreciation when these words from Exodus 12:13 were quoted: "When I see the blood, I will pass over you" – words which pointed forward from the Passover and the blood sprinkled, on the lintel and on the door posts of the Israelite home, to the sacrifice of Christ, and the application of its benefits to the individual soul. And it made one assume that the truth there expressed was particularly blessed to him on some occasion, possibly when he was first granted the liberty of the gospel. He expressed appreciation of the help he obtained from conversation with John MacLean, from Northton, Harris, who was for many years a missionary in the Church.

Donald first publicly professed faith in Christ at the South Harris communion in March 1971. He received encouragement to do so from the sermon preached that Saturday by Rev John MacLeod on Jeremiah 51:50: "Ye that have escaped the sword, go away, stand not still: remember the Lord afar off, and let Jerusalem come into your mind". Meanwhile, he had married Catherine Morrison, from Northton. They were to spend most of their almost 60 years of married life in Leverburgh and were given a family of one son and two daughters.

That Donald's profession was sincere was clear to all who knew him. He valued the means of grace and enjoyed fellowship with the Lord's people, not least at communion seasons, when he and his wife were glad to welcome people from elsewhere to their home.

In September 1975, Donald Mackenzie was ordained an elder of the South Harris congregation. He was often called on to conduct public worship; it was a time when there were several preaching stations in the congregation. He was an able speaker, and the people appreciated his addresses. It was striking, on one occasion when his strength was failing and he felt unable to continue with the service in Sheilebost, how sympathetic the people were to him, conscious as they were that they might never hear him again. It was a clear indication that his labours were indeed appreciated. He was sometimes asked to conduct public worship in other congregations, particularly in North Harris. He often travelled to the mainland to transport livestock, in one direction or another, and to bring home feeding stuffs; one result of this was that he was sometimes asked to conduct the Gaelic prayer meeting in Inverness.

The Lord blessed Donald with an excellent singing voice and he often led the praise in the congregation. As a Gaelic precentor he was outstanding.

His frequent reference to the words of Rebekah: "If it be so, why am I thus?" indicated that he was not without spiritual struggles. But we can be

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sure that, as Rebekah in her trouble “went to enquire of the Lord”, so Donald brought his troubles to the throne of grace. He was sincerely committed to the witness of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and was saddened by the spiritual declension that he saw taking place in his generation.

A heart attack he suffered when in his fifties necessitated heart bypass surgery, which was successful but had to be repeated about 20 years later. This preserved his life and usefulness for some further years, but latterly he suffered from a number of health problems until, after his health deteriorated further, he spent his final weeks in Leverburgh Home. There he was well cared for until he passed away to his eternal rest on 24 October 2012 at the age of 81.

We express our sympathy to his widow, his family and his surviving brother and would wish that they would all follow in his footsteps as one whose great aim in life, after he was called by grace, was to “be found in [Christ], not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith” (Phil 3:9).

(Rev) *K D Macleod*

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## Protestant View

### The Pope and the Curia

It appears that the Pope is running up against determined opposition to his attempts to change the image and reform the workings of the Roman hierarchy. The principal source of resistance seems to be the Curia, the 3000-strong bureaucracy which administers the Roman empire. In a recent speech, the Pope referred to the Curia as suffering from 15 “ailments”, including “spiritual Alzheimer’s”, “feeling immortal or immune”, “committing terrorism of gossip” and “becoming spiritually and mentally hardened”. He even went so far as to say that some clerics were guilty of “cold-bloodedly killing the reputation of their own colleagues and brothers”.

However revealing these strong words may be about the highest echelons of the Roman system, the reform that Roman Catholics need is far more radical and spiritual than the current schemes of the Pope. Nothing less than a new heart and a new spirit (Ezk 36:25-26) is needed. Since the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, the apostate Roman Church has been fixed in irreconcilable opposition to the truths of Christ’s gospel and can never spiritually reform itself, nor can its erroneous teachings be owned by the Spirit of God to effect the renewal of sinners in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Any sinners who are saved by grace while still in communion with Rome are the

subjects of this great work of God's Spirit in spite of, and not because of, the distinctive tenets of Romanism. The duty of such people is to leave Rome: "Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (Rev 18:4). *AWM*

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## Notes and Comments

### The Enigma of Islam

That Islam is a religion that breeds violence can hardly be denied. Vile, brutal murders have been committed in its name in the past few months in Australia, Pakistan, Iraq, Syria, Kenya, Nigeria, France and probably numerous other countries as well. Hardly a day goes by without a mass-murder being committed or attempted in the name of religion by a Muslim somewhere in the world, frequently against fellow Muslims of a different sect. Furthermore, Islam shows a good understanding of the power of the Establishment Principle, foolishly rejected by so many in the Christian Church; in every country where Islam gets a foothold it seeks to establish itself as the only permitted religion in that country. The murders in Australia, Kenya, Nigeria and France have a lot to do with intimidating opposition in these countries to the spread of Islam.

The secular powers in Western Europe have no answer to the advance of Islam. They are not prepared to execute murderers, so that terrorists have a stronger weapon – death – than they dare to use themselves. The promotion of homosexuality, abortion and contraception in these countries leaves birth-rates very low, so that the Muslim population rapidly outbreeds the non-Muslim population and establishes expanding Muslim enclaves. And the blinded principles of the secularists leave them reluctant to oppose Islam, or even to allow opposition to it, so that they nurture that which threatens, in a short while, to destroy their hedonistic lifestyle. The danger, however, they will not openly admit. Islam is a scourge sent by God to afflict a society that has turned its back upon Him and upon His Son, Jesus Christ.

The enigma of Islam, however, is that most Muslims who have come to the West have probably done so, not with an intention of Islamisation, but simply in pursuit of a more comfortably prosperous way of life. Living in countries where truth and kindness were something of a rarity, where little worked properly, and where religious violence and murder were a daily occurrence, there was an attraction in a country of relative prosperity, efficiency, safety and peace. Such people must view the spread of Islam with mixed feelings. Their religious principles are forced to approve it, and yet they recognise

it as the very thing that they moved away from. The corruption, the acid attacks, the honour killings and the terrorism were what they left behind.

The result of this seems to be a vulnerability within Islam which Satan recognises. It is evidently important for his kingdom to keep the gospel away from Muslims, or else to terrify them out of embracing it, by fear of death. Both in Islamic and non-Islamic countries, there seems to be an awareness that the West has, or has had, something that is lacking in Islam. This “something”, of course, is the Person and the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some Muslims react to this perceived lack with fury and terrorism, but others show an openness and a readiness to learn about Christ. Perhaps herein lies the resolution of the problem of Islam. Perhaps the ongoing confrontation between Islam and the secular West will be the divine instrument to lead many, enslaved under both systems, to recognise that the One in whom truth and goodness are found is Jesus Christ. “There be many that say, Who will shew us any good? Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us” (Ps 4:6). DWBS

### Free Speech

Following the horrendous shootings by Muslim gunmen at the offices of the French satirical magazine, *Charlie Hebdo*, there has been a great outpouring of support for “free speech”. The magazine had long resisted pressure to tone down their mockery of Islam, and particularly the depiction of Mohammed. Now that vengeance has been taken, the media in general have been anxious to protect their freedom to speak as they please; huge rallies have gathered in support of free speech; and politicians have joined in.

For instance, Harriet Harman, the deputy leader of the Labour Party in the UK, spoke strongly in a radio discussion in favour of free speech. She referred in particular to the repeal of the Blasphemy Act as a positive move. Entertainers and the media are free to speak as irreverently as they please about the Most High without being restrained by the civil law. And many of them take full advantage of their liberty. In France *Charlie Hebdo* has a reputation for belittling religion in general, not merely Islam.

But, in fact, the law permits no one to speak or write just as they please. In recent days, a number of people in France have been arrested for glorifying terrorism. No free speech there. People in the UK have been arrested for pointing out in public the sinfulness of homosexuality – although the law has recently been clarified on this issue – a welcome change. But the danger remains that preachers of the gospel may lose the right to speak freely.

In this note it is not intended to try to draw a line between speech which should be illegal and what is acceptable. Clearly, for instance, almost every-

one would agree that libel should be unacceptable. But, in practice, what comes under the protection of the campaign for free speech is obscenity and blasphemy. While people ought to restrain themselves from speaking and writing in such ways, there ought to be laws against both obscenity and blasphemy to be used when self-restraint is absent. And we ourselves must seek, by God's grace, to "be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation" (Phil 2:15).

### **Further Educational Issues**

Now that the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Scotland) bill has become law and marriage has been redefined in Scotland, the Scottish Government is incorporating the new definition into its updated Draft Guidance on the Conduct of Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood Education in Scottish Schools (RSHP). It includes the statement that "it is legal and permissible to discuss homosexuality in schools".

The guidance which is bound up with the Curriculum for Excellence affects children and young people from 3 to 18 and purports to take cognisance of their various relational needs. It highlights "attitudes", "beliefs", "moral issues", "the value of commitment in relationships and partnerships – including marriage" and the "importance of family relationships". There is an emphasis on developing "mental, emotional, social and physical well-being now and in the future" and a call to all who work in schools to facilitate this development. However, it is clear that "same-sex" relationships and "marriages" are not only to be considered normal and acceptable but are to be vigorously promoted in this programme. Sadly, what the Word of God says is no longer counted as having much relevance in our modern society.

It is considered good practice for all schools to consult with, and inform, parents and carers on key aspects of the curriculum. Parents and carers are encouraged to view school materials, while teachers are advised to be sensitive to "cultural views and religious beliefs". However, the agenda has a decidedly sinister tone to it. For example, one point is: "In issuing this guidance it is the Scottish Government's expectation that if a teacher, child, or young person is asked to do something against his or her conscience, he or she should be able to raise this with the school or local authority. The Scottish Government would expect alternative arrangements to be made where possible." On the face of it, there would appear to be an opt-out clause, yet the language is weak and there is no guarantee that a person who has an issue of conscience will be listened to.

Further statements indicate that "schools must be sensitive to the cases in

which a parent or carer may wish to withdraw a child or young person from all or part of a planned sexual health education programme”; yet persuasion is to be encouraged and the child’s views must be taken into account, “given their statutory right to an education”. (We are concerned that parents should have the right to bring their child up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.) Even when the parent or carer is “allowed” to withdraw that child from the specific class, the guidelines go on to state, “Aspects of RSHP education may be discussed in many areas of the curriculum, and it would not be possible for a child or young person “to be withdrawn from lessons across the curriculum as this would prevent a child or young person receiving an adequate and holistic education”. There is a determination that schools “meet the experiences and outcomes” of the curriculum for a child “even if that child is withdrawn from a particular lesson”.

The pro-marriage group, Scotland for Marriage, warns that “parents who believe in traditional marriage are being sidelined by [this] draft sex-education guidance”. It fears that “teaching about marriage will be downgraded in sex education” and that “teachers who have concerns about the issue will not be protected”. A spokesman comments that these guidelines represent “a significant liberalising of the sex-education guidance, a failure to respect those who come from a faith or otherwise-traditionalist background, and a shocking contempt for the rights of parents”.

There is a note in the guidelines on publicly-funded denominational schools indicating that their religious authorities will continue to provide guidance at present, but “this national advice should serve as a useful basis for everyone”. The Humanist Society Scotland (HSS) is incensed by this concession, stating in its own intolerant way: “It is no longer acceptable that religious bodies should have a say in the sex and relationship education of children . . . Upholding a traditional marriage view . . . goes against equality”. The HSS goes on to object to any “opt out” clause for parents or carers and is calling on the Scottish Parliament “to force teachers to promote same-sex marriage, even if it contravenes their religious conscience”. This call is supported by Alison McInnes, the Scottish Liberal Democrat spokeswoman for Justice, and also by Patrick Harvie, convenor of the Scottish Green Party.

How sad that the young people of Scotland (and the rest of the UK) may be subjected to such immoral teaching in their schools with little counter-teaching, we fear, in many homes. As we noted last month, Satan is raging and seeking whom he may devour, and he is not short of means. And we have sinful hearts; we need the Lord’s cleansing. “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy Word” (Ps 119:9).

*KHM*

### **Church of Scotland Declension**

The Church of Scotland has taken another step towards approving the ordination of ministers who are in same-sex relationships. The last General Assembly had accepted the proposal and sent it down to presbyteries under the Barrier Act, which requires innovative legislation to be passed, not only by the Assembly, but also by a majority of presbyteries. This step has now been taken and 32 out of 45 presbyteries (71%) have expressed agreement with the proposal. However, when individual presbytery members are counted, the result was much closer: 55% to 45%. The Church is in a dire position when the clear teaching of Scripture has again been rejected.

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## **Church Information**

### **Committee Meetings**

Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, March 17, as follows:

- 10.00 - 10.30 Church Interests Committee
- 10.30 - 12.00 Training of the Ministry Committee
- 12.00 - 1.00 Sabbath Observance Committee
- 2.00 - 3.00 Outreach Committee
- 2.00 - 5.00 Finance Committee
- 3.00 - 5.00 Religion and Morals Committee
- 6.00 - 7.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee
- 7.30 - 8.30 Welfare of Youth Committee
- 7.30 - 8.30 Dominions and Overseas Committee

*(Rev) John MacLeod, Clerk of Synod*

### **Statement by the Southern Presbytery**

The Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met in Glasgow on the twenty-fifth day of November 2014, places on record its thankfulness to God that 25 years ago, in 1988-1989, this Presbytery was given grace to uphold the requirements of Scripture when it exercised discipline over an elder for attending a requiem mass. The Presbytery also puts on record its thankfulness to God that the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, met in May 1989, upheld the Southern Presbytery's decision.

### **Bookroom Fund**

By appointment of Synod, the Special Collection on behalf of the Bookroom Fund, is due to be taken in congregations during February.

*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** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Achary Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev N M Ross; tel: 01349 864351.
- 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. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- 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; Thursday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Wick:** 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** and **Strond** 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. Contact Mr A MacRae; tel: 01463 790521.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross. F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present. 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 Rev D Campbell; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev I D MacDonald, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.
- 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; Monday 11.00 am. Contact Rev K M Watkins; tel: 01282 850296.

### 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, Rossharon, Texas 77583; tel: 409 927 1564.

### Australia

**Grafton**, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA PhD, 174 Fitzroy Street, Grafton, NSW 2460; tel: (02) 6643 5692.

**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: sydneyfpchurch@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 (Carterton)**: Senior Citizens' Hall, 150 High Street North. 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; Beacon International College, 70 Martaban Road, Singapore 328667 (entrance is opposite 37/39 Mandalay Road); Wednesday: 7.45 pm, Lion Building B, #02-11, 12 Arumugam Road, Singapore 409958. Contact: Mr Bernard Yong, 4 Chuan Place, Singapore 554822; tel: (65) 6383 4466, fax: 6383 4477, e-mail: byong1@singnet.com.sg.

### Ukraine

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