

# 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*

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## Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**September: First Sabbath:** Chesley, Sydney, Ullapool; **Second:** Halkirk, Munaka, Portree; **Third:** Tarbert; **Fourth:** Aberdeen, Barnoldswick, Farr, 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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## Reading – a Means of Grace

At the induction of W B Sprague<sup>1</sup> in 1829 to a Presbyterian charge in Albany, in New York state, Samuel Miller<sup>2</sup> preached on Titus 1:9: “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers”. Miller explained the “faithful word” as “the pure, unadulterated doctrines of Christ; the genuine gospel, as revealed by a gracious God for the benefit of sinful men”.<sup>3</sup> The main point he wished to put across was: “The ministers of our holy religion, if they desire to convince, to convert, or to edify their fellow men, are solemnly bound to maintain for themselves, and diligently to impart to those around them, sound doctrine, or, in other words, the genuine truths of the gospel” (p 557).

We will confine ourselves to some of the points that the preacher makes under his first head: “Why ought we to maintain ‘sound doctrine’?” His first reason is: “The faithful word of which we speak is from God”. “To suppose that we are at liberty lightly to esteem such a gift”, he rightly considers to be “dishonourable to God”.

Miller’s second point is that we are “frequently and solemnly commanded by the great God of truth” to hold fast “the genuine system of revealed truth”. He gives many examples. For instance: in the Old Testament “we are exhorted to cry after knowledge . . . and search for it as for hidden treasures”. And in the New, “the inspired Apostle pronounces, ‘If any man come unto you, and bring any other gospel than that which ye have received, let him be accursed’”. (Miller explains *any other gospel* as “any other system of doctrine concerning the salvation by Christ”) (pp 557-8).

His third point is “the great importance which the Scriptures everywhere attach” to gospel truth. “Christian doctrine”, Miller emphasises, “is the grand instrument, in the hands of the Holy Spirit, by which spiritual life is begun,

<sup>1</sup>Author of the impressive book, *Lectures on Revivals*.

<sup>2</sup>For more on Miller, see the leading article in the November 2014 issue of this *Magazine*.

<sup>3</sup>James M Garretson, ed, *Princeton and the Work of the Ministry*, Banner of Truth, 2012, vol 1, p 556. References to further quotations from Miller’s sermon will appear in brackets in the text.

carried on, and completed in every subject of redeeming grace. . . . Hence [the Scriptures] so plainly teach us that there can be no real piety where the fundamental doctrines of the gospel are not embraced.” Scripture teaching about the way of salvation is to be firmly grasped, not rejected. Indeed, says Miller, the Bible, “with awful emphasis, declares certain ‘heresies’ to be ‘damnable’ – that is, inevitably destructive to the souls of men”. Indeed he adds, “All Scripture and all experience teach us that, wherever the preaching and the prevalence of true doctrine has declined, there piety, immediately and in a corresponding ratio, has declined; good morals have declined; and all the most precious interests of the Church and of civil society have never failed to be essentially depressed” (pp 558-9).

Fourth, “such doctrine is universally distasteful to the unsanctified heart, and therefore requires not only to be presented, but also to be importunately pressed on the attention of men if, by the blessing of God, we may prevail with them to receive it”. He thus quotes Thomas Chalmers: “Of all kinds of truth, the pure gospel of Jesus Christ is precisely that, and that alone, for which there is no natural demand among men”. It must, Miller adds, “be urged and pressed on their minds, with ceaseless repetition, as long as they continue within the reach of the voice of mercy”. He further stresses the need to hold fast sound doctrine because “the same distaste for the holy, humbling, and self-denying doctrines of the gospel . . . disposes [men] to pervert these doctrines . . . and thus to endeavour to divest them of their offensive character and accommodate them to the taste of unsanctified men” (p 560).

Fifth, “the enemies of truth are everywhere zealous and indefatigable in opposing it”. So ministers should “be awake, active, and faithful in guarding the precious deposit committed to their charge”. Then in words which we might well adopt in today’s circumstances, he goes on: “The fact is, those whose duty it is to plead the cause of sound doctrine, in the present world, are like mariners rowing against both wind and tide” (pp 561-2). Sadly, both wind and tide are flowing far more strongly and dangerously today than in Miller’s time. It ought to be particularly obvious in these dark days that only the powerful work of the Holy Spirit applying sound doctrine can result in today’s “mariners” making any progress whatever.

Miller’s sixth point is the last we will notice; he complains that “there is, everywhere, such a deplorable lack of doctrinal information among the mass of the people” (p 562). He claimed that, 50 years previously, those who made a serious profession of religion were much more in the habit of reading good books than in 1829, when he delivered that particular sermon. Among the authors he believed such people were then reading were: John Owen, John Flavel, Stephen Charnock, John Bunyan, Thomas Manton, Thomas

Haliburton and Jonathan Edwards. Yet there is no doubt that reading the Bible is of first importance. Any other reading, even what seeks to explain and apply the Scriptures, must be secondary. Again reading scriptural literature must be considered as second to attending public worship when it is possible to do so.

It is difficult to judge trends, but one fears that many professing Christians today are reading less than those of 50 or more years ago. Yet a far greater variety of sound books is available now than then. Certainly there are greater distractions around. Miller referred to the number of religious newspapers and other light periodicals that had become available in his time and had taken the place of the more solid reading material that had occupied the attention of a previous generation. The point, of course, is not that it is wrong to read religious newspapers, but that by spending too much time on them, one is left with much less time to spend on what is much more useful. Today one feels that social media and the internet are occupying a great deal of time which might be put to much better use. That said, one recognises that it is possible, for instance, to use the internet to access valuable religious books which are no longer easily available in printed form.

One must bear in mind that much of the religious literature available today – and that was true in other generations also – is very far from being sound. Unscriptural material is much more likely to cause harm than good. And why should one spend time on a book that is moderately good when one could read one that is excellent? Yet people may put themselves off reading good books by aiming too high at first, attempting to read books that are still too difficult for them. For instance, from Miller's list of authors, Bunyan and Flavel are more accessible than some of the others, and not all of a given writer's works are equally easy to follow. Because Owen is by no means the easiest of Reformed writers, one would not recommend his works to someone who is only beginning to read solid Christian literature. Yet it should be every Christian's aim to read some Owen when they are more experienced; perhaps no one has had a better understanding of Scripture truth since the inspired writers of the New Testament laid down their pens.

But what about particular titles? The suggestions that follow are not intended as a list of the best uninspired books ever published; there would, in any case, be a subjective element in the choice. First, there is *Thoughts on Religious Experience* by Archibald Alexander, a colleague of Samuel Miller. This volume is included because of the importance of its subject. The Bible insists on the necessity of examining ourselves as to whether our spiritual experience is genuine or not. Alexander was blessed with great spiritual wisdom; he writes in a straightforward style; and, while recognising that there

is a significant variation in what different believers experience, he carefully and scripturally describes the effects of the work of the Spirit. An attractive feature is his repeated references to the lives of individuals.

There is much to be gained by becoming familiar with the history of the Church. *The Story of the Scottish Church*, by Thomas M'Crie covers the period from before the Reformation till 1843 in a clear, interesting manner. We can only properly understand our present spiritual and moral situation if we have some understanding of what happened in the past. Some historical figures have wielded such influence that we should be familiar with them in particular. In Scotland no one in the Church was more influential than John Knox. His *Life* has been written by Thomas M'Crie, the father of the previous author. Certainly this volume is over 200 years old, but no subsequent writer on Knox – and there have been many – has had a better spiritual understanding of this spiritual giant. And biographies of good men and women provide practical examples of true godliness.

Miller's emphasis was on doctrine; so let us look briefly in that direction. We begin with *The Shorter Catechism*, that brief summary of sound doctrine, so carefully expressed. For a reliable explanation, readers should find helpful the book by Thomas Vincent, one of the Puritans: *The Shorter Catechism Explained from Scripture*. Also produced by the Westminster Assembly were *The Larger Catechism* and *The Westminster Confession of Faith*. Much longer, but very readable, is John Dick's *Lectures on Theology*. Printed sermons too are a valuable resource; one suggestion is *Sermons by Noted Ministers of the Northern Highlands*.<sup>4</sup>

These are but a tiny fraction of the many sound books in print today, so many that the most diligent of readers may not get through them in a lifetime. But we must remember that, if we are to profit from our reading, the truth must be applied to our souls by the Holy Spirit. Though we may not put books ahead of the pure preaching of the Word, they are means to the same end: first, to make us see our need and direct us to Christ; second, to teach believers the truths of Scripture, so that they will “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of [their] Lord and Saviour” – so that they may be instructed in “the genuine truths of the gospel”, which was Miller's great concern. Thus, as with other means of grace, it is our duty to make use of good books as much as possible, especially in a time when “enemies of truth” are so many.

<sup>4</sup>*The Story of the Scottish Church*, *The Life of John Knox* and *Sermons by Noted Ministers of the Northern Highlands* have been republished by Free Presbyterian Publications, as has *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, which contains both Catechisms. *Lectures on Theology*, a four-volume set, has been made available by Tentmaker Publications (but Dick's handling of inspiration is not altogether satisfactory). All the other titles mentioned are published by Banner of Truth Trust.

# The Believer's Refuge and Consolation<sup>1</sup>

A Sermon by Archibald Alexander

Hebrews 6:18. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.*

God would have His people be comfortable. He has therefore laid a solid foundation for their consolation in the promises of His Word. Faith is weak and, unless it is well supported, it is apt to totter and the soul sink into deep discouragement. The promises of God, on which the believer leans, are not only rich but sure: they are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God. Among men, what is confirmed by solemn oath is considered firmer than what rests only on a promise; thus God, condescending to our infirmity, has added an oath to His promise. And because there was no one greater by whom He could swear, "He sware by Himself, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us".

The form of expression used here is probably derived from a custom sanctioned by the law of Moses, that when anyone killed a man, he could flee to one of the cities of refuge. There were three on each side of the Jordan, so situated as to be within reach of the people in every part of the country. In ancient times, it was usual for the nearest relation to avenge the death of a murdered person by slaying the murderer. And the practice still exists among many tribes. The kinsman, who had the duty of taking vengeance was called "the avenger of blood". He was bound in honour never to give up pursuing the manslayer until blood was shed for blood.

Whether this practice began with what God said to Noah after the flood, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed", we need not inquire. This Mosaic law certainly did not begin this ancient custom, which was intended to prevent frequent injustice and cruelty. When a man was slain, without a deliberate purpose to take away life, the kinsman of the slain would be poorly qualified, while in the heat of passion occasioned by the death of a near relation, to judge impartially the motives behind the act. There was therefore a danger of killing someone innocent, or someone who did not deserve so severe a punishment.

By this law of Moses, an asylum was provided for every manslayer who chose to make use of it, until there was an opportunity of a fair and impartial investigation into the true character of the act. The gates of these cities of

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted, with editing, from Alexander's *Practical Sermons*. His *Thoughts on Religious Experience* should be compulsory reading for those with serious thoughts on spiritual things.

refuge were constantly kept open, so that the manslayer might get in, by day or by night. The highways to these cities also, and the bridges, had to be kept in good repair. But although all manslaughterers were permitted to take refuge in these cities, the institution was not intended to screen the malicious murderer from just punishment. Nor could it help such a person to take refuge in them, for if on inquiry it was found that the act was deliberate, the murderer was immediately delivered up to the avenger of blood to be put to death.

There were, however, other places to which the guilty fled for refuge. When Joab feared for his life, he fled to the altar of burnt-offering, laid hold of its horns, and refused to let go. Solomon therefore directed that he should be slain there. As there is nothing in Scripture to sanction this custom, it is probable that it was borrowed from the pagans, among whom temples and altars were always places of refuge for the guilty. To slay them in such places was considered a sacrilegious violation of the sanctity of the place.

The precise meaning of the word *hope*, requires a moment's consideration. Most understand it to mean the object of hope – justification and its consequence, eternal life. Others understand it to mean the act of hope. But it is more probable that the Apostle meant the *foundation* of hope; that is, the promise of which he had been just speaking, which generates hope in God's people. Certainly, this agrees best with the preceding context and with the scope of his argument. God had given a promise and confirmed it by an oath. On this solid foundation, faith could firmly rest, and hope is the fruit of faith, ever rising and falling with it. He who believes the promise lays hold of hope, for faith in the promises of God is the pillar and ground of gospel hope.

1. Let us contemplate the soul *fleeing for refuge* and laying hold of God's sure promise. No one seeks a refuge unless he is afraid of some danger. The traveller who sees a storm rising and fears some injury from the wind, rain, hail and lightning, flees to the nearest shelter, and takes refuge from the gathering storm. So he who is pursued by an enemy, as was the manslayer, hastens his steps to the city of refuge. Thus the sinner, when awakened to a true sense of his danger, begins to look for a place of safety. But the person who fears no danger will not flee. You may call on him to flee as much and as long as you will, but he does not listen. He feels no motive strong enough to make him leave his worldly pursuits and seek salvation.

Hence the necessity of conviction of sin, so that people may feel their need of a Saviour. The "whole need not a physician, but they that are sick". The first step then is to see that we are in a lost and perishing condition. Thus we learn that the first work of the Spirit is to convince men of sin. Although a mere legal conviction has no tendency to renew the heart, God deals with sinners as reasonable, accountable creatures, and He does not usually grant

them grace and pardon until they are conscious of their wretched, helpless condition. Thus those convicted on the day of Pentecost were first pricked in their hearts and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And the jailor of Philippi cried out, "What must I do to be saved?"

Careless sinners make light of the gospel invitation and continue to neglect the great salvation. But when the law is brought home to the conscience, the false peace of the sinner is interrupted. When he begins to open his eyes to his true situation and finds that he is really under a sentence of condemnation, in a blind and helpless condition, that his whole nature is corrupt, and that he can do nothing to save himself, he begins to enquire earnestly if there is any refuge for someone in his wretched condition. He is now disposed to listen to every report of a refuge where he may flee and be safe.

This subject now occupies his thoughts and the things of time and sense no longer engross his attention. All earthly things appear trivial, and his only concern is how he may escape impending wrath and secure the salvation of his soul. Oppressed with the burden of his iniquities, he groans in anguish. He is filled with compunction for the sins of his youth, which now rise up before his conscience. He is ashamed to look up to the throne of a holy God, but cries with the publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner". He takes all the blame to himself and acknowledges the righteousness of the sentence which condemns him. Sometimes he is tempted to despair of any relief, but the free offer of salvation to the chief of sinners, in the gospel, encourages him to indulge a feeble hope that God may intend mercy for his miserable soul. He therefore turns his face toward the place of refuge and resolves that he will never give over seeking and crying to God for mercy.

2. The manslayer, pursued by the avenger of blood, might for a time *persuade himself that he could be safe in some other refuge*. Such a course would be exceedingly unwise; wherever he was, he would still be exposed to danger; his adversary might fall on him unexpectedly and kill him. In all Israel, there was no security for a manslayer but in one of the appointed cities of refuge. There was legitimate protection here, and nowhere else.

Such is the case of the awakened sinner. He is convinced that danger is near and he must seek some refuge from the coming storm. But he is unwilling to flee to the place of safety which the gospel points to. This way of escape is not in his thoughts; it is uncongenial to his feelings. He naturally turns to the covenant of works, under which he was created. The covenant of grace is strange to him; he does not understand it. He persuades himself that by reforming his life and forsaking the sins which have particularly troubled his conscience, he may be safe without fleeing to the place of refuge, which seems far off and difficult to get to.

If conscience is still not satisfied with his reformation, he will become more diligent about religious duties. He will observe the Sabbath, attend church, pray in his family and on his own, and show much zeal in all the externals of religion. In the warmth of his zeal, he may even aspire to the holy ministry, and may warn and reprove others. He fancies himself to be religious and foolishly compares himself with the multitude who completely neglect religion and infers that his condition must be safe. He compares his present with his former conduct and congratulates himself on the great change in his way of life. Other professed believers may view him as an eminent Christian, and his delusion is so complete that he does not suspect himself. He thinks that all is well and that he shall be received into heaven when he dies. The awakened sinner has indeed found a refuge, but it is “a refuge of lies”. He has no shelter but his own rotten righteousness. He entertains high hopes, but they are built on a sandy foundation.

At some future time, he will be convinced that he has taken refuge in an unsafe place, from which he must be driven or perish miserably. This conviction of danger may seize him while he yet has an opportunity to escape to the true city of refuge which God has appointed. But often the mistake is not detected until it is too late to seek safety in the true refuge. Some have their eyes opened to see their miserable condition just as they are leaving the world, when it is too late to prepare for eternity. Others do not realise their danger until eternity reveals it to them. O wretched condition! Let all convinced sinners beware of the danger of resting on a false foundation or seeking safety in a refuge of lies. Let them never feel at ease until they have entirely escaped from the plain of destruction and have taken refuge in the mount of safety. We must be brought to renounce our own righteousness and all dependence on our own works or on our tears of repentance; we must put our trust solely in the perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. The figure *fleeing for refuge* is well suited to express the act of faith, believing on Christ. And the phrase *laying hold* is a striking description of the earnestness with which the convinced sinner seizes the gracious promise of God when his eyes are opened to understand the freeness and fullness of the salvation offered to him. As a drowning man eagerly seizes a rope thrown to him and grasps it with a firmness that nothing can loosen, so the sinner flees to the gospel refuge when he is pursued by the demands of the broken law. He may immediately enjoy a feeling of repose – and often of strong consolation. The expression *lay hold of* would seem to refer to the horns of the altar, which the guilty person grasped who sought safety there.

Although the experiences of sincere converts vary considerably; yet some leading points are common to all true believers. As all are by nature in the

same condition of condemnation and depravity; as all are equally helpless; as the same gospel is the object of the faith of all; and as regeneration in all is the work of the same Holy Spirit; there can be no essential difference in the nature of the exercises of genuine converts. All, for example, are convinced of sin and feel they are perishing. In some this conviction involves a much more vivid sense of danger, but the degree of fear does not determine either the depth or genuineness of the sinner's convictions. There may be overwhelming terror where there is little true conviction, and there may be deep scriptural conviction where there is little terror and the mind remains calm. Indeed often when conviction is deepest, the mind is calmest. Even when it seems on the borders of despair and has almost given up hope, there is often a sad calmness, which it is not easy to account for.

All true converts are not only convinced of sin, but they feel thoroughly helpless; not only convinced that they are unable to keep the law, but also unable to repent of sin or receive the gospel. Unbelief is commonly the last sin of which the Spirit convinces the awakened soul: "of sin, because they believe not in Me". But the truly-convinced sinner never pleads his inability as his excuse, nor does he feel less guilty on this account. Other sins are the branches of the evil tree, but he is conscious that this is the bitter root out of which they grow. Thus every convinced sinner is led clearly to see the justice of God in his condemnation. He may be said to accept the punishment of his sins, for he acquiesces in the justice of the sentence which condemns him to eternal misery. He justifies God, and takes all the blame to himself.

Indeed, at this point in his experience, his feeling is that, if he perishes eternally, he never can feel that he has been unjustly treated, but that gratitude is due to God for His long-continued, unmerited kindness. Such views can only be accounted for if a spiritual change has already taken place in the soul – though nothing is further from what this person believes. Often the sinner is renewed before he is aware of it. Spiritual life is breathed into the soul before it is filled with the joy and peace which arises from receiving Christ by faith. There are evident breathings after God – the effect of renewing grace – before the eyes are opened to behold the reconciled face of God in Christ. One of the earliest feelings of the regenerated soul is a sense of ingratitude which breaks the heart, hitherto hard, into a melting frame of godly sorrow. Tears flow apace. This sorrow is sweet in the experience, because it is always mingled with a sense of the mercy and goodness of God; yet there may be no thought of being in a safe state.

But such feelings may soon be succeeded by views of Christ as an able and willing Saviour. These first views of a Saviour are sometimes sudden and overwhelming. The soul feels itself transported, as it were, into a new world.

Gross darkness is exchanged for “marvellous light”. The joy is “unspeakable and full of glory”. The soul exults in the cross of Christ; all doubt and fear are expelled, and the heart is at once filled with contrition, love and peace. These first views of a Saviour are often more noticeable in the flow of emotion which accompanies them, than any experienced afterwards.

This blessed vision of divine truth may be repeated two or three times and then the soul is left to what may be called the common encouragements which the gospel inspires. But it would be injurious to many sincere Christians to lay this down as the uniform experience of all the children of God. Indeed I am persuaded that a large majority of those converted in our day are led in a different way. Their first views are very obscure, and they can point to no particular time when darkness and doubt were banished from their minds. The light, for them, has been like the dawn of the day: at first an obscure twilight, but gradually increasing to clear light. They are conscious of a great change in their views and feelings from what they once were, but how it came about they cannot tell. All they can say is: “Whereas I was once blind, now I see”.

Often the first views of Christ are very partial. Perhaps the soul that considered its case hopeless begins to see that Christ is able to save it, desperate as its condition seemed. Even this, which would seem a small matter to many, is as life from the dead to a convinced soul almost in despair. To be assured that salvation is even possible fills the soul with a delight it never before experienced. Hope now takes place of despondency, and the soul into which this first ray of light has darted forms a purpose never to give up seeking until salvation is obtained. One of its greatest difficulties is to suppress a continually-rising thought that a change has been experienced. As sincere souls are more apprehensive of a false hope than of any other danger, they become alarmed when they find themselves sliding into the opinion that they are already Christians; yet it is hard to resist this persuasion because it is based on the evidences of piety contained in the Word of God and laid down by wise ministers.

4. The blessed effect of fleeing to the refuge set before us is *strong consolation*. No feeling is more delightful than an assurance of deliverance from a great impending calamity. And as no danger to which we can be exposed is comparable to that of everlasting misery, so no enjoyment is so sweet as the joy of salvation. It is described as “unspeakable and full of glory”. There must be peace and joy in believing, for he who truly believes must have some view of Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour. He must have some apprehension of the refuge provided for guilty sinners; he must have fled to this refuge, an act which cannot take place without experiencing something of that repose

and comfort which necessarily follow from discovering a way of escape from the wrath of God.

Though ample provision has been made for strong consolation to all who flee to this refuge, yet the comfort enjoyed will generally be in proportion to the strength of the faith exercised. Often faith begins like a grain of mustard seed – so small that in the midst of the darkness and corruption of the human heart it can scarcely be discerned. And many people have a gloomy, melancholy temperament, or such a degree of suspicion and lack of confidence in themselves that they cannot easily be persuaded that they are in a safe state. Their comfort is therefore greatly marred by doubts and fears, which accompany some pious people through their whole pilgrimage. And they may not understand the true nature of conversion. It is assumed that this change is always very great and perceptible; and as they have never before experienced anything of this sort, they suppose they are still impenitent.

There is, moreover, a degree of perverseness in some serious people about this matter. They get into the habit of taking part against themselves, always uttering complaints about their unhappy state and refusing the consolation which the gospel freely offers to people in their condition. They may be said to deprive themselves of consolation. But it seems wisely ordered that our spiritual comforts should rise and fall with the degree of strength or weakness in our faith. If we could enjoy strong consolation while faith and love were feeble, it would prevent us from exerting ourselves suitably to grow in our spiritual attainments.

However, in God's promises there is a rich fountain from which streams of strong consolation may be drawn at any time, by exercising a living faith. All other joy fades away when death and eternity seem near; it is earthly and cannot endure the bright light of eternity shining on it. But the consolations which are found in Christ become richer and stronger, the more we meditate on the solemn realities of the future world. Indeed, much that the believer experiences of this strong consolation arises from an assured hope of heavenly happiness. It is the anticipation of future blessedness which fills the heart with a joy which cannot be expressed. If then we would partake of this "strong consolation", let us be strong in faith, not staggering at the promise through unbelief, but being fully persuaded that what God has promised, he will perform. Let us hold fast the beginning of our confidence, encouraging ourselves to embrace the promises in all their fullness and freeness. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy.

**Application.** 1. *There is good reason for the name gospel (good news).* To the sinner, justly condemned by the unalterable law of God, it opens a safe refuge to which the guiltiest may flee. I therefore now exhort and entreat

every sinner to avail himself, speedily, of this safe retreat. Flee from impending wrath. The storm of divine vengeance lowers over your head, and unless you get into some safe shelter, it will soon overtake you, overwhelm you and plunge you into endless perdition. Escape then – escape for your lives. There is no time to be lost. The door of mercy is now open, but no one can tell how soon it may be closed, for ever.

2. *Beware of false refuges.* There are many of these, which deluded souls enter in search of safety, but they only expose themselves to more dreadful destruction. They provide no real shelter from the storm of divine wrath. At most they only afford momentary ease, by cherishing false hopes. But when the hypocrite's hope perishes, as it certainly will, he is left in a more miserable condition than if he had never indulged any hope. Among false refuges, we may mention infidelity, or the foolish persuasion that there is no future punishment; trust in a decent, moral life, without any saving knowledge of a crucified Saviour; self-righteousness, or a dependence on the exact performance of religious duties. Do not flee to any of these; they are all refuges of lies.

3. As long as the Christian is in this world, he needs a refuge to which he may flee in seasons of affliction and danger. In himself there is no help or strength. He is like a defenceless, timid dove, liable to be devoured by every bird of prey. If he had no place of refuge, he could not escape destruction. But having once entered the place of refuge, he is safe; no enemy dare pursue him within this sacred refuge. Or if he should be assaulted there, he has a mighty Redeemer at hand.

4. Having found a safe refuge, the believer should be careful to remain there. The manslayer, though acquitted, could not safely leave the city of refuge during the lifetime of the high priest, and that might be as long as he lived. But our High Priest lives for ever, so we must ever remain in the refuge to which we have fled. There is safety there and nowhere else. Even when we leave this world, we are only transferred to a higher, holier refuge.

5. Let condemned, perishing sinners, who are exposed daily to the wrath of God, avail themselves of the opportunity to escape to a place of safety. Do not delay fleeing from the wrath to come. While you procrastinate, divine vengeance may suddenly overtake you. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." How can you escape, if you neglect so great salvation? Christ, who has provided this refuge – or rather, who is Himself the sinner's refuge – kindly invites you to come to Him for rest. His gracious promise is: "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". Be wise then and know the time of your merciful visitation, for many who once occupied precisely the same position have eternally perished. They put off the matter too long and must lament their folly throughout eternity.

# Christ's Offices – Some Lessons<sup>1</sup>

*Thomas Boston*

1. How great and glorious is the Lord Jesus Christ, who was suited to bear all these offices at once – as Prophet, Priest and King – and to exercise them at once, so that one does not clash with another! He is glorious indeed in whom all the glory scattered amongst the typical persons is perfectly centred. If it was an honour for Melchizedec to be both a priest and a king and for David to be both a king and a prophet, how much more glorious it is for our divine Mediator to be a Prophet, a Priest and a King, really possessed of these offices and exercising them in their full extent, in a more effective manner than any person that was ever invested with any of them!

2. Let this commend Christ to you as a full and a suitable Saviour. There is no situation a poor sinner can be in, but he will find the remedy in these offices of Christ. Are you, sinner, under spiritual darkness and ignorance? There is knowledge and instruction to be had from Him. He is the light of the world and can give you understanding to know Him that is true; He can give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Himself. Are you under guilt and condemnation, laden with sin that is likely to sink you to hell? There is righteousness in Him as a Priest to remove your guilt. He is the atonement and propitiation for sin. He saves from sin and wrath. Are you a slave to sin and Satan? He is a King, who came to destroy the works of the devil; He can break the dominion of sin in you, knock off your fetters, and subdue all your spiritual enemies.

3. You cannot take Christ as a Redeemer if you do not take Him in all His offices. He offers Himself to sinners in no other way. And what God has joined together let no man put asunder. Many pretend to take Christ as a Saviour to save them from hell and wrath, but do not hearken to Him as a Prophet to teach them the saving knowledge of God; nor do they submit to His laws. How many call Christ their Lord and yet do not the things that He says! O the folly of the world that reject Christ's teaching, saying, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways"! O the stupidity of those who despise Christ as a Priest and think of recommending themselves to God's favour by their works of righteousness, which they substitute for His righteousness! O the madness of those who contemn Christ as a King, refusing to submit to His royal authority and spurn His laws and government! And how foolish are the princes of the earth that will not suffer Christ to reign freely in their dominions but encroach on His authority and make laws inconsistent with His!

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Boston's *Works*, vol 1.

4. Do you receive Christ in all His offices, giving up yourselves (1) to be taught by Him as a Prophet in all things relating to your salvation, renouncing your own knowledge and wisdom; (2) to be justified by His righteousness, and washed in His blood, renouncing all your own righteousness as filthy rags, saying, In the Lord alone have I righteousness; and counting all things but loss and dung that you may win Christ and be found in Him, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God by faith; and (3) to be guided and governed by Him as your sovereign Lord and King, yielding a hearty and cheerful obedience to all His laws and commandments and saying, “Other lords besides Thee have had dominion over us; but by Thee only will we make mention of Thy name”?

5. Make use of this mighty Redeemer in all His offices, which as Mediator He exercises for the benefit of the ruined race of mankind. You have absolute need of Him in all these offices. You are foolish and stand in need of His wisdom to guide you; you are ignorant both of yourselves and of God; and so you require saving knowledge and instruction. You are guilty, condemned sinners – indeed daily offenders – and so stand in need of continual pardon. You are weak, having no strength to combat your spiritual adversaries; so you require the exertion of His mighty power as King of kings to enable you to stand against your adversaries. If you knew yourselves, and were exercised to godliness, you would see the absolute necessity for all Christ’s offices that you might be saved, and you would every day bless God for such a complete and all-sufficient Redeemer. O make use of Him daily in all His glorious offices; honour Him by making use of Him as your Prophet, Priest and King.

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## **Biblical Fellowship<sup>1</sup>**

### **1. Fellowship Within the Godhead**

*Rev J R Tallach*

**T**he Greek word for fellowship is *koinonia*, and the basic meaning is participation in, having a share, or giving a share. This noun does not occur in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew to Luke), but the spirit of it was diffused through the early Church, which was characterised by spiritual light, liberty, union and communion.

<sup>1</sup>This is the first part of a paper given at last year’s Theological Conference. It draws largely from Hugh Martin’s *The Atonement*, John Owen’s treatise on “Communion with God”, in his *Works*, vol 2, Francis Turretin’s *Institutes* and John Calvin’s *Institutes*.

The paper will be divided into three parts: (1.) The fellowship which exists within the triune God as Head and Lord, and God over all; (2.) The fellowship which exists between God and His people; (3.) The fellowship which exists between believers in the Church of God on earth.

First, *the fellowship within the Godhead*. Hugh Martin deals with this under the heading of “The Blessedness of God”. “The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king. He will save us” (Is 33:22). The absolute sovereign rule of the Judge, Lawgiver and King is the great source of our confidence and comfort. He rules out of His own perfections without consultation with anyone; no one says to Him, “What doest Thou?” This rule is as blessed as His nature is blessed; He the blessed and only Potentate.

Martin sees this blessedness as an expression of the fellowship which exists within the Triune God. The relationship of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is eternally and infinitely blessed and is expressed in the fellowship which exists between the three persons of the Godhead. Such a fellowship must be worthy of God’s nature and satisfying to God’s infinite powers of fellowship.

Martin sees the concept of a uni-personal god as inconceivable. Such a being would be without converse or love; he could not be loved, dwelling in an infinite silence and solitude. Such a god would be cold, distant and repulsive. Martin doubts that a uni-personal god could be self-aware. He would be therefore unable to say, “I am”; a god without relations could not say this. Yet God says, “I am that I am”, and man, made in the image of God and reflecting that image, says, “I am”. When man was created, he was able then to say to God, “Thou art”. This was an expression of recognition, and recognition reciprocated, which is the foundation of fellowship.

But, Martin argues, this was surely not the first time that God had entered into fellowship. God’s roots are in eternity and it is from this everlasting root that such fellowship springs; it did not begin with the creation of frail man. Did He not say to another: “Thou art My Son”? Again “unto the Son He saith, “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever”. Martin finds it impossible to conceive of a uni-personal god being a creator at all. God says, “Thou art”, to man; He does so as the God who had eternal converse with One who is co-equal with Himself. The Son was the beginning of the creation of God. We cannot conceive of a uni-personal eternal god without relations or fellowship. Christ was the beginning of creation and He was the Word. There was eternal fellowship.

The unity in God is essential to all His works and must be set over against the fellowship found within the Godhead. To this point the Word Himself speaks: “The Lord possessed Me in the beginning of His way, before His works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the

earth was. When there were no depths I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water. Before the mountains were settled, before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. When He prepared the heavens, I was there: when He set a compass upon the face of the depth: when He established the clouds above: when He strengthened the fountains of the deep: when He gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed the foundations of the earth: then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: and I was daily His delight [see here the blessedness of God the Father in fellowship with His Son], rejoicing always before Him” (Prov 8:22-30).

The Son then sheds light on the blessedness of God, and is a light to men. The presence of the Spirit prevents the fellowship within the Godhead being between two only. Thus the Father and Son can go beyond “I am” and “Thou art” to say, “He is”. The blessedness of God lies in the fact that the Father and the Son have fellowship in the Spirit and concerning the Spirit, and the Son and Spirit concerning the Father.

## The Reformation in Spain<sup>1</sup>

### 4. The Inquisition Fights Back, with Fire

Some Spanish Protestants, moved by the dangers they faced in Spain, left the country to find freedom to follow their consciences in other states such as Geneva and Germany. The clergy in the Brussels court of Philip II were keeping a close watch on refugees from Spain.<sup>2</sup> From their spies, these clerics learned late in 1557 that a large number of Protestant books had entered Spain and that heresy was spreading quickly.

The inquisitors soon discovered that Julian Hernandez<sup>3</sup> had been active in bringing in these books and threw him in prison. Hernandez was ready to confess his views; he was glad to have helped to make the Scriptures available to the people of Spain. His superior knowledge of the Bible made him victorious in all his debates, even with educated men – and he was no scholar. The inquisitors were anxious to obtain information from Hernandez about his fellow-Protestants; they hoped thus, in their own words, “at once to crush

<sup>1</sup>Last month’s article described real progress, with some individual congregations becoming established in Spain. Page references in the text are to Thomas M’Crie, *The Reformation in Spain*, 1824.

<sup>2</sup>Philip succeeded to the throne when his father Charles V abdicated in 1554; he was the husband of Queen Mary of England.

<sup>3</sup>See the previous article for a previous reference to Hernandez (May issue, p 137).

the viper's nest" (quoted, p 240). They sent men to the prisoner who claimed to be sympathetic to the faith of the Reformation, but their ploys were unsuccessful. During the three years Hernandez was kept in prison, he was frequently tortured in horrific ways but gave nothing away.

However, through one of their spies, the Inquisition found out the information they were looking for. At Valladolid, they made use of Juan Garcia's stoutly-Romanist wife. Garcia was a goldsmith who used to summon the Protestants to their services. He kept from his wife the place and times of meeting but her confessor persuaded her to follow her husband one night, which she did and told the Inquisition what she had seen. In Seville and the surrounding area, 200 Protestants were arrested in one day. Not all of them resisted the inquisitors' questioning like Hernandez; so the number arrested there soon reached 800. In Valladolid 80 were imprisoned, and the Inquisition was similarly active in other parts of Spain. Some tried to escape and were pursued and captured; others were successful in reaching a Protestant country but were kidnapped by agents of the Inquisition and brought back to Spain. The inquisitors were particularly anxious to have Francisco Zaffra<sup>4</sup> in their clutches, but in the confusion caused by a lack of accommodation for all the prisoners, he got away and escaped to Germany.

Reference was already made to the monks of San Isidro who had gone some way in adopting Protestant principles. Their difficulty was that if they reformed further, the Inquisition would at once arrest them; so they discussed leaving the monastery and fleeing the country. This option too was dangerous, and at first they decided to stay where they were and commit themselves and their safety to providence. No doubt it was when the providence of increasing danger spoke to their minds that they had a further discussion, the outcome of which was that each of them would do what seemed best to himself. Twelve of them departed and, following different routes for safety, escaped and met in Geneva, as planned, a year later. The storm of persecution burst just a few days later and caught up the monks who remained behind, as well as others who had connections with them. One of these refugees from the San Isidro monastery, Casiodoro de Reina, was responsible for the first complete Spanish Bible, which was printed in Basel in 1569.

The dying Charles V left a charge to Philip in which he expressed his persuasion, referring to Protestantism, that "the King his son would use every possible effort to crush so great an evil with all the severity and promptitude which it required" (quoted, p 253). Philip was entirely obedient to these wishes; he applied to the Pope to increase the authority of the Inquisition still further. In 1558 he charged Francisco Valdes, now the Inquisitor General in

<sup>4</sup>A priest with Lutheran leanings (see May issue, p 138).

Spain, to prosecute and punish those guilty of heresy, whatever their rank – even archbishops, cardinals, dukes, kings and emperors might be investigated. Philip also passed a law that those who would read, or even possess, any book forbidden by the Inquisition would suffer capital punishment and have their goods confiscated.

The next year, the Pope strictly directed all confessors to charge those who came to them that they must denounce – again whatever their rank – all whom they knew were guilty of this fearful crime, on pain of the greater excommunication. And those confessors who neglected this duty were subject to the same punishment. Philip also renewed a previous statute which entitled informers to a quarter of the property of those found guilty of heresy; such legislation must have encouraged many a false accusation from those who might receive a significant boost to their possessions as a result. Further, anyone convicted of believing Luther's doctrines, even if they would recant, was subject to capital punishment, and the penalty was applied, not only for future offences, but retrospectively.

Suspected Protestants would suffer prolonged imprisonment – most for two years, many for three – during which they were examined endlessly. The inquisitors might assure them one day that they would escape further punishment if they made an honest confession of all that they knew, and the next day they would be told that their confessions had only served to confirm the inquisitors' suspicions of their sincerity. Intense pressure was applied to extract a recantation, so that this could be read at the public *auto-da-fé*<sup>5</sup> before those convicted were burnt to death. The effort to persuade prisoners to recant was a cruel deceit; they were likely to be killed anyway.

Constantine Ponce de la Fuente was regarded as the ablest of those who promulgated the new doctrines. Though one of Charles V's chaplains, he was among the first to be arrested in Seville; his popularity as a preacher no doubt aroused jealousy. He denied the charges against him and the inquisitors almost despaired of convicting him on any charge, but he was doomed when part of his library was fortuitously discovered.

The collection included various volumes deemed heretical, but perhaps most significant was a book in his own handwriting in which he discussed at length the points of controversy between Rome and the Protestants. "In it", says M'Crie, "the author treated of the true Church according to the principles of Luther and Calvin and, by an application of the different marks which the Scriptures gave for discriminating it, showed that the papal Church had no claim to the title. In a similar way he decided the questions respecting justification, the merit of good works, the sacraments, indulgences and purga-

<sup>5</sup>A ritual of public penance by heretics; those who did not recant might be burnt to death.

tory, calling this last the wolf's head and an invention of the monks to feed idle bellies" (pp 264-5). Constantine acknowledged that the book was his and that these were his beliefs. He gave up his fight against conviction, but nothing could persuade him to inform on any Protestant.

For some reason the inquisitors did not subject him to torture – possibly because of Charles' respect for him. Yet in the hope of inducing other prisoners to confess, they told them that Constantine had given information against them, even producing false witnesses who claimed to have heard his cries when being tortured on the rack. Such were the tactics of those who purported to be carrying out the will of God by attempting to preserve true religion in Spain.

Shortly after Charles' death, Constantine was removed to a damp, unpleasant dungeon. There he was heard to cry out: "O my God, were there no Scythians, or cannibals, or pagans still more savage, that Thou hast permitted me to fall into the hands of these baptized fiends?" (quoted, p 265-6). In that foul hole, he contracted dysentery and soon died. Yet, in God's kind providence, his cellmate was a young monk from San Isidro named Fernando, who looked after him as best he could during these last days of sickness. This monk was able to refute a report circulated by the inquisitors that Constantine had committed suicide. But even his death did not satisfy them; at an *auto-da-fé* in December 1560 his effigy and bones were displayed, so that he could be publicly condemned for his heresies.

The inquisitors were absolutely unscrupulous in the ways they sought to extract information. For example, a widow, three of her daughters and a married sister were arrested, but the Inquisition had no evidence against them, even after they were tortured. One of the daughters was promised that, if she made a full disclosure, she and her relations would be set free. She fell into the trap and confessed that they had discussed Protestant doctrines. She was at once brought to court and obliged to repeat her confession. Then, supposedly because her confession was not sufficiently full, she was again tortured. All these relatives were burnt, as were others who were implicated in the woman's evidence.

Two years after the initial flurry of arrests, it was decided that it was time to bring these cases to a conclusion. *Autos-da-fé* were to be held throughout the land, but those in Seville and Valladolid, which were the main centres of Protestant activity, involved greater pomp than elsewhere. When there were a number of heretics, the *auto-da-fé* always took place on a Sabbath or a Roman holy day. All the clergy and civil authorities were required to attend and, to maximise the size of the crowd, a 40-day indulgence was granted to all who came to watch. All the spectators were obliged to take an oath binding

them to live and die in communion with Rome and to uphold the Inquisition against all its adversaries.

The previous evening, the prisoners who were penitent and were to suffer a lesser punishment than death were informed of their sentence. At midnight a confessor came to each of the prisoners who were to be brought to the stake and told them their fate. He earnestly exhorted them to recant and die reconciled to the Church. Yet the only advantage of recanting was a quick death; the prisoner would be strangled before being burnt. In the morning the bells of all the churches began to ring. Convicted heretics were required to wear a *sanbenito*, a loose kind of tunic made from yellow cloth; if the heretic was to be strangled before being led to the stake, flames burning downwards would be painted on the *sanbenito*; if he was to be burnt alive, the flames would appear burning upwards.

The inquisitors mounted a platform and the prisoners were led to another opposite it. Proceedings began with a sermon; then the sentences of the penitents were read and they, on their knees, repeated their confession. The punishments could include banishment, whipping, hard labour or imprisonment. Afterwards those condemned to death heard their sentences publicly read and were handed over to the secular authorities, who were to put them to death. At every *auto-da-fé*, the inquisitors obliged the magistrates to swear that they would faithfully execute the sentences passed against the heretics, without delay. Amazingly, as the prisoner was handed over, the inquisitors directed the state officials to treat him with compassion. A compassionate burning is somewhat difficult to understand! But the Inquisition was a thoroughly cynical system.<sup>6</sup>

The first of the *autos-da-fé* for burning Protestants took place in Valladolid in May 1559. A huge crowd attended, including Don Carlos, the heir to the Spanish throne, and his aunt. The presiding Inquisitor went to them to administer the oath to support the Inquisition and reveal to them everything opposed to the faith that might come to their notice – without respect of persons. This was the first time such an oath was laid on royalty, and Don Carlos, then just 14, is said to have had an implacable hatred to the Inquisition from that time. Thirty prisoners brought out on this occasion; 16 were reconciled to Rome; two were burnt alive and the other 14 were strangled first. The number who recanted may seem high; yet most of them would have been babes of the

<sup>6</sup>This cynicism is illustrated by a woodcut which depicts trying the guilt of a witch by casting her into the water. It is reproduced in Michael Baigen and Richard Leigh, *The Inquisition*, Penguin, 2000, with the caption: “If she drowned, she was presumed innocent; if she survived, it was presumed to be with the devil’s aid and so she would be burned”. Either way, she perished.

flock, if indeed they were truly converted; we know little about them and the pressures they were under.

Among those sentenced to death was Augustin Cazalla, pastor of the Protestant congregation in Seville, but previously Charles V's chaplain. He was repeatedly examined by inquisitors, who hoped to get information against him and other prisoners. When about to be tortured, his courage failed and he promised to submit to his judges. He confessed that he had embraced Lutheran doctrine but denied that he had ever taught it to any who did not already believe it. When a monk came to inform him of his sentence, Cazalla was very anxious to know if there was any hope of escaping death. The monk told him, perhaps dishonestly, that he might be shown mercy if he would confess everything that the witnesses had said against him. It was then clear to Cazalla that his fate was sealed and replied, "Well then, I must prepare to die in the grace of God, but it is impossible for me to add to what I have said, without falsehood" (p 286). He was duly burnt after being strangled. In addition to the Protestants, there was a Portuguese man, who was condemned as a relapsed Jew.

One of the two who were burnt alive was an advocate, Antonio Herezeulo, who remained unbroken in spirit throughout the fearful experience of torture and burning.<sup>7</sup> "The only thing that moved him on the day of the *auto-da-fé*," says M'Crie, "was the sight of his wife in the garb of a penitent; and the look which he gave . . . as he passed her to go to the place of execution seemed to say, 'This is hard to bear'" (p 288).

A Roman Catholic observer of the scene wrote, "He could not speak, but his mouth was gagged on account of the blasphemies which he had uttered; but his whole behaviour showed him to be a most resolute and hardened person who, rather than yield to believe with his companions, was determined to die in the flames. Though I marked him narrowly, I could not observe the least symptom of fear, or expression of pain; only there was a sadness in his countenance beyond anything I had ever seen. It was frightful to look on his face when one considered that in a moment he would be in hell with his associate and master, Luther" (quoted, pp 288-9).

<sup>7</sup>The words of William C Robinson, in a piece entitled "Justification by Faith", are relevant here. He states his conviction "that one cause for so much of our present loose theological thinking and for the diminution of the vitality and power of present Christianity is that too few of us have thought out just what this cardinal doctrine of the Reformation is. We have not the courage of our convictions, the transforming force in our lives, the faith that mocks the flames, which the Reformers had, because we have not felt the graciousness and blessedness of their doctrine of justification by faith" (David B Calhoun, *Pleading for a Reformation Vision*, Banner of Truth, 2014, p 176). The faith of these Spaniards rested on Christ alone, not on works, and so it mocked the flames.

The observer completely misunderstood the significance of what was happening before his eyes. But the martyr's wife, Leonor, never forgot his last look. She was only 22 and may well have been told that her husband had recanted; such was the gross dishonesty of the Inquisition's dealings with its victims. Besides, in common with many others who were arrested, she did not have much opportunity to become established in the faith of the Bible. Yet she soon resolved, in dependence on divine strength, to follow her husband's example of faithfulness. She broke off the course of penance that she had begun and, as a result, had to endure eight years of imprisonment. Every effort was made to bring her to recant once more, but in vain.

The same observer describes her martyrdom at an *auto-da-fé* at Valladolid in 1568: "She suffered herself to be burnt alive, notwithstanding the great and repeated exertions made to bring her to a conviction of her errors. Finally she resisted what was sufficient to melt a stone, an admirable sermon preached at the *auto* of that day by . . . [the] Bishop of Zamora . . . . But nothing could move the impenetrable heart of that obstinate woman" (quoted, pp 290-1). What an unbelieving heart recognised as obstinacy was, in fact, the result of the sustaining power of divine grace.

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## John Calvin and Attendance at Mass

*Matthew Vogan*

At the time of the Reformation there were individuals who claimed to be Protestants but hid their convictions by continuing to attend the mass and other Roman Catholic ceremonies. Afraid of persecution, these Protestants kept their faith secret and pretended in everything outward to be Roman Catholics. The Reformers refuted the views of these people, who were called "Nicodemites", showing that continuing to attend the blasphemous and idolatrous mass could not leave them undefiled.

Reformed theologians all wrote against mass attendance and argued that merely to share the same space with a Roman Catholic idol or to be an observer at mass was to allow oneself to be polluted. Calvinists were forbidden from attending Roman Catholic marriages, baptisms and funerals. Early in the Reformation, in 1537, Calvin wrote a treatise called *On Shunning the Unlawful Rites of the Ungodly*.<sup>1</sup> This treatise is the only work written against the Nicodemites not included in the volume of collected writings against them: *Come Out from Among Them*.

In this treatise, Calvin is responding to a request for advice as to how to

<sup>1</sup>All the remaining quotations in this article are from this treatise.

live among rampant Romanism while maintaining “fidelity to the Lord pure and unpolluted”. From the very start, “the Mass, that head of all abominations” is singled out since it “takes the lead among all those species of iniquity. In it every imaginable kind of gross profanity is perpetrated”. He also goes to the heart of the question that faces those who are in such a situation. They must either pursue their own expediency and human favour by making “a pretence of indulging in idolatry” or seek God’s approbation by shunning these rites. Calvin says that there ought to be no dubiety or question on matters that are laid down so clearly in Scripture:

Whenever any semblance of good or convenience would withdraw believers one hair’s breadth from obedience to their heavenly Father, the first thought which ought to present itself for consideration is that everything, be it what it may, which has once obtained the sanction of a divine command, thereby becomes so sacred as not only to be beyond dispute, but also beyond deliberation. If we merely allow ourselves to deliberate in such circumstances, we overstep our proper limits; when this is done, we are on a downward path which quickly leads us farther astray.

In his *Institutes* (3.6-10) Calvin has a very practical section on the Christian life. In it he emphasises self-denial as one of the most basic principles of following Christ: “We are not our own: let not reason nor our will therefore sway our plans and deeds. We are not our own: let us therefore not set it as our goal to seek what is expedient for us according to the flesh. . . . Conversely, we are God’s: let us therefore live for Him and die for Him. We are God’s: let His wisdom and will therefore rule all our actions” (3.7.1).

*On Shunning the Unlawful Rites of the Ungodly* likewise begins with the core principles that we are not our own and we must deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow Christ. The first principle of discipleship is: “Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed when He shall come in His own glory and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels” (Lk 9:26).

“Let us remember then that this is the edict which our Saviour issues when we are first enrolled in His family, and that the perpetual edict promulgated for life to those who would belong to His kingdom is that, if they have embraced His doctrine with true heartfelt piety, they must manifest this piety by outward profession. And, indeed, how dishonest were it to be unwilling to make a confession before men of Him by whom they wish themselves to be acknowledged before angels? And how would they have the truth of God to remain effectual to them in heaven after they have denied it upon earth?

“There is no room, therefore, for anyone to indulge in crafty dissimulation,

or to flatter himself with a false idea of piety, pretending that he cherishes it in his heart, though he completely overturns it by his outward behaviour.”

***Scriptural testimony against attending idolatrous worship.*** Calvin lays down the principle: “Whoever bestows any kind of veneration on an idol, be the persuasion of his own mind what it may, acknowledges it to be God”. Whatever may be the thoughts of the heart, if there is an outward action of participation in idolatry we are giving tacit consent and acknowledgement to the idolatrous beliefs of those with whom we gather. Calvin uses the example of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refusing to obey the King’s command to worship an idol, to teach that “to perform any act of idolatry, in order to gain the favour of man, is more to be shunned than death in its most fearful form”. Their duty was clear when presented with “only two alternatives between which to choose – either to shake off the fear of God . . . or to despise men when brought into competition with God”.

Nicodemites wished to say that the body could be present at idolatrous worship without the soul being affected or guilty, since it was inwardly dissenting from such worship. Calvin maintains that the body is no less affected by such participation than in the sin of fornication and he applies Paul’s teaching to this effect. “Know ye not”, he asks, “that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them the members of a harlot? God forbid” (1 Cor 6:15). In the same way, can we take “the members of Christ” and “defile them by the worship of idols, or by impure superstitions?” “Let us remember that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; that we are not our own, but have been bought with a great price, and ought therefore to bear and glorify God in our body.” “Thus he [Paul] enjoins us not to keep at a remote distance from unbelievers in respect of space, but to stand far aloof from their polluted rites.”

***Questions of conscience.*** Calvin refers to the way in which Paul deals with matters of conscience in relation to participation in matters connected with idol worship. Those who felt they were able to participate, in the knowledge that there was no reality in these false gods, were only considering their own conscience and not that of others:

“What you openly do, as it may seem to be a participation in the worship of false gods, you do to the peril of many: for the rude and simple who are present at the spectacle, having not yet reached that prudence of yours, which understands that idols are nothing, on seeing you apparently communicating in their religious rites, what other idea can they form than just that you are worshippers of idols, and thus be emboldened to commit the sin which their own conscience condemns? . . . The impiety which is committed by the wicked in imitating you, seeing it is committed by your fault, must be

charged to your account.” Therefore “it behoves every man who possesses a pure zeal for piety, not only to refrain his tongue from impious words, but keep every part of his body untainted by any sacrilegious rite”.

***The abominations of the mass.*** Calvin goes on to show that the Scriptures “anathematise papistical ceremonies not less than any other kind of idol abominations . . . there never was displayed in Gentile superstitions sacrilege more execrable, more grievously subversive of true piety, or more insulting to it than some of those things that are now everywhere seen within the domain of the Pope”. He refers to the extreme reverence given to the mass and yet “notwithstanding the abominations with which the mass teems, you meet with very few who venture to absent themselves”. They comply out of fear, lukewarmness, or failure to discern the truth.

In highlighting briefly the abominations of the mass, Calvin asserts that “every believer should be aware that the mere name of sacrifice (as the priests of the mass understand it) both utterly abolishes the cross of Christ, and overturns His sacred Supper which He consecrated as a memorial of His death. For both, as we know, is the death of Christ utterly despoiled of its glory, unless it is held to be the one only and eternal sacrifice; and if any other sacrifice still remains, the Supper of Christ falls at once, and is completely torn up by the roots”.

The point that Calvin emphasises most strongly, however, is “the abominable idolatry” of the mass. This takes place “when bread is pretended to assume Divinity, and raised aloft as God, and worshipped by all present! . . . A little bit of bread, I say, is displayed, adored, and invoked. In short, it is believed to be God.”

***What attendance at the mass involves.*** Calvin describes someone attending the mass and shows how they cannot disassociate themselves from its idolatry. He gives us a sketch of the scene of which they must be spectators. They behold an altar and a sacrificing priest, a pretended “mediator” who is supposed to be able to call Christ down from heaven in order to be “sacrificed”. The “idol” wafer is worshipped, and “is this idol in any respect different from that which the Second Commandment of the law forbids us to worship?”

“In the mass Christ is traduced, His death is mocked, an execrable idol is substituted for God – shall we hesitate, then, to call it the table of demons? Or shall we not rather, in order justly to designate its monstrous impiety, try, if possible, to devise some new term still more expressive of detestation? Indeed, I exceedingly wonder how men, not utterly blind, can hesitate for a moment to apply the name, ‘Table of Demons’, to the mass, seeing they plainly behold in the erection and the arrangement of it the tricks, engines, and troops of devils all combined.”

In the countries of Europe where Romanism was ascendant it was impossible to avoid walking past idol shrines and inadvertently witnessing superstitious rites, just as visitors to Romanist districts in our own day find themselves confronted by similar displays of idolatry. Calvin is not saying that we can never enter buildings given over to this idolatry or that we have sinned if we have looked upon these idols. We are, however, “utterly to abstain from all fellowship with any form of sacrilege, meaning by fellowship not mere proximity of place . . . but inward consent, and some kind of outward manifestation indicative of consent”. We are not to join ourselves in the congregation of those that engage in such idolatrous rites, as this implies that we are consenting. Someone is only free from being defiled by these abominations if he “is abstinent to such a degree, that he contracts no guilt or stain either by look, access, or vicinity”.

**Conclusion.** Many believe it to be a matter of very little moment as to whether or not someone attends mass or not. Their instinct is that it is certainly something to be left to individual liberty and conscience, as a grey area, or at worst a minor fault. It is certainly not a minor fault but, even if it were a small matter amongst the other commandments of God, we should not be indifferent to it.

Calvin says that “every one among the precepts of God, how small soever the matter as to which it prescribes, ought to be sacred to us: for when negligence in regard to the minutest matter (the observance of which the Lord has enjoined by His law) finds its way into the minds of men, contempt of the whole law and its righteousness gradually creeps in and follows.”

The Nicodemites that Calvin addressed likewise wished to minimise the significance of their actions. Calvin draws upon Paul’s arguments against any participation in the acts of idolatry to show that in such an action “the Lord is defied, sin is committed against Christ, the table of devils is partaken of, and the table of Christ is repudiated”. It cannot be “deemed a light and venial fault”; indeed if “these are light offences, entitled to an easy pardon, where shall words be found weighty enough to describe flagrant . . . crimes?”

This is “an act by which the glory of God was exposed to the derision of idolaters, and the consciences of weak brethren were unhinged, because they supposed they had, and gloried in having, a Christian man as an associate in the worship of an image, and were emboldened by his example to do the same, although with a wavering and undecided conscience”. Calvin summarises in one plain but pithy sentence what this act entails: “They assemble at mass, which they see provided with a long and varied apparatus of sacrilege, and they assemble with a multitude known to entertain a pernicious veneration for the mass”. This is nothing other than association with idolatry.

As in our own day, one of the reasons brought against avoiding attendance at mass – for instance, as in connection with a wedding or a funeral – is that it will cause offence to friends, colleagues or family if we are not present. Generally this is a specious argument as many are willing to accept that it is contrary to the profession of a genuine Protestant to be present and are respectful of their conscience in the matter. Avoiding offence given to such people by attending mass actually creates offence to God and to Christ and also to other believers who are stumbled by such an example.

“What else do those men do when they endeavour, by a show of respect for the mass, not to offend [that is, stumble] those altogether untaught, or those not yet fully confirmed? They indeed avert offence from themselves, but they entice others, by their example, to offend God.”

In his last urgent appeal to those who are deliberating whether or not it is lawful for them to attend the mass, Calvin sums up the fearful consequences of attending the idolatrous mass. His urgent entreaty is “that you may not pollute the holy religion of God by horrible sacrilege; that you may not profane your body, which He has dedicated as a temple to Himself, by foul abominations; that you may not inscribe your name on execrable blasphemies”.

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## A Free Forgiveness<sup>1</sup>

*W K Tweedie*

Isaiah 43:25. *I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*

“**F**or Mine own sake.” That is the foundation of the gospel and the well-spring of hope to the sinner. All begins in grace, all is carried on by grace, and by grace the whole scheme of redemption is perfected. Man wishes to find something in himself by which to move the unchanging One. My tears, my penitence, my suffering, my sacrifices, my faith, my religion: these are some of the considerations to which even the believer is prone to cling in the hope of influencing his God or regaining His favour.

But “for Mine own sake” puts all these delusions aside. In the fathomless depths of the divine compassion; in that mercy which is like a great deep; in that grace which is to be measured, if measured at all, by the sufferings of the Son of God – in these alone we find a foundation for hope. Man is utterly set aside. He is laid in the dust, and God alone is exalted to the throne. In no case will He, in no case can He, give His glory to another, and least of all when blotting out iniquity and restoring the soul to purity again.

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Tweedie’s volume, *Glad Tidings of the Gospel of Peace*.

Mark, moreover, how this Almighty condescension speaks: "I, even I, am He that . . . will not remember thy sins". As if the Omniscient One could forget! As if He who is the same yesterday, today and for ever could change! Now, when all this is said or done to reassure the sinner, may he not boldly come for pardoning mercy? Or if he still refuses under any pretext, may not the God of pardons renew the complaint: "What could have been done to My vineyard that I have not done in it?" O my soul, may it be otherwise with you! Commit yourself in well-doing to Him who delights to pardon, and He will cause you to delight "in the abundance of peace". "Put Me in remembrance, let us plead together," are the gracious words of God. Plead then in faith, and God must change before your hopes can fail.

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## Notes and Comments

### **Abusers of Themselves with Mankind**

The subject of those that "abuse themselves with mankind" (1 Cor 6:9) is an unpleasant one, and would surely come among those things of which the Apostle says "it is a shame even to speak" (Eph 5:12); but when almost every news programme has something on the subject, it is a matter that we can hardly avoid. Scripture is perfectly clear that such practice is sinful, and expressly warns us that the utter destruction of the cities of the plain in Abraham's day was "an example unto those that after should live ungodly" (2 Pet 2:6). On the other hand, the sin is not one that cannot be washed out in the blood of Christ, and among the Corinthian believers there were some who had been guilty of that sin but had repented and forsaken their evil way (1 Cor 6:9-11). They did not make a "biological" excuse for their unclean conduct, nor is any such excuse valid today.

Scripture also tells us that the sin is closely connected with idolatry and false religion, and that those who "did not like to retain God in their knowledge" may be given up to it by God as a punishment (Rom 1:28). Probably numerous examples of this have occurred in our own day. The element of "the reprobate mind" that is spoken of in the verse in Romans is seen in the openness and boldness with which the sin is often made public, and in the determination that others must be compelled to endorse it. It is seen too in the opposition to the ordinary biblical standards of morality; and proponents of the sin frequently argue nowadays that those who condemn the sin are not fit for positions of responsibility in society, while those who are ensnared by it are suitable for all roles, even those involving families and children.

The two main examples of the sin in Scripture – Sodom (Gen 19:5) and

Gibeah (Jdg 19:22) – strongly suggest that the situation in Britain is likely to get worse. In both cases, the inhabitants of the particular town demand the right, not only to indulge their evil desires, but to force others to submit to them. Scripture is here revealing the restless and insatiable tendency that lies behind this sin, involving a casting off, not only of duties towards God, but even of the most basic duties towards one's neighbour.

The evil movement that supports this sin has been gathering strength for over half a century, and now threatens to carry all before it. There is hardly a public figure who dares to “move the wing, or open the mouth, or peep” against it. How it will have an end, we find hard to imagine; but end it must because “He must reign, till He hath put all enemies under His feet” (1 Cor 15:25). That is a day that we pray and long for. *DWBS*

### **First Taste of the Named Person Scheme**

A mother in Aberdeen, Mrs Susan Watt, who has five children, reported at the end of March on “Archbishop Cranmer's blog”, on the internet, about an interview that her youngest child, aged almost 13, had been subjected to at her school, Harlaw Academy. The child was taken out of class and told that she had an appointment with the school nurse. There was no prior notice of this “appointment”. The nurse was not the usual school nurse, and the child had never seen her before.

The questions were of a probing nature and included the following. “Who do you live with? Do you get on with your sister? Where do your other siblings live – do they live nearby? Do your parents work? What jobs do they do? Do you have any pets? How many pets? Do you sleep well? (When the girl answered, Yes, to this question the nurse said: “So no bed-wetting then?”) Have you started your menstrual periods? Do you feel safe and secure in your home? Do you feel loved and cared for? Are you listened to? If you have a problem who would you go to? Do you have a good relationship with your parents? Can you talk to them?” etc, etc. The girl said that she felt very uncomfortable and taken aback at the questions, and she rang her mother as soon as she could. Some such questions might have been appropriate if there had been a proper health reason for them, but apparently there was no such reason.

The mother has since spoken to the school and filed a complaint against the NHS. The headmaster, reasonably enough, said that he had no prior knowledge of the questions. The lead nurse mentioned SHANARRI (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included), GIRFEC (Getting It Right For Every Child), and the Named Person scheme which is already being implemented at Harlaw Academy. She refused to

give a copy of the notes that the nurse had taken at the interview on the grounds of “confidentiality”.

It appears that the intention is to ask these questions of all children in their first year in Aberdeen secondary schools. The Christian Institute may be able to provide more information. For the moment, we would warn parents in Scotland, and indeed all family members, including grandparents, that any stray remarks relating to children under 18 made to doctors, dentists and other health-workers, teachers and carers may be reported to the Named Person and may rebound on the family. One woman had a compulsory psychiatric assessment after the birth of a baby because she happened to mention casually to a nursery worker, when she was heavily pregnant and collecting an older child from the nursery, that she was “struggling”. With the loss of true religion, Scotland is in danger of entering a “communist-style” society in which trust breaks down. So it was in the days of the Covenanters. “Be ye therefore wise as serpents and harmless as doves” (Mt 10:16). *DWBS*

### **The Word of God**

In an art gallery in Cracow, Poland, is a large painting which fills an entire wall. The painting is of a grim scene of Christian martyrdom and has the unpleasant title, “Nero’s Torches”. The picture, by a Polish artist, Henryk Siemiradzki (1843-1902), shows a brutal-looking Nero lounging on a covered bed in the centre of the canvas, looking bored. He is attended by African slaves and has a debauched company of men and women around him. Several of the men wear pink flowers in their hair. In front of him, preparations are in hand for the burning of a number of Christians. The martyrs have been trussed up with combustible material at the top of high poles and are about to be set on fire. The grave faces of the Christian martyrs contrast with the coarseness and sensuality of Nero’s entourage.

The scene fills one with disgust, and seems entirely inappropriate as the subject of a painting. But as one turns from it, one notices a huge Latin inscription on the base of the gold frame: “Et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt” – “And the darkness comprehended it not”. Suddenly one realises what the painting is about. The perspective is instantly transferred from earth to heaven, and one sees, not the wicked vilely triumphing over the godly, but the godly, with the approval of heaven, bearing witness to, and triumphing over, the wicked. “Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints” (Ps 116:15).

The immediate effect of an apposite scripture in transforming one’s view is remarkable. The more that the people of God can apply His Word to their lives, the wiser and happier they will be. *DWBS*

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## Protestant View

### Wasted Lives

The number of women entering convents to become nuns has increased from only seven in 2004 to 45 last year and is now at its highest level since 1990. According to the Roman Catholic authorities, these statistics show that there is “a gap in the market for meaning in our culture” and that “as a generation we have turned a corner”.

No doubt such women have a sense of the emptiness of materialism and of a worldly lifestyle and are trying to find something in their religion which will satisfy the needs of their souls. We feel sorry for such women, however, since they are looking in the wrong place for fulfilment in life. Taking engaging vows of obedience, chastity and poverty will not be for their own spiritual good or anyone else’s. Monastic orders have ever confounded devotion to the Church of Rome with true dedication to Christ. The two are, however, entirely opposite. Furthermore, biblical separation from worldliness certainly does not require withdrawal from normal family life. But as long as they are dedicating their lives to the practice and advancement of unbiblical Roman Catholic religion, these sadly deluded women – however well-intentioned they may be at the outset – are only wasting their lives serving the kingdom of darkness.

AWM

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## Church Information

### Removed by Death

Mr John Buchanan, for many years an elder in the Uig, Lewis, congregation, passed away on May 10. We extend our sympathy to the family

### *Heidelberg Catechism Review*

The review in the April issue, of the Banner of Truth edition of the *Heidelberg Catechism*, referred to the use of *impart* in relation to forgiveness, which is a significant element in justification. It was not intended to suggest that the publisher has a defective view of this doctrine. Question 60, for instance, uses the word *impute*. The original Latin and German do mean *give freely*, and *impart* is an alternative translation to *give* in Question 56. It is more literal than *impute*. Other translations have used *impute*, however, due to the context of not being condemned. It may be useful in future editions to mention *impute* in a footnote.

The word *impart* has undesirable associations and is best avoided in

relation to justification as it is frequently used in relation to false views of the doctrine. Two examples from many instances are in the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification by the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church, and the second Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission Statement on Salvation and the Church (1986). The latter seeks to blur the clear distinctions of the Reformation between justification and sanctification. It says that God's "creative word imparts what it imputes. By pronouncing us righteous, God also makes us righteous. He imparts a righteousness which is His and becomes ours" (quoted from Hywel R Jones, *Gospel & Church*, p 99). MV

### Sermons of Archibald Cook

Free Presbyterian Publications have now made available these sermons in a 332-page hardback, under the title, *Eternal Reality*. The sermons have been translated into English from the Gaelic in which they were preached; they cost £19.50. Copies may be obtained from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom. Rev Neil Cameron wrote of Cook: "The people [of his congregation] felt that they had in him a faithful servant of Christ – a true, unwavering friend that wept with them that wept and rejoiced with them that rejoiced, and one who lived and laboured for their everlasting benefit". And Donald Sage, a nineteenth-century Scottish minister wrote, "I question if there be any of the age in which we live who, in pure disinterested zeal, in holy abstractedness from the world, in vital godliness, or in exclusive devotedness to the external interests of the kingdom of heaven, more nearly approximates to the divinely-trained disciples of Galilee than does Archibald Cook".

### College and Library Fund

By appointment of Synod, the first of two special collections for the College and Library Fund is due to be taken in congregations during June.

*W Campbell*, General Treasurer

### Acknowledgement of Donations

**The General Treasurer** acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

*College & Library Fund*: Anon, £350.

*Eastern Europe Fund*: Anon, for the Lord's work in the Ukraine, £120.

**Congregational Treasurers** acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

**Fort William**: Anon, £50.

**Glasgow**: *Bus Fund*: Anon, £100, £20, £20, £20. *Eastern Europe Fund*: Anon, £60, £10, £60.

**Laide**: Friend, Holland, £500; Estate of late I MacKenzie, £535.04; Friend, Dingwall, for calendars, £20. *Eastern Europe Fund*: Friend, Aultbea, £30, £30, £30, £30, £40; Friend, Arina, £40, £40; Friend, Holland, £563.88, £250; Friend, Melvaig, £100; Isle View Residents, £13, £5, £6; Friends, Inverness, £50; Friend, Shieldaig, £50; Friend, Applecross, £50; Friend, Udrigle, £150; Friend, Laide, £30, £35; Strathburn Residents, £68.35, £61.03 per Rev DAR; Friend, Strathburn, £25 per CR. *Sustentation Fund*: Friend, Holland, £500; Friend, Aultbea, £40; Friend, Mellon Charles, £10 per Rev DAR; Friend, Aultbea, £30, £30 per CR.

**Staffin**: Raasay Friend, £20 per Rev WAW. *Manse Fund*: Anon, £100 per Rev WAW.

## 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 12 noon. 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, Rosharon, 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: antipaa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levyskiy; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytsky@gmail.com.

### Zimbabwe

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