

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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September 2015

Vol 120 • No 9

The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland

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Published by The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland (Scottish Charity Number SC003545). Subscriptions and changes of address to be sent to the General Treasurer, Mr W Campbell, 133 Woodlands Road, Glasgow, G3 6LE; tel: 0141 332 9283. The subscription year begins in January. Prices are on back cover. One month's notice is required for change of address. Queries about delivery of the magazines should be sent to the General Treasurer, not the printer.

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Deadline for sending material to the Editor: The beginning of the month previous to publication.

The Gaelic Supplement (quarterly): Editor: Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0TA. Available free on request.

Youth Magazine: *The Young People's Magazine*. Editor: Rev K D Macleod BSc.

Communions

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

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

March: Second Sabbath: 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, Sheldraig; **Third:** Lochcarron, Uig; **Fourth:** Bulawayo, Gairloch, Inverness, Raasay.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Volume 120

September 2015

Number 9

Why Do People not Go to Church?

People in the Western world today inhabit a very different spiritual and moral environment from, say, 150 years ago. Church attendance has plummeted in most Western countries; people do not feel their need of God; they do not realise that they need to be saved from sin and guilt; they are not conscious of needing to listen to what God has to say in His Word; so they do not turn to Him. Yet the fact is that many, even if they did feel their need of hearing the Scriptures expounded and applied, would struggle to find the Word proclaimed in its purity in their neighbourhood.

The Lord complained of Judah: “The prophets prophesy falsely . . . and My people love to have it so” (Jer 5:31). They did not want to hear the demands of God’s law and the warnings that faithful prophets like Jeremiah were drawing to their attention. Similarly people today do not want to hear such demands or warnings, but preaching that lacks them is tragically deficient. It cannot give anyone a sense that it is relevant to the human condition, and so, in general, fewer and fewer are attending church services.

One can only assume that Bible-reading has declined in line with church attendance. And as contact with the law of God, as revealed in the Bible, has declined, so there is a decline in the attention that is paid to the Commandments. The First Commandment, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me”, is certainly broken by those who follow false religions. But it is also broken by those who ignore what *The Shorter Catechism* identifies, from Scripture as “required in the First Commandment” – “to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify Him accordingly” (Answer 46).

Not only is there generally no consciousness of the obligation to worship God, there is no sense of the duty to know Him by faith – not merely to know *about* Him. A significant proportion in many countries accept that God exists; yet in practice they regard Him as irrelevant. “God is not in all his thoughts”, says David of the ungodly man (Ps 10:4). So, if one could examine all the thoughts of the majority of people today, one would not find any thought of the Most High, who created all things, including mankind.

In his *Commentary* on the Psalms, W S Plumer remarks on the verse just quoted: “If sin had its way, it would both dethrone and annihilate God. As far as it can, it acts and feels and thinks as if He existed not”. Plumer is describing sin operating in creatures who have intelligence. Human beings may not always spell out to themselves the implications of their thoughts, but the consequence of people ignoring God, and the revelation He has given, is a society where God’s authority is rejected and men and women live as if He did not exist. But there need be no doubt that Satan, as he goes about seeking to tempt sinners away from the truth, is doing so with a view to bringing about a world where God is universally rejected – a world where people live as if He had indeed been annihilated.

Every false religion, every heresy, every godless philosophy is the result of “the god of this world” blinding “the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor 4:4). Satan is determined to do all in his power to keep sinners in rebellion against God and bring them down at last to a lost eternity. But a particularly potent philosophy in the past century and a half has been evolution, with its idea that everything, including living creatures, has developed from the simple to the complex, without being directed in any way. The whole process that has brought the universe and everything in it to its present stage of development, so it is usually claimed, has at no point been under the control of any being.

One of the strongest arguments for the existence of God has always been the fact of creation. Paul speaks of God’s “eternal power and Godhead” as seen in the creation, leaving people “without excuse” (Rom 1:20) when they deny His existence. And when Paul began to expound what the men of Athens described as “strange things”, he pointed to God as “God that made the world and all things therein” and “Lord of heaven and earth”, implying that He has authority over, in particular, all human beings. This, of course, is still true, but the blinding power of evolution has resulted in the testimony of nature and Scripture to God being obscured, if not entirely obliterated, in the minds of many today.

Some who, if pressed, will acknowledge that God exists, yet succeed in keeping Him out of their thinking. They live as if He did not exist; they do not consider His law and their responsibility to obey it; they ignore the fact that they are guilty because of their disobedience to the Commandments; they do not set aside time to worship Him; they do not consider their latter end. Behind this rejection of God and His authority lies the widespread acceptance of evolution, which means that they do not feel any responsibility to treat God as *their* Creator, with all that this implies about God’s authority

over them – His authority to direct them as to how they should live, and His authority to punish them for their sin both in time and in eternity. These implications are unwelcome to the natural heart. Like Pharaoh, they say, in effect, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?” (Ex 5:2). And they add, Who is the Lord, that He should have the right to punish me?

One cannot avoid seeing such attitudes behind the ferocious opposition to teaching about creation. Minds are being blinded to the existence of God and to His authority as lawgiver, and evolution is used to buttress the atheism of those who do not wish their consciences to be disturbed overmuch by their wrongdoing. But God has spoken. Because He is our Creator, He does have the right to demand that we worship Him and that we cease immediately our resistance to His authority. He says, “O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker. For He is our God; and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your heart” (Ps 95:6-8).

Science has discovered much and lies behind many useful inventions. It has therefore acquired an aura of infallibility, but in the area of evolution, what we see is science as a philosophy, not as a series of conclusions which are testable by experiments. No one can go back and rerun the origins of the universe; if we are to know about its early history, we need a revelation from the only One who was present “in the beginning”. Apart from such a revelation from the true God we could not reliably know anything about what happened then. And we must bear in mind that it is “through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God” (Heb 11:3). Even a historical faith – a mere acceptance that the facts of Scripture are true – has a useful influence on people, bringing about a sense of God’s authority and outward obedience to His commands.

But historical faith will save no one; saving trust in Christ is necessary. Unless people have that trust, there is no fear of God in their hearts – that holy respect for God and His law that leads to an obedience which is not only outward but inward. Where the fear of God has been planted, the soul cannot be satisfied without faith in Christ, without being reconciled to God, without being the subject of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit.

If we are again to see widespread church attendance, study of the Word of God, sinners convinced of sin and seeking salvation, and going on to live godly lives, there must be a powerful work of the Holy Spirit. Yet we must not despair; for God has promised that “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Is 11:9) – not only in one district or country, but everywhere. Satan can never sweep true religion out of the world; he cannot have the victory, for Christ has conquered him.

God's Providence (1)¹

A Sermon by Archibald Bonar

Revelation 19:6. *And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.*

Even if nothing more had been revealed in the Bible than the certainty, extent and uprightness of God's providential rule, this would have provided a powerful argument for searching the Scriptures and making them our constant companion in this world. To have infallible authority for the doctrine of God's providence is something highly satisfying to the mind; it is so suited to the wishes and needs of all men, so soothing in times of sorrow, so supporting in the prospect of approaching difficulties or of dreaded dangers that it may well constrain the humble worshippers of the Almighty to join with the happier assemblies of saints above in saying, with ever-growing gratitude: Alleluia! Let us be glad and rejoice, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

When this sublime thought is engraved on our heart, we may meditate without dismay on all the astonishing things which are happening among the nations. Undaunted at what the people may devise, we may look by faith to Him who is invisible, and hear Him saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure". We behold this glorious Ruler, seated on His throne of justice and judgement, ordering aright the lot of His people, distributing to all a just proportion of good and evil, putting down one and exalting another, ensnaring wickedness in its own devices or promoting righteousness by the stratagems used for its destruction, sending abroad judgements through many lands or mercifully calming the tumult of the nations. Thus in considering what has been, or now is, or what may be hereafter, we may triumph in the persuasion that the kingdom and power and glory are God's.

The consolation arising from a firm belief in the important doctrine contained in this text is greatly heightened to real Christians because they know that He to whom the alleluias of heaven are addressed, and who reigns King for ever, is the very Prince of peace on whom their hopes are built and whom they supremely love. He died to redeem them from their sins by His own blood; He is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, having all power in heaven and earth, and on His vesture this name is written: King of kings and Lord of lords. This is what confirms their faith that all things work together for their

¹The first of two sermons on this text taken, with editing, from Bonar's *Sermons, Chiefly on Devotional Subjects*. Bonar (1753-1816) was, for most of his ministry, pastor of Cramond church in Edinburgh.

good; it gives energy to their hope of safety in troublous times; and it yields to their minds unspeakable calm amid all changes and revolutions.

The text leads our believing thoughts to the activities and joys of the inhabitants of heaven. It introduces believers to the innumerable company of angels and to the spirits of just men made perfect; it represents all the ransomed above as worshipping before the throne of God and the Lamb; it elevates their devotion by declaring the cause of the joy of heaven; and it invites those still in the world to take their part in the heavenly songs and, with their feebler notes of praise, to celebrate the glory, the greatness and the grace of Zion's Almighty King.

Thus you read: "And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready" (Rev 19:4-7).

Let us for a moment forget that we are on earth and let us joyfully listen to those seraphic strains above. Gabriel tunes his golden harp and gladly sings, Alleluia; "the Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof". Abraham and the venerable band of patriarchs re-echo, Alleluia; He whom we saw in vision and whom we foretold as Shiloh, the Prince of peace and the King of righteousness; He reigns; the government is upon His shoulders; Hosanna in the highest. David and all the prophets join the angelic hosts and say, Alleluia; the Lord reigns; His arm and power shall reach afar, shall extend from sea to sea, from the rising sun to where it sets; men shall be blessed in Him, and all nations shall call Him blessed. Martyrs and apostles shout aloud with joy, Alleluia; the Lord Redeemer reigns; He has all power in heaven and earth; to Him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess; and the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ.

Let us join these heavenly songs, saying, Live and reign, wondrous King of glory; be Thou Lord of all; let Thy kingdom come, and let Thy will be done in earth; and let every creature ascribe blessing, dominion and glory to the Lord God omnipotent, who was and is and is to come.

In further discoursing on this portion of Scripture, I propose through divine assistance: (1.) To speak of the wide extent of Jehovah's government: "the Lord reigneth". (2.) To remind you of the essential properties of His providence, towards mankind in general and His redeemed in particular. (3.) To

point out to you the application of this extensive subject, which is suggested by the text and the context.²

1. To excite the ardour of your devotion and lead you to join, with understanding, in the song of the adoring hosts above, let us contemplate ***the wide extent of the omnipotent Jehovah's government***. The Lord reigneth, says our text; or, as it is expressed in the Psalms, "The Lord hath prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom ruleth over all" (103:19). Memorable words, commanding at once our trust, submission, obedience and joy. Independent of all created aid, He Himself has prepared and established His throne, so that it cannot be shaken by all the furious attacks of earth or hell. This throne of God is in the heaven of heavens; there He reigns in royal majesty; and from thence extends His sovereign authority to all around and all beneath – to all His creatures and all their actions. His kingdom rules over all: (1) over angels of light, (2) over fiends of darkness, and (3) over mankind of every kindred, nation and language.

(1.) Let us meditate on the government and providence of God as it relates to *the holy angels in heaven*. Here the aid of faith is necessary, for these happy spirits are invisible to human view. Thus it is only belief of what Scripture reveals that can make us acquainted with them. The Bible tells us all that we need to know about their nature, number and work. There they are called the host of heaven, an innumerable company of angels, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands. They are continually employed in ascribing glory to God in the highest, harkening to His commands and doing His will. With unceasing rapture they celebrate the riches of redeeming love; with unwearied alacrity they minister to the heirs of salvation and fulfil whatever is the pleasure of their almighty King.

O joyful discovery! By faith we behold myriads of superior intelligent creatures perpetually praising and serving the God whom we are to serve. Do not say then, humble worshipper, that you are left alone and unsupported in your regard for the honour of religion, that you have no one to encourage your zeal for God and no one to accompany you in the path of obedience. Far from being alone in your zeal for the glory of God, an innumerable company of angels join with you in the same service. Like you, but in a manner that is vastly superior, they contemplate and admire and worship and obey.

These countless hosts of angels excel all other intelligent beings in wisdom and strength; they are closely allied to God; they are completely blessed in His presence; and they enjoy constant communion with their Maker. They are willing subjects of His kingdom and government, and under His sovereign

²Bonar deals with the second and third heads in his second sermon on the text.

dominion, they are always obedient to His royal command and gladly serve Him with all their extensive active powers.

He often sends them on important errands to mankind, either to punish iniquity, or for the joy of the righteous. When the firstborn in Egypt were to be cut off in one night, an angel was commissioned for that memorable service. And when the army of Sennacherib was justly doomed to immediate destruction, angels from heaven were made the ministers of divine indignation. On the other hand, these benevolent beings were sent to deliver Lot from Sodom, to comfort Jacob at Bethel, to strengthen Elisha at Dothan, to inform the watchful shepherds at Bethlehem that a Saviour had been born, even Christ the Lord. They willingly ministered to this Saviour in the days of His sorrow; they adorned the triumphs of His exaltation, when He ascended up on high, leading captivity captive. In all this they fulfilled the pleasure of Him who is the Lord of hosts, who has established His throne in the heavens, and who does His will among the armies above.

Daily the angels minister to every heir of salvation. They rejoice at his conversion; they witness his devotion; they mark with gladness his Christian conduct; they guard his midnight hours; they attend his tottering steps in the days of declining health; they surround his dying bed and introduce him to the world of happy spirits and welcome him to the mansions of eternal bliss.

Such is the government of God over holy angels: the subjects of His kingdom; they obey what He commands and serve Him with perfect love and perfect joy; they are immutably confirmed in a state of unspeakable happiness; and they minister to the heirs of salvation by ways unknown to us. Alleluia; the Lord God omnipotent reigneth and is King of glory; many angels are about His throne and ascribe blessing and dominion to Him who lives for ever, and to the Lamb that was slain.

(2.) Let us next turn our attention to God's rule over *the powers of darkness*. Let us see, with adoring joy, how their malignity is restrained, how their furious rage is bounded, and all their stratagems turned into artillery against themselves. These wretched spirits were once angels of light and continued for a time perfect in wisdom, purity and bliss. But, proudly aspiring to be independent of the God who made them and ungratefully rebelling against His authority, they brought upon themselves wretchedness and ruin, were banished from heaven, cast into the place of torment and doomed to irrecoverable vengeance. Ever since that apostasy and condemnation, they have been the determined foes of God and of righteousness, and never do they experience one moment's mitigation of their unutterable anguish, except perhaps when hoping to thwart the designs of the Almighty and when trying to prevent mankind from doing His will.

For holy ends they have been permitted, in God's unsearchable wisdom, to set up a kingdom in opposition to the cause of God and His Christ. With unwearied vigilance and unceasing stratagem, they endeavour to entice mankind from the path of commanded duty. And, alas, their success in every age is marvellous and sad. Many are led captive by the snares of these malignant spirits; many are the children of the evil one; many believe and obey Satan rather than God, doing the works of their father the devil, resembling him in their evil dispositions and uniting with him in opposing the interests of holiness.

But Almighty God reigns, and His kingdom shall prevail. He who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, who even in His state of humiliation dispossessed legions and delivered men from the cruel influence of Satan – this almighty King of Zion holds Satan bound in chains and says to the furious tempter: Hitherto shalt thou go, but no further; here shall thy proud rage be stayed. This exalted Lord of lords governs the invisible worlds and has the keys of death and hell; He beholds all the stratagems of the artful seducer of souls; He gives His people strength to resist the devil, to stand in the evil day, to vanquish the powers of darkness, and to be more than conquerors through the grace of Christ.

In many nations and in many hearts, the empire of Satan seems so firmly established that it can never be overthrown; yet He whose kingdom rules over all shall arise and plead His own cause; He will make the nations obedient to His word, will deliver an elect world from the bondage of the great adversary, and will bring Jews and Gentiles, barbarians and Scythians, bond and free, to the clear light and glorious liberty of the children of God. Before long, the omnipotent Lord of Zion will take to Himself His great power, and the accuser of the brethren will be cast out. Before long that tremendous day shall come to which Satan looks forward with agonising horror – that day of final judgement when his total overthrow shall be accomplished, when he shall be constrained to bow to the dire irreversible service of never-ending misery.

Such is the mysterious and righteous government of God over the devil and his angels. They are now permitted to tempt, and seemingly to triumph, so that the wisdom, power and grace of the great God may appear more illustrious in translating careless captive sinners from darkness to light; in enabling feeble, timid believers to fight and conquer; in extending the triumphs of the gospel through those lands where Satan has his seat, and in hastening on the blissful period when a spiritual, holy, everlasting kingdom shall be established. "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." True and righteous are His judgements; He shall judge the great deceiver which did

corrupt the earth and shall cast him into the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, where the smoke of his torment shall ascend for ever and ever.

(3.) Having reminded you that the dominion of the glorious Jehovah extends to the host of heaven and to the fiends of hell, let us now turn our attention to His government of *the children of men on earth*. Here a most rich, varied and wide scene opens before us – involved indeed with clouds and darkness, if viewed only by the dim eye of natural reason, but bright and joyful when contemplated through the light of revelation and by the eye of faith. Then we can clearly perceive that God is King of all the earth and can see that the Almighty is regulating every motion in the complicated machinery of His providence.

By Him kings reign, princes decree justice and kingdoms rise and fall; He lays low the proud monarch of Egypt and sends the imperious King of Babylon to feed with the beasts of the field; He crowns with victory the arms of Cyrus and says that he will do all God's pleasure "though thou hast not known Me". Those astonishing changes in empires, which seem to arise merely from the fury of the people or the ambition of princes, are under the control of Him who sits on the floods and directs the storm, who mocks the projects of princes and laughs to scorn the monarchs of the earth, who defeats the enterprises of the crafty and makes His people's fiercest foes the instruments of safety and good to His chosen. Alleluia; the Lord reigneth. Thine, O Lord, is the kingdom, power and glory; Thou changest the times and the seasons; Thou dashest into dishonour the towering hopes of the mighty; and Thou exaltest to victory the defeated captives doomed to destruction. All kings of the earth should bow down before Thee; all kindreds of the people shall do Thee homage.

As God is King of kings, so He is the refuge of the needy and the Father of the fatherless in His holy habitation. His care is not confined to the mighty and the noble; He pleads the cause of the destitute; He delivers the oppressed from deceit and violence, and is the stay of those whom no one regards; He beholds the sorrowful, pities the afflicted and does not overlook a blind Bartimaeus, a wretched Lazarus, or even a starving prodigal. Thus princes and people, the mighty and the lowly are in the hands of the Lord, and His most righteous government extends to all ranks, kindreds and nations.

But let us come nearer home; let us behold the text verified in our own situations, and let us admire the providence which has cared for us from our earliest infancy and so graciously ordered all our concerns. How has it come about that you are the children, not of idolaters, but of Christian parents? To whom belongs the praise for all the merciful circumstances relating to your birth, infancy and childhood? And how is it that, amidst the thousands who

die in their early years, you have been spared in the land of the living and have been blessed with health, food and clothing? To all such questions God's children may reply in the language of Scripture: "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me"; "By Thee have I been holden up from the womb"; "Thou art my trust from my youth"; my praise shall be ever of Thee.

But the progress of life, as well as its beginning, is from the Lord. He has nourished and brought us up as children, has made us dwell in safety and kept our life from the power of the grave; He has healed our distresses, heard our supplications and crowned us with tender mercies. Our various situations in life, our worldly calling, our success in business, our relations and home, though seemingly accidental, are ascribed in Scripture to the care, the guidance and the control of God's providence. The great Lord of all appoints our place, assigns our work and gives to all life, breath and all things. Look back on your past days; remember the way by which Jehovah has led you; and behold Him thwarting your plans, disappointing the schemes of your kindest friends, raising up unexpected benefactors, making cross occurrences productive of much benefit, and making encounters that seemed accidental to be the origin of important events in life.

But here let me particularly remind you that in His all-governing providence, He has specially regarded your spiritual interests. To Him you owe those distinguished religious privileges with which you are favoured and those precious means of grace to which you have free access. To Him also you owe pious parents, who train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and faithful pastors who warn their hearers to flee from God's wrath, and those who may kindly beseech you to shun the path in which destroyers go. To Him we owe the living oracles of truth, the peaceful sanctuary, the reviving sacrament of the Supper, the liberty of prayer and the communion of saints.

He has not dealt thus with everyone; it therefore becomes you to adopt the language of the text, ascribing grateful hosannas to the Lord God omnipotent, to whom you are so much indebted. And God's children ought to say, from a sincere heart: Here we raise our Ebenezer, for hitherto the Lord has helped us and He has done all things well. You may thankfully adopt this acknowledgment, not only for the evident mercies already mentioned, but also for the adverse circumstances you have experienced. Your afflictions do not spring from the dust, nor come by chance; they were sent in mercy and wisely timed to humble and to try you – to chastise your offences and reclaim your wandering steps, to reveal and remove your secret corruptions, to test and improve your spiritual graces, to increase your faith, and to exercise your submission and patience.

Revivals¹

2. In the Early Christian Church

James Buchanan

Amidst the general defection of the Jewish Church and nation, there were some hidden ones who cherished a sincere piety and waited for the hope and consolation of Israel. They were revived and refreshed by the ministry of John the Baptist, and still more by the manifestation of the Son of God. Careless sinners were converted and, although it might have seemed that the work was suspended by the crucifixion of the Lord of glory, that event only prepared the way for a more remarkable outpouring of the Spirit of God and a more general awakening among the nations. Jews and Gentiles – people of all nations and of various languages – were suddenly arrested, convinced, converted and became Christian missionaries to spread the glorious gospel over the whole world.

No sooner had the Spirit of God descended in His miraculous gifts on the Apostles than He descended also in His saving grace on their hearers – so that, on the Day of Pentecost, 3000 souls were converted by a single sermon. Let those who doubt the power of God’s Word and Spirit, or are conscious of a latent distrust of any remarkable, sudden work of conversion, consider that case recorded in the Word of God. Let them listen to the Prophet’s question, “O thou that art named the house of Jacob, is the Spirit of the Lord straitened?” “The Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear.”

Nor is the great work of conversion on the Day of Pentecost a solitary instance in the New Testament. Great multitudes believed in other places – “the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved”. And in Athens, Rome, Corinth and Galatia; in Asia, Cappadocia and Bithynia; in places the most primitive and the most refined, the preaching of the Apostles was mighty through God and was felt to be the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation. Follow one of the Apostles through the various scenes of his labours; trace his course on the deep and his journeys by land. Suppose yourself a companion of Paul, a witness of the scenes he saw, of the converts he gathered, and the churches which he founded and which long existed as memorials of his successful labours. Could you then doubt that the preaching of the gospel, accompanied by the power of the Spirit, is sufficient to revolutionise the world, to overturn the kingdom of darkness, and to erect on its

¹Taken with editing, from the “Illustrative Cases of Conversion” in *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit*. It is based on Acts 2:17,18. The first article, last month, summarised the Old Testament teaching on revival.

ruins the kingdom of God, which consists in righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost?

While such was the experience of the Church of God, both under the Old and the New Testament dispensations, we must now inquire how far we are entitled to expect the same, or similar, results from the preaching of the gospel in modern times. We are far removed from the age of miracles and are left to depend, for means, on the mere preaching of the Word. It might then seem unreasonable in us, if not presumptuous, to anticipate any such remarkable success as attended the preaching of the Apostles on the Day of Pentecost. Yet some weighty considerations, applicable to this question, may help to abate the supposed improbability of such an expectation.

In the first place, many prophecies predict, and many promises ensure, the progressive advancement and the ultimate universality of the gospel. "Ask of Me," says the Father to His beloved Son, "and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine heritage and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." "In thee, and in thy seed," said God to Abraham, "shall all the families of the earth be blessed." "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed." "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

These passages, which declare the progressive advancement and ensure the ultimate universality of the gospel, imply that the work of conversion is to be carried on in the Church of Christ – a work which is to be accomplished instrumentally by the preaching of the gospel, applied with power to the heart and conscience by the direct operation of the Holy Ghost. Everyone who shall be saved and added to the Church must be enlightened, convinced, subdued and converted by precisely the same agency as was put forth on the Day of Pentecost. Then the gospel depended, for its converting power and its saving efficacy, on the grace of that divine Spirit who "divideth to every man severally as He will" – even when it was declared by inspired men, and accompanied with the signs of God's miraculous interposition; how much more now is the Spirit necessary when the gospel is proclaimed by men destitute of both the light of inspiration and the power of miracles?

Both the predictions and promises of Scripture asserted that the gracious operation of the Spirit of God was to be continued into the Christian Church, and to be effectual for the conversion of sinners and the sanctification of His people till the end of time. Many are apt to suppose, because the miraculous gifts of tongues and healing and prophecy have long since ceased in the Christian Church, that the agency of the Spirit of God has been discontinued. They forget that what is really the most valuable part of the Spirit's work is permanent and will be carried on till the end of time. The work of conversion, by which sinners are turned from darkness to light, and the work of sanctification, by which they are gradually prepared for glory, are as much the fruit of the Spirit as was the inspiration of the Apostles. And these must be continued until the whole company of the redeemed shall be gathered in from among all peoples and tongues and nations.

So far from having discontinued His gracious agency, the Spirit of God is at work in every congregation and in every soul that is deriving spiritual benefit from His Word. We live in these latter times under a dispensation which is emphatically "the ministration of the Spirit". Before the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were bestowed on the Day of Pentecost, His agency as the Sanctifier of God's people was felt in the Church, and acknowledged by the writers of the Old Testament. And surely, if He was known in His enlightening and sanctifying influence by the Old Testament Church, we must conclude that the Church cannot be deprived of His gracious presence under a new and better dispensation, especially when we find that one of the greatest blessings promised to the Church in later times was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Referring to New Testament times, Isaiah says, "The palaces shall be forsaken . . . until the Spirit be poured out upon us from on high". And Joel says, "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh" – which is expressly applied to the New Testament Church in the Acts of the Apostles. Accordingly all the Epistles refer to the ordinary gracious work of the Spirit as a matter of experience for every true believer, even those who had no miraculous gifts. Their prayer for all believers was that "the communion of the Holy Ghost", not less than "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God", should be with them all.

Indeed it is solemnly declared that everyone that will be converted till the end of time must be converted by the Spirit – that every soul that will be born again must be born of the Spirit. To say that the gracious operations of the Spirit of God have ceased in the Christian Church is virtually to declare that the work of conversion is finished, that the gate of heaven is now closed, that not one soul can now be added to the Church of such as shall be saved

– for it is clear that “except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”. And it is equally clear that if he is born again, he must be “born of the Spirit”.

Thus the renewing and sanctifying agency of the Spirit of God has not ceased in the Christian Church; nor will it ever cease until the last convert has been won – the last penitent restored. The continued agency of the Spirit of God in the Church, under the present dispensation, which is emphatically called “the ministration of the Spirit”, is a doctrine which teaches us to expect great results from the faithful preaching of the gospel. It is, in fact, the sheet anchor of the gospel ministry – their one encouragement to persevere in the otherwise-hopeless effort to evangelise and regenerate the world.

Biblical Fellowship¹

4. The Believer’s Fellowship with the Holy Spirit

Rev J R Tallach

The basis for our fellowship with the Holy Ghost is His mission as comforter. At the time of the discourse recorded in John 16, the immediate and longer-term outlook for Christ’s disciples was bleak. Christ their friend, master and rabbi was going to leave them in circumstances which could not but produce sorrow and perplexity. The Lord also said they would meet similar hatred from the world as He had met. Indeed the magistrates of the land would consider that they were doing God’s service in putting the disciples to death. They would do this with vigour and in ignorance because, Christ said, “they have not known the Father, nor Me” (Jn 16:3).

It was not necessary that these doleful predictions be made prior to the time when the Saviour was about to depart since He Himself had been with them. He had been there, for instance, to comfort them when John the Baptist was beheaded and the disciples “went and told Jesus” (Mt 14:12). He had been there to instruct them personally in the spiritual meaning of the parables (Lk 8:10). “Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God”. Now He was speaking of leaving them: “It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you” (Jn 16:7). Christ here revealed to His disciples in the most emphatic terms the foundation for the revelation concerning the Spirit.

The Greek word translated *Comforter* here might also be translated *Ad-*

¹The previous part of this Theological Conference paper appeared last month. It dealt with the believer’s fellowship with Christ as Mediator.

vocate but the word *Comforter* seems more appropriate in the context of the sorrow of the disciples. “Sorrow hath filled your heart”, He said, but He would send them “the Comforter” – that is, “the Spirit of truth” (Jn 16:6,7). The mystery of the sending of the Spirit was revealed in the Lord’s promises concerning His coming. John 14:16 speaks of Jesus praying to the Father, and the Spirit is the One whom the Father would send in Jesus’ name (14:26). Again Jesus says of Him: “Whom I will send unto you from the Father” (15:26) and again absolutely, “I will send Him” (16:7). The Spirit is promised (1) for the conversion and sanctification of the elect; and (2) for the consolation of believers.

The Spirit proceeds from the Father as the fountain. The Spirit also proceeds from the Son and this proceeding forms the first and primary basis for our fellowship with the Spirit. Jesus says, “When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of Me” (Jn 15:26).

The fact of the proceeding forth by the Spirit from Father and Son, in the external work of God, demonstrates and illustrates the Spirit’s relationships within the Godhead. The Spirit is a willing free agent. He came forth and of His own accord proceeds. As the Son does the work of a Redeemer, so the Spirit willingly proceeds from the Father and the Son.

First there is the purpose of the Father’s *love* as the fountain of all, then the Son asking (Jn 14:16) which embraces His purchase and His merit, and there follows the willing proceeding of the Spirit. This bestowal from this fountain is first a free gift as in John 14:16: “He shall give you another Comforter”. The Spirit, who is received through the gospel, not the law, is of mere grace and all His works are “free gifts”. He is also to be received as a free gift, and this is what faith does.

The Spirit comes with authority as One sent by the Father and the Son. This does not argue any inferiority in the Spirit, but only that the Spirit graciously accepts the work of a “delegate” in the salvation of the sinner. This view of the authority by which the Spirit comes to us casts light on some areas of gospel teaching.

(1) *The sin against the Holy Ghost*. If the Spirit comes with the authority of the Father and Son, then refusing Him is a refusal of the authority of the Trinity. We are then to pray to the Father and the Son for the Spirit. “How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” (Lk 11:13). We are also not to grieve the Spirit (Eph 4:30), because He comes with the name, with the love and with the grace of the whole Trinity – He is sent with authority.

The Spirit is said to be poured or shed on us (Tts 3:6). This was the main

term used in the Old Testament. “Until the Spirit be *poured* upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest” (Is 32:15). The figure is of water poured out on dry land. “And I will *pour* upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications” (Zec 12:10). Thus the covenant of grace is free; the Spirit is *given*. When we grieve the Spirit, we turn our back on the covenant of grace.

(2) *The covenant is ordered and sure* as it comes from the love of the Father and the procurement of the Son – the purchase of His blood. The receiving of the Spirit as the Spirit of sanctification is a passive act like a vessel receiving the water poured into it. Like the wind blowing over the dry bones in Ezekiel’s vision, He makes them live. As the Spirit of consolation, however, it is different. In this sense the world cannot receive the Spirit, “because it seeth Him not, neither knoweth Him: but ye know Him: for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you” (Jn 14:17). The world cannot receive the Spirit of consolation, but the believer has that power. This is the power of faith. “But this spake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him should receive” (Jn 7:39).

Owen describes three special acts of faith in receiving the Spirit: (1) The Spirit is described as the “Spirit of promise”: “Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise” (Eph 1:13). Faith receives the Spirit as the One promised in the Word. (2) By prayer, faith receives the Spirit as the Spirit of supplication. Owen sees this as the chiefest work of faith in this world. “How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?” (Lk 11:13). (3) Faith attends to the actings of the Spirit and improves on them according to His mind and will.²

The manner of working in us by the Spirit is variously described. He works effectually, dividing to every man “after the counsel of His own will” (Eph 1:11). The same Spirit distributes to everyone “as He will”, giving one degree to one, and another degree to another (1 Cor 12:11). Thus the saints are kept constantly dependent on Him. He gives when and what He desires. This action of the Spirit does not inhibit the liberty and actions of the Father and the Son. This is because the will of each Person of the Godhead is the same – the one counsel of all, and each acting freely.

The work of the Spirit is to glorify Christ. “He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it unto you” (Jn 16:14). What the Spirit will take is the “all things” given to the Father by Christ; that is, all the fruits of election provided in the blood of the Son. These are committed to the Spirit for Him to dispose of for the good of His people. He shows them

²See John Owen, *Works*, Edinburgh, 1851, vol 2, pp 232-3.

the mercy, grace and forgiveness which the Father has provided and the Son purchased.

Again the Spirit sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts (Rom 5:5). He gives a comforting persuasion that God loves the sinner and has kind thoughts towards him. Owen says, "What we have of heaven in the world lies herein".

The Spirit affirms that believers belong to the family of God. "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God" (Rom 8:16). Though they are by nature the children of wrath, they receive the Spirit of the Father and become the children of the Father. The setting is a courtroom where the Judge hears the claim from the litigant that he is one of God's children. Those opposed bring many evidences that he is not what he claims to be, but at last one of proven righteousness gives evidence on the side of the person before the court and establishes the claim. So Satan and the world oppose the very standing of the child of God, just as Satan and those at the crucifixion of Christ raised this calumny against Christ's sonship: "If Thou be the Son of God" (Mt 4:3,27:43). But the Spirit enters and persuades the heart by a word of promise that the plea is well based.

Owen refers to the sealing of the Spirit in Eph 1:13: "Ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise". While he confesses, "I am not very clear in the peculiar intendment of this matter", he does say that there is an effectual communication of the image of God to the soul so as to be an evidence to the soul that it is accepted of God.

The Spirit is given into believers' hearts as an earnest: God has "given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts", says Paul (2 Cor 1:22). The Spirit Himself, personally considered, is the earnest. An earnest is a part of the whole given by God and is a confirmation of the promise made at the time of the transaction. The delivery of the remainder is thus guaranteed. The Spirit has several ways of operating in us and by us. Stirring up grace and giving new supplies of grace from Christ Jesus both tend to greater obedience and closer walking with God. All such blessings are to be seen as coming from Him in an especial manner.

The Spirit's work is to be seen in and by the Word of God. Stephen charges the Jews with "always resisting the Holy Ghost" (Acts 7:51,52). How did they do this? They slew the Lord's prophets – that is, they resisted God's Word. The Jews "were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake" (Acts 6:10). Our submission to the Word is a submitting to the Holy Ghost, and our resistance to the Word is a resisting of the Holy Ghost.

The chief end of the gospel is to restore man to holiness, and thus to make him happy.

Archibald Alexander

Growth in Grace¹

1. There Is Such a Thing as Growth in Grace

J C Ryle

2 Peter 3:18. *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

The subject of the text is one which I dare not omit in this volume about Holiness. It is one that ought to be deeply interesting to every true Christian. It naturally raises the questions, Do we grow in grace? Do we make progress in our religion?

To a mere formal Christian I cannot expect the inquiry to seem worth attention. The man who has nothing more than a kind of Sabbath religion – whose Christianity is like his Sabbath clothes, put on once a week and then laid aside – cannot be expected to care about growth in grace. He knows nothing about such matters. “They are foolishness unto him” (1 Cor 2:14). But to everyone who is in downright earnest about his soul and hungers and thirsts after spiritual life, the question ought to come home with searching power. Do we make progress in our religion? Do we grow?

The question is one that is always useful, but especially so at certain seasons. A Saturday night, a Communion Sabbath, the return of a birthday, the end of a year – all these are times that ought to set us thinking and make us look within. Time is flying fast. Life is fast ebbing away. The hour is daily drawing nearer when the reality of our Christianity will be tested, and it will be seen whether we have built on the rock or on the sand. Surely it becomes us to examine ourselves from time to time and take account of our souls. Do we make progress in spiritual things? Do we grow?

The question is one that is of special importance in the present day. Crude and strange opinions are floating in people’s minds on some points of doctrine and, among others, on the point of growth in grace as an essential part of true holiness. By some it is totally denied. By others it is explained away and pared down to nothing. By thousands it is misunderstood and consequently neglected. In a day like this it is useful to look fairly in the face the whole subject of Christian growth.

In considering this subject there are three things which I wish to establish: (1.) The reality of religious growth; there is such a thing as growth in grace. (2.) The marks of religious growth; there are marks by which growth in grace may be known. (3.) The means of religious growth; there are means that must be used by those who desire growth in grace.

¹The first section of a chapter, with editing, from Ryle’s volume, *Holiness*. A review of this book is scheduled to appear next month, describing it as “excellent”.

I do not know who you are, but I am not ashamed to ask for your best attention. Believe me, the subject is no mere matter of speculation and controversy. It is eminently a practical subject, if any is in religion. It is intimately and inseparably connected with the whole question of sanctification. It is a leading mark of true saints that they grow. The spiritual health and prosperity, the spiritual happiness and comfort of every true-hearted and holy Christian are intimately connected with the subject of spiritual growth.

1. There is such a thing as growth in grace. That any Christian should deny this proposition is at first sight a strange and melancholy thing. But it is fair to remember that man's understanding is fallen no less than his will. Disagreements about doctrines may be nothing more than disagreements about the meaning of words. I try to hope that it is so in the present case. I try to believe that when I speak of growth in grace and maintain it, I mean one thing, while my brethren who deny it mean quite another. Let me therefore clear the way by explaining what I mean.

When I speak of growth in grace, I do not for a moment mean that a believer can grow in safety, acceptance with God or security. I do not mean that he can ever be more justified, more pardoned, more forgiven, more at peace with God than he is the first moment he believes. I hold firmly that the justification of a believer is a finished, perfect and complete work, and that the weakest saint is as completely justified as the strongest, though he may not know and feel it. I hold firmly that our election, calling and standing in Christ admit of no degrees, increase or decrease. If anyone dreams that by growth in grace I mean growth in justification, he is utterly wide of the mark and utterly mistaken about the point I am considering. I would go to the stake, God helping me, for the glorious truth that, in the matter of justification before God, every believer is "complete in Christ" (Col 2:10). Nothing can be added to his justification from the moment he believes and nothing can be taken away.

When I speak of growth in grace I only mean increase in the degree, size, strength, vigour and power of the graces which the Holy Spirit plants in a believer's heart. I hold that every one of those graces admits of progress and increase. I hold that repentance, faith, hope, love, humility, zeal, courage and the like may be little or great, strong or weak, vigorous or feeble, and may vary greatly in the same person at different periods of his life. When I speak of a man growing in grace, I mean simply: his sense of sin is becoming deeper, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, his love more extensive, his spiritual-mindedness more marked. He feels more of the power of godliness in his heart. He manifests more of it in his life. He is going on from strength to strength, from faith to faith, and from grace to grace. I leave it to others to

describe such a man's condition by any words they please. For myself, I think the truest and best account of him is this: he is growing in grace.

One principal ground on which I build this doctrine of growth in grace is the plain language of Scripture. If words in the Bible mean anything, there is such a thing as growth, and believers ought to be exhorted to grow. What does Paul say? "Your faith groweth exceedingly" (2 Th 1:3). "We beseech you that ye increase more and more" (1 Th 4:10). "Increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col 1:10). "Having hope, when your faith is increased" (2 Cor 10:15). "The Lord make you to increase in love" (1 Th 3:12). "That ye may grow up into Him in all things" (Eph 4:15). "I pray that your love may abound more and more" (Phil 1:9). "We beseech you . . . as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more" (1 Th 4:1). What does Peter say? "Desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby" (1 Pet 2:2). I do not know what others think of such texts. To me they seem to establish the doctrine for which I contend, and to be incapable of any other explanation. Growth in grace is taught in the Bible. I might stop here and say no more.

The other ground, however, on which I build the doctrine of growth in grace is the ground of fact and experience. I ask any honest reader of the New Testament if he cannot see degrees of grace in the saints whose histories are recorded there, as plainly as the sun at noon. I ask him if he cannot see in the very same persons as great a difference between their faith and knowledge at one time and at another, as between the same man's strength when he is an infant and when he is an adult. I ask him if the Scripture does not distinctly recognise this in the language it uses, when it speaks of "weak" faith and "strong" faith, and of Christians as "new-born babes", "little children", "young men" and "fathers" (1 Pet 2:2, 1 Jn 2:12-14).

I ask him, above all, if his own observation of believers nowadays does not bring him to the same conclusion. What true Christian would not confess that there is as much difference between the degree of his own faith and knowledge when he was first converted, and his present attainments, as there is between a sapling and a full-grown tree? His graces are the same in principle, but they have grown. I do not know how these facts strike others; to my eyes they prove, most unanswerably, that growth in grace is real.

I feel almost ashamed to dwell so long on this part of my subject. In fact, if anyone means to say that the faith, hope, knowledge and holiness of a newly-converted person are as strong as those of an old-established believer and need no increase, it is a waste of time to argue further. No doubt they are as real but not so strong, as true but not so vigorous, as much seeds of the Spirit's planting, but not yet so fruitful. And if anyone asks how they are to

become stronger, I say it must be by the same process by which all things having life increase: they must grow. This is what I mean by growth in grace.²

Let us turn away from the things I have been discussing to a more practical view of the great subject before us. I want people to look at growth in grace as a thing of infinite importance to the soul. I believe, whatever others may think, that our best interests are concerned in a right view of the question: Do we grow?

(a) Let us know then that growth in grace is the best evidence of spiritual health and prosperity. In a child or a flower or a tree, we are all aware that when there is no growth there is something wrong. Healthy life in an animal or vegetable will always show itself by progress. It is just the same with our souls. If they are progressing and doing well, they will grow.³

(b) Let us learn also that growth in grace is one way to be happy in our religion. God has wisely linked together our comfort and our increase in holiness. He has graciously made it our interest to press on and aim high in our Christianity. There is a vast difference between the amount of conscious enjoyment which one believer has in his religion compared to another. But you may be sure that ordinarily the man who feels the most “joy and peace in believing”, and has the clearest witness of the Spirit in his heart, is the man who grows.

(c) Let us learn also that growth in grace is one secret of usefulness to others. Our influence on others for good depends greatly on what they see in us. The children of the world measure Christianity quite as much by their eyes as by their ears. The Christian who is always at a standstill, to all appearances the same man, with the same little faults, weaknesses, besetting sins and petty infirmities is seldom the Christian who does much good. The man who shakes and stirs minds, and sets the world thinking, is the believer who is continually improving and going forward. Men think there is life and reality when they see growth.⁴

²True grace is progressive, of a spreading, growing nature. It is with grace as with light: first, there is daybreak; then it shines brighter to full noonday. The saints are not only compared to stars for their light, but to trees for their growth (Is 61:3; Hos 14:5). A good Christian is not like Hezekiah's sun that went backwards, or Joshua's that stood still, but is always advancing in holiness, and increasing with the increase of God. *Thomas Watson*

³The growth of grace is the best evidence of the truth of grace. Things that do not have life will not grow. A picture will not grow. A stake in a hedge will not grow. But a plant that is alive will grow. The growing of grace shows it to be alive in the soul. *Thomas Watson*

⁴Christian, as ever you would stir up others to exalt the God of grace, look to the exercise and improvement of your own graces. When poor servants live in a family and see the faith, love, wisdom, patience and humility of a master shining like the stars in heaven, it draws forth their hearts to bless the Lord that ever they came into such a family. When

(d) Let us learn also that growth in grace pleases God. It may seem wonderful that anything done by such creatures as we are can give pleasure to the Most High God. But so it is. The Scripture speaks of walking so as to “please God”. It says there are sacrifices with which “God is well pleased” (1 Th 4:1, Heb 13:16). The husbandman loves to see the plants on which he has bestowed labour flourishing and bearing fruit. It cannot but grieve him to see them stunted and standing still. Now what does the Lord say? “I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman.” “Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples” (Jn 15:1,8). The Lord takes pleasure in all His people – but specially in those that grow.

(e) Let us learn above all that growth in grace is not only possible, but something for which believers are accountable. To tell an unconverted man, dead in sins, to grow in grace would doubtless be absurd. To tell a believer, who is alive to God, to grow is only summoning him to a plain scriptural duty. He has a new principle within him, and it is a solemn duty not to quench it. Neglect of growth robs him of privileges, grieves the Spirit and makes the chariot wheels of his soul move heavily. Whose fault is it if a believer does not grow in grace? The fault, I am sure, cannot be laid on God. He delights to “give more grace”; He “hath pleasure in the prosperity of His servant” (Jas 4:6, Ps 35:27). The fault is our own. We ourselves are to blame, and no one else, if we do not grow.

John Love’s Early Years¹

2. Education

Roy Middleton

S*chool and University.* It was evident to his parents whilst he was still a child that John Love “was a boy of very superior natural abilities. Before he was five years of age he had acquired the art of reading with facility” (1:9). He was educated at Paisley Grammar School and by the time he was 10

men’s graces shine as Moses’ face did, when their life, as one speaks of Joseph’s life, is a very heaven, sparkling with virtues as so many bright stars, how much others are stirred up to glorify God and cry, “These are Christians indeed; these are an honour to their God, a crown to their Christ, and a credit to their gospel. If they were all such, we would be Christians too.”

Thomas Brooks

¹This is a further section of an abridgement of a new introduction to John Love’s *Memorials*, a two-volume work which is to be republished later this year, DV, by Free Presbyterian Publications. References to the *Memorials* are placed in the body of the text, with volume and page numbers in brackets. The previous section, last month, dealt with Love’s childhood and the state of Presbyterianism in Paisley, his birthplace.

he was pronounced qualified to proceed to university. In consequence of his outstanding intellectual abilities, his father believed that he would one day become a minister in the Church of Scotland. Accordingly, with the aid of a bursary, he was enrolled as a student at Glasgow University in October 1767, at the age of 10, where he studied for five successive sessions of six months.

The course he followed constituted the curriculum of preliminary study prescribed for those intending to become ministers of the gospel in the Established Church. Love distinguished himself during his academic career, especially in Latin and Greek and in mathematics. Before the end of his University course he was looked upon by all competent judges as one of the ablest scholars on its roll. The University was staffed by a number of men who, whilst being academically outstanding in their disciplines, were very far from the Scottish Calvinism of the Reformation. Several of these men had been parish ministers in the Church of Scotland before they became teachers at the University and were theological Moderates.

For the young John Love, who was absorbed by his classical studies and other intellectual pursuits, to have been taught by these Moderates in the formative years between 10 and 15 was bound to have made on him a marked impression. In addition, these were years when he was a stranger to the grace of God. Though outwardly correct and moral, he gave no indication of a serious interest in saving truth. On the contrary, he attached himself to the Moderate Party of the Established Church and sympathised with both its political outlook and its doctrinal stance. Like many more he rejected the Evangelical party and its teaching as absurd and the product of enthusiasm. During the five years of his Arts course in Glasgow he had abundant opportunities to attend a faithful Evangelical ministry. The venerable John Gillies, the friend and biographer of George Whitefield, was minister of the College Kirk. However, during John Love's early teenage years, while still unconverted, this was an opportunity missed. It does not appear that during his preparatory university course he ever heard Gillies preach the gospel.

After his conversion he was to admit that during these crucial years at Glasgow University he was proud, worldly minded and "esteemed others entirely on account of their worldly power, riches, wisdom, beauty and the like, my love of the world and the things of the world appearing in this" (1:33). The editor of Love's *Memorials* observes of the 15-year-old graduate, "There is no reason to think that he had, at this time, any other than the most self-complacent estimate of his own qualifications for immediately entering upon theological studies; and for, thereafter, as a matter of course, assuming all the responsibilities of the sacred office of the ministry. Even much lower qualifi-

cations than his, in respect of natural abilities and literary acquirements, were, in this period of the Church's history, generally considered fully sufficient, without the possession, and almost without even the profession, of religion at all, to entitle their possessor to enter on the theological curriculum, and even to take on himself the ministerial office" (1:11).

Love's first three years at the Divinity Hall. The 15-year old student, in the winter of 1772-3, entered on the study of theology at Glasgow University Divinity Hall. He was later to write regarding the commencement of his divinity course: "My deliberate purpose and intention, and my proceeding for years upon that deliberate purpose, of perjuring myself in the matter of subscribing the *Confession of Faith*, while in my heart I believed it to be false, and so, by practising an imposition upon God's Church, of getting myself intruded into it" (1:35). Between the start of his course and July 1775, Love attended three sessions in the Divinity Hall. The first session seems to have been what was called a partial session. In the second session, that of 1773-4, he attended for the greater part, whilst in the third session his attendance was for the whole period.

No sooner had John Love commenced his divinity course than both he and his father lapsed into Socinianism. In the case of James Love, the defection into heresy went all the way of denying the divinity and the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is expressly stated by his son in his diary of May 1779. The same thing, though not as expressly mentioned, is clearly implied in several statements which Love makes about himself. Both father and son were so thoroughly in earnest in rejecting some of the central doctrines of Scripture and in adopting Socinian principles that they ceased attending the congregation in which they usually worshipped in order to listen to a Socinian.

It is difficult to determine with any precision what factors led to this tragic development. It may have been due to the influence of the teaching at the Glasgow Divinity Hall; however, the major influence that John Love mentions is that of the Church of Scotland minister of Kilbarchan, John Warner (1713-1786). That father and son were committed to Warner's views is indicated by the fact they were willing to travel just over five miles from Paisley in order to attend on his preaching in the parish of Kilbarchan.

Warner was a student during the time that the Church of Scotland was pursuing a case against John Simson, the Professor of Divinity at Glasgow University. Simson was suspended in 1729 following charges being brought against him that he held Socinian and Arminian views. Although it is unlikely that Simson taught Warner, discussion of his opinions would have been rife during the time he was a divinity student. Amongst the Moderates in the

Church of Scotland, there was a distinct tendency to Unitarianism. It seems that Warner was part of a group of more radical Moderates that were sympathetic to Socinianism. In keeping with the practice of many Moderates, Warner seems to have taken less interest in his pastoral duties than in education and agriculture.

John Love was a divinity student when, through Warner's influence, he embraced Socinianism. From the record of his repentance that he later recorded in his diary, his years in the divinity hall were marked by rebellion and opposition to the gospel. He speaks of his sarcastic behaviour to Evangelical ministers, his "scoffing in the Abbey Kirk, on the day when Mr Campbell² preached. Once going into Mr Randall's³ church on a sacramental Sabbath evening, to mock and scoff. . . . My profane and impious speeches, carrying in them contempt of God's ordinances and ways. My speech to JY after Mr Campbell preached on a Fast-Day before the sacrament, mocking at Mr C's using the words, 'mourning like a turtle-dove' in allusion to Isaiah 59:11, at which even he seemed to be shocked. My laughing in Mr Alice's⁴ church at a minister's having given thanks in his prayer that that congregation was blessed with a rousing ministry: and my proud obstinacy, when reproved for it by one of the hearers."

He goes on to detail his "wicked contempt and abuse of God's ordinances during the whole of Mr Muir's ministry". He laments his "behaviour in the High Church in Mr Baine's⁵ time, and in Mr Muir's time: in the Laigh Kirk in Mr Witherspoon's time". In addition to his opposition to the gospel when he was sunk in Socinianism he relates sadly that he tempted "others to sin just for the pleasure of seeing them sin; tempting them to anger, etc, showing myself to have intrinsic delight in sin. Endeavouring to tempt the saints of the Most High from their holy faith; irritated at them, and the truth that they spoke; reasoning against them, etc . . . Seeing nothing of the Divine authority in the ordinances and government of the Church of Christ, and being ready and disposed for all manner of insult upon Him therein; as simony, oppression of His people, etc."⁶

Love seems to have been held in the grip of Socinianism for around two

²This is a reference to Colin Campbell (1718-1788), the Church of Scotland minister in nearby Renfrew. The editor of the *Memorials* describes him as "one of the faithful preachers of the gospel at that time" (1:32, note a).

³Thomas Randall (1747-1827) was the minister of the Outer High Kirk in Glasgow when Love heard him.

⁴James Alice was minister of a Secession church in Paisley.

⁵James Baine and George Muir were successive ministers of the High Church in Paisley.

⁶See *Memorials*, vol 1, pp 30-35, for Love's detailed account of his conduct at this period. The excerpts above are from pp 31,34.

years and, as we shall notice, his lapse into heresy would later become a matter leading him to a profound repentance. The editor of the *Memorials* notes, "We meet with no record of his studies in Theology earlier than in the third of the sessions" (1774-75). He then adds, "In that session, we find some notes which were taken by him of the exposition by the Professor of Theology of some of the leading New Testament texts, which are usually adduced in proof of the Divinity and atonement of the Saviour. These which are dated in November 1774 may also be regarded as evidence of the acquiescence of the writer in the views of his instructor; for otherwise it is improbable that he would have written and preserved these notes without any expression of dissent" (1:29).

Obituary

Mr Angus MacRitchie

Angus MacRitchie was born in December 1934 in Swainbost, in the Ness district of the Isle of Lewis. He spent all of his life in his home village except for a short period in England, on national service in the army. Angus remained around 40 years in the wilderness of this world with no concern for the needs of his immortal soul and of the claims of the Lord upon him as an accountable creature and a fallen sinner. Although he never missed family worship he did not attend church during this period of his life.

The time came, in the mercy of God, when Angus came under concern for the welfare of his soul for eternity and came to see his need of attending the preaching of the gospel. Although nominally connected with the Free Church of Scotland, Angus was brought to make his way to the Free Presbyterian Church, where Rev William MacLean had returned in 1976 from the Grafton congregation to recommence his labours in Ness. Mr MacLean was in the habit of paying a short visit to Angus' mother and aunt around five times a week, since the family home was situated immediately opposite the Free Presbyterian manse. He invariably prayed with them on these occasions. The words Mr MacLean constantly quoted in prayer in Angus' hearing were: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28). It appears that, through these words, the way of salvation was opened up to Angus' understanding.

Angus was enabled to profess faith in Christ publicly in the year 1988. In 1991 he was elected to the office of deacon in the Ness congregation and in 1996 to that of the eldership. He represented the Ness congregation on the Outer Isles Presbytery and at the Synod on a good number of occasions.

Though naturally a retiring and private individual, Angus was gifted with a keen intelligence and a highly-retentive memory and he was one who observed the wider state of the nation with concern. In prayer he frequently asked the Lord for “*laithean dusgaidh is amannan fionnarach*” (days of awakening and times of refreshing). Though he never saw these petitions fulfilled, we nevertheless fully believe they will be answered in the Lord’s own time. Angus was often charged with the burden of keeping the services in Ness over the latter part of the long vacancy in the congregation. Indeed, a great many of the Ness congregation’s affairs fell upon him for a considerable period and, in manfully shouldering these responsibilities, we believe he showed his devotion not only to the cause and people of Christ but also to the King and Head of the Church Himself.

Angus MacRitchie departed peacefully from this life into the great eternity in the Western Isles Hospital on 30 August 2013 after a period of illness. His Bible was found resting upon him and opened at Isaiah 54, and with the words of the portion (v 13) marked that he gave out at the last Fellowship Meeting he attended, at the Ness communion in October 2012: “All thy children shall be taught of the Lord and great shall be the peace of thy children”.

(Rev) *A W MacColl*

Our Gospel Work in Africa and Israel

Rev Neil M Ross

I*srael. The Westminster Confession of Faith* in Hebrew is almost ready for printing, Rev John Goldby reported after returning in June from a visit to Israel. It would have gone to press sooner but for a shortage of suitable editors to help with adding the Scripture proof texts. There is great need of getting the *Confession* into the hands of the Jewish people, says Mr Goldby, because its Reformed doctrine is precisely what has been blessed in the past to many Jews, and is, “we believe, the same doctrine that will be used in the saving of ‘all Israel’”.

The revision of the Delitzsch Hebrew New Testament continues steadily and it is expected that the Epistle to the Romans, which is almost complete, will soon be sent to the Trinitarian Bible Society (TBS). The members of the translation team are to be commended, says the report, for their determination to express the meaning faithfully and accurately. There is much need for the sound translation principles which secure faithful translations of the Scriptures to be more widely known among the Jews, says Mr Goldby. It is hoped that the new “TBS Israel” website under

development (to be named tbshebrewbible.org), will help to meet this need. **Zimbabwe.** The new system of governance for the Mission institutions is now well established and appears to be operating smoothly, albeit new situations put it to the test and show that the learning process will need to go on. Of course, the hospital, high school, primary schools and orphanage are no longer overseen by the Field Committee (which is now dissolved), but each of these entities is managed by a Board of Governors. The main objective of each board, within its own sphere and according to its constitution, is “to promote the knowledge of the gospel of Jesus Christ by all legal and practicable means”. Adherence to this guiding principle will, with the divine blessing, make each institution an effective handmaid to the gospel.

Our four ministers in Zimbabwe, Rev S Khumalo in Bulawayo, Rev M Mloyi in Zenka, Rev A B MacLean in Ingwenya and Rev N Sibanda in Mbuma, continue to bear heavy burdens of work in preaching the gospel. Each minister has outstations and a wide area to supervise. Mr Khumalo also has the oversight of our New Canaan Mission. They are indebted to many elders and five catechists for their faithful assistance in maintaining the regular round of services. It is heartening that the attendances are good at our new church in Zvishavane. Rev A B MacLean has visited the remnant congregation in our former Mission in Sengera, Kenya, and ministered there several times on behalf of the Zimbabwe Presbytery.

The opening of the new Rural Health Clinic at Lutsha on June 23 went well, in the kind providence of the Most High. It was an important day for our Mbuma Mission Hospital, which will manage the clinic (about 11 miles away). It was also an important day for the local community, which has a significant stake in it. The opening ceremony, to which hundreds of people gathered, began with worship conducted by Rev John MacLeod, Convener of the Jewish and Foreign Mission Committee, and the ribbon was cut by the Zimbabwean Minister for Health, Mr David Perirenyatwa. The master of ceremonies for the day was Mr Melusi Mpofo, the Mission Administrator.

Our translation team, based at the Zvishavane Manse, has now completed half of the Old Testament in its new translation of the Shona Bible. Its new translation of the Shona New Testament has, of course, been already widely distributed. The TBS reports that it has received several encouraging reports about its reception.

In Thembiso Children’s Home, a sad blank has been made by the death of Mrs E Ndlovu, House Mother in House No 1. At the time of writing, Miss Norma MacLean is due to return to Ingwenya to her Deputy Head duties at John Tallach High School after a well-earned furlough.

May the Lord bless the work of those who “labour in the word and

doctrine” – and others who care for the sick, teach our pupils, translate the Scriptures, and administer Mission business. “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ” (Gal 6:2).

Notes and Comments

The Outcry Against Sir Timothy Hunt

Sir Timothy Hunt is a retired British biochemist who won a Nobel Prize in 2001. In June of this year he caused a storm at a lunch for women journalists and scientists in South Korea by saying, in an unprepared and light-hearted speech: “Let me tell you about my trouble with girls. Three things happen when they are in the lab: you fall in love with them; they fall in love with you; and when you criticise them they cry. Perhaps we should make separate labs for boys and girls.” Following a “politically correct” outcry, he was obliged the next day to resign his honorary professorship at University College London, and two other scientific positions as well. A few weeks later the University Council unanimously confirmed the decision taken to accept Sir Timothy’s resignation. A number of eminent scientists, politicians, and newspaper columnists have criticised the University and supported Sir Timothy.

To the present writer, the main concern with the remarks as reported is the casual attitude to relations with the opposite sex. Sir Timothy is a married man, and one questions whether he should make public jokes about “falling in love” with other women. Otherwise the remarks seem harmless enough. They are cast in a dogmatic form, as is common with jokes, but they contain an element of truth. Men and women are often attracted to one another other in the workplace, and women are “the weaker vessel” (1 Pet 3:7), one aspect of which is that they tend to cry more easily. Indeed both the matters raised by Sir Timothy are of some importance. The mixing of the sexes in the workplace can be a source of temptation and even a possible factor in marital breakdown, and this is certainly an issue to be discussed. Similarly, the differences between the mental constitutions of men and women cannot be denied. The same day that it reported on part of the outcry against Sir Timothy, *The Daily Telegraph* had another article with the headline, “Women who suppress emotions to act like men are making themselves ill”.

The outcry against Sir Timothy shows how ready fallen mankind is to judge others by standards that it would not like applied to itself. Those that condemned Sir Timothy must themselves give an account to Christ of “every idle word” that they have spoken (Mt 12:36). They will be judged with the same measure that they have used in judging others (Mt 7:2). Doubtless it

will be found that they have spoken unadvisedly with their lips on many occasions (Ps 106:33). Isaiah warns against those that “make a man an offender for a word” (Is 29:21), and the spirit that drove Sir Timothy from his positions of honour for a trifle is not so distant from the spirit that cries “Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live” (Acts 22:22). Christians are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” (Mt 5:13,14), and one of the services that they can render to their community is to retain a sense of balance and biblical proportion when Satan is urging the world towards the sort of fanaticism exhibited in this case. *DWBS*

Anti-Extremism Laws and Christian Teaching

Conservative MP Mark Spencer has told a constituent about the Extremism Bill: “Teachers will still be free to express their understanding of the term *marriage*, and their moral opposition to its use in some situations, without breaking the new laws. The EDOs [Extremism Disruption Orders] in this case would apply to a situation where a teacher was specifically teaching that gay marriage is wrong.” Although Mr Spencer makes other statements apparently to the contrary, there is no doubt that teachers who teach that same-sex marriage is morally wrong will be in danger of having action taken against them under anti-extremism legislation. One must presume that Mr Spencer would not say so if he had no authority for saying so.

Simon Calvert of the Christian Institute has stated, “This is exactly the kind of thing we’ve been warning about. The Government say we’ve got nothing to worry about from their new extremism laws, but here is one of their own MPs writing to a constituent saying EDOs would stop teachers teaching mainstream Christian beliefs.” Governments may, under pressure from homosexual activists, try to banish criticism of sinful lifestyles from the classroom and society, but there is a God in heaven whose condemnation of sin cannot be dismissed and to whom promoters of iniquity are accountable. *NMR*

Website Promoting Adultery

Balak, King of Moab, desired to smite Israel in the wilderness and called Balaam to curse them. However, Balaam, though a false prophet, could do nothing but pronounce more and more blessings on God’s chosen nation (Num 22-24). But Balaam had another strategy, which worked only too well, as we read about the church in Pergamos. There we find that some held “the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication” (Rev 2:14). So we read in Numbers 25:1: “The people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab”. What an effect this now had on Israel, resulting in God’s solemn judgements!

Satan still has his strategies and agents to seduce sinners of all nations into ever greater sin and destruction. One device which has recently gained notoriety is a website masquerading as the second-largest dating site in the world but blatantly promoting extra-marital affairs. Reports indicate that over 37 million members in 46 countries have signed up to it – the majority of them are married and seeking to cheat on their spouses. Most are said to be men. Membership has increased by 35% over the past year, while revenue has increased even more, showing the sinful demand for this sordid activity.

Even more publicity, ironically, has been gained by the news that a computer-hacking group broke into the site's database, threatening to disclose members' details if the site is not closed down. In spite of this, it is still operating and one would expect members to feel in danger of exposure. However, the threat appears to have had little effect; an investigative journalist who recently joined the site, posing as a client, said that in a very short time she had 16 responses, 13 of them from married men.

The website originated in Canada and was set up by a couple with two children. Their motto is, "Life is short, have an affair", claiming that adultery is good for a marriage and that "monogamy is dead". Since 2010, when they launched their site in the UK, 1.2 million Britons have signed up: 1 in 20 of the married population. Most are said to be middle-class people aged from 20 to 50. The leader of the European operation boasts that, in spite of a ban on TV adverts for the site, the UK makes more money for it than any other European country. The company hopes to float on the London Stock Exchange, claiming that Europe has a "more relaxed approach to infidelity" than North America, having tried unsuccessfully to list its shares in Toronto.

Amidst this depressing news, it is encouraging to find a mainstream finance broker in London saying he "seriously hopes that any professional investor worth their salt will think twice before putting savers and pensioners' money into this marriage-breaking organisation". We hope and pray that others will agree and that the scheme will fail.

The organisation's sinister aim is to keep expanding worldwide, especially in Asia, where great growth is expected. When the site in Japan opened in 2013, 1 million people joined in 8 months. In South Korea, where the gospel had great influence over decades, adultery was punishable by imprisonment; but last February it was decriminalised and 100 000 clients signed up to their site in just 4 weeks. This summer, further sites are planned for the Baltic states, Russia and the Ukraine.

So Satan and his agents are making great inroads throughout the world, seeking to oppose the spread of the gospel, using different avenues – perhaps especially the internet. Socially the misery is great. Several newspapers

recently gave anecdotal evidence of how this and similar sites have caused great anguish and misery to families in Britain. Divorce is commonplace; one divorce lawyer states, "It's an adulterous minefield. Every third client now has something to do with online infidelity". Jo Welch, commercial director of support group, Women Scorned, adds that such sites have caused their workload to soar in recent years. She states, "It may have started in the US, but it is a trend that is growing frighteningly quickly in Britain . . . they break up families, causing so much pain and suffering".

Recent statistical studies have supported the view that children of broken homes have a high incidence of behavioural problems, mental health issues and drug and alcohol abuse. The ultimate misery, of course, is not just social; it is spiritual. Jesus says, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications . . . these are the things which defile a man" (Mt 15:19,20). If not repented of, these things lead to eternal destruction, for "whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Heb 13:4). How we need an outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the nations of the earth! We need to seek that day of repentance when there shall be a great mourning for sin. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zec 13:1). *KHM*

Church Information

Committee Meetings

These Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church as follows on Tuesday, October 6:

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

(Rev) John MacLeod, Clerk of Synod

Dominions and Overseas Fund

By appointment of Synod, the special collection on behalf of the Dominions and Overseas Fund is due to be taken in congregations during September.

W Campbell, General Treasurer

FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

Scotland

Aberdeen: 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.

Bracadale: Struan: Sabbath 12 noon; Wednesday 7 pm (fortnightly). Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.

Dingwall: Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Achany 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 6 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barrton 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; **Strathy:** 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.

Lochcaron: 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 6 pm. 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 I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.

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, 252 Brierciffe Road, Burnley, BB10 2DQ; tel: 01282 835800.

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 835800.

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: antipa@eurocom.od.ua; or Mr D Levytskyi; 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.by@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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The Saint and his Saviour: The Work of the Spirit in the Life of the Christian by C H Spurgeon, Christian Focus, 2005, pbk, 306pp	£7.99	£6.39
The Men of Lewis by Norman C Macfarlane William Murray, 2015 [1924], pbk, 271pp	£5.00	£4.00
A Golden Chain; or, The Description of Theology by William Perkins Puritan Reprints, 2010 [1591], hbk, 271pp	£15.99	£12.79
The Imputation of Adam's Sin by John Murray Presbyterian & Reformed Publishing, 2012 [1959], pbk, 95pp	£6.99	£5.59
The Puritan Hope by Iain H Murray Banner of Truth, 2009 [1971], pbk, 326pp	£8.00	£6.39

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