

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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Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

November: Second Sabbath: Glasgow; **Third:** Chesley, Chiedza.

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

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Human Reason or Divine Revelation?

A Church of Scotland minister in Milngavie, north of Glasgow, described his thoughts about his 2014 Christmas Eve service¹ in an article in *The Herald*, a Glasgow-based newspaper. The minister, Rev Andrew Frater, wrote that, after the service, he felt “troubled and dispirited”, despite the fact that there had been “a full church” and “a healthy collection” for Christian Aid.

What was wrong? He was disturbed that he had stuck so closely to “the literal aspect” of the biblical account of the birth of Jesus. The Bible readings had included Luke 1:35: “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God”.

Mr Frater admits he does not believe the virgin birth of Christ “literally”. He supports his stance by quoting from John Robinson, Bishop of Woolwich in the 1960s, who did much to popularise a form of theology which rejected the authority of Scripture and, with it, many core Christian doctrines. He has been described as “an uninhibited proponent of universal salvation”.²

But if we do not accept the clear teaching of Luke 1:35, and of Matthew 1, about Jesus’ supernatural birth as the son of His virgin mother, what are we left with? A mere human child – perhaps a special child who grew up to be a unique man, but certainly not one to be worshipped.

Mr Frater quotes Bishop Robinson expressing his concern not to lose sight of “the real world – the world of missiles and housing and unemployment in which we live”. But we must not lose sight of the more fundamental problem in this world, of which missiles, issues about housing and unemployment are but symptoms, albeit serious symptoms. That is the problem of sin, for there was a literal Adam and a literal Eve, a literal Satan and a literal Fall with actual consequences both in this life and in a literal hell.

It is all very well to say, as Mr Frater does, that he was asking his cong-

¹This article does not address issues about Christmas itself; this was done in a note beginning on page 30 of the January 2016 issue of this magazine, and also in the first article of the December 2015 issue of *The Young People’s Magazine*.

²Quoted in [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Robinson_\(bishop_of_Woolwich\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Robinson_(bishop_of_Woolwich)).

regation “to suspend reason” when he read to them about the virgin birth of Christ and other parts of the Scripture account of the incarnation. What he seems to be left with is the belief that “the God of life and love is eternally with us and for us”. It would be very easy to assault *this* belief as straining one’s reason. How many can say, in the face of the severe troubles that this world brings, that God is with them and for them? The evidence seems to point in an altogether different direction, but only if human reason truly submits to divine revelation will sinners trust in God as with them and for them.

Human reason is not a source of information; it is the capacity to use information. People may say that various facts – such as the virgin birth, the appearance of angels to the shepherds and the wise men being led on in their journey to Judea by the star that they had seen in the East – are too much for human reason to accept, but it is better to point to the unwillingness of the fallen human will to accept that God can work supernaturally in this world.

No, we do not see such miracles today – or healings as performed by Jesus and the apostles, or people raised from the dead, or bread and fish multiplied to feed thousands. But those who have eyes to see it can recognise greater miracles than these: the healing of spiritual diseases and the raising of the spiritually dead to spiritual life through the Holy Spirit.

The central question is: Why did Jesus come into the world? Let the Bible answer: it was “to save sinners” (1 Tim 1:15). Sin separates between sinners and God; it brings them under condemnation; and it is the cause of all the friction between individuals, between groups in society and between nations. Whatever commendable efforts may be made to reduce disharmony and prevent violence, they will ultimately not go far enough unless the basic human problem of sin is addressed. Missiles may be decommissioned and stocks of other armaments reduced, but this does nothing to remove the natural tendency in human hearts to disharmony and violence.

But when will nations “beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks”, or turn modern weapons of war into machinery for agriculture or industry? When will “nation . . . not lift up sword against nation, neither . . . learn war any more”? (Is 2:4). At some time during “the last days”, the New Testament age, “the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it” (Is 2:2).

Commenting on this verse, J A Alexander notes: “The Prophet sees the Church permanently placed in a conspicuous position, so as to be a source of attraction to surrounding nations. To express this idea, he makes use of terms which are strictly applicable only to the local habitation of the Church” in the Old Testament age. It describes a period when the spiritual miracle of

conversion will take place on a large scale, when the Church of Christ will be more conspicuous than any national body, any nation, or group of nations. None of this would be possible if Jesus was merely a human child.

But He was the very Son of God, who took human nature so that He might deal with sin and its consequences. He took the guilt of sin upon Himself; He bore the punishment due to the sins of everyone that will ever believe in Him; He made it possible for them to be at peace with God, a peace even more vital than that between individuals and nations, important though it is. For Jesus' sake, the Holy Spirit works in the hearts of sinners, subduing the enmity, the jealousy and the distrust that leads to disharmony and violence between human beings. It is when sinners are reconciled to God through the blood of the cross, and only then, that He is with them and for them.

How do we know this? Because God, in His grace, has not only made provision for the salvation of sinners; He has revealed this, accurately and reliably, in the Scriptures. The inspiration of Scripture was itself a miracle, or rather a series of miracles. Accordingly it is rejected by those who think they have to "suspend reason" if they are to accept the miraculous. Mr Frater speaks of "the growing number who are hanging on to the Church by their fingertips" and is concerned to retain their allegiance, weak though it may be. The truth is that ministers must be faithful – wisely – to the souls of their hearers; Paul was conscious, as he told the Hebrews, that ministers "watch for your souls, as they that must give account".

This Apostle was made willing to submit to facts he had once violently rejected: for instance, that Jesus of Nazareth was actually the Son of God, that He was reigning from His throne in heaven, that He will return at the end of the world to call everyone that has ever lived, both godly and ungodly, from their graves, and judge them in righteousness. Those who rely on their natural reason, rather than on God's revelation in the Bible, may readily reject these truths. But that does not make them false. Our duty is to submit to the facts as revealed by God, and particularly to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the divine Saviour.

Many have been shocked over the last few years at decisions made by the Church of Scotland General Assembly on the issue of homosexuals in the ministry. But even more fundamental has been the willingness of the Church of Scotland to accept ministers who reject such doctrines as the absolute authority and inspiration of Scripture, the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His atoning death, His literal resurrection, the final judgement and a lost eternity. This is what should leave us troubled and dispirited. But let us pray that God would so work that the professing Church everywhere would submit wholeheartedly to the entire revelation that He has given.

God Commending His Love (2)¹

A Sermon by John Macdonald

Romans 5: 8. *God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

2. The important *result* of the fact which we have been illustrating comes next into view in our text. That result is: **God commends His love.** We have examined the foundation of fact; let us now contemplate the super-structure of inference. As the former was glorious in depth, so the latter will be glorious in height.

But let us premise a few things which are important in guiding our steps:

(1.) The death of Christ for sinners was not the *cause* of God's love to them, but the love of God was the source of Christ's death. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son". Whatever mercy is in the cross of the Son was in the bosom of the Father. The death of Christ and the love of God are as much one as the Father and the Son are one in the blessed Trinity.

(2.) The death of Christ was not merely a *demonstration* of divine love, but a *communication* of it to us in a specific and direct form. It was not only to show that God did love sinners that Jesus laid down His life; but also and chiefly to convey in a suitable and consistent manner that love itself. As we have already seen, there was an actual substitution for the sinner in the person of Christ, and an actual atonement by sacrifice for the guilt of transgression in His death. In the practical and personal benefit conferred, there is a commendation of the peculiar love which bestowed the sacrifice.

(3.) Whatever love is manifested in the death of Christ is the love of *God* – of that God with whom we have to do. It was the love of Father, Son and Holy Spirit alike, although manifested in the Mediator. We are to contemplate God as clothed in the glory of this love, as God; and whether, in the matter of salvation, we transact with the Father, the Mediator or the Comforter, we are to view them alike, through the medium of the bleeding Love on Calvary, as that God who is love.

God then purposes to commend, or display to the utmost extent, His love in the death of Christ for the ungodly. He would show in all His works that He is God – infinitely exalted above all His creatures – that His ways are not as our ways, neither His thoughts as our thoughts. He has displayed the holiness of His character in the immediate, final and everlasting damnation of the angels that fell – and He will yet commend His infinite righteousness

¹The first part of this sermon, which appeared last month, spoke of "the grand fact of the Christian faith, that *Christ died for sinners*".

in the eternal perdition of all impenitent sinners of this world of ours. But He has also displayed the glory of His love in the death of His Son for sinners; and He is continually commending it in the reconciliation to Himself of His enemies, by Christ's sacrifice, that we may glorify Him as God in His love, and be ourselves blessed in this gracious exercise.

(1.) God thus commends His love to the *faith of sinners* – that is, to their trustful acceptance. This is the first class with which the gospel has to do, and this is the original class to which we all belong. The message of love is sent to the enemies of God, and the greatness of that love is commended to the guilty, that they may desist from their enmity and be delivered from their guilt and live. The careless sinner is to be awakened, by the terrors of the law and character of God as seen on Sinai or Calvary, that he may be driven to consider his own condition as a rebel, and his prospects as a condemned criminal – and from this again be brought to seek reconciliation to God as his sovereign, and justification by God as his Judge. Then will the commendation of God's love in the death of Christ become precious to him.

The sinner is convinced of sin by the manifestation of God's law to his conscience, and through the inward operation of the Spirit of truth. He is brought to see his inseparable connection with those perfections of Jehovah which make Him a consuming fire to the workers of iniquity, and to hear for himself the Lawgiver pronouncing the sentence of death on every transgressor, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them". Then he is filled with secret dread, and despair begins to lay iron hands upon his soul. He can only see God through the medium of His law; he can only contemplate his Judge through the medium of His righteous sentence. There seems therefore to be no way of escape. Sin meets him at every avenue, and the law challenges him at every gateway of flight. Sparks of hell are falling thickly into his conscience, and the heavings of perdition are beginning to swell in his soul.

He hears that God is gracious; but "will He be gracious to *me*"? He is assured that God pardons, but "will He pardon *me*"? He looks around; he sees that those whom he deems unpardoned are wicked and that those whom he deems pardoned are holy. He connects pardon with holiness, as cause and effect, and says in the darkness of legal bondage: "There it lies, were I as good as they, then I might have hope, and their Saviour might be mine too!"

To such we are sent to say, Behold the love of God! While these saints were yet sinners, while these friends were yet enemies, God gave His Son to die for them. You have seen God in the awfulness of His wrath against sin; behold Him now in the grandeur of His love to sinners! He whom you so justly dread "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life". He did this for a world of ungodly enemies; and are you not an enemy? Behold the freeness and the fulness of God's love!

Are you "without strength" – unable to do what is good for Him or for yourself? When "we were without strength", "Christ died for us". Do you feel that you are "ungodly" – that your heart is without the fear or love of God, and that you have hitherto been leading a godless life? Yet know this: that Christ died for the ungodly. Are you pre-eminently a sinner, the chief of sinners in your own esteem? Yet remember that Christ died for sinners, and that you are still but a sinner. Have you been the "enemy" of God, "a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious"? Yet hear this: Christ died for His enemies. Yes, He died for some who spat on Him and murdered Him: for His sacrificial death was a human murder.

On the cross of Christ, human enmity in its highest form came into conflict with divine love in its full glory; and love triumphed, gloriously triumphed. Christ's last prayer was for His enemies: "Father, forgive them". Sinner, did Jesus not command the gospel of salvation to be first preached in the city of His enemies, in the den of His murderers? And were the first believers not from among them? O then accept the offer of mercy and the gift of love in Christ Jesus. Come as a sinner, as only a sinner, and put full trust for salvation in God's love to sinners. Magnify His love to them by coming as a sinner, and venturing all upon it; for it is indeed "a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners".

(2.) But God also commends His love, as illustrated in our text, to the continued *hope of the believer*. We have already seen that this is the principal object of the context, in its doctrinal connection: to show how Christian hope "maketh not ashamed"; it cannot disappoint. The true believer entertains hope of the glory of God habitually, and is often enabled to rejoice in it with "joy unspeakable, and full of glory"; yet there are many cloudy skies and dark days in his spiritual life.

Often, when he would take a distant view of the object of His hope and endeavour to be glad in it, he is cast down on beholding the space that intervenes between him and it, the innumerable evils springing from his own corruption that must beset him by the way. Then he is ready to exclaim, I shall one day fall by sin, as by the hand of Saul. He remembers that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord" – and he feels that "in himself, that is in his flesh, there dwelleth no good thing". Then the warfare between the former truth believed, and the latter truth experienced, becomes too heavy for him to endure; his knees become feeble and his hands hang down. The clouds of

satanic temptation thicken around him, and the consciousness of indwelling sin descends, as the darkness of night, on the sweet vista of heavenly hope that stretched out before his view.

But fear not, believer. Remember the word on which your beloved Lord first caused you to hope! You believe in Jesus Christ. You rely on Him for justification. You have peace before God, and you love to be reconciled to Him through the death of His Son. You enjoy freedom of access to the throne of His grace. You can in some measure rejoice in your tribulation. You can feel that tribulation is working patience in your soul, and that by patience your experience is increased. No, you have known that past experience increased your hope, so that you have been enabled to “rejoice in hope of the glory of God”.

But now your hope fails in its exercise, and you are afraid that you will come short of its object, because of conscious sin. Is it not so? Then let me ask what was the source of all the blessings which you have enjoyed, and which you feel even now? “The love of God”, you will reply. True, then tell me: was that love exercised toward you as you now are, or as you formerly were when dead in sin? In the latter condition, you will say. Certainly. Then what follows? God now commends His love to you, in that while you were yet a sinner, He loved you and gave His Son to die for you. Sin was no obstacle to God’s love when He first loved you as an enemy; and shall it prevent His pitying love now that you are His friend?

Mark the reasoning in the sequel to our text (verse 9). If the love of God was such that His Son died in your stead when you were ungodly, an enemy, a sinner, unconverted and unpardoned, much more now, after you have been reconciled and justified through His blood, may you not be assured that such love will never suffer you to fall under wrath or come short of glory? If when you were accursed, Christ became a curse for you, much more when you are now blessed of God, will He not continue to bless you?

Indeed, if the love of Christ was so great that He laid down His life on the cross for you, will He forget you and suffer you to be plucked out of His hand, now that He has taken up His life again? If He died for your sins, did He not rise again for your justification? Was it not the self-same Jesus that was humbled first that was afterwards exalted? Is the crucified One not the glorified One? Is the object of His cross and of His throne not the same? If His love was victorious against all evil, shall it not be triumphant amidst all good? If He loved you when sin was the law of your heart and the practice of your life, will He not love you when sin has become the exception of your heart and the greatest burden of your life?

You may be groaning under the loathsome pressure of a body of sin and

death, and you may at times be trembling for the consequences of the “evil heart of unbelief” that works deceitfully within you; your hands may hang down and your knees become feeble, but arise and behold this love for sinners. Come and feed on this sacrifice for sin! It is the first food of faith; it must be the constant food of hope. The more simply and entirely you live on the love of Christ to sinners, the more joyful and vigorous will you be in your course to glory. Flee from the sense of sin in yourself to the faith of love divine in the cross, and then will your hope abide joyful, under the sweet shadow of the grace of God spread out for you in these words: “God commendeth His love toward us, in that, whilst we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”.

3. God also commends that love which is set forth in our text to our *admiration*, our wondering love. “Behold”, says the Apostle John, “*what manner of love* the Father hath bestowed upon us!” There is in this love of God a vastness, a majesty, a glory that can fill the faith of sinners and replenish the hope of believers, and then deluge their souls with an overwhelming flood of admiration. In this treasury of love divine, there is more than enough for all the uses of human salvation: a surplus that cannot be counted remains to manifest the immense riches of the Sovereign Himself. In this river of life, the trembling penitent drinks peace and joy, and the tried believer is refreshed with the waters of hope and glory.

But there still remains an unfathomable depth in which the matured saint may bathe his soul, plunging freely and exercising fully all the energies and faculties of a divine nature. Here he may be lost to self, but not to God, in a love that has no length or breadth or depth or height, that passes the comprehension of all beings, save of Him whose love it was. Here is the keynote of infinite, eternal harmony; here is the everlasting music of innumerable harps, here is the universe of sanctified hearts – the infinite space of redeemed affections. Speak of the lover, and you are abashed; speak of the loved, and you are confounded: so is it now. But hereafter believers will have strength corresponding to their desire, and desire corresponding to their duty. Then shall the intense silence of immeasurable prostration, or the fixed gaze of irresistible attraction, or the loud voice of universal praise, or the instantaneous act of self-devoted obedience, or the everlasting re-iteration of every possible method of admiration, testify somewhat to the glory of that love of which it is written: “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”.

Some of you have been touched by a sense of this love of God. It has been shed abroad in your hearts. On it your faith, hope and love are supported amid the cold selfishness of this world. But you may sorrow under the unfeelingness of your hearts and the deadness of your souls to such love as

this. You bewail your stupidity, and mourn over your unwilling apathy. You mentally exclaim, "Lord! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Fear not. Christ did not die in vain. He has redeemed you by a ransom from the dominion of sin, and He will by His Spirit's power communicate His purchase.

But He first causes you to feel your need of the gift that is to be given. Ask for what you need. Seek what you desire. The Spirit of God will give you what is lacking, for Christ's glory, for it is His special office to glorify Christ. Pray much for the inward operation of this Spirit of God. O grieve Him not, neither quench His grace by sin or fleshly lust. Worldliness in a gracious soul is as ice heaped on the fire.

Sit much at the gospel telescope and, through it, behold "the King in His beauty" afar off. Read much and meditate much about the love of Christ, as revealed in the gospel. Let the evangelists and apostles be your constant companions. Learn from them how to love the Lord Jesus and how to esteem the grace of God. Hold much communion with the loving Jesus at a throne of grace. He is ever to be found there – in its neighbourhood, as Intercessor, He abides. Speak to Him, as one man to another, although you do not see Him. Charge Him with His love to sinners. Remind Him of Gethsemane; remind Him of Calvary! He loves such reminders; He delights in such remembrancers; He desires to have them around His sacred person. Say to Him: Art thou the God-man that died for Thine enemies? O Thou bleeding Lamb, teach me how to love – that I may love Thee as Thou lovedst me: even guilty, sinful me.

Rejoice that there are those who, even now, can and do praise as you cannot do. Remember these words, "I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying, with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!" Soon, believer, we shall join that blessed multitude if we abide in Christ's love – we shall see Jesus Himself, who died for us when enemies. Is this not hope and heaven *now*? And what will the reality be hereafter! Hold on then and let this be your staff through many a weary step: When I was an *enemy* Christ *died* for me; and now that I am a friend, He *lives* for me!"

But, *ungodly sinner*, what shall I say to you before parting? You have heard all that has been said concerning the love of God in Christ Jesus; yet are you unmoved? You remain unaffected, as a blind man under the full blaze of the sun, but with this difference: he would see the sun if he could, but you, even if you could, *will not*. There is one short sentence in the Word

of God that settles your doom for ever: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema maranatha" – accursed at the coming of Christ! Awful words! Fearful end of a sinful life!

O man or woman, will you not arise and shake yourself from this state? Do you not see that the love of God aggravates your sin, and that the cross rejected is hell kindled, the furnace heated? If Christ died for His enemies, what excuse can you ever have for not being saved, or reconciled to God through Him? There is no plea of justification for you in the sinfulness of your own self, or in the deficiency of divine love. He died for the ungodly. You are naked, homeless and defenceless in your impenitence; and this one text damns you beyond all remedy for ever if you will not turn from your sin and be reconciled to your God. "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die?" Behold the seal of this oath in the cross of Christ, God's Son, dying for His enemies!

Can you doubt for a moment the sincerity of such a God, the love of such a Saviour? We beseech you to desist from your rebellion against Him who laid down His life for His enemies. In His death, there is a perfect sacrifice for sin. If you will but turn and believe in Him, you need not die; your life, indeed eternal life, will be given to you. He has suffered the pains of hell; therefore, if you now accept Him, His sufferings will become yours, and you shall not be called upon to repeat them for yourself. The gospel is the declaration of the love of Christ to sinners.

Faith is the reception of that gospel into the heart as true and good. Is it not true? Believe it. Is it not good? Accept it. This is the whole mystery of a sinner's interest in Christ. Lay aside that proud, self-righteous, calculating spirit. As a little child, hear the Father who speaks from heaven. Agree only to meditate on that love which we have preached to you. Compel your mind to this blessed work. Go with the stream of this love. Do not resist its divine current. It will carry you to faith and repentance. Call upon the Spirit of God in Christ's name to quicken you; for this He waits to do.

Go home then, sinner, saying within yourself, O love, infinite and incomprehensible, unheard of in this world before, that the Son of God should have died for sinners, His enemies! Can I, dare I, sin any more against this God, this Christ? No, I will return to the Lord and say, In my sinful ignorance I sinned against Thee; in the light of Thy gospel I now return to Thee! I did not believe that Thou hadst such love as this in Thy Godhead! Have mercy upon me; cleanse me from my sin; fill me with Thy love by Thy Holy Spirit; make me a new creature in Christ Jesus!

This will be the meditation, the prayer of faith. And, according to your

faith shall it be unto you. Your sins, which are many, shall be forgiven; and your guilt, like a cloud, shall be rolled away before the wondering gaze of your trembling conscience. The book of death shall be shut; the book of life shall be opened. You shall live as the friend of Christ on earth and hereafter you shall be with Him, to behold His glory for evermore. To this may the Lord the Spirit bring you all, my dear hearers.

Regeneration¹

John Dick

Regeneration is a change of the moral state of the soul, a renovation of all its faculties. The sinner becomes a new creature, not in respect of his essence, but of his views, habits and inclinations. It is the introduction of a powerful new principle into the soul, under whose influence its natural faculties are exerted in a different way. In this sense, old things pass away, and all things become new (2 Cor 5:17). His thoughts are new; the objects of his choices are new; his aims and motives are new; and, by this internal revolution, the external conduct is affected. The infusion of divine grace, like the engrafting of a tree (if I may so speak) alters the quality of the soul, so that, instead of the sour and crabbed fruits which it formerly produced, it now yields excellent fruit, acceptable to God. The instrument of the change is the Word of God, and the agent is His Spirit, who, moving as at the beginning of time, upon the dark and turbulent mass, reduces it to order.

Light is the first effect of divine power in the new creation, as in the old. The regeneration of the soul commences with the illumination of the mind. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" (2 Cor 4:6). When the Saviour gave Paul a commission to the Gentiles, He sent him "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God" (Acts 26:18). By the same means his own conversion was accomplished, for he tells us that, "when it pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me . . . immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood" (Gal 1:15,16).

This must indeed be the mode of procedure in every conversion, because God will always act upon us according to the nature which He has given us; and, as His purpose is to make us willing and obedient, there is no way in which this can be accomplished but by communicating clear, impressive views of truth to the mind. The Scriptures are a perfect revelation of the will

¹Taken with editing from Dick's *Lectures on Theology*, vol 3.

of God, containing all the doctrines which we must believe, and all the precepts which we are bound to obey. But, although their instructions are full – plain at least on every essential point, and admirably fitted to arrest the attention and engage the heart – the human mind is so blinded by prejudices, and so captivated and misled by the maxims of worldly wisdom that it either rejects the information which the Scriptures bring, or contents itself with a cold, careless assent to them.

An unrenewed man may have perused the Scriptures, and may have acquired such clear ideas of their contents as to be qualified to be a teacher of others. Yet, at the same time, he does not perceive their real excellence, nor experience their spiritual efficacy. Hence, while he remains under this mental incapacity, it is evident that the intended effect of the Word will not be produced, and that an operation is necessary, analogous to that performed on the eyes of a blind man to admit light.

The illumination of the mind does not consist in the discovery of unknown truths. To represent this as its purpose would detract from the fullness of the Scriptures and – if there were some truths which must be known that are not contained in God’s written revelation – it would provide the unconverted with the excuse that they do not possess adequate means. But “the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul” (Ps 19:7) – that is, among external means it is sufficient for conversion, and it has no defect that needs to be supplied. Enthusiasts may talk of dreams, visions and revelations, but every sober-minded Christian can trace all his spiritual perceptions, holy tempers and devout feelings to the records of the apostles and prophets. And if he was first awakened, or has been since impressed by the words of men, the sentiments which they conveyed were consistent with the Scriptures and were derived from them.

Thus the illumination of which we speak consists in enabling sinners to apprehend the true sense and importance of truths which they find in their Bibles, and which they may have often read before without being affected by them, because there was a veil on their hearts. It is impossible to explain how this change of views is effected, because we do not know the way of the Spirit, and it is impossible to make it intelligible to anyone who has not experienced it. No one ever succeeded in giving a blind man an idea of colours. Even the regenerated cannot tell how they were illuminated, or make others understand the specific difference between their present and their former conceptions. They may realise that their views of truth were once obscure and uninteresting and now are clear and enlivening; but such information is general and indefinite. One thing, however, they know, that whereas they were blind, now they see.

The sinner is enlightened in the knowledge of his own character and state. Thus, conscious of his guilt, wretchedness and danger, he is prepared to accept the offers of mercy. He is enlightened in the knowledge of the love, grace and compassion of God, becomes disposed to return to Him instead of hating, dreading and avoiding His presence. He is enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, of His substitution, righteousness and fullness, that he may trust in Him for the supply of his need and, believing in Him, may be restored to the favour of God.

Indeed his views on all subjects are changed. He is now convinced of the evil of sin; he now feels the vanity of the world; he now appreciates the value of time; he now perceives the excellence of holiness; he now forms a proper estimate of the realities of eternity. God's illumination leads him to view things as they are, whereas he formerly contemplated them through the false medium of prejudice and misconception. He awakes as from a dream and finds himself surrounded with the solemn and interesting objects of religion. All Christians are "renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created them" (Col 3:10). "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord" (Eph 5:8).

Having seen the effect of divine grace on the intellectual part of our nature, let us consider the change in our moral principles. In giving an account of regeneration, it is usually observed that the illumination of the understanding is followed by the renovation of the will. To renew the will is to incline it to good, to render it conformable to God's will. This change is necessary because the will is naturally rebellious and its practical language is: "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?" It is therefore said: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power" (Ps 110:3), and we learn from an apostle how this is done: "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil 2:13).

The renovation of the will may be considered the natural consequence of the illumination of the understanding. While we speak of different faculties of the soul, we should reflect that, strictly speaking, these are only different modes in which the soul exerts itself. The understanding is the soul apprehending and contemplating; the will is the soul choosing or refusing. But although the heart often opposes slight and transient convictions of truth and duty, it does not follow that it will act thus when the Word comes "in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power".

The effect of regenerating grace extends to every power of the soul, and all its movements are controlled by grace. The affections are all influenced by the change. They are regulated and directed to their proper objects. New feelings and emotions, new tendencies and exercises, are the consequences

of the new views of divine things which have been communicated to the mind. The revelation of the Saviour in His righteousness and grace, accompanied as it is with a heartfelt sense of guilt, wretchedness and helplessness, gives rise to faith – that act of the soul by which it receives His offered salvation, trusts in Him for acceptance with God, and finds peace, hope and joy in contemplating His character and work.

Repentance is the effect of a clear apprehension of three things: (1) the infinite purity of God’s nature, to which sin stands opposed as darkness is to light; (2) the goodness of God, whom sin has offended and dishonoured; (3) His mercy in Christ, the serious consideration of which is sufficient to melt the hardest heart and to subdue the most stubborn. Godly sorrow for sin, hatred of it, prayers for deliverance from it, a purpose instantly to forsake it, and the commencement of a course of resistance and mortification, are the ingredients, or fruits, of repentance.

The dislike of the human heart to God flows partly from misconceptions of His character, and partly from its own corrupt inclinations. Both are removed in regeneration, when the mind is enlightened and the will is renewed. How is it possible for that person not to love God, if He seems the most amiable of all beings and the person is tasting that He is gracious? All the fruits of the Spirit are produced in the heaven-born soul; all His graces are imparted; and the heart of man – which was recently like a wilderness, overgrown with briars and thorns – is transformed into the garden of the Lord.

When the seed is sown in the mind, the fruit will speedily appear. Reformation is not regeneration, but will always be the result of it, when the conduct has previously been irregular; for “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God” (1 Jn 3:9). The Corinthians were adulterers, fornicators, idolaters, covetous and extortioners, before God called them by His grace; but they were washed, sanctified and justified “in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God” (1 Cor 6:11).

A change will even take place in the behaviour of the most moral unconverted man as soon as he is born from above. There are no gross sins, we will suppose, from which he needs to be purified; but he will become more spiritual in his conversation, more attentive to religious and other duties, less eager in the pursuit of the world, more scrupulous in the selection of his company, more cautious in avoiding occasions of sin and appearances of evil. The eye of an attentive onlooker will perceive, notwithstanding his former fair show, that even he has become a new man.

But it is in the secret recesses of his heart that he will himself be deeply conscious of the spiritual revolution. He will be conscious of a new attitude

of mind in the performance of duty. Whereas it was formerly a drudgery, it will now be his highest pleasure. Engaged in the service of God, he will find himself in his proper element; instead of confining himself to the narrow round of duties in which he moved, while his sole aim was to maintain a decent appearance or to silence the clamours of conscience, he will now labour to be extensively useful to others and unweariedly active for the glory of God. The praise of man is no longer the motive which stimulates his activity; another motive, of a purer and more exalted kind, has taken its place, a desire for the approval of his Maker.

The principles by which he is governed are: a reference to God in all his thoughts and actions, a regard to His authority, and love compounded of esteem and gratitude, and a desire for His favour and presence. There is a lofty elevation of sentiment and affection above the standard of nature, however carefully improved. He is still in the world, but he is no longer of it. Although he attends to its affairs and feels joy or sorrow from its changes, he gives the decided and habitual preference to nobler objects; and, like the ancient sojourners in Canaan, whose faith we are exhorted to follow, he declares plainly that he is seeking a country, even a heavenly (Heb 11:13-16).

Christ the Mediator¹

2b. Development of the Doctrine – Later Controversies

Rev A W MacColl

Since the Councils of Chalcedon and Constantinople, the orthodox faith of the Church regarding the Person of Christ has been guarded. And we must acknowledge the special guidance and superintendence of the Holy Spirit in this critical area of the Church's understanding of truth. Through the Middle Ages the Christology of the Church was not under threat, in theory at least, despite all the other threats medieval religion posed to the gospel.

The appearance of Socinianism in the sixteenth century, however, facilitated a dangerous attack on the biblical teaching on the Person and work of the Mediator. Socinians taught that Christ was a mere man, that He did not offer an atoning sacrifice on the cross, nor was one needed, since man is morally good by nature. We can thus identify Socinianism as a forerunner of modern liberal rationalism in theology. In more modern times, other poisonous trends have developed and, in some cases, certain of the ancient heresies have reappeared in a modified guise.

¹Last month's section of this paper dealt with early controversies in the development of this doctrine.

One example of this is the heresy of Paul of Samosata from the third century. He taught that the Logos (the Word) was an impersonal power of the Divine nature which progressively permeated the humanity of Jesus, thus gradually deifying the humanity. Views of this kind often involved the idea that Christ – rather than being the eternal Son, co-equal with the Father – merely became the Son of God by adoption.² This grossly-aberrant type of Christology is strikingly similar to that of the highly-influential German theologian Albrecht Ritschl in the nineteenth century. Ritschl taught that “Christ is a mere man, but in view of the work He accomplished and the service He rendered, we rightly attribute to Him the predicate of Godhead”³.

Since the late eighteenth century, there has been a powerful movement to remove from religion its supernatural and transcendent elements. This originated in Germany and produced the destructive Biblical criticism which brought forth such bitter fruits of theological liberalism in Churches throughout Europe and America which were once orthodox and evangelical. Part of this drift has led to the over-emphasising of the humanity of Christ, evident since the mid-nineteenth century in the so-called “quest for the historical Jesus”. All too often this has led to a detracting from the divinity of Christ.

Some of the fruits of this are obvious in our day, such as the idea that the Divine nature can suffer, which is in a sense a mutation of the ancient error of Patripassianism. Also known as Sabellianism, this was the theory that there are no personal distinctions in the Godhead, just manifestations or modes of the one divine person. Thus the logical outcome of this heresy is that it was the Father who suffered on the cross, manifested in Jesus Christ. While few who profess to believe in the Trinity in modern times would go that far in error, nevertheless the idea that the Father suffered in giving up His Son to die at Calvary is all too common.

Among the more recent discussions in Christology, the so-called “kenotic” theory was perhaps most theologically influential in the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century.⁴ The kenotic theory attempts to explain the humiliation of Christ by asserting that He relinquished or lost the attributes of divinity while He was on earth. The true, scriptural teaching, however, is that Christ veiled the outshining of His divine attributes during “the days of His flesh”; He put into abeyance the direct exercise of His divine powers and the display of His essential glory as the eternal Son of God. During that time He drew upon His Father’s promised help through faith in the Word of God

²Louis Berkhof, *History of Christian Doctrine*, Banner of Truth, 1969, p 78.

³Berkhof, *History of Christian Doctrine*, p 122.

⁴The theory takes its name from the Greek verb used in Philipians 2:7, translated by the clause “but made himself of no reputation”.

and in the power of the Holy Spirit – as seen in the wilderness, when He used the Scriptures to drive away the evil one and when, on another occasion, He called on the Father at the grave of Lazarus.

In all this, however, He did not lose His power or glory in the least degree. He had power, for example, to lay down His life, and to take it again. He gave intimations and glimpses of His divine glory at various points, as on the Mount of Transfiguration, although it must be always borne in mind that, even there, the display of His glory was not the full outshining of His undiminished divine majesty; rather it was an exhibition for the disciples of the glory of the God-man Mediator, as conditioned to be perceived by human eyes in this present world. In Philippians 2, Paul compares with the humility of Christ the humility that Christians ought to exhibit: “Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant”. The famous dictum, which can be traced back to Augustine, is very helpful in clarifying our thinking here: “He became what He was not, but He never ceased to be what He always was”.

Eastern Europe Mission News

Rev Dmytro Levytskyi

There is some hope that the present situation in Ukraine may become more peaceful than it was at the time of my last newsletter. It may seem that the rage of war has calmed down as a result of peace talks, but this would be wrong. Some in the outside world may think that, if there are peace talks between Ukraine and Russia, a permanent peace will inevitably follow; however, during these peace negotiations, both sides of the conflict are preparing their armies for war. Through this war situation, the Lord in His mercy has given the people of Ukraine another opportunity to repent of their idolatry and superstition. The judgement was postponed, as in the time of Jonah, but the question is, Will the people of Ukraine react in the same way as the people of Nineveh, by repenting?

In pursuing the task of bringing Christ’s gospel to the people of Ukraine, the Eastern Europe Mission of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland is engaged in Mission activities in Odessa as well as throughout Ukraine. Odessa is a city with many opportunities for furthering the Kingdom of God. One of the main tasks of the Mission, in fulfilling this great commission, is to preach the gospel. The Bible, confessional documents and tracts continue to be distributed, both to the local people and to others throughout Ukraine. This distribution work has brought many people into contact with the Mission,

and we pray that the Most High would bless the word of grace sown in the hearts of sinners.

A recent result of this work was that two men, Alexander and Oleg, 40 and 42 years of age, received literature from our Mission and became interested in *The Westminster Confession of Faith* and visited the Odessa congregation on a Sabbath for worship. They told us they had never read the *Westminster Confession* and did not know, as is true of many other people in Ukraine, what a Presbyterian Church is.

The situation with the Presbyterian churches in Ukraine is far from encouraging, since Churches which call themselves Presbyterian do not explain to their members what it means to be Presbyterian. The main focus of such Church's activities is the social, not the spiritual, life of their members. It is unusual to hear from them anything about the Westminster Confession or Catechisms. We have also met Presbyterians who adhere to the erroneous doctrines and practices of Charismatics, yet claiming to be the true Church. It is one of our tasks, as a Mission, to make known to the people of Ukraine, through the preaching of the Word and the distribution of biblical literature, what a Presbyterian Church should be in doctrine and practice.

The books that the Eastern Europe Mission has printed have been distributed among the people of Ukraine and have been received with interest and gratitude. We hope that these books will be of much interest to the multitudes of spiritually thirsty and hungry sinners of this land. It is our constant prayer that the Most High would turn the hearts of the people to embrace the truth of the gospel of Christ. In order to fulfil that task, the Eastern Europe Mission in Ukraine is reprinting a translation into Russian of *The Westminster Confession of Faith*; this translation was made under Free Presbyterian auspices and is an improvement on a previous translation. Other books too are ready to be printed. The work of distributing books is an enormous task and Mr Zadorozhnyi is very busy with this, as well as replying to numerous letters.

But the most important task of our mission work is the preaching of the Word. It is the great responsibility of the messenger of Christ to warn the people of their lost and ruined condition and deliver to them the gospel message. It is his responsibility also to take care of Christ's sheep, drawing their attention to Christ so that they will rely on Him in every situation.

In all these mission activities, we seek the Lord's guidance and blessing, for we are absolutely dependent upon Him. We are very thankful to the Most High, the giver of all good, for making possible this mission work in Ukraine. We also thank those who continue to support the spreading of the gospel in Eastern Europe and who remember it at the throne of grace. "Brethren, pray for us" (1 Th 5:25).

Book Review

Thoughts for Young Men, by J C Ryle, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, paperback, 87 pages, £3.50, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom. This is an excellent book. Ryle speaks directly, relevantly and clearly to young men. And most of what he says is appropriate for young women, and people from other age groups also. The book is reprinted, without significant change, from *The Upper Room*, a collection of Ryle's addresses and tracts; it was also printed separately in the nineteenth century. The new edition has some helpful extra footnotes.

Ryle begins with "five reasons for exhorting young men"; including: "Death and judgement are before young men, even as others, and they nearly all seem to forget it". He follows this with "five special dangers young men need to be warned against"; among them are "the love of pleasure" and "the fear of man's opinion". Then Ryle gives "six general counsels to young men"; he begins with, "Try to get a clear view of the evil of sin", and ends with, "Never make an intimate friend of anyone who is not a friend of God". He finishes with "five special rules for young men", among which he includes: "Resolve never to forget the eye of God is upon you".

Ryle warns, instructs and encourages simply and there is little indication that he wrote these thoughts well over a century ago. He warns, "Repentance and faith are the gifts of God, and gifts that He often withholds when they have been long offered in vain. I grant you true repentance is never too late. But I warn you, at the same time, late repentance is seldom true. I grant you, one penitent thief was converted in his last hours, that no man might despair; but I warn you, only one was converted, that no man might presume." In encouraging his readers, he states, "Remember it is possible to be a young man and yet to serve God", and, "If men believed the promises more, they would never be afraid of duties".

Finally, two quotations under the heading: "Resolve, by God's help, to shun everything which may prove an occasion for sin". First, on worldly amusements: "It may be difficult, in some instances, to show that they are, in themselves, positively unscriptural and wrong. But there is little difficulty in showing that the tendency of almost all of them is most injurious to the soul. They sow the seeds of an earthly and sensual frame of mind. They war against the life of faith. They promote an unhealthy and unnatural craving after excitement." Second, "Do not be always trying how near you can allow the enemy of souls to come, and yet escape him. Hold him at arm's length. Try to keep clear of temptation as far as possible, and this will be one great help to keep clear of sin."

In his Introduction, Ryle stated, “I pray God that what I say may do good to some soul”. No doubt many souls did find profit, and one can only repeat Ryle’s prayer – for the young people of an even more ungodly generation.

John Love’s Early Years¹

6. Later Years and Writings

Roy Middleton

L*ater Ministerial career.* After being an assistant to the minister of two Church of Scotland congregations, first at Rutherglen and then at Greenock, John Love was ordained as minister of a Scots Presbyterian congregation on Crispin Street in Spitalfields, London, on 22 August 1787. In 1795, whilst he was in London, Love was one of the founders of the London Missionary Society and its first foreign secretary, a position he retained as long as he remained in the capital. When a chapel of ease² was set up in Clyde Street, Anderston, Glasgow, in 1799 he was elected to the charge and returned to Scotland. Once back in the north his zeal for foreign missions continued and he became the secretary of the Glasgow Missionary Society, which had been set up in 1796.

His ability and reputation as a scholar and theologian was widely acknowledged and led, in November 1815, to an invitation to be one of the candidates for the professorship of divinity at King’s College, Aberdeen. He complied, but due to the ascendancy of the Moderates, the vacant chair was filled by a man who sympathised with their theological stance. Academic authorities in Aberdeen were, however, impressed by him and he was awarded the degree of DD by Marischal College the following year.

In Glasgow, as we have noted, a great congregation rallied about his ministry, and there he became the recognised centre of the old school gospel folk of the West of Scotland. Among those on whom John Love’s ministry made an indelible impression were Peter MacBride, Gavin Parker, Archibald and Finlay Cook, Jonathan Ranken Anderson and John Duncan. Principal

¹This is the final section of an abridgement of a new introduction to John Love’s *Memorials*, which has now been reprinted, by Free Presbyterian Publications, and costs £35.50 for the two hardback volumes, running to around 1000 pages in total. The previous section, last month, told about Love being licensed to preach the gospel and gave some reasons why such a young man, both chronologically and spiritually, was able to write as maturely as he does in the *Memorials*. References to the *Memorials* are placed in the body of the text, with volume and page numbers in brackets.

²A church connected with the Established Church built to cope with the rising population in Scotland. However, these chapels did not have their own Kirk Session.

John Macleod notes regarding Duncan: "As a preacher and divine he was recognised by the admirers of Dr John Love as the Elisha on whom the mantle of their master had fallen".³ These men would all have heartily approved of Macleod's assessment that Love believed in thoroughness of personal self-examination and that he put it into practice in his own life. Love died at his manse in Clyde Street, Anderston, on 17 December 1825; he was 68. The Church of Scotland's first important mission station in Kaffraria (South Africa) was named after him, Lovedale.

John Love's writings. During his lifetime, John Love published little. The only publications he saw through the press were a number of sermons preached on various occasions and his *Addresses to the People of Otaheite*,⁴ designed to assist the labour of missionaries and other instructors of those who were ignorant. After his death, his wife Janet (née McKillop),⁵ entrusted to a committee his diary and other shorthand manuscripts, along with his unpublished papers, with a view to printing what they regarded as suitable for publication. The committee who acted as his literary executors first published two volumes of *Discourses* in 1829. This was followed by a volume of *Letters* almost a decade later in 1838.

In 1846, three years after the Disruption of the Church of Scotland and the formation of the Free Church of Scotland, a further volume of Love's *Sermons and Addresses* was published in Edinburgh. Another volume of sermons was published in 1853; these were sermons preached during the time he was an assistant in Greenock. This volume was published independently of his literary executors. The Greenock sermons were derived from shorthand notes

³*Scottish Theology*, p 283. It was once said to Duncan, in criticism of Love's works, that his discourses were only skeletons. This called forth the reply from Rabbi Duncan, "that the bones then must be the bones of a mammoth" (*Scottish Theology*, p 222). In Macleod's *Some Favourite Books* (pp 42-43), he attributes this comment not to Duncan but to Alexander Stewart of Cromarty, whose aunt was a hearer of Love in his Anderston days.

⁴Now Tahiti.

⁵It seems that, near the end of Love's life, his wife suffered from depression. John Morison writes, "One of the heaviest calamities of his life, and which he bore with becoming fortitude and submission to the will of God, was the great mental depression endured for many years by his beloved wife, of whom he was wont to say, that 'the arrows of the Almighty had drunk up her spirit'. She had been for many a long year the cheerful and devoted companion of his private hours, had sympathised in all the objects connected with his ministry, had aided him by her prayers and gentle counsels; and in the evening of his days, it bore heavily upon his sensitive mind to see her 'walking in darkness, and having no light' at all; but the God in whom he trusted did not suffer his spirit to be overwhelmed; and with her, too, it was 'light at eventide'; for a few years after the decease of her revered husband, she passed into the joy of her Lord, in the full assurance of a glorious immortality" (*Fathers and Founders of the London Missionary Society*, p 265).

taken by a hearer and not from the papers that had been entrusted to the committee by Mrs Love. The publication of these sermons led his literary executors to make a thorough examination of the papers that were in their possession to see if anything more might be done in the way of publication. This examination resulted in the two volumes of Love's *Memorials* being published in 1857-58.

Jonathan Ranken Anderson, an ardent admirer of Love, reviewed the volume of his *Greenock Sermons* in the first issue of his magazine, *The Alarm*. Anderson's estimate was typical of those who were attached to Love's ministry. He writes, "The theology of Dr Love is distinguished by a depth which the lines of few thinkers can reach; a grandeur which fills the reader with admiration of the noble mind that handles it, and with awe at the lofty objects that are presented to him; and withal a simplicity which ever characterises the productions of sanctified genius. . . .

"Everything is calm, and solid and well-proportioned. The light that is thrown upon portions of Scripture is rich and striking; and argues on the part of the author a profound and intimate acquaintance with the fountain of truth. He is full of the unction of the Holy Ghost; and under the sacred influence approaches the Word of God, to learn the mind of Him who is light. He subjects an understanding of extraordinary penetration and power to the authority of God; and with the docility of a little child, receives the testimony which comes to him with that sanction. The result is, that in the illustration of the subjects of his discourse, he opens one vein of truth after another; and to those who are sanctified to accept them at his hand, he offers a plentiful supply of the richest treasures."⁶

Alexander Henderson¹

A Review Article by Roy Middleton

Charles Jackson is a minister of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the USA. This book is the result of his doctoral studies at the University of Leicester, under the supervision of Professor John Coffey. Dr Coffey's doctorate was on the life and work of the Scottish Covenanter, Samuel Rutherford.²

⁶*The Alarm! A Magazine for the Times*, January 1855, pp 11-12.

¹A review of *Riots, Revolutions and the Scottish Covenanters: The Work of Alexander Henderson*, by L Charles Jackson, Reformation Heritage Books, hardback, 311 pp, £20.00, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

²Coffey's doctoral work was published in 1997 by Cambridge University Press as *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions: The Mind of Samuel Rutherford*. Coffey also wrote the entry on Alexander Henderson in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

The book under review is a full-scale academic biography of Alexander Henderson (1583-1646), the Covenanter and senior colleague of Samuel Rutherford and the other Scottish Commissioners at the Westminster Assembly. As Charles Jackson points out, his biography is the first such work since that of Robert Low Orr in 1919 and, before that, the one of John Aiton, the Church of Scotland minister of Dolphinton, in 1836.³ An up-to-date biography of Henderson, utilising the results of the extensive historical research that has taken place in the last 175 years, is long overdue. This is especially the case since Archibald Johnston of Wariston's *Diary* was not available to Aiton and the full *Minutes of the Westminster Assembly* were not available to Sheriff Orr.

Alexander Henderson is one of the towering figures that God raised up in the Scottish Church, and this modern biography ably and carefully sets out what he was able to achieve by God's grace. After the introductory chapter, which details the present state of scholarship on the life of Henderson, Dr Jackson has six thematic chapters that outline Henderson's career.

The first chapter details his early life and preparation for the ministry. He was born in Creich in Fife and studied at St Andrews University under Andrew Melville. Following his University course he courted the favour of the Archbishop of St Andrews, who was the patron of the parish of Leuchars, who presented him to the living. It was, however, a staunchly anti-episcopal parish and as Henderson at that time was a supporter of Prelacy, the doors were locked to prevent him entering. With the help of friends, Henderson broke a window and climbed into the church in spite of the opposition.

This episode of being intruded into the charge against the wishes of his parishioners led to a turning point in Henderson's life, when he subsequently went to hear the famous Robert Bruce preach. His text was John 10:1: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber". This sermon was for Henderson both the day of salvation and the catalyst for a change in his doctrine of the Church; he would abandon Prelacy and become a staunch Presbyterian. The subsequent chapters are headed: The Covenanter, The Preacher, The Presbyterian, The Pamphleteer, and The Westminster Assembly.

In a review article it is only possible to highlight a few of the matters dealt with in these chapters. The section on Henderson the Covenanter focuses on his commitment to the Regulative Principle. Among the requirements of the English service book was the assertion that it was necessary to kneel whilst receiving the elements at the Lord's Supper. This Henderson regarded as idolatry. He led the opposition to the "Popish-English-Scottish Mass-Service

³John Aiton, *The Life and Times of Alexander Henderson*, Edinburgh, 1836; Sheriff Robert Low Orr, *Alexander Henderson: Churchman and Statesman*, London, 1919.

book”⁴ and, along with Archibald Johnston, was co-author of the National Covenant, which was signed throughout Scotland in gatherings that resembled a religious revival. Both the author’s lengthy chapter on Henderson the Covenanter and his discussion of the relationship between national covenanting and Reformed covenant theology are most instructive.

The third chapter, on Henderson the preacher, breaks a measure of new ground in Henderson studies. It is a detailed account of his preaching based on his extant sermons and covers such subjects as divine calling, authority in preaching, the style and substance of his preaching and evangelical faithfulness, along with a section on “a theology of godly listening”. Dr Jackson concludes that some of Henderson’s extant sermons are clearly from a series of expositions that he preached during the time he was a minister at Leuchars. Henderson advocated careful preparation of sermons. Dr Jackson observes that, for Henderson, belief in the inspiration and authority of the Bible meant that a minister had to be careful how he crafted his sermons. He believed that shaping the text of Scripture into a meaningful sermon required concentrated effort and care. He encouraged presbyteries to nurture a preacher’s abilities in these areas. In consequence, presbyteries organised monthly meetings when theological topics were discussed and vindicated against adversaries. It was expected that ministers would thoroughly prepare themselves in order to take part (see p 107).

The chapter on Henderson the Presbyterian deals at length with the historic Glasgow Assembly of 1638 of which he was the Moderator. What this Assembly achieved, in Dr Jackson’s words, “was the ‘root and branch’ extirpation of episcopal ecclesiology and anything they alleged to be foreign or contrary to the Reformation” (p 153). It was at this Assembly that eight bishops were excommunicated and the remaining six were deposed. Henderson preached a sermon from Psalm 110:1 that so encapsulated the Covenanters’ stance that it was published the same year. Its title in part was *The Bishops Doom*. Although it is not cited in this book, Henderson, after pronouncing the apostolic benediction, dismissed the Assembly with these memorable words, “We have now cast down the walls of Jericho; let him that rebuildeth them beware of the curse of Hiel the Bethelite” (see Jos 6:26, 1 Ki 16:34).

The fifth chapter deals with Henderson’s role as both author and editor of Covenanter pamphlets. This is a chapter in which the author has been able to utilise some of the extensive research that has taken place in recent years, in order to enhance our understanding of Henderson’s role in the Coven-

⁴This is the long designation given the service book by the Covenanter and historian, John Row (1568-1646) in his *History of the Kirk of Scotland from the year 1558 to August 1637*, Wodrow Society, 1842, p 398.

anters' struggle. When war became inevitable, Henderson and his fellow Covenanters began crafting pamphlets or propaganda documents to urge support for their cause. These pamphlets were circulated all over Europe but most importantly in England. Dr Jackson cites a recent thesis that argues, "The Covenanter pamphlets triggered or unleashed a pamphlet onslaught in all directions that in terms of quantity, changed the history of pamphlets and pamphleteering".⁵

Henderson's purpose in producing these pamphlets was to influence and even pacify the English army. Dr Jackson observes, "When the Covenanter army invaded England it brought not only cannons and muskets but also pamphlets full of information that would, it was hoped, undermine support for the king's policies" (p 175). Henderson led the Covenanter movement into a self-conscious commitment to the important concept, that ideas play a crucial role for all people in every station in life. Henderson both wrote pamphlets and, possibly more significantly, edited the work done by others. John Leslie, the Earl of Rothes, one of the leaders of the Covenanters, indicated that they were so dependent on Henderson's drafting and editing skills that they made certain he had the final say, not just on pamphlets, but also on official letters of correspondence that they used in their cause. According to Rothes, Henderson's editing gave the documents a "smoother" and more "amenable" tone.⁶

The final main chapter deals with Henderson's role at the Westminster Assembly where he was the most senior of the five ministerial commissioners sent by the Scottish Church. Several useful essays have been written in recent years on the role of the Scottish commissioners at the Assembly.⁷ In this review we mention just two matters regarding Henderson that Dr Jackson has

⁵Quoted from Joseph Black, *Pamphlet Wars*, University of Toronto, 1996, p 249.

⁶Quoted from John Earl of Rothes, *A Relation of the Proceedings concerning the affairs of the Kirk of Scotland from August 1637 to July 1638*, The Bannatyne Club, 1830, p 162.

⁷See Iain H Murray, "The Scots at the Westminster Assembly: With special reference to the dispute on Church Government and its aftermath", *Banner of Truth Magazine*, August-September 1994, pp 6-40; Chad B Van Dixhoorn, "Scottish influence on the Westminster Assembly: A Study of the Synod's Summoning Ordinance and the Solemn League and Covenant", *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, vol 37, pp 55-88; W D J Mackay, "Scotland at the Westminster Assembly", in J Ligon Duncan (ed), *The Westminster Confession into the 21st Century*, Fearn, 2003, pp 213-245; Christopher Caldwell and Guy M Richards, *Introductory Essays to Sermons preached before the English Houses of Parliament by the Scottish Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly of Divines 1643-1645*, Naphtali Press, 2011, pp xiii-lxx. See also the recently-printed 1976 University of Pittsburgh thesis of Wayne R Spear, *Covenanted Uniformity: The Influence of the Scottish Commissioners upon the Ecclesiology of the Westminster Assembly*, Reformation Heritage Books, 2013.

highlighted. The first was his ability to maintain a public image of diplomacy and calmness. This was why some of the staunchest critics of the Scottish commissioners distinguished between the Scots in general and Henderson, who they considered to be a minister of an “apostolic spirit” (p 236).

A second matter highlighted in this book is that Henderson was the main author of *The Directory for Public Worship of God*. Robert Baillie asserted, “Mr Henderson has drawn it up, by way of a practical directory, so calmly, that we trust to get it past the Assembly the next week without much debate”.⁸ Under Henderson’s influence, the *Directory* reflected his commitment to genuine and honourable compromise. The Scots and the English Independents differed on many things and Henderson was privately exasperated by their delaying tactics.

One area of disagreement was over the frequency and manner of communion. Robert Baillie considered the Independents’ practice of weekly communion to be irreverent.⁹ Without forcing a change of principles on either party, Henderson crafted the *Directory* to include specific relief for differences over the frequency of communion with the words, “How often, may be considered and determined by the ministers and other church-governors of each congregation, as they shall find most convenient for the comfort and edification of the people committed to their charge”.¹⁰ Charles Jackson observes, “This section has all the marks of authentic compromise on differences of practice without compromising on theological principles, and this was where Henderson was at his best” (p 247).

The reviewer finds it rather surprising that in what was originally a doctoral thesis there are a number of errors in the otherwise-useful Selected Bibliography. Some of the mistakes that we have noticed are as follows: The editor of the first volume of *Archibald Johnston of Wariston’s Diary* was George Morison Paul, not David Hay Fleming; Fleming edited the second volume. The David Laing edition of *John Knox’s Works* is in six volumes, not five. The series of books edited by J Ligon Duncan, *The Westminster Confession into the 21st Century* is in three volumes, not four, and *The Story of the Scottish*

⁸Robert Baillie, *Letters and Journals*, Edinburgh, 1841, vol 2, p 250.

⁹In a public letter Baillie observes, “The Independents way of celebration, seems to be very irreverent. They have the communion every Sabbath, without any preparation before or thanksgiving after; little examination of the people; their very prayers and doctrine before the sacrament uses not to be directed to the use of the sacrament. They have after the blessing, a short discourse, and two short graces over the elements, which are distribute and participate in silence, without exhortation, reading or singing. And all is ended with a Psalm, without prayer.” *Letters and Journals*, Edinburgh, vol 2, pp 148-149.

¹⁰“The Directory for the Public Worship of God”, in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, Free Presbyterian Publications, 1962, p 384.

Church was not written by Thomas M'Crie (1772-1835), the author of the *Life of John Knox*, but by his son Thomas M'Crie Jr (1797-1875). These errors are not misprints in this book but are repeated from the thesis itself.

Whilst we recommend this volume by Charles Jackson, readers should be aware that it is an academic biography. In addition, it is not a replacement for the biographies of either John Aiton or Sheriff Orr, or the excellent sketch of Henderson's life by Thomas M'Crie,¹¹ all of which have a more detailed historical narrative. The thematic volume under review supplements and updates the older works, which are now happily available again in print-on-demand editions. Presbyterians world-wide, but especially those in Scotland, should be interested in the life of this outstanding servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. For those who have never read a biography of Henderson the reviewer would recommend they begin with the 40-page booklet written by the editor of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* and published by the Scottish Reformation Society in its "Scots Worthies Series".¹²

The Unspeakable Loveliness of Christ¹

Isaac Ambrose

Psalm 21:5. *His glory is great in Thy salvation.*

I remember someone dying and hearing some conversation about Jesus Christ. "O," said she, "speak more of this; let me hear more of this. Do not be weary of telling His praise; I long to see Him; how should I but long to hear of Him?" Surely I cannot say too much of Jesus Christ. On this blessed subject no man can possibly exaggerate. If I had the tongues of men and angels, I could never fully set forth Christ. It involves an eternal contradiction that the creature can see to the bottom of the Creator. Suppose all the sands on the seashore, all the flowers, herbs, leaves, twigs of trees in woods and forests and all the stars of heaven were rational creatures and, if they had the wisdom and tongues of angels to speak of the loveliness, beauty, glory and excellence of Christ, as gone to heaven and sitting at the right hand of His Father, they would, in all their expressions, stay millions of miles on this side of Jesus Christ.

¹¹Thomas M'Crie's sketch of Henderson's life is in the *Miscellaneous Writings, chiefly Historical, of Thomas M'Crie*, edited by his son, Edinburgh, 1841, pp 1-87, and is reprinted in *Lives of Alexander Henderson and James Guthrie*, Edinburgh, 1846, pp 1-68. Regrettably this reprint omits M'Crie's informative and valuable footnotes.

¹²Kenneth D Macleod, *Alexander Henderson*, Edinburgh, 2014, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

¹Quoted in C H Spurgeon's *Treasury of David*, and reprinted here with editing.

O the loveliness, beauty and glory of His countenance! Can I speak, or you hear, of such a Christ? And are we not all in a burning love, in a seraphical love, or at least in a conjugal love? O my heart, how is it thou art not love-sick? How is it thou dost not charge the daughters of Jerusalem as the spouse did: "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell Him, that I am sick of love" (Song 5:8).

Protestant View

"Jubilee Holy Year of Mercy"

The Vatican has designated the period between December 2015 and November 2016 as a "Jubilee Holy Year of Mercy". So-called "holy doors" have been constructed in cathedrals and churches worldwide and the Pope has promised that each is a "door of mercy, through which anyone who enters will experience the love of God, who consoles, pardons and instils hope". Certain pilgrims who make their way to Rome on foot will be rewarded with "certificates of participation".

Once again we see that Rome substitutes an outward ceremony for the true spiritual reality of obtaining mercy through faith in Jesus Christ. He says, "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (Jn 10:9). The gospel proclaims a spiritual jubilee continually to all who will believe on Christ and thus there is no need for a special "holy year". Indeed, if the grace of God were to be obtained through the Papacy and the Roman Catholic priesthood, as they claim, why do they not – out of compassion for precious souls – proclaim full, free, unhindered gospel mercy to perishing sinners at all times throughout every year? This was a question raised by Martin Luther in connection with the sale of "indulgences" at the time of the Reformation and, since Rome claims never to change, it never has been answered, and never will be.

AWM

Notes and Comments

The Columba Declaration

The Church of England and the Church of Scotland have announced "an historic agreement", called the Columba Declaration, which "recognises their long-standing ecumenical partnership and lays the groundwork for future joint projects". At the time of writing, the document has not even been published in full, and has not yet been debated either by the Synod of the

Church of England or by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, but this does not stop leading figures from saying that an agreement “has been reached”. The approval of the Church courts is regarded as a rubber stamp, apparently.

The summary of the report contains no surprises, and amounts to little more than a mutual acknowledgment and the keeping up of a “Contact Group” which is to meet “at least annually”. An example is given of the sort of ecumenical projects that are in mind: the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, along with three other denominations, have set up an internet bank, in response to “concerns that low-income families needed access to low-cost banking and loans”. That such an agreement should be hailed as “historic” shows the extent to which the ecumenical movement has run out of steam. Surprisingly, the Declaration has deeply offended the Primus and other members of the Scottish Episcopal Church because it disregards the special position that they feel that they have in Scotland.

The bitter ecumenical manoeuvring behind these agreements reminds one of Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones’ comment that “the burial of many corpses together in a graveyard does not lead to resurrection”. The great need of the Church of Scotland is not ecumenical links but rather to relearn the fundamental truth that “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mk 16:16). *DWBS*

Children Seized From Christian Parents

Draconian measures appear to have been taken against a Christian family in Norway by the Barnevernet, the country’s child welfare service. It has accused Marius and Ruth Bodnariu of “Christian radicalism and indoctrination” and seized their three sons and two daughters. Marius, a Romanian, and his wife Ruth, had moved from Bucharest to Ruth’s home town near Bergen 10 years ago wishing to raise their family according to biblical principles.

Last November, without warning, the authorities took their two daughters, Eliana and Naomi, out of school and placed them in an unknown location. They then went to the home and forcibly removed the two elder sons, Matthew and John, and arrested Ruth who, with three-month-old baby Ezekiel, was taken to a police station. Officials went to Marius’ workplace and apparently arrested him too. After several hours of interrogation the parents were allowed home with Ezekiel but without the other children. The following day, Barnevernet officials and four police officers, seemingly with no documentation, came to take away the “breast-feeding baby”, on the grounds that Ruth was “dangerous”.

Why did all this take place? Apparently, according to Marius' brother, Daniel, who is a pastor, the principal of the girls' school contacted welfare authorities voicing concern about how the children were being raised and disciplined at home. She complained that they were "very Christian" and that the parents and other relations believe "God punishes sin", which "creates a disability in the children". The principal went on to say that "she did not believe they were physically abused at home but that the parents needed 'help and guidance' (by the child welfare service) as to how to raise their children". When the Barnevernet questioned the girls about their home life they said that they hid some things from their parents because they feared being pulled by the ear and spanked.

Daniel Bodnariu adds that the girls explicitly told the investigators that although they feared punishment, they did not fear their parents. The report goes on to say that "it is clear that there are no signs of physical abuse, but that the older children stated that they were being punished". The children were physically examined and the baby was even subjected to x-rays and a CT scan but no injuries were discovered. The child welfare service, however, claims that Marius is physically abusive. He vehemently denies this. Presumably the allegation is made because the Barnevernet believes he uses corporal punishment on the children, which is illegal in Norway.

Within a few days the devastated parents were notified that the children had been separated into two foster families and that they had "already started integrating into their new lifestyle". The Barnevernet then appeared to taunt them saying, "The kids don't even miss you; what kind of parents are you?" According to Daniel Bodnarius, the children were told that "their parents had abandoned them and did not care for them". The Bodnarius' appeal against the state's intervention was rejected; however the couple are allowed to see Ezekiel twice a week for two hours at a time. Ruth is also allowed to visit their younger sons once a week, but both parents are denied any contact with their daughters.

Of course, all alleged abuse must be investigated and Daniel Bodnarius acknowledges this. Clearly we need to know the facts, but it is hard to think that these reports indicate anything other than a secular state seeking control over a Christian family and indeed persecuting them. Apparently there is a documented history of unwarranted Barnevernet interference in families – especially immigrant families. Daniel Bodnarius certainly believes so. In an internet post he states, "Norwegian children are taught in school to notify their teachers if a parent asks them to do their homework, or to do something that a child, in its childishness, finds unappealing, so that the teachers help the children to get rid of such parents". He concludes, "Marius and Ruth

[have] raised a ‘normal’ family with Christian values . . . and have taken every imaginable step in raising their children with loving care”.

It is clear that many agree with him. A petition on their behalf has attracted nearly 30 000 signatures. Ongoing worries about Barnevernet have led concerned professionals, including lawyers, psychologists and social workers to petition the Norwegian Parliament in June 2015 seeking assurances: “Society wants to be confident that Barnevernet operates with high professional competence and exercises good judgement . . . but those of us involved in individual cases unfortunately see another reality too often”. A Romanian senator has asked the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Council to investigate the Bodnarius case.

When we read and hear of such cases we see the results of a secular outlook. Christianity is under attack. Scotland’s acceptance of the “Named Person Scheme” may open doors for similar cases; it is a cause for concern and for prayer. Families could be destroyed solely because parents have sought to discipline their children in love and to bring them up according to God’s own Word, which says, “Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with a rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell” (Prov 23:13,14) Of course, punishment must not be excessive and children must not be abused. They are to be brought up in the “nurture” as well as in the “admonition of the Lord” (Eph 6:4). Correction must be carried out in love, which is how God deals with His children: “Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth” (Heb 12:6). KHM

Acquittal of Falsely Accused Evangelist

Christian Voice reports on the acquittal, on appeal, of a Christian open-air preacher in Taunton who had previously been convicted of a public order offence before a Muslim judge. The interesting point was the collapse of the prosecution case when it transpired that both witnesses had embellished their testimony by alleging that the evangelist said things that were “homophobic”. What had offended them was the simple preaching of the gospel, but to get the man arrested they complained to the police about “homophobia” and “racism”.

The martyr Stephen was dealt with similarly in Acts 6: “And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and against God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council, and set up false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth

not to speak blasphemous words against this holy place, and the law” (vv 10-13). The gospel has lost none of its offence. *DWBS*

Church Information

Removed by Death

Sadly we have to report the deaths of two long-standing elders: Mr Angus Macleod of Stornoway, on December 27, and of Mr William Fraser of Inverness, on January 3. We express our sympathy with their relatives.

Meeting of Presbytery

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, March 8, at 11 am, DV.

Committee Meetings

Synod committees will meet, DV, in Inverness Free Presbyterian Church on Tuesday, March 22, as follows:

- 10.00 - 10.30 Church Interests Committee
- 10.30 - 12.00 Training of the Ministry Committee
- 12.00 - 13.00 Sabbath Observance Committee
- 14.00 - 15.00 Outreach Committee
- 14.00 - 17.00 Finance Committee
- 15.00 - 17.00 Religion and Morals Committee
- 18.00 - 19.30 Publications and Bookroom Committee
- 19.30 - 20.30 Welfare of Youth Committee
- 19.30 - 20.30 Dominions and Overseas Committee

(Rev) John MacLeod, Clerk of Synod

Bookroom Fund

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

W Campbell, General Treasurer

Acknowledgement of Donations

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Dingwall: Caithness Friend, £10; Mrs McInnes, Dingwall, £30 per NMR. *TBS:* Anon, £60.

Glasgow: *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10, £30. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £60, £60, £60. *Home Mission Fund:* Mrs A Baxter, £100. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Mrs A Baxter, £100. *Sustentation Fund:* Mrs A Baxter, £200. *TBS:* Anon, Greenock, £40.

Greenock: *Magazines Fund:* Anon, £36. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £10. *TBS:* Anon, £10.

Inverness: W & J Fraser, £1000 per IMK. *Tape Fund:* Anon, £20, £100 per JC.

Ness: Anon Friend, England, £20 per Rev AWM. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon Friend, England, £20 per Rev AWM.

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 DPhl, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm. Thursday 7 pm (alternately in Struan and Vatten, fortnightly). Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 014786 12110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beaully** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Acharyn 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 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Farr** (by Daviot): Sabbath 12 noon. **Tomatin:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Stratherrick:** Sabbath 12 noon. (Each of these services is held once in three weeks as intimated). **Farr:** Thursday 7.30 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr M J Schouten; tel: 01463 221776.
- Fort William:** Monzie Square, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm as intimated. Manse: 15 Perth Place, PH33 6UL; tel: 01397 708553. Contact Mr D A McKinnon. Tel: 01397 702597.
- Gairloch** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm. Prayer meeting in **Strath**, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev A E W MacDonald MA, F P Manse, Gairloch, Ross-shire, IV21 2BS; tel: 01445 712247.
- Glasgow:** St Jude's Church, 137 Woodlands Road, G3 6LE. Sabbath 11 am and 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev Roderick MacLeod BA, 4 Laurel Park Close, Glasgow, G13 1RD; tel: 0141 954 3759.
- Greenock:** 40 East Hamilton Street, Sabbath 2.30 pm.
- Halkirk:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Thursday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Wick:** Church; **Strathly:** Church; no F P Church services.
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm. **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J B Jardine BD, F P Manse, Tarbert, Isle of Harris, HS3 3DF; tel: 01859 502253, e-mail: northharris.fpc@btopenworld.com.
- Harris (South):** **Leverburgh:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Sheilebost:** Sabbath 12 noon (as intimated). Prayer meetings in **Leverburgh**, **Sheilebost** and **Strond** as intimated. Rev K D Macleod BSc, F P Manse, Leverburgh, HS5 3UA; tel: 01859 520271.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacRae; tel: 01463 790521.
- Kinlochberrie:** Sabbath 11.30 am; Tuesday 7.30 pm. Manse tel: 01971 521268. **Scourie:** Sabbath 6 pm.
- Kyle of Lochalsh:** Sabbath 6 pm. Manse tel: 01599 534933. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Laide** (Ross-shire): Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev D A Ross, F P Manse, Laide, IV22 2NB; tel: 01445 731340.
- Lochcarron:** Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Manse.
- Lochinver:** Church. No F P services at present. Manse tel: 01571 844484.
- Ness:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev A W MacColl MA PhD, F P Manse, Swainbost, HS2 0TA; tel: 01851 810228.
- North Tolsta:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Thursday 7 pm; 1st Monday of month 7 pm. Manse tel: 01851 890325. Contact Rev J R Tallach; tel: 01851 702501.
- North Uist:** **Bayhead:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). **Sollas:** Wednesday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Rev D Macdonald BA, F P Manse, Bayhead, North Uist, HS6 5DS; tel: 01876 510233.
- Oban:** Church and Manse. No F P services at present.
- Perth:** Pomarium, off Leonard Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Rev D Campbell; tel: 0131 312 8227.
- Portree:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev I D MacDonald, F P Manse, Achachork, Portree, IV51 9HT; tel: 01478 612110.
- Raasay:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev W A Weale; tel: 01470 562243.
- Shieldaig:** Sabbath 11 am; **Applecross:** Sabbath 6pm. Tuesday 7 pm (alternately in Shieldaig and Applecross). Shieldaig manse tel: 01520 755259, Applecross manse tel: 01520 744411. Contact Rev D A Ross; tel: 01445 731340.
- Staffin:** Sabbath 12 noon, 5 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev W A Weale, F P Manse, Staffin, IV51 9HY; tel: 01470 562243.
- Stornoway:** Matheson Road, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. **Achmore:** Sabbath 12 noon; Tuesday 7 pm. Rev J R Tallach MB ChB, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, HS1 2NH; tel: 01851 702501.
- Tain:** Church and Manse. **Fearn:** Church. No F P services. See Dornoch and Bonar.
- Uig (Lewis) Mivaig:** 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.

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 Briercliffe 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, 7.30 pm; Tuesday 8 pm. Contact: Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

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

USA

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

Australia

Grafton, NSW: 172 Fitzroy Street. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G G Hutton BA PhD, 3 Martin Crescent, Junction Hill, NSW 2460; tel: (02) 6644 6174; e-mail:grafton@internode.on.net.

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:sydneyfpcchurch@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. Rev C Hembd, 14 Thomson St, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140.

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 Rev D Levytsky; tel:00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevytsky@gmail.com.

Zimbabwe

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

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

Mbuma: Church and Hospital. Rev N Sibanda. Postal Address: Mbuma 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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