

# The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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**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.

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**November: First Sabbath:** Aberdeen, **Second Sabbath:** Glasgow; **Third:** Chiedza, Singapore.

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

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## Above All We Ask or Think

Consider a sinner who feels the guilt of sin, who can see nothing ahead of him but a lost eternity, and knows that he is quite unable to repent, or to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows that Christ came into the world to save sinners and that it is his duty to pray. Yet it is a serious question for him: Will God hear *my* petitions and rescue *me* from my dreadful situation?

Every sinner is under an obligation to receive as true the whole testimony God has given in Scripture and, in particular, to receive what is relevant to himself. And here is one part of Scripture truth which is relevant to everyone and especially to those who are in the position described above: God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” (Eph 3:20). People may hesitate to look to Christ for deliverance because they know they do not deserve anything. But Christ insists: “I came not to call the righteous”; He did not come to call those who have earned some merit through their attempts to live righteous lives. There never were any such individuals, “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom 3:23); apart from Christ, no one can be described as righteous.

So who does Christ save? He goes on to say that He came to call “sinners to repentance” (Mk 2:17). It is natural for sinners to think they can contribute to their salvation, but that is utterly impossible. Yet the truth is altogether more wonderful; it is “exceeding abundantly above” what we ask or think. Salvation is free. We are called to receive these blessings – pictured in terms of the good things of our natural life – “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk” (Is 55:1). And these blessings are emphasised to be “without money and without price”.

Having come to Christ, believers may look at their present state and be more than a little discouraged as they think of the perfection they need if they are to enter heaven. One aspect of the believer’s imperfection in this world is to look too much to himself and too little to Christ. Indeed believers are to go through this world looking to Christ alone. It is not through works of righteousness that they are saved in the first instance, but according to

God's mercy (see Tts 3:5); so it must be through God's mercy that they are led safely along the whole pathway to a better world.

Every degree of sanctification has its source in the free grace of God, for the sake of Christ; it cannot be earned. And the more the believer sees of God's willingness to bless him in spite of his sin and unbelief – and the more he receives the fact that God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” – the better it will be for him. He is to ask God to continue the work of grace in his heart and life, and to do so in the light of the Saviour's words: “Ask, and it shall be given you” (Mt 7:7). And when he asks, he is to recognise that God is not only able, but willing, to give more – “exceeding abundantly” more – than what he actually asks for.

There are many promises in God's Word to encourage the believer on his way through this world: for example, “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil 1:6). If God has begun the good work of grace in a soul, He will continue the work until it is brought to completion on the day when Christ will come to this world the second time. That is when the believer's body will be raised again in perfection and reunited to his soul – the soul having been made perfect on the day of his death. How clear it will be then that God was indeed able to do exceeding abundantly above what any of His people asked or thought!

In this life we have many needs but, more than anything else, we are to seek the welfare of *our* soul, first to be brought into the kingdom of God and then to make progress along the way to heaven. Beyond that, we are to pray for other people, especially for relations and friends, and particularly for their spiritual welfare. We are to do so in the light of the encouragement that God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think”. If we believe that these words are true, surely we will feel that we may ask for more, much more, rather than less. In a day of small things, which is what we are presently experiencing, we may think it unreasonable to ask for many conversions in any congregation or locality; but we must ever bear in mind that God is able to do more than we ask – indeed much more. How appropriate to ask, as David did, “Let the whole earth be filled with His glory” (Ps 72:19)! Our prayers are limited and our thinking is limited, but there is no limit to God's power to save sinners and build up His Church.

Today the Church of God generally seems to be in retreat; much of it is unfaithful to its Head, rejecting the truth of Scripture and its divine authority. We may feel that we can only expect God to visit the Church in judgement and leave it to further declension and weakness. That *may* be the immediate outcome, but we should never lose sight of the promises that, for instance, “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the

sea” (Is 11:9). Yet it is our duty to pray earnestly for the immediate future as well as for what is further away.

Apart from a deep faith in the power of God, the spiritual atmosphere in mid-sixteenth-century France could not encourage anyone to hope for great things. Yet it is estimated that the number of organised Protestant churches in France increased from five in 1555 to somewhere around 2000 in 1562. One remarkable example of unexpected interest in the Word of God comes from a letter written by a Genevan pastor to John Calvin. The pastor was invited to spend a night in a Normandy village, when the annual fair was taking place, and to preach in a private room. Instead he found a crowd of between 2000 and 3000 waiting for him that Friday evening. He preached in a suitable place near the village, and “the sermon was conducted in a seemly silence with a Psalm at the beginning and at the end”.

The pastor preached again at 5 am on the Sabbath to a huge crowd, and at 5 pm around 5000 gathered. A further sermon followed on the Monday; and on Tuesday, when the preacher was about to leave, he was told that many were asking, “What shall we do now? We can no longer go to mass: how do we live now?” The pastor responded by preaching another sermon, in which he told the people: “When you have received Christ, follow Him” and gave them practical advice.<sup>1</sup> Clearly the response was far beyond what the preacher was led to expect. What the permanent effects were, one cannot say. Clearly there were outward impressions and, one would hope, saving effects also. Only on the day of judgement will all be made clear.

We should learn that today God “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think” – as well as in the sixteenth century. In particular, even in a generation taken up almost entirely by the things of the world, especially its entertainments, God is able to make sinners *want* to hear the gospel. We should pray in the light of that fact. The spiritual and moral state of the United Kingdom and other countries is dire. Yet the gospel is still being preached, and the Scriptures continue to be circulated; these and other means can be blessed to large numbers of souls.

We should remember the prayer of Moses, when the Israelites accepted the unbelieving report of the majority of spies and refused to enter the promised land: “Pardon, I beseech Thee, the iniquity of this people *according unto the greatness of Thy mercy*” (Num 14:19). When we so often see serious sin promoted as good and right, we also may pray in these terms – seeking not only pardon but also a change of heart and life – for God is still “able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think”.

<sup>1</sup>This account is taken from R D Smart, M A G Haykin and I H Clary, eds, *Pentecostal Outpourings*, Reformation Heritage Books, 2016, pp 20-21.

# The Lord's Pleasure in His People<sup>1</sup>

Synod Sermon by Rev K M Watkins

Psalm 149:4. *For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people: He will beautify the meek with salvation.*

These last five psalms of the Psalter reach a crescendo of praise. Every one of them begins and ends with "Praise ye the Lord". In the Hebrew the word is *Hallelujah*, and hence they have been called the Hallelujah Psalms. Given the contents of these Psalms, and indeed given the contents of the whole book of Psalms, it is only fitting that all the praise should go to the Lord. Let Him be magnified for His wondrous grace to His people.

In our text, the focus is upon the Lord taking pleasure in His people, the Lord delighting in them. His people, though, find it very hard to take any pleasure in themselves. Anyone who has grace finds it difficult to take much pleasure in himself. He is saying, "My sin I ever see". Where the true grace of God is in the heart, it is hard to take pleasure in oneself. "O wretched man that I am!" is the cry of the Lord's people. But the Lord does take pleasure in them. He delights in the operations of grace which He sees in them.

In the Song of Solomon, it does not surprise us that the Church commends Christ. Having gone through various details, words begin to fail and she says, "Yea, He is altogether lovely". Take Christ, this Pearl of great price, and from whichever angle you look at Him, He is altogether, through and through, loveliness – nothing but desires, nothing but delights. It should not surprise us that Christ is so commended by the people who are saved by faith in His blood. He has done all for them, so it should not surprise us that they take pleasure in Him.

But what a surprise it is that Christ takes pleasure in them! In the Song, He piles up commendations one after another, to show His delight in His bride the Church. The heavenly Bridegroom delights in the operations of His own grace in them, as He sees His own image being more and more reflected in them, the Holy Spirit in sanctification increasingly conforming them to His own image. All this is gathered up into this statement: "For the Lord taketh pleasure in His people".

When we see how His people are described in this Psalm, then we see why He takes pleasure in them. Firstly, it is because they are His saints. Again and again they are described as His saints – "the congregation of saints" (v1). The second reason is that they sing His praise. They are the singers in Zion; they are the Israel that, rejoicing in Him, "sing praises unto Him"; they even sing unto the Lord "a new song" (v1). There is a third reason: they are

<sup>1</sup>Preached by the retiring Moderator at the opening of this year's meetings of Synod.

His soldiers. Like the dry bones in the valley of Ezekiel's vision, they were spiritually dead and dry; but when they were brought to life by the Lord's Word and Spirit, they rose up to be an exceeding great army. They are an army of soldiers, with a two-edged sword in their hand, as well as the high praises of God in their mouth (v6). With the Lord's help, we shall look at these three reasons why the Lord takes pleasure in His people.

**1. The Lord takes pleasure in His people because they are saints.** Three times in this Psalm we have the word *saints*: in verses 1, 5 and 9. There are two Psalms where the word appears twice – Psalms 89 and 132 – but this is the only one where it appears three times. It appears in the whole Psalter only 21 times, and three of those are pressed into the short compass of these nine verses. It must therefore be emphatic. We should ask ourselves whether we are numbered among these saints.

They are saints because they have been saved. Their salvation is spoken of in our text: "He will beautify the meek with salvation". In their salvation they were separated from the world, and so the Lord made them to be saints – "Let Israel rejoice in *Him that made him*" (v2). Israel signifies the Church of God as a whole. These saints did not turn themselves into saints. It was the doing of the Lord, and it is wondrous in their eyes, if not wondrous in the world's eyes, and it is wondrous in His eyes.

The Lord takes pleasure in His own work when He beholds His saints, for He sees them as a people He has saved, a people saved by the shed blood, obedience and perfect righteousness of His own Son. Christ offered Himself in their place as the sacrifice to satisfy Divine justice and reconcile them to God. They are made saints by a new creation. When verse 2 says that the Lord "made" them, it is not talking about the physical formation of their body, or the creation of the soul in the womb at conception. Rather, it is the new creation by the Holy Spirit, making a new man and creating new spiritual life in those who previously had no such life whatsoever. They are saved, they are saints as a result of a new birth, a new creation that made old things pass away and all things become new.

In their effectual calling they meet the King: "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King" (v2). When they first lay hold upon Christ, it is His priestly office that is their focus of attention. They think of Christ in His sacrifice, finding forgiveness with God through His blood. If there was no priestly office, no cross, no blood, then the Lord would be marking iniquity and there would be no salvation. There would be no saints, and no people for the Lord to take pleasure in.

Although on their side the priestly office is especially in view, on the Lord's side it is Christ coming forth in His kingly office, subduing them to

Himself. In that moment of being born again, when all is made new, they lay hold on Christ, a whole Christ. Yes, what He has done as priest is uppermost in their view, yet He is also a prophet, teaching them by His Word and Spirit. He is also a king, drawing them to Himself, persuading and enabling them to embrace Himself, as He is freely offered to them in the gospel.

They are saints, and the Lord takes pleasure in that: a people that belong to Him, a people who do not belong to the world or the flesh or the devil any longer. They have been rescued; Christ has taken them for His own. He has gone forth, conquering and to conquer, in a mighty work of salvation that is all of grace. He has separated them to Himself to be His own possession. They belong to Him; He has bought them with a price and they are not their own. They are Christ's; they are His property; He has taken possession of them. He values the saints, for He purchased them with His blood.

The word for *saints* in the Old Testament is rooted in the word often translated *lovingkindness*. The saints have received the love, kindness and mercy of the Lord, and this is what they will be saying: It was only enmity and sin and wretchedness and death on my side, but on His side it is all grace; it is only mercy; it is all lovingkindness.

He will beautify His saints. He will sanctify them. He will deal with their sin. He will add grace to grace. He will make the saints saintly. He will make them increasingly saintly. Although they will not feel like it in themselves, He will produce in them that which He can delight in, especially in the grace of meekness: "He will beautify the meek" (v4). They came into the yoke with the meek and lowly Saviour, and He is making them like Himself. "The Lord taketh pleasure in His people" because they are His saints.

**2. The Lord takes pleasure in His people because they sing.** They are His singers as well as His saints. The thought appears in the Psalm once and again: "Sing unto the Lord" (v1); "Let them sing praises unto Him" (v3); "Let them sing aloud" (v5). These saints, the Lord's new creatures, are being sanctified by the Holy Spirit applying the Word, being made more and more like Christ. They are a people who sing, and they sing the praises of the Lord. He who inhabits the praises of Israel loves to dwell in the hearts of these meek and contrite ones who sing to His praise and honour.

What do they sing? They sing a new song – "Sing unto the Lord a new song" (v1). This is not speaking of new words. This is not giving authority for men to make up their own uninspired compositions and intrude them into the holy worship of God. Rather, it means that even when you sing a psalm like this Psalm 149, which perhaps you have sung hundreds of times before, you sing it as a new song. It is not singing new words, but singing the words that are already there with a new meaning, with a new under-



standing, with a new significance, with a freshness that makes them feel new.

We sang in Psalm 40 at the outset this evening. When the Lord takes a soul from the miry clay and from the fearful pit of sin and misery, and sets the feet of that soul upon the Rock that is Christ, what else does the Lord do? He puts a new song in that person's mouth, his God to magnify. He does not sing new words, but he sings the same words in a new way, singing the songs of salvation as a saved soul, who can now enter into the reality of them. The Lord takes pleasure in seeing the words of praise enter the heart.

The Lord looks not only on the outward appearance; the Lord looks into the heart. When the lips are singing the songs of the Psalter, it is good, but it is not enough. The Lord looks into the heart, searching for a soul singing the new song. Have you ever sung a Psalm in that new way? The unregenerate sing God's praise in one way, but the Lord's people have come to sing it in a new way. Can you make that contrast in your own experience? Does the Lord sometimes help you to sing His praise in this new way, as refreshingly new? It can be new over and over and over, again and again. That is when the Lord takes pleasure in the singing of His people.

Singing the new song is joyful to the singers: "Let Israel rejoice in Him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King" (v2). That is how they sing this new song: with spiritual, not carnal, joy. The Ethiopian eunuch had it. Even though Philip, the instrument of his conversion, had been removed, the Lord was still with him, and therefore the Ethiopian "went on his way rejoicing" (Ac 8:39). When souls are rejoicing in the gospel, the Lord's appointed way of expressing it is singing: "Is any merry? Let him sing psalms" (Jas 5:13). The Lord takes pleasure in this.

When their delight in Christ flows out in joyful singing of His praise, then they understand the images used in the third verse: "Let them praise His name in the dance: let them sing praises unto Him with the timbrel and harp". Just as we would not expect Christian congregations to use literal dancing, so we would not expect them to use any musical instrument in their worship. That is not what this is speaking of. This is talking about the spiritual joy when the new song abounds within the soul, either when it first comes or when it is restored. Then let them sing as if they were dancing before the Lord; let them express their joy as if their singing was accompanied with instruments.

This song is a glorious song: "Let the saints be joyful in glory" (v5). There is nothing in it to be ashamed of. You cannot go too far in this. Michal despised David for his super-abounding delight when he leapt and danced before the Lord. She took no pleasure in what she saw in her godly husband, thinking he had brought shame on himself. But the Lord viewed David

dancing before Him with all his might in a very different way. “The Lord taketh pleasure in His people” when they rejoice in Him.

The Lord’s people, of course, have much that grieves them, especially in their own wretched hearts. That does not give them any right to exclude themselves from seeking this joy in the Lord. They should be learning that spiritual skill of being able to sorrow and rejoice at the same time: sorrowing in themselves for their sin, rejoicing in Christ for His salvation. O what a mass of complexity the child of God is to the world, and what a mass of complexity he is to himself! But what a wonder he is in the eyes of the Lord who takes pleasure in his rejoicing!

These are high praises: “Let the high praises of God be in their mouth” (v6). Singing is a heavenly occupation. This is what heaven is busy with. In glory, their theme over and over is: “Worthy is the Lamb”. Their singing is unstoppable. The Psalm begins with praise and that is how it ends.

When the saints meet together “in the congregation” (v1), they sing. When they are alone, they sing: “Let them sing aloud upon their beds” (v5). From beginning to end, and all the way through, in public and in private, they are singing the praise of God. The more His people live as described in the Psalm, the more the Lord takes pleasure in them, who are not only His saints, but also His singers.

**3. The Lord takes pleasure in His people because they are soldiers.** They are sent out to wage war, to engage in battle for the Lord. From the middle of verse 6 onwards, we read of a two-edged sword being in their hand. They are soldiers, engaged in a holy war. Not only are they to have the Lord’s praises in their mouth; they are to have the Lord’s sword in their hand.

Clearly, it is a *spiritual* warfare that they are engaged in. Like the dancing, it is not physical, but spiritual. This sword is no carnal weapon, but a spiritual one. Paul told the Corinthians: “Though we walk in the flesh we do not war after the flesh” (2 Cor 10:3). Though we go up and down in this world in the body – that is the way he is using the word *flesh* – yet the war that we wage, the battles that we engage in, are not conducted in a fleshly, carnal, physical way. We war according to the Spirit. It is a spiritual warfare using spiritual weapons. “The weapons of our warfare”, Paul continued, “are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds” (v4).

Paul told the Ephesians: “We wrestle not against flesh and blood” (Eph 6:12). In our day, flesh and blood are so opposed to God’s people. In the land and in the professing Church, our fellow human beings are engaged in the most pernicious endeavours to dismantle anything left of Christianity. Using them as instruments are the principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, and the spiritual wickedness that is in high places. There

is a spiritual warfare between truth and error, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between the knowledge of God and atheism, between God's Word and everything set up against it.

Paul continued addressing the Corinthians: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor 10:5). It is not the people so much as the philosophies; it is not the teachers themselves, but the things they teach. It is their practices, their laws, their ideas, their attitudes, their blasphemies against the Lord and His anointed, as they plot against Him with their abominations. Casting down these imaginations that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God; that is what is in view in this warfare.

The education system and the media – so much of it is against God. All the proud things that men say against the Word of God, against Christianity, against real religion and the power of godliness – all of this is to be cast down, and every thought captured for Christ. Every thought! Not just every law on the statute book, not just every lesson in the schools, not just every activity of the people, but every thought of every person is to be held captive to the Lord Jesus Christ speaking in His Word. That is the aim of this warfare. Where the Lord sees His people caring about that and praying for that, and in their own calling doing what they can towards that, the Lord takes pleasure in them.

The Lord equips His soldiers with the two-edged sword in their hand, that is, in the hand of faith. This sword is the Word of God. Compared to physical weapons, it is "sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow" (Heb 4:12). It is "quick" – that is, it is living – and it is "powerful". When the Lord puts His Word into the hand of His people to go forth to battle, with Him as their Leader and Commander, the great Lord of hosts at their head, then they are a force, an army indeed. How He takes pleasure in them then! To illustrate, think of the two-edged sword like this: one edge dealing with lusts, and the other edge dealing with lies.

God's people see that sin and lust still dwell within them: "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (1 Jn 2:16). What can they do about it? Let them go to war against it, armed with the sword of God's Word. Let them cry for the Holy Spirit, and cry to Christ, to aid them to cut off this wickedness still at war with the Lord.

The Psalm says that they "execute vengeance upon the heathen" (v7) – that is, upon these heathenish, ungodly and idolatrous thoughts that still live within them; these heathenish desires and habits that they have brought with

them from their unconverted days. They are soldiers – they are to be at war; they are to execute vengeance upon these things. What kind of vengeance? Not vengeance upon those who have wronged them – that kind of vengeance belongs to the Lord and they leave it with Him. But as for vengeance upon their own sin, the Lord’s soldiers should never restrain themselves. In 2 Corinthians 7:11, “revenge” is included in godly sorrow. The Lord takes pleasure in His people when they avenge their own sins, using the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. When through grace they mortify their lusts, showing themselves no mercy, the Lord takes pleasure in them.

If we personalise the rest of verse 7, we find the Lord’s soldiers bringing “punishments upon the people”. Like Mansoul in John Bunyan’s *Holy War*, the Babylonians of indwelling sin come out of their hiding places and give the soul no rest. These sins that remain are not merely to be chastised, but to be punished to destruction. Nothing can be done to improve them; they will never learn. They can only be destroyed, using the Word.

The saints have their king sins, the ones that would rule over them, the sins which most easily beset them. As the Lord’s soldiers, they are to capture these leaders of sin; they are “to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron” (v8). Unbelief is a king sin in all the saints, but it is not the only one. Each saint has others as well. They all need to be bound, clamped with the chains of God’s Word. There are “nobles” among them – the sins that have been given a chief place, the sins that they have allowed, revelled in and were proud of. Now that they are the Lord’s soldiers, they would have these sins bound in fetters of iron. This pleases the Lord.

They are to “execute the judgement that is written” (v9). All sin has been judged already in the written Word of God; it has been condemned; the sentence upon it has been passed. The Lord’s people execute the sentence against their own sin. When the Word comes with power, it has a withering effect upon remaining sin. Then they resist the devil, who flees from them. Sin no more has dominion over them. The world no longer captivates them with its alluring attractions, nor silences them with its malicious enmity.

The Lord’s soldiers “have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts” (Gal 5:24). In Christ’s death, sin was dealt with. It was condemned when divine judgement was executed upon Him. That condemnation of sin in Christ’s death is a “judgement that is written” – the record of it is written down in inspired Scripture. The saints are to “execute the judgement” themselves by dying to sin – by mortifying the workings of the flesh, with its affections and lusts. They are to put sin away, motivated by the Saviour’s constraining love. How can sin live any longer, in the loving presence of Christ, who died for it?

Let the Lord's soldiers use the other edge of the sword against lies: the lies of heresy and error, of unbiblical worship and church government, and of anything else that does not conform to Christ's will revealed in His Word. According to Psalm 40, he who has the new song in his mouth also "respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies" (v4). The Lord gives them some understanding of His truth, and puts some zeal in their souls and some love for His name. Whether in a private way or in a more public capacity, they are to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints. They are to use the two-edged sword of Scripture against everything contrary to Christ's mind for His Church.

The sword is not to be aimed at people. Some of the Lord's people do not see eye to eye with us on various things. Where we see the root of the matter in people, we seek to maintain brotherly fellowship with them. But that should never blunt the edge of a most fervent witness against every deviation from the mind of Christ in His Word. That should be as sharp as ever against all the distortions that have entered into the doctrine, worship, government and practice of the professing Church. This is pleasing to the Lord.

This two-edged sword is to be used by the Lord's soldiers against anything that is unbiblical and mars the witness of biblical Christianity. What a witness was raised up in the Scottish Reformation! Was there anything like it? What a witness was made in the principles of the Second Reformation! This sword was firmly in the hand of those who in 1893 were involved in founding the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Again it was in the hand of those who remained faithful in 1989. It will have to remain in the hand of the saints, now and always – this year, next year, and on into the future. We look for a generation to be raised up that will have the sword in their hand, who will fearlessly and fervently use the sword of God's Word to maintain the truth.

Yes, it has to be done with the right spirit. But it has to be done, and the Lord takes pleasure in His people, not just because they are saints, not just because they are singers of His praise, but also because they are soldiers for His cause. At the end of the Psalm, we read, "This honour have all His saints". They should look upon it as their honour to maintain, defend, promote and fight for the truth. According to their different callings, they are to discern anything that undermines or contradicts the truth, and to have an answer to refute the objectors. When the Lord's soldiers are holding to the truth as it is in Jesus, they are decorated as it were with a medal of honour.

The Lord's pleasure in His people – how pleasant that should be to us! The Lord takes pleasure in His saintly people; the Lord takes pleasure in His singing people; and the Lord takes pleasure in His soldiering people. As a branch of the Church, and as a Synod, may we be such a people by His grace!

# Effectual Calling<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Introduction

*Rev D A Ross*

The subordinate standards of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland are based on the Word of God. They define accurately the doctrinal position of the Church since its inception. In these standards, effectual calling is clearly expressed.

*The Shorter Catechism* states, “Effectual calling is a work of God’s Spirit, whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, He doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the gospel”.

*The Larger Catechism* enlarges on this: “Effectual calling is the work of God’s almighty power and grace, whereby (out of His free and special love to His elect, and from nothing in them moving Him thereunto) He doth, in His accepted time, invite and draw them to Jesus Christ, by His Word and Spirit; savingly enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they (although in themselves dead in sin) are hereby made willing and able freely to answer His call, and to accept and embrace the grace offered and conveyed therein”.

*The Westminster Confession of Faith* develops this doctrine further by saying, “All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, He is pleased, in His appointed and accepted time effectually to call, by His Word and Spirit, out of a state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God; taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them an heart of flesh; renewing their will, and by His almighty power determining them to that which is good; and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ; yet so as they come most freely, being made willing by His grace.

“This effectual call is of God’s free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.”

It is a wonderful blessing to have the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. The gospel declares that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. It is a call from God to flee from His just wrath to Christ, who alone is able to save us from that wrath. The declaration of the gospel has no saving

<sup>1</sup>The first section of a paper given at the Theological Conference in 2015.

effect on some people, yet it has on others. We can therefore speak of an effectual call and one that is not effectual but it is the same gospel call that has a saving influence on some but not on others. In that all who hear the gospel are truly called to repent and believe, this call is described as *outward*. But the call is referred to as *inward* when the Holy Spirit applies it to awaken the sinner to a sense of sin and of his need of Christ, and enables him to repent of his sins and to receive and rest on Christ alone for salvation.

Much has been written about effectual calling. My intention is to cover more fully, yet in a limited way, most of the points already stated. We must first note the dreadful enmity of sinners to God and the necessity for God to make the sinner His friend (Jas 2:23). It is essential to go back to the beginning of God's revelation, in Genesis. One purpose of the Word of God is to make known the history of mankind. Adam our first father was made perfectly holy. God graciously made the covenant of works with him, so that his obedience to the law of God would be the ground of eternal life – for himself and for his posterity. Alas, it was otherwise. Adam's disobedience brought eternal ruin on himself and on us – spiritual death, temporal death and eternal death. Neither Adam or his posterity can reverse the sentence of death; even if we try our utmost to regain eternal life by our good works, the Scriptures assure us that it is all in vain: "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (Jer 13:23).

But all is by no means lost. The second Adam, the Son of God, came into this world to make atonement for sin and so deliver those sinners given to Him by the Father. This involved paying the full price for their salvation, through obedience to the law and justice of God. On this ground alone could they be saved. They must believe in Christ as the One who paid perfect obedience to the law and justice of God. Thus when the Philippian Jailer cried out to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).

On the basis of His atonement for sin, Christ as Prophet makes known, in the Scriptures, the good news of salvation. When the shepherds watched over their flocks outside Bethlehem, "the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Lk 2:10-11). Because of this rich provision, all are directed to repent and believe the gospel. This is the outward call which the Holy Spirit makes effectual to as many as have been given to Christ by the Father. The end result is that the sinner thus wrought upon receives Christ and rests on Him for salvation.

# Lamech<sup>1</sup>

*Henry Law*

Genesis 4:23,24. *Lamech said unto his wives, Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold.*

Here a mysterious person appears. Dark veils envelop him. He moves with shrouded features rapidly across the sacred page. His few words startle rather than inform. While the eye watches him, he vanishes. Before the ear can fully catch his voice, silence stills the scene.

But still he occupies a place on hallowed ground. He is a Bible character. The Spirit forbids him to be buried in oblivion, and gives him a station in the ever-living Word. Thus he stands as a warning beacon. Each pupil in the school of truth is called to learn from Lamech.

Let us then draw near with prayerful hearts. Holy Spirit, this is Thy record. Pour down explanatory rays. Shine on this dial which Thy wisdom raises. Bring light out of this obscurity. Unfold Thy gracious purpose. Give the right key, so that the casket may fly open. May every reader be wiser by the survey of these solemn features!

But let idle curiosity retire. Marvels are here indeed, but no details. No lengthened statements gratify a prying mind. No ingenuity can expand the brevity. No research can gain more than the words: "Adah and Zillah, Hear my voice; ye wives of Lamech, hearken unto my speech: for I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt. If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and seventyfold."

But the brief words are very sad. They plant us in a region enlivened by no sun, in a field without one flower, in a parched desert with no cooling stream, in a deep valley of terrific shadows. Each sound falls mournfully as the knell of death. The keynote of this dirge is sin. Vice bubbles up as from a fountain of iniquity. The whole prospect appals. There is not one bright spot. Hope cannot hope where all is hopeless. Pity may pity, but with much trembling. No one can leave Lamech and not sigh.

The wretched speaker is of the family of Cain. He is a vile descendant of a vile progenitor. When five generations had passed away, Cain seems to reappear in him. It may be well to approach him by marking the complexion of his times. They show the piteous state of men devoid of grace, in whom self is the worshipped idol and selfishness the master passion.

The house of Cain grew rapidly. They sparkled in nature's gifts. Their

<sup>1</sup>Taken, with editing, from Law's *Beacons of the Bible*.



energy was great. Their intellect was keen. Their contrivances were shrewd. But we look in vain for love of God or labours in His service. They planned and toiled indeed. But it was all for worldly interests – for comforts, for refinements. Extensive buildings spread. Inventions in the use of metals advanced. Distinction in music was reached. Cities arose. Works in brass and iron acquired fame. The harp and organ sounded in their feasts. They became a multitude great in earth's greatness – rich in earth's wealth, skilful in earth's skill, polished in earth's polish, luxurious in earth's luxuries. They were many. They ascended high steps of cultivation. But all their industry was the intensity of worldly-mindedness. God was not the moving principle. They were emphatically "of the world". This was their character: "he that is of the earth is earthly" (Jn 3:31).

Can we go on without a sigh! How pitifully foolish are those followers of the world! They may have gifts which glitter splendidly, but it is only for a speck of time. Their brightest sun soon sets in blackest night. Their joys are no true joys while they remain, but their continuance is a fleeting dream. Their flowers have many a thorn and they fade in the plucking. Their fruitless blossoms soon decay.

Listen: why is life yours? Why are you called to tread this earth? Why are immortal spirits planted in your breasts? Why do grand faculties raise you as creation's lords? It has been nobly said: "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him for ever". Shall then all your time and means and powers and energies be frittered in the sordid work of serving time and gratifying self? Awake, arise, renounce such folly. Grovel not in such mire. Study the glorious truths of God's most glorious Word. Be one with Christ. Live as citizens of the bright world. Walk with God. Join the high company of His sons. Shine as lights in this world. Work for eternity. In everything you do, seek first the heavenly kingdom, the good of men, the glory of the Lord. Take as your chart the faithful saying: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 Jn 2:15).

When we contemplate man's most brilliant and successful efforts – the books in which high genius shines, the stately buildings, the almost-living statue and other monuments of splendid minds – admiration is turned to mourning by the reflection, Was this designed to magnify the Lord? "Whose is this image and superscription?" It avails nothing to have loud praise where we are not, if we have torment where we are. Many who are crowned as great and glorious here may awake to "shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan 12:2). The old world, with all its ingenuities, ripened for ruin. They "knew not until the flood came, and took them all away" (Mt 24:39).

Such were the times of Lamech. Now hear his voice. He speaks to his wives. But why are they two? Is God's ordinance thus wide? Is double fellowship permitted by the sacred rite of marriage? Far otherwise. Consider its intention. God in His tender mercy plans sweetest solace. Therefore He places one of man's nature by his side – to be a second self, a sharer of happiness, a partner in distress, another heart to which each care may be unbosomed, whose love may make life's journey smooth, whose sympathy may render burdens light, who may diminish loads and double joys, who may meet tear with tear and smile with smile, who may be intertwined in every fellowship until death breaks the bond. Intent and gracious thus to multiply delights, God brought to man “an help meet for him” – always near to minister and help (Gen 2:18).

Thus the ordinance grants but one wife. God gives not Eves, but Eve. Jesus adds His authoritative comment: “For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh” (Mt 19:5,6). No sentence can be more explicit. Two, not many, shall be one. But the design is frustrated when a husband joins himself to more than one. Oneness is then broken into diverse parts. Affections which should have one channel diverge into distracting streams. Marriage is no more godly union, but confusion. It is not love, but jealousy. The sweetest type of Christ and His one spouse, the Church, is debased into dissoluteness.

Lamech disregards God's will. His reckless passions burst the wise restraint. Greedily he wallows in licentiousness, and by his lusts degrades the hallowed oneness. Thus he contemns the original law. It is not said that he was the first to perpetrate this sin. But the first record of it claims his name. No polygamist in history precedes him. In sacred annals he stands at the head of a new crime.

But did it end in him? Evil, once introduced, spreads as a flame amid dry stubble. The weed, although rooted up, can hardly be eradicated. Through latest ages the fruit may still spring up. Hence this domestic misery pollutes not only wilds of savage life, but families of grace. Even David strayed in this miry path.

In pity to others, if not to yourself, mortify each rising sin. By yielding you may found a pyramid of misery, and earn the ignoble fame of “Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin”. Future generations may trace their wretchedness to your example. Many may wish that you had never lived. Lost souls may loathe you as paving their road of ruin.

Lamech sinks into blacker guilt. He next appears confessedly a murderer. He openly proclaims, “I have slain a man”. True it may be that no immediate

link joins his offences. But true it is that sin is always a spreading plague. One fault indulged soon swells into a deepening torrent and widens into a boundless sea. One little leak may sink the noblest ship. One little spark may carry fiery fury to immense expanse. To blind and harden is a property of sin. It soon obscures the light; then hideousness does not frighten, and a monster does not seem monstrous. Its contact blunts the edge of conscience; and he who said not long before: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" now perpetrates the very deed and blushes not.

See this in Lamech. He tramples down the marriage law. Then human blood pollutes his hands. He goes literally in the very "way of Cain". Let it be granted that no perceptible connection unites these branches of transgression. But let it be maintained that sin will not live single. It quickly propagates and fearfully extends.

Of the provoking cause and of the sad details, history does not speak. Until the great day shall reveal all secret things, we can only know that he slew a man. Until all deeds are published to an assembled world, the bare fact only can be seen: like Cain, he was a murderer.

Perhaps horror runs through your heart at this terrific sound. You sigh, How could this be? Where was his conscience? Was human feeling utterly extinct? How could the thought arise? How could it be cherished? How could the hand be raised? How could he look on the victim and not spare it?

It is well to shudder at such sinfulness of sin. But in your great loathing turn your eye inward. Mark what passions lurk in your own breast. See what monsters nestle in the chambers of your imagery. There are dormant vipers there. Temptation and opportunity would animate them into activity. Your heart holds seeds of all iniquity. True, you turn pale at the thought of murder. Once David felt the like abhorrence. True, the ripe crime does not pollute you. But what is the ember from which this flame bursts forth? Is it not anger? Our Lord's teaching traces these floods of evil to their secret source. Anger conceived, retained, fostered, fanned soon becomes rage. Rage flares into fury. Fury maddens into recklessness. Recklessness is blind to consequence.

Thus then you may possess the moving cause without advancing to the terrific deed. God's eye may see all full-blown evil in your embryo thoughts. Therefore in all hatred of another's crime, the gracious man will hate himself the most. He will confess that nature always tends to sin. He will ascribe his guiltless walk to screening grace and to his guardian God. Lamech cries, Kill every sinful motion when it first stirs. It will soon lead to nether-millstone hardness. It may provoke the hopeless doom, "Let him alone". It may bring down the bitterest curse of a "reprobate mind".

He seems to have rolled quickly down into this quagmire. He speaks of this murder, but with no distress or pain or penitence or shame. Unblushingly he trumpets forth his deed. Unfeelingly he shows his blood-stained hands, as if they were some trophy of illustrious act.

When conscience is thus seared, where is the fiend more vile than man? Earth may still be his home, but hell is within. Lamech is a proof of this. His heart next shows abandoned desperation. He abuses God's long-suffering. He takes it as a weapon to fight the more against Him. Because God is patient, he becomes more sinful. Divine goodness, as the sun shining on a putrid mass, draws out its vileness. Cain for a while had found a respite. He was not cast down instantly into the pit. Avenging lightnings did not drive him headlong to his bed of fire. Life was prolonged. Indeed a special shield was for a season spread around him. This patience on the part of God fomented the basest thoughts in Lamech. He pleads this case. His distorting mind concludes that he was less in crime than his progenitor. He dreams the beguiling dream: if Cain were spared, surely I shall be so much more; if he received protection, surely greater impunity is my due. "If Cain shall be avenged sevenfold, truly Lamech seventy and sevenfold."

All this is very black. This conduct touches the last confines of wickedness. How different are hearts broken by the Spirit! Grace always hangs a lowly head, wails in dust and ashes, sees the inward blackness and in its holiest actings still laments, "Sinners, of whom I am chief".

But it is nature's base propensity to view self in a blinding mirror. Keen to see others' faults, it has no eye for its own iniquities. Sightless as to self, it misreads the mind of God. From the sweet flower of forbearance, it extracts the direst poison. God spares in mercy. This tender goodness is abused, as if He neither saw nor cared. The wrath withheld is counted as indifference. The hand which smites not is despised as powerless. Reprieve is construed to be acquittal. Execution delayed is presumed on as impunity. Patience, the gentle guide to penitence, is misused to hard indifference. The lengthened space is filled, not with amendments, but with more vile transgressions. Reluctance to take vengeance is insulted, as license to prolong iniquity. The Spirit's warning is verified: "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Ecc 8:11).

Thus Lamech heaped up wrath against the day of wrath. Thus too other men of his dark days sinned with presumptuous hand. Eliphaz depicts their conduct and their end. "Thou sayest, How doth God know? Can He judge through the dark cloud? Hast thou marked the old way which wicked men have trodden, which were cut down out of time, whose foundation was over-

flown with a flood: which said unto God, Depart from us: and what can the Almighty do for them?" (Job 22:13-17).

Where is baseness like the baseness of thus trampling on mercy? Its language is, Because God is good, I will be viler yet; because He grants me longer space, I will the more defy Him. Where is folly like unto this folly? It misinterprets God's loveliest attribute. It draws aggravated guilt out of these wells of grace. Where is madness like unto this madness? It rushes on the thick bosses of Almighty wrath. It adds fury to the penal flames. It sharpens the gnawing of the deathless worm. For though avenging feet may advance slowly, avenging hands will strike at last more heavily.

O despisers, tremble and turn. Fall low on knees of penitence. Marvel that you yet live. Bless God that you may yet repent and pray. Give thanks that Christ yet offers pardon. But do not delay another moment. Remember Lamech, and do not perish.

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## Donald Gunn<sup>1</sup>

*Rev J S Sinclair*

**T**he aged trees of righteousness are being cut down one by one throughout the country, and there is much need that importunate prayer would ascend to the God of Israel for the filling of the breaches, so that His cause might be strengthened and His name glorified in the land.

On this occasion, we notice with much sorrow the death of Donald Gunn, Halkirk, Caithness, who passed away on 20 April 1902. He had reached the ripe age of 82 and was much esteemed as a man of deep and fervent piety. He was born in 1820 in Shurrery, in the parish of Reay, Caithness, and enjoyed for many years the privilege of the gracious and faithful ministry of the honoured Rev Finlay Cook, who was settled in Reay in 1835. His coming was hailed with delight "by the Lord's people in that parish and surrounding districts. Worthy Janet Macleod, Sandside, in the fulness of her heart lifted up her hands and exclaimed, 'Lord, bless the whole earth'."<sup>2</sup>

The subject of this obituary was brought to the saving knowledge of the truth under Mr Cook's ministry. Warm was the love he ever cherished for the memory of that worthy minister; and he seldom engaged in conversation on a spiritual topic without quoting some remark by Mr Cook in tones of the

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted, with editing, from *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 7. Volumes 1-13 of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* have all been reprinted in recent years.

<sup>2</sup>Alexander Auld, *Ministers and Men of the Far North*, (Free Presbyterian Publications, 1956 reprint, p 79). It has again been reprinted by the same publishers, in a reset edition.

deepest affection and reverence, almost always describing him as “the man of God”.

Mr Gunn was a sheep manager and was for a time in the parish of Dunnet. There he sat under Rev David Campbell of the Free Church, an able minister of Christ, and a faithful witness for the truth in his day. Mr Campbell was a watchman on Zion’s walls, who gave no uncertain sound on the errors of the times, and was strongly opposed to the delusive Union movement which has culminated in the formation of the United Free Church.

Mr Gunn was a man of more than average mental power and took an intelligent interest in all the controversies which agitated Church and state in his time. His grasp of any subject he studied was clear and comprehensive, and he could express his views in language of great point and power. He had a profound admiration for Rev John Kennedy, Dingwall – as indeed had all right-minded people who knew that eminent preacher – and read with much appreciation his articles on the Union controversy.

Mr Gunn deeply deplored the backsliding of the majority in the Free Church and, when the well-known Declaratory Act was passed, he cordially supported the protesting minority and joined without delay those who formed the Free Presbyterian Church. He had dark views of the state of true religion throughout the land, and in this connection often read the eighth chapter of the prophet Amos.

As to his personal piety it may be said that Mr Gunn was one who had deep and solemn views of eternity and divine things. A friend well writes: “He greatly feared resting in a profession of religion without knowing the reality of it. ‘Thousands,’ he would say, ‘in this day, are entering eternity with a lie in their right hand. O eternity, eternity, five minutes of the realisation of it would be enough to unhinge the strongest reason.’” While we heard him on one occasion acknowledging that he remembered the time when he took heaven and earth to witness that Christ was his choice and portion, he was yet a man subject to great inward conflicts and temptations. He was not permitted to remain long in a self-complacent frame of mind, but was kept a lively wrestler at the throne of grace. To use an expression of his own about others, “No rust was allowed to lie on his soul”.

In such seasons of soul trouble, however, he was not easily comforted. He would sometimes exclaim, “Though all the Christians in Scotland should tell me I have an interest in Christ, I would not believe it. Only the Spirit of God can make me believe it by shining on the page of the Word.” His life was a long conflict; yet at eventide there was light, and his last days were composed and even bright. It is worthy of note, as coming from one who was led to examine all matters in the light of eternity, that he said to a friend on his

deathbed, that whatever other doubts and fears he had, he had none as to the step of separation for the truth taken in 1893.

Mr Gunn, though a man of commanding presence and ability, was very diffident as to taking part in public worship, yet latterly, when circumstances called for it, he assisted in the conduct of the meetings in Halkirk to the great satisfaction of the people. He was much concerned about the cause of truth in the district, and it gave him much satisfaction when a minister was recently settled there.

At the Friday fellowship meeting, on the last communion occasion, he gave out the question, which was based on 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; and the words are indicative of the deep spiritual line of thought which characterised his exercises: "Now He which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts". He desired marks of the persons described by the Apostle. Perhaps we should not omit noting that Mr Gunn, though a man of deep and marked experience of the power of the truth, deprecated the tendency of speakers at fellowship meetings sometimes to lay down too hard and fast lines as to the first dealings of the Lord with the souls of His people.

A petition of his in prayer was: "O Eternal Love, let the river of life flow through our souls"; and another: "Leave us not like the dead fish that are carried down the stream of iniquity, but make us like the living fish that swim against it".

It is only a few months since his mother-in-law, Mrs Hobkirk, to whom he was affectionately united in the Lord, died at a very advanced age, and now he has followed her, as we firmly believe, to the everlasting rest that remains to the people of God. He leaves a widow and family, with whom much sympathy is felt.

"Help, Lord, because the godly man doth daily fade away;  
And from among the sons of men, the faithful do decay" (Ps 12:1).

There is no surer refuge, when the enemy distresses us, than renouncing ourselves, to profess the only name of Christ Jesus, who died for our sins and rose again for our justification. For if the enemy shall say, We have sinned; our answer is, Christ has died for us, yea is risen again, yea is ascended into heaven, etc. If he say we lack the righteousness of the law, we must answer, Christ has fulfilled the law, that we by Him might be made the righteousness of God. If he say we are in nature corrupt and therefore both unworthy and unfit for the kingdom of heaven, we must answer him with the words of Christ Himself, For their sakes have I sanctified Myself.

*Richard Greenham*

Self-suspecting is a great preservative from perdition, whereas self-confidence is a sad prognostic of apostasy.

*Andrew Gray*

# The Spirit and the Heart's Desires<sup>1</sup>

*C R Vaughan*

The Spirit makes intercession for God's people and teaches them to pray as they ought, by enkindling and controlling the desires of the heart. Prayer is the offering up of our desires unto God, and the nature and the force of the prayer will be determined by the nature and the energy of the desires embodied in it. If the desires are selfish, the prayer will be selfish; if the desires are holy, the prayer will be holy; if the desires are feeble, the prayer will be feeble; and if the desires are strong and intense, the prayer will have the same characteristics.

It is obvious then that the desires must be controlled, if the prayer is to be regulated rightly. Nothing can more powerfully illustrate the necessity for the Spirit as an intercessor, to indite our petitions for us, than this essential fact in the nature of prayer. The human heart is full of evil; its affections have been corrupted by sin; and no honest desire after a holy salvation can spring up in the heart unless the Holy Spirit gives it.

No special influence of the Spirit is needed to make people willing to escape the *penalty* of sin except perhaps in cases of extraordinary depravity; the natural principles of hope and fear will ensure that result. Selfishness will determine desire in all matters in which self is concerned, whether in view of danger or the bitter power in sin itself to create sorrow. A man may be terribly oppressed by some sin, by the power of a destructive, sinful habit or by the strength of an evil impulse, and yet be purely selfish in it. He is oppressed because he feels he is injured by it; yet that feeling of dread towards his sin may have no more moral merit in it than someone's anxiety to be rid of toothache or neuralgia.

A man may selfishly desire to be holy, not because he likes it – for if he likes it he himself is holy and not selfish – but because holiness is a condition for getting to heaven, and he knows that he cannot see God without it. This fact is enough to make us all pause and ponder the state of our hearts with intense self-scrutiny. Even the most mature of regenerate souls may well be startled into watchfulness when the deceitfulness of the heart is brought into remembrance.

Are our desires after the salvation of God what they ought to be? Are our prayers, after all, only embodiments of selfishness? If not altogether so, may there not be an element of selfishness in them, which may possibly account, in part at least, for so many defeats in prayer? May not our very desire for

<sup>1</sup>An edited extract from Vaughan's *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit*.



the salvation of sinners be tainted with selfishness, as when we desire it to gratify a partisan attachment to our own church? If our desires are substantially sound, are they truly regulated in degree? Are they strong enough to overcome our reluctance, our laziness, our love of money, our pride, our resentments, our love of ease and self-indulgence?

These questions may make us set more value on the Spirit as an intercessor; for He can remove all defects in our desires, and thus elevate the character and increase the power of our prayers. It is right that we should seek with all earnestness our own salvation; the desire to escape the penalty of sin is a desire altogether legitimate, and the distinct consciousness of such a desire by no means discounts the integrity of our wish to be saved. But is this the only reason why we seek for grace? Is there not something in the very essence of sin, a criminality in its nature, that – independent of its penal hazards – would make every right heart revolt at sin and rejoice to be delivered from it?

But surely, however trying the perplexity created by the effort to discriminate aright the mixture of motives in our religious experience, it is a matter of infinite comfort to know that the Spirit in His intercessory work takes charge of the desires of His people, and ensures so much of a pure element in them as to make their prayers effective. He regulates the degrees as well as the nature of these desires. And those groanings which cannot be uttered are simply the strong yearnings of a regenerate soul after spiritual advancement, for which it longs intensely, although it cannot give adequate expression to the desire, or adequate description to the blessings desired.

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## Book Reviews<sup>1</sup>

*Jewels from John Newton, Daily Readings from the Works of John Newton*, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 384 pages, £15.50.

As Miller Ferrie, the compiler of these “jewels”, states in the very helpful Preface, “the material included in this book is largely drawn from Newton’s prolific correspondence, and covers a wide variety of topics. Although written more than two hundred years ago, it remains as relevant and edifying as ever.”

Following the Preface, there is a brief outline of John Newton’s life (1725-1807), who is well described as “a trophy of God’s grace”, being transformed “from a blasphemous slave trader to a much-loved minister of the gospel”.

<sup>1</sup>All the books reviewed here are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom, as are all Ryle’s volumes published by the Banner of Truth that are referred to in the second review.

His homely letters and other writings “have been a source of strength and comfort to Christian believers for centuries”. The daily readings, which are each contained within a page, are all based on a portion of Scripture and clearly and simply laid out. The source of the extracts is given at the foot of each page.

Over the years, daily readings from various well-known preachers have appeared in print and one may ask what this present volume has to offer. Perhaps the answer to this is best summed up by Miller Ferrie herself: “I have been greatly blessed by the writings of John Newton and for this reason desired to put together a book of daily devotional readings selected from his *Works*. What impresses me about this man is his honesty in readily admitting his struggles, sinfulness and failures. This aspect of his writings has been an encouragement to me personally, for it gave me the assurance that my own daily battles and humiliations are not unique. In addition, he repeatedly reminds his readers of God’s trustworthiness, no matter what circumstances they might be facing.”

An example of this is seen in some comments on the words, “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto Him ye shall hearken” (Deut 18:15): “The Lord says, ‘This is My beloved Son, hear Him’. If you approve Him, He is yours. If you are still perplexed with doubts, they are owing to the weakness of your faith. But there are means appointed for the growth of faith. Wait patiently upon the Lord in the use of those means and you shall find He has not bid you seek His face in vain. . . . Allowances must be made for the effects of constitution and temperament. Some sincere persons are beset and followed, through life, with distressing temptations. But, in general, simplicity and obedience lead to assurance.”

For those who do not possess the *Works* or even a volume of his letters, those *Jewels* would provide an excellent introduction to his writings.

(Rev) *W A Weale*

***Light from Old Times, Protestant Facts and Men***, by J C Ryle, published by the Banner of Truth Trust, hardback, 427 pages, £15.00.

John Charles Ryle (1816-1900) was one of the most influential Evangelical clergymen of the nineteenth century. After serving several Anglican parishes in Suffolk he became the first Bishop of Liverpool in 1880. The current year marks the two-hundredth anniversary of Ryle’s birth and the Banner of Truth are to be congratulated for reprinting several of his major works in a retype-set, uniform edition.<sup>2</sup> In addition, Rev Iain Murray has written a new biography<sup>2</sup> These currently include the following classic volumes of Ryle: *Holiness, Knots Untied, Old Paths, Practical Religion* and his seven volume *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*.

of Ryle, published by the Banner of Truth, and the same publishers have announced that later this year they are to print Ryle's autobiography, covering the first 45 years of his life.<sup>3</sup>

*Light from Old Times*, as Andrew Atherstone points out in his foreword to this new edition, is "designed to whet our appetites for Reformation and Puritan theology" (p viii). This volume, in common with several of Ryle's other major works is a miscellaneous collection of articles and addresses, composed over several decades, for different audiences. As such there is inevitably a little unevenness in some places. The earliest of the chapters dates from 1853, while the last paper to be written was that on John Wycliffe in May 1884 and was an address commemorating the quincentenary of the death of the proto-reformer.

After the article on Wycliffe, the next 190 pages are taken up with six chapters that formed an earlier publication of the Banner of Truth Trust, *Five English Reformers*, first published in 1960; it begins with a chapter on "Why were our Reformers burned?" This is followed by biographical sketches of English martyrs: John Rodgers, John Hooper, Rowland Taylor, Hugh Latimer, John Bradford and Nicholas Ridley. When this volume was reprinted in 1982 the editor of *The Free Presbyterian Magazine*, Rev D B Macleod, observed, "This further reprint is most timely in view of the proposed visit of the Pope to this country. From it we learn how the Roman Catholic Church dealt with those who differed from her in the past, and how she would deal with those she calls heretics, if power were ever again given to her. We warmly commend these sketches to our readers."<sup>4</sup>

The remainder of the volume contains five further chapters, three of which provide biographical sketches of Puritans: Samuel Ward, Richard Baxter and William Gurnall. The remaining two chapters provide accounts of Archbishop Laud's evil influence on the Church of England<sup>5</sup> and that of the Seven Bishops who went to the Tower of London in the reign of James II rather than agree to a Declaration of Indulgence that, under a mask of giving liberty

<sup>3</sup>Iain Murray's biography is titled *Prepared to Stand Alone*. The Ryle autobiography will be a scholarly edition produced from the original manuscript and edited by Andrew Atherstone of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. The volume will also include many rare photographs of Ryle from the family album. A version of the autobiography was published in 1975 from a third-hand copy of the original, *J C Ryle: A Self Portrait*, Reiner Publications, edited by Peter Toon, with a biographical postscript of his later life by Michael J Smout.

<sup>4</sup>*Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 87, p 28 (January 1982).

<sup>5</sup>Ryle writes regarding William Laud: "I hold that, wittingly or unwittingly, meaningly or unmeaningly, intentionally or unintentionally, Laud did more to harm the Church of England than any other Churchman that ever lived. He inflicted a wound that will never be healed; he worked mischief that will never be repaired" (p 226).

to Nonconformists, would have given freedom to Roman Catholic worship.<sup>6</sup> As Dr Atherstone observes, “Ryle believed that one of the reasons so many congregations drift from their Evangelical foundations is their sheer ignorance of Christian history, and their lack of understanding of the major doctrinal controversies and why they matter” (p ix).

The volume contains many fine statements which one wishes that an Anglican bishop would make today. Ryle writes, “The Romish doctrine of the real presence, if pursued to its legitimate consequences, obscures every leading doctrine of the gospel, and damages and interferes with the whole system of Christ’s truth. Grant for a moment that the Lord’s Supper is a sacrifice, and not a sacrament; grant that every time the words of consecration are used, the natural body and blood of Christ are present on the Communion table under the forms of bread and wine; grant that everyone who eats that consecrated bread and drinks that consecrated wine does really eat and drink the body and blood of Christ; grant for a moment these things, and then see what momentous consequences result from these premises. You spoil the blessed doctrine of Christ’s finished work when He died on the cross. A sacrifice that needs to be repeated is not a perfect and complete thing. You spoil the priestly office of Christ” (pp 38-39).

Regarding the necessity of episcopal ordination in order to attain ministerial status, Ryle makes the following statement, “The divine right of episcopacy, to the exclusion of all other forms of church government, and the absolute necessity of episcopal ordination to make a right minister of Christ, are positions that cannot be established from Scripture” (p 314).

The re-typeset Ryle volumes are of the highest quality. The publishers have added a number of footnotes to the present volume which are identified by the letter P; almost all of them seek to explain archaisms in Ryle’s citations. However, one note which seems to deny that the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by Paul (p 177) would best be deleted if this volume is reprinted.

When Ryle died in June 1900, *The Free Presbyterian Magazine* of the following month carried a note on his passing by the editor, Rev James S Sinclair: “The deceased was long and favourably known as an able champion of the Evangelical faith. His departure deprives the Bishop’s bench of the English Church almost of its last defence and ornament. . . . He was the penman of many sound and earnest tracts, as well as more laborious expository works. His *Christian Leaders of the Last Century*<sup>7</sup> is a fine work, introducing the reader to the goodly fellowship of Toplady, Romaine, Hervey, Grimshaw,

<sup>6</sup>One lesson Ryle draws from this is the “duty of never allowing the government of this great country to be placed in the hands of a papist” (p 388).

<sup>7</sup>The Banner of Truth Trust currently has this volume also in print.

and other heroes of the faith, who fought the good fight one hundred and fifty years ago. Whatever defects and errors attach to the Church of England, it were mere folly to deny that Christ has signally adorned it from age to age with shining examples of true Christianity.”<sup>8</sup>

While there are comments in the volume from which Free Presbyterians will demur, such as Ryle’s unwillingness to exclude High and Broad Churchmen from the Anglican Communion, this book is classic J C Ryle material and we heartily commend it to our readers.

Roy Middleton

*Meditations on the Lord’s Supper*, by John Willison, published by Reformation Press, paperback, 72 pages, £5.25.

In reading this beautiful little book, taken from Willison’s *Works*, the reviewer found more than once that while he “was musing the fire burned”. The meditations are written in the first person, expressing John Willison’s own desires and prayers. The effect is to transplant these desires and words into the reader’s mind. While he ascends high in earnest breathings and longings of soul after Christ and holiness, yet it is from the depths of felt depravity and disability. The poor soul conscious of its own spiritual weakness and unworthiness for the holy ordinance of the Lord’s Supper finds a sympathetic frame of spirit throughout. In one place he writes, “O Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof; the house is so ruinous, smoky and defiled, Thou hast not a fit place where to lay Thy head with me. But, since Thou didst not disdain to lie in a manger among beasts, nor to dine with Simon the leper, O come and furnish the house, prepare an upper room in my soul, and there abide and keep the Passover with me!”

The inescapable conclusion in reading the book is that the godly in Willison’s day had a view of the solemnity and holiness of the sacrament rarely found among us now. He asks, “O whither am I going? The place is holy, the table is holy, the bread I am to eat is holy, the cup I am to drink is holy, and God, who is infinitely holy, is terrible from His holy places.” A dread of formality is also apparent, and the frequent yearning desire is for the presence of Christ Himself at His own table: “Lord, come to the feast, for it will be a dead and heartless feast if Thou be absent. Sit Thou at the head of the table, carve everyone their portion, and give me a Benjamin’s mess – if it be Thy will – that my soul may be satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth may praise thee with joyful lips.”

The *Meditations* also describe spiritual exercises suitable to the period after partaking of the sacrament. Often the author breathes out his wish for a blessing to follow, conscious of the fresh obligation to holiness of life.

<sup>8</sup>*Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol 5, pp 118-119 (July 1900).

Thus we read, “Seeing then that I have eaten of Christ’s meat, O that I may travel a good journey and work a good turn for Christ in the strength of it! O that I may be a diligent and faithful servant to so good a Master! Lord I have eaten of Thy bread; let me never lift up the heel against Thee.”

The book begins with those meditations which are suited to preparation for the sacrament, and proceeds to those which are concerned with the period after partaking. It closes with Willison’s useful suggestions on making personal covenants with God.

In this book readers will find the writings of one of the outstanding Scottish divines at their spiritual and experimental best. We most willingly recommend it to our people. (Rev) I D MacDonald

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## Protestant View

### The Pope and Islam

The Pope has stated in an interview with *La Croix*, a French Roman Catholic newspaper, that the murderous campaign being waged by ISIS, could be compared to the call of Christ to evangelise the nations. He stated, “It is true that the idea of conquest is inherent in the soul of Islam. However, it is also possible to interpret the objective in Matthew’s Gospel, where Jesus sends His disciples to all nations, in terms of the same idea of conquest.” Such language may seem astounding, yet this fork-tongued blasphemy is characteristic of Rome and especially of the present pontiff, who seems determined to send out a conciliatory message towards Islam, to further the papacy’s long-term goal of ruling over all world religions. AWM

### Persecution in Mexico

It is also reported that Protestants are suffering an increasing level of persecution in Mexico, where numbers are converting from Romanism to Evangelical Christianity throughout the country. The unwillingness of Protestants to participate in semi-pagan Romanist festivals, in which whole communities celebrate mass and then spend days in drunken reverie, has made them targets of persecution which often turns violent. Banishment is not an uncommon sanction along with beatings; in one community 50 Evangelicals have recently returned after a five-year-long exile, but they had to pay a fine in order to be allowed home.

“It is time that the Mexican government provides justice and protection for victims of religious persecution”, said Jeff King, president of International Christian Concern, in a statement. “A slow wave of religious persecution

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has been sweeping across Mexico, and the culture of corruption and lack of accountability that surrounds religious freedom cases needs to end.” *AWM*

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## Notes and Comments

### The EU Referendum

In answer, we think, to the prayers of many of His people in Britain, the Lord gave the “Leave” vote a small and unexpected majority in the EU Referendum in June. The EU has been noted for its deceitfulness and corruption over a long period of time, and has been a powerful instrument in the hand of Satan for opposing and weakening the Christian influence in Britain. The dismay and political turmoil arising from the vote has been remarkable. Our hope and prayer now is that the political change may be accompanied by a spiritual one, especially among the working classes in northern England, who have unexpectedly turned against the EU and against their former political guides. O, that they might turn to the Lord!

*DWBS*

### Drunkenness in Scotland

“Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Prov 20:1). So said the inspired wise man Solomon.

Disquieting reports reveal that, after some years of decreasing consumption, alcohol intake in Scotland has risen sharply over the last two years relative to the rest of the UK. One Government report states that Scots have increased their consumption of alcohol for the second year in a row. NHS Health Scotland is blaming this trend on more drink being bought in supermarkets and off-licences, where alcohol costs less. This sector now has 74% of total sales – indicating a greater number of “at home” drinkers. Total sales of alcohol per head were 20% higher in Scotland than in England and Wales in 2015, the equivalent of each adult in Scotland consuming 477 pints of beer, 41 bottles of vodka or 116 bottles of wine. Off-licence sales of vodka per person in Scotland were estimated at more than double the level south of the border.

An earlier report in December 2014 appeared more optimistic, finding alcohol consumption in Scotland had fallen by the equivalent of 38 million pints of beer a year since 2009. The decline, they thought, was linked to the crash of the economy and the scrapping of multi-buy deals but, last year, the NHS said alcohol sales had risen to the startling figures quoted above.

In recent years, the Scottish Government has tried to tackle Scotland’s alcohol problem by reducing the legal limit for drivers from 80mg to 50mg

of alcohol in every 100ml of blood, meaning that an average male driving his car would be limited to just under a pint of beer or one large glass of wine. The limit in England and Wales remains at 80mg. This reduction does not really deal with the issue of drinking at home, although it is hoped it will reduce road accidents.

The Scottish Government's plans to introduce a minimum price for a unit of alcohol, passed in 2012, were challenged by the Scotch Whisky Association and there followed a row with the European Union over the legislation. Under the plans for a minimum price of 50p per unit, the cheapest bottle of wine (9.4 units of alcohol) would be £4.69 and a 70cl bottle of whisky could not be sold for less than £14.

Dr Mark Robinson, a senior manager at NHS Health Scotland, said the reversal in declining alcohol sales was "concerning". He connects the price of alcohol with its consumption: "Between 2009 and 2013, the average price of alcohol increased and consumption decreased. Since 2013, the average price has flattened and consumption has increased." He adds, "Higher levels of alcohol consumption result in higher levels of alcohol-related harm and these present a substantial public health and economic cost to Scotland".

He believes that reducing the availability of low-priced, high-strength alcohol is the most effective way of reducing alcohol-related health issues, while Public Health Minister Michael Matheson claims minimum pricing is needed because cheap drink is the "real source of Scotland's alcohol problem". He added: "Minimum pricing will save hundreds of lives, prevent thousands of hospital admissions, reduce crime and save the public purse millions in dealing with the consequences of alcohol misuse". The Scottish Government states that, on average, 22 people a week die in Scotland due to alcohol-related illnesses or accidents.

An added dimension to the increase in drunkenness was highlighted by a recent report in *The Press and Journal* newspaper. It revealed how drink-related incidents on flights and at airports have caused havoc for passengers and crew. Several hundred passengers have been arrested over the last two years for violent conduct, including head butting, attempting to open aircraft doors and even smashing the window of a plane. Several flights have been disrupted by drunken behaviour with at least one plane being diverted to another country, where police were called to deal with a group who were particularly uncontrollable.

Government and police do have a great responsibility for Scotland's welfare, but ultimately it is the Lord alone who can deal with this addiction. Dr Robinson and others appear to focus on the secular and physical aspects of the epidemic on society (and we must not minimise these, including the anguish



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alcoholism causes in families). However, they seem not to acknowledge that the greatest harm is spiritual. There is little or no mention of the *sin* of drunkenness. It does harm society and the physical health of the individual, but it is a sin, against God, “He that sinneth against Me wrongeth his own soul” (Prov 8:36). We must be convinced of our sin and turn to the Saviour of lost sinners for forgiveness. The Word of God says, “Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit” (Eph 5:18). The Holy Spirit’s work is vital to convince of this and other sins and to give strength to overcome them. How we need to pray for Him to come to our land to make us a “sober” people, not gratifying sinful fleshly desires! *KHM*

### **Rogue Waves**

A rogue wave is one whose height is more than twice the average height of the waves around it. Such waves may be very dangerous to shipping because they often appear without warning and can exert a force far beyond what the ship was built to withstand. The loss, and even complete disappearance, of several ships has been attributed to rogue waves.

Mariners have been reporting such waves for centuries, but the scientific community was remarkably slow to accept their existence. This was because the standard mathematical model used for predicting wave height suggested that rogue waves would be exceedingly rare, occurring perhaps only once in thousands of years. In 1826, an eminent French naval officer who reported that he had seen a wave 100 feet high in the Indian Ocean was publicly ridiculed by the French prime minister, himself a physicist.

This negative opinion persisted as late as the 1990s, and textbooks on oceanography were silent on the existence of rogue waves. Eventually, in 1995, a wave-measuring device on the Draupner oil-platform in the North Sea recorded a 60-foot rogue wave, three times as high as its neighbours, and the existence of rogue waves was at last generally conceded. Mathematical models for rogue waves have now been derived.

The subject shows that the scientific community can be dogmatic, even abusively so, and yet entirely wrong. The application of this to the theory of Evolution is obvious. *DWBS*

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## **Church Information**

### **Theological Conference**

This year’s Theological Conference will be held, God willing, in Inverness, on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 25 and 26, with Rev J R Tallach as chairman. It is expected that the following papers will be read, all in public:

**John Love in London**

*Mr Roy Middleton*

**Spiritual Life**

*Rev Roderick Macleod*

**The Fossil Record and the Biblical Record**

*Dr A H Ross*

**Prayer**

*Rev Donald Macdonald*

**John Hooper – Protestant Martyr**

*Rev K M Watkins*

*(Rev) J R Tallach, Convener, Training of the Ministry Committee*

### **Meetings of Presbytery (DV)**

**Australia & New Zealand:** At Sydney, on Friday, September 2, at 10 am.

**Outer Isles:** At Stornoway, on Tuesday, September 27, at 11 am.

**Southern:** At Glasgow, on Tuesday, September 27, at 2 pm.

**Zimbabwe:** At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, October 11, at 11 am.

**Western:** At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, October 18, at 11 am.

**Northern:** At Dingwall, on Tuesday, November 1, at 2 pm.

### **Doctor for Mbumba Mission Hospital**

With Dr Bezemer coming to an end of his two-year tour, a vacancy will arise in December 2016 for a Christian medical doctor to work at Mbumba Mission Hospital, Zimbabwe. For further information interested parties should apply to: Rev J R Tallach, 2 Fleming Place, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2NH, Scotland; e-mail: jrtallach@btinternet.com.

### **Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund**

By appointment of Synod, the second of the year's two special collections for the Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund is to be taken in congregations during August.

*W Campbell, General Treasurer*

### **Acknowledgement of Donations**

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

*College & Library Fund:* B Garrard, £50.

*Eastern Europe Fund:* N Pearce, Cmryu, for the work in Ukraine, £140.

*Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £2000.

*Wellington Earthquake Strengthening Fund:* C MacAulay, £100; Anon, Portree, £60; Anon, £20, £200, £200; Skye Friends, £1000, £5000.

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

**Dingwall & Beaully:** Anon, £20 per Rev NMR; Funeral of late Mrs I MacInnes, £55.70.

**Edinburgh:** *Building Repairs:* Anon, £300; Anon, 1 Chr 29:11-16, £12 000. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £20 per Rev DC. *Where Most Needed:* Friend, £100 per Rev DC.

Glasgow: Anon, £100; Estate of late Mrs A MacSween, £3000. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £62, £62, £62, £62, £60, £60. *Wellington Earthquake Strengthening Fund:* Anon, £100.

**Greenock:** *General Building Fund:* Anon, £20. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £60, £30, £20. *TBS:* Anon, £750.

**Inverness:** Estate of late Miss Margaret Anne MacRitchie, £99 425.46 per ANM. *Home Mission Fund:* Mr A M Reynolds, £33. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Mr A M Reynolds, £33.

**Portree:** CMP, £20 per Rev IMD; Anon, Deut 32:7, £25.

# FREE PRESBYTERIAN PLACES OF WORSHIP

## Scotland

- Aberdeen:** 2 Alford Place, AB10 1YD, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Tuesday, 7.15 pm. Rev D W B Somerset BSc DPhil, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, AB15 4BQ; tel: 01224 645250.
- Bracadale Duirinish-Strath:** **Struan:** Sabbath 12 noon. **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm. Thursday 7 pm (alternately in Struan and Vatten, fortnightly). Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 0147861 2110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauly** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev Neil M Ross BA, 10 Achany Rd, Dingwall, IV15 9JB; tel/fax: 01349 864351, e-mail: nmross2001@yahoo.co.uk.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Lairg:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Rev N M Ross; tel: 01349 864351.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, Sabbath 11 am, 6 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:** Sabbath 2.30 pm, held in Free Church of Scotland Hall, 14 Jamaica Street, PA15 1XX. Sabbath 2.30 p.m.
- 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) Miavaig:** Sabbath 12 noon Gaelic, 6 pm English; Wednesday 12 noon. Manse tel: 01851 672251. Contact Rev A W MacColl; tel: 01851 810228.
- 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 BA, 252 Brierclyffe 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. 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

**Sancta Fe**, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; 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:sydneypfchurch@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. Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Wednesday 6 pm. Rev D Levyskyi; tel: 00 38 048 785 19 24; e-mail: dlevyskyi@gmail.com; or contact Mr I Zadorozhnyi, P O Box 100, Odessa-91, 65091; e-mail: antipa@eurocom.od.ua.

#### 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: Ingwanya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

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

**New Cnaan**: Church.

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

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<b>The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy</b> by Ian Hamilton Christian Focus Publications: Mentor, 2010, pbk, 233pp	£11.99	£9.59
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