

The Free Presbyterian Magazine

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

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

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Communions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

December: Third Sabbath: Bulawayo, Santa Fe, Tauranga.

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“Heresy with a Gilding of Orthodoxy”

Among the “Notes” in C H Spurgeon’s periodical, *The Sword and the Trowel*, for July 1890, is an item about the state of the Free Church of Scotland at that time. It looks back to the General Assembly of that year, when two divinity professors, Marcus Dods of New College, Edinburgh, and A B Bruce of the Glasgow Free Church College, were accused of making statements inconsistent with orthodox views of the accuracy of the Bible. Both men were exonerated although it was accepted that some of Bruce’s statements had been unguarded.¹ It should be noted that the newspaper comment quoted by Spurgeon is not written from an orthodox position, though the writer can see clearly that the position of the Free Church liberals, such as the two professors, was not an honourable one: they were dishonestly ignoring the vows that they had made when they became ministers, and they were ignoring these same vows after they made them over again when they became professors.

Spurgeon, experiencing a “downgrade” in his own denomination, wrote, *The Times* of June 5 contains a passage which puts the recent decision of the Free Church of Scotland in a clear light. The case is one for great sorrow and deep humiliation, and it is fairly stated in the sentences:

“From the decision it might almost appear that professors and ministers may be as heretical as they please, provided only that they cover their heresy with a gilding of orthodoxy. . . . The position in which the decisions of the Free Church (on Dods, Bruce etc) places its ministers and professors is that they may speak freely of the “mistakes and immoralities” contained in the Scriptures, may hold that belief in the accepted doctrines of the atonement and the divinity of Christ is not essential to a true Christian, and may treat the books of the Bible as human productions, criticising them as they would do any other books; may do and believe all these things without exposing themselves to process of libel,² or incurring anything more serious than the

¹For further information on these cases, see *History of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland 1893-1970*, pp 52-57.

²The formal document used in a case of discipline.

mild censure of the General Assembly. . . . However little deserving of sympathy the narrowness of the orthodox party may be, their position is undoubtedly logical. It is not only illogical, it is also immoral, to accept and sign a confession of faith, and then call in question its doctrines.’”

Spurgeon comments pointedly: “Is it not natural that the following query should suggest itself? Is it not a serious question for our country, how far existing want of honesty may be traceable to the corrupt examples set by the professing Church when, by its ministers and members, it sets aside solemn covenants, trust deeds, and confessions of faith, and deals with them as current opinion demands? If the foundations of morality be destroyed, what can the nation do?”

“What will be done in the matter? We don’t care to prophesy; but if our Scotch brethren have degenerated to the English level, they will do nothing. The sound will shield the unsound, the evangelical will pat the rationalistic on the back, and say that ‘they trust they will not go too far’; and all will live together in that form of peace which is not peace, but treachery to God and His truth. The scribes and priests of Israel are now linked in unhallowed confederacies in which there is unbounded toleration for error: at the rate at which they are now advancing, those same confederacies will soon have no tolerance for orthodoxy. Even now the sneers and sarcasms at the old faith are more than self-respecting and truth-loving men ought to bear. Yet behind the ruling clique there are hosts of plain, godly men, who will be heard of before very long.”

Probably Spurgeon was over-optimistic in his assessment of what lay ahead. Just two years later, the Free Church General Assembly passed a Declaratory Act, which brought about a fundamental change in the Church’s constitution. A year was given to allow the 1893 General Assembly an opportunity to repeal the Act. When that Assembly refused to reverse its decision of the previous year, Rev Donald Macfarlane, then of Raasay, tabled a Protest against the Assembly’s refusal and thereby separated himself from the Free Church. The formation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland followed very soon afterwards.

It was then that some of the “plain, godly men” were heard, as thousands of people took their places in the newly-formed Church. Among the meetings held to consider what should be done, following the anticipated decision of the 1893 Assembly, were some organised by elders. One of these was publicised in a newspaper advertisement placed by three Skye elders; elders and laymen were invited to meet in Achnasheen, a township midway between the east and west coasts of Ross-shire, easily accessible by railway. One of these “plain, godly men” was Neil Mackinnon, a Portree elder, who chaired

the meeting and stated that “they in Skye had fully made up their minds to separate from the Free Church, carrying with them the old doctrines and principles of the Free Church as held in 1843”.³

Many others who were opposed to the Declaratory Act remained behind, following the leaders of the constitutional party in the Free Church, who were strongly opposed to separation. It took the union of the Free Church with the United Presbyterian Church to persuade the majority of the constitutional party to give up ecclesiastical fellowship with those in the Free Church who no longer wholeheartedly considered *The Westminster Confession of Faith* to be the confession of their faith. Those who did not enter this union continued to call themselves the Free Church of Scotland, but only in 1906 did they repeal the Declaratory Act.

Many years have passed since 1893. The religious and moral condition of Scotland has deteriorated drastically since then and the direction of travel continues decidedly downwards. In particular, the Free Presbyterian Church is very much smaller than it was then. Yet the words of Duncan Campbell, another Portree elder, continue relevant: “We must stand firm in the faith which has been delivered to us, and God who is mighty to save by a few or by many will crown our efforts with success”.⁴

It might be asked: What, in this context, could be counted as success? No doubt, one main matter has been the continued witness for “the old doctrines and principles” that Neil Mackinnon referred to – the doctrines and principles of Scripture, particularly as summarised in *The Westminster Confession of Faith*. Further, the gospel has been faithfully preached in Free Presbyterian congregations in various parts of Scotland and, from not long after 1893, in some other parts of the world, beginning with Canada and what is now Zimbabwe. No one can tell how many – in the century and more since these meetings took place – found mercy for their souls, so that they turned from their sins, trusting in Christ Jesus for salvation. A large proportion of them now enjoy the never-ending blessedness of heaven.

Newspapers and other media may still make disapproving references to “the narrowness of [an] orthodox party”, but our duty in an ungodly generation is to go on in dependence on God, seeking to be faithful to His Word. We should earnestly pray that the “God who is mighty to save by a few or by many will crown our efforts with success” in this new year.

³Quoted in Neil Cameron, *Ministers and Men of the Free Presbyterian Church*, Settle Graphics, 1993, p xxviii. This interesting and spiritual volume has been reprinted by Free Presbyterian Publications.

⁴Neil Cameron, *Ministers and Men*, p xxxiii. The statement was made at another elders’ meeting, in Flashadder, a village in the Isle of Skye.

Prayer and the Peace of God¹

A Sermon by Rev H M Cartwright

Philippians 4:6,7. *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

How thankful we should be that the Bible addresses the Lord's people, not as if they are what they ought to be, but as they really are. Of course the Bible constantly urges God's people to be what they ought to be, but it also recognises that they are *not* what they ought to be. And the provision made in the gospel for sinners – and for sinners who believe in Jesus – is a provision that suits them as they are, in all their sin and frailty and weakness.

The Bible recognises that the Lord's people will have anxieties and cares. But they should not; they have trusted their souls to the Lord for eternity, and why then do they need to be anxious about the things of time and sense? But the Lord, in His condescension and grace, deals with us as we really are. Therefore the Lord knows that His people need the exhortation, "Be careful for nothing". And they need provision to be made to preserve them from that carefulness. That provision is set before us in these verses.

We may notice: (1.) The frailty and the danger that the Lord's people are in, which is addressed in this exhortation. (2.) The preservative or cure that the Lord has provided for their tendency to be full of care. (3.) The encouragement to make use of that prescribed preservative and cure.

1. The frailty and danger. Peter says that the Lord's people may for a season be in heaviness through manifold temptations. God's people are surrounded by trouble, trial, temptation and difficulty – some more than others, at some times more than others. But although chosen by sovereign grace, redeemed by the blood of Christ, and with the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we are human, in a state of sin, and we are frail.

We *ought* to have a proper concern for the things of time and sense. If anyone should be careful, considerate and diligent about earthly things, it is the servants of the living God. They have to give themselves to doing what is required of them in this world. But the problem is that they are liable to the kind of care that is forbidden – what nowadays we call worry, anxious care – the kind of care which sets our minds in a storm, which disqualifies us from thinking clearly, which comes between us and the confidence in God, the submissiveness to the will of God, and the devotion to God that we ought

¹A sermon, largely to the Lord's people, preached on 1 January 1999, during the first year of Mr Cartwright's ministry in Edinburgh.

to have. The Lord Himself said that one of the effects of the cares of this world is to make the Word of God unfruitful. We hear it and read it, but our mind is in such a turmoil through the things that are seen and temporal, through the anxieties we have, that we do not benefit as we should.

Of course, some people are temperamentally more inclined that way than others. In great mercy, the Lord takes account of His people's temperaments. But, while circumstances may occasion the carefulness, the causes of care are within their own hearts: a lack of submission to the Lord, of dependence on Him, of assurance that He is in control, that He is doing all things well and making everything work together for the good of His people. The reason for care is not that circumstances are difficult but that our mind is not set on God as it ought. However difficult the circumstances, the person is preserved from care when the mind is set on God. However *trifling* the circumstances, we are liable to be anxious when the mind is not set upon God.

Now this carefulness is useless for those who trust in the Lord. It does no good; it does harm. But what we are looking at just now is the fact that we are prone to be full of care. The Lord has saved His people by His grace; He has given them a hope for eternity, and yet how small the things that can cause them, as the Psalmist says, to reel and stagger like one drunk!

2. The preservative or cure. The Lord does not say, Pull yourself together; it is the *world* that says this. But people in this condition cannot pull themselves together. The Lord says, "In every thing, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God". He is exhorting His people to think about Him and come to Him in prayer. What we need is to have our minds fixed upon the Lord: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee". Very often, when we are worried, we have to acknowledge that the cause of our trouble has filled our minds; it has displaced God from our thinking. If God is in our thinking at all, it is at the periphery. But the cure, the preservative, is to have God central to our thoughts and hearts.

That of course is one of the chief functions of prayer. The Lord is not saying we have to run away from our problems, but to flee to Him; we have to go to His throne of grace. We have to take account of God's sovereignty, wisdom, power, grace and, when these become real to us again, they show us that – although the circumstances may not have got any better – there is no need for anxiety, because everything has been left in the hands of the Lord. So the exhortation He gives is, In everything, to let our requests be made known to God – whatever is liable to cause care and concern.

Perhaps part of our trouble is that we think we can only bring some things to the Lord in prayer; we may feel ashamed to bring other things to the Lord.

But He says, “In *every thing*” – whatever is making you anxious – “let your requests be made known unto God”. Turn the anxiety into a petition. It might be about something profoundly spiritual; it might be about something very temporary and temporal, but He says, “In *every thing*”, whatever the problem is. John Kennedy says somewhere that we so often try to take upon our tiny shoulders the burden which we should leave upon the Lord. And that is the problem – our shoulders are not adequate to carry any burden if we face it in our own strength. But whatever is a burden to us, let us pray to God about it – “let your requests be made known unto God”.

This is not for God’s information, not merely for psychological release. Some rationalistic people do not mind people praying; some psychiatrists may think: If you want to pray, pray; and that will give you some sort of psychological relief. Prayer no doubt does give relief, but this is God’s commandment – not to inform Him, but because He says He will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do this for them. He has given promises, and we have to ask for what He has promised. The Lord’s way is to promise and to plan, but one of the means He has ordained in the fulfilment of that promise and the working out of that plan is to make His people ask Him to do it. It is an expression of their dependence, of their confidence and of their readiness to trust in Him – in His wisdom, power, grace and faithfulness.

You may say, I do not know what to ask. But the Spirit Himself “maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”. We may be all confusion at times, unable to express our need, and we know that what we say does not express our need – perhaps we cannot say anything – but the requests the Lord heeds may not be properly-framed requests. Yet they are the yearnings of our souls for Him to deal with us as He sees our need. Someone has said that, if we ask the Lord, sometimes He will give us what we ask, sometimes he will give something just as good, and sometimes He will give us something even better. Although what He gives us may not *seem* good to us, we can be sure that the Lord *will* give what is good.

“Let your requests be made known,” Paul says, “by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving”. We believe that it is prayer in a general sense that is meant here – not specifically asking, but the whole attitude we should have in prayer – coming to God in the attitude of reverence and confidence, of worship and submissiveness. Prayer is not just asking for things; it is the soul coming to God in the attitude of dependence, of worship, of devotion, with reverence and godly fear, desiring God’s glory. We should be putting ourselves at the footstool of divine grace.

Our requests are not to be presented to God in a self-centred manner, but in the spirit of devotion to Him, recognising that He is God, and that what

we ask from Him, we ask with the desire that it might contribute to His glory. Supplication is an aspect of asking; we are coming as beggars. We are not claiming a right; we have no right to be heard; we have no claim upon God in ourselves at all. All we can do is ask for mercy. We can only ask God in His sovereignty and grace to hear our cry and help us in our time of need.

Why should He help us? We only know that we need His help and that, in His sovereign mercy, He is the helper of the needy. If He will help us, it is because He wills to help us – because of His own gracious inclination to do so. We have promises to encourage us; He has told us that He will hear our cry; He encourages us to seek His mercy. We have great need, and He has great supplies for our need, but the supply comes to us from His great resources through the channel of mercy. He is on a throne of grace; let us make our requests known unto Him with supplication, begging for mercy.

Paul also tells us to come with thanksgiving. Perhaps that is what we often neglect when oppressed by a sense of our need and conscious that the Lord has all the grace we need. Thankfulness will affect the attitude in which we approach Him. We have many reasons to thank Him, but sometimes we come in a complaining spirit, and sometimes as if reproaching the Lord for His delays. The old saying states that delays are not denials, but we very often reproach the Lord for His delays in coming to our aid. We are so conscious of the need that we can practically forget all the reasons we have for being thankful to the Lord for His goodness to us in the past.

In a situation of great need, you ask yourself what reason you have for thanksgiving. We all have great reason for thanksgiving; we are still in the room of mercy; we are not in hell! We can start there. If that would work on our minds, how it would bring us to the throne of grace in a begging spirit. Then we would begin to think of many other reasons for giving thanks to the Lord. Whether we are His people or not, there are so many things we should be thankful for; and if we are the Lord's people, how thankful we ought to be that He has rescued us from the pit of destruction, and has given us the hope of an inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and which fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us – and that He has given us Christ.

Let us not come before God as if He has done evil to us, but let us come remembering the many reasons for thanking Him. And thanksgiving will put us into a right frame of mind for coming to God. What an encouragement to think of the reasons we have for thanksgiving! Even if it is the case, and it is not, that we have nothing else to be thankful for but that we are not in hell, we can start from that point, coming to the Lord with our need. What encouragement we have to make our requests known unto Him!

This is the preservative, the cure, that the Lord prescribes for His people

when they are prone to anxiety and worry: seek God in prayer instead. Come before Him with thanksgiving, with adoration, with begging, with your requests and make them known to God. Turn everything into a request to God. Whatever is troubling you today and whatever will trouble you in the days to come, the Lord is saying to us, “Be careful for nothing” – instead of being anxious about the matter, “by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God”. If we can only do like the king who spread out the letter before the Lord, that is what we are to do. Spread the cause of concern before the Lord, though perhaps we do not know what kind of help to ask for. It is not because He needs to be told, but because we need to be brought into a state of trust and submission.

3. The encouragement. The encouragement to come to God in prayer is: “The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”. Here is something that will preserve, guard, protect, keep you, so that these causes of care will not be able to get at your heart and mind. The trouble is: the causes may be external, but they get at our hearts and minds; they take possession of our thoughts; and we cannot get rid of them. They are with us during the day and the night, and the more we try to put them out of our minds, the more they trouble us.

Well, here is something to protect your heart and mind; they are *kept*, or guarded, so that things that have a potential to disturb us will not be able to do so. What will keep us from being disturbed? The peace of God. It is wonderful to think of the peace of God as the possession of a sinner, when we think of our natural state of alienation and enmity against God. God is angry with us; we are in a state of war, under His curse; but here is the peace of God, and it is founded in the person and work of Christ!

We can think of the peace of God as it is in the fountain, in God Himself – the peace which God Himself has. And it should make us very thankful to think of God as full of peace. Nothing can disturb the mind of God or His blessedness. As the fountain of peace, He gives His people peace by drawing them into fellowship with Himself. There is no peace anywhere, except as it is derived from Him. And the peace spoken of here is the peace that God gives. “The thoughts that I think toward you,” He says, are “thoughts of peace, and not of evil.” That is the beginning of our hope.

Then we think of peace as the relationship established between God and His people in Christ. These thoughts of peace are translated into reconciliation. We are justified and, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Peace *from* God the fountain, peace *with* God established in our justification, established on the basis of the righteousness of Christ. He is our peace – that is what we should remember. Peace is

not some sort of abstract thing; it is not a mere relationship; it is embodied in the Person of Christ. If we have Christ, we have peace with God. If we are in Christ, we are in a state of peace with God. We may not always feel that, but it is always the case, because nothing can affect it. Christ has made peace through His blood, and the peace is established for ever. It *cannot* be broken; God will never turn against His people.

That peace becomes an experience in the believer's soul – peace of mind, conscience and heart. That is what we often think of as peace and, because it sometimes goes away, we think our peace has gone. Peace with God is grounded in Christ; it is always the same. But our grasp, our appreciation of it and our experience of it changes. There are times when believers feel at peace with God. The peace of God occupies their hearts and minds. They feel assured that God and themselves are reconciled. Whatever happens to them, whatever God does with them, they are sure that He and they are at peace. Their conscience is clear through the blood; their mind is in a peaceable condition because it is set upon God. The fact that we are at peace with God, and God with us, means that nothing will ever be able to harm us.

It must have been very difficult for Job, for example, to believe that when he lost everything. We can read the Book of Job so easily, yet let us stop to think of what he actually went through when he lost every possession, every member of his family, and latterly even His sense of God's favour. He lost *everything* that was precious to him. Yet in heaven, God was saying, "Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?" He was embraced in the love and the favour of God – God was looking at him peaceably and favourably, even when He was allowing the devil to destroy everything he had. Whether Job could understand it or not, God was keeping him from harm; God said to the devil, You can go so far, but no further; there is a limit. God's protection and His peace kept him from anything that would do him real and lasting harm. It is not easy to believe that, we are quite sure, when everything is falling down around one, as it did around Job. But the devil could not put a finger on Job, except what he was permitted to do by God. He was at peace with Job, looking upon him with great favour.

Probably peace as a matter of consciousness is particularly before us, when we are aware that God is at peace with us, and we with God – that is what keeps our hearts and minds. The problem is that our troubles and trials disturb our peace so often; they take away our sense of God's favour and love. Then they can overwhelm us! As long as we have the assurance that God has loved us with an everlasting love, that God the Son has redeemed us by His blood, that God the Holy Spirit has regenerated us and dwells in us, and are con-

scious that there is peace between us and God, then our hearts and minds are kept from being overwhelmed by what would disturb us.

“If God be for us, who can be against us?” This is the language that consciousness of this peace allows a believer to use. It is when we wonder if He is for us that we become disturbed by the things of time and sense, and things in our experience. But if we are assured He *is* for us, we believe that nothing in heaven or earth or hell can disturb or harm us. He who gave Christ to us, as the ground of peace, will with Him freely give us all things. “The peace of God shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

In conclusion I want to mention two things about this peace: it passes all understanding, and it operates through Christ Jesus. Obviously we cannot comprehend this peace or its power. Our minds cannot grasp the reality of this peace, its nature and its effects. It is not a little thing, and the same is true of every grace. Everything God is, everything He does, everything He gives is beyond our power to comprehend exhaustively. We can know it, but not exhaustively. Our intellect cannot fathom the depths of the peace of God. Is that not a great encouragement? We will *never* exhaust what is in the peace of God. We will never come to such circumstances that the peace of God will not be adequate to keep us – it passes understanding. No one who has ever lived, or ever will live, can say they have seen the end of the peace of God. It is beyond understanding.

But the peace of God does what our understanding can never do. The peace of God goes beyond all intellectual powers in keeping the heart and mind of the believer. The world encourages us to reason ourselves into a state of peace. But *no* reasoning will produce the kind of peace spoken of here. No amount of argument with ourselves will produce the state of mind described as the peace of God. No matter how correct our understanding of the Scriptures, that in itself will not bring peace. Some people say the lack of peace is due to a faulty understanding of the doctrine of justification. Perhaps it is. But a correct understanding of this doctrine will not in itself bring peace. If that is true of biblical doctrine, how much more of human arguments. Our understanding can never do what the peace of God can do; it passes all understanding; it goes beyond all intellectual capacity to understand it or to accomplish what it brings about.

The other matter is: the peace of God operates through Christ Jesus. It is very encouraging that the peace of God is beyond our understanding and every capacity of ours. But what brings it home to us and makes it effective in our experience is that it is through Christ Jesus. If we have Christ, we may enjoy this peace. It is through Christ that peace with God has been established, and it is through Christ that peace with God is enjoyed. And it is by focusing

on Christ that we begin to enjoy this peace, both as an objective relationship and as an internal, subjective feeling and experience.

So when Paul exhorts us to pray, and encourages us with a sense of what the peace of God can do, he shows us that we need to be taken up with Christ. If we pursue peace in itself, we will not find it, because it cannot be found apart from Christ. That is another of our problems when we are worried about things. We sometimes try to deal with the problem by our own thoughts and we do not succeed; we try to get peace by affecting our minds with biblical truth and we do not succeed. The Lord says that it is through Christ that peace comes, and therefore our hearts and minds should be occupied with Christ. He is central in everything. He is the answer to all His people's problems – He may not take the difficulties away, but He enables His people to cope with these difficulties. When we rest on Christ and are taken up with the glory of His Person and work, the peace of God will keep our hearts and our minds. If we are looking for peace, we do not find it; but if we are looking for Christ, then we also find peace when we find Christ.

We obviously do not know what the future holds. It is very likely that the future will bring what will cause us concern. Christ said, "In this world ye shall have tribulation", and some people know that much more than others, but all on the way to heaven will know it to some extent. There is trouble of some kind ahead of everyone, and some of the Lord's people will have a very dark passage to go through in the days to come. But however difficult it may be, however inclined we may be to sink under it, what an assurance is here! If we are taken up with Christ, if we cast all our cares upon Him, then the peace of God will keep our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Sometimes it is a great surprise when Christians come through trouble. Perhaps they were very timid and weak, and everyone is surprised by how they respond to the crisis: they overcome it. No one perhaps is more surprised than they are! But the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps the heart and mind through Christ Jesus. We see that in our own lives, and in those who are near and dear to us. And the cause of Christ throughout the world *must* be a great burden to the Lord's people.

What is to become of the cause of Christ if things go on as they are? It is a sad reflection on us that we are often much more concerned about personal matters than about the cause of Christ. It *will* concern the Lord's people, but it is included in this: "In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds." That is what equips us for warfare, for difficulty and temptation. The peace of God "shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus".

Luther and the Reformation¹

13. Opposition to Luther

J H Merle d'Aubigné

The reproaches, the timidity and the silence of his friends had discouraged Luther; the attacks of his enemies produced a contrary effect. This often happens: the adversaries of the truth, who hope by their violence to do their own work, do that of God Himself. Tetzel took up the gauntlet, but with a feeble hand. Luther's sermon, which had been for the people what the theses had been for the learned, was the object of his first reply. He refuted this discourse point by point, after his own fashion; he then announced that he was preparing to meet his adversary more fully in certain theses which he would maintain at the University of Frankfort on the Oder.

One thing strikes us as we read Tetzel's reply: the difference between the German employed by him and Luther. One might say they were several ages apart. A foreigner, in particular, sometimes finds it difficult to understand Tetzel, while Luther's language is almost entirely that of our own days. A comparison of their writings shows that Luther is the creator of modern German. This is no doubt one of his least merits; still it is one.

Luther replied without naming Tetzel; Tetzel had not named him. But there was no one in Germany but could recognise who had written each publication. "The penance imposed by the holy father cannot be that required by Christ,"² wrote Luther, "for what the holy father imposes he can dispense with; and if these two penances were one and the same thing, it would follow that the Pope takes away what Christ imposes, and destroys the commandment of God." He continues: "He who purchases indulgences, our adversaries repeat, does better than he who gives alms to a poor man who is not reduced to the last extremity". Luther goes on ironically: "Let him who desires to follow this precept, beware of feeding the hungry, or of clothing the naked, before they die, and consequently have no more need of assistance."

It is important to compare Luther's zeal for good works with what he says on justification by faith. The more we see the necessity of works, the more we become willing to practise them; Luther and Paul before him are proofs of this assertion. When Luther comes to Tetzel's invectives, he answers them thus: "When I hear these invectives, I fancy it is an ass braying at me. I am delighted with them, and I should be very sorry were such people to call

¹This is a further abridged extract from d'Aubigné's *The History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, vol 1. Last month's article described some of the reaction to Luther's 95 Theses, written in response to the sale of indulgences by Tetzel near Wittenberg.

²The "penance" Christ requires is, more accurately, repentance.

me a good Christian.” We must represent Luther as he was, with all his weaknesses. A turn for jesting, and even for coarse jesting, was one of them. The Reformer was a great man, a man of God, no doubt, but he was still a man and not an angel and he was not even a perfect man.

Luther did not lack courage. He relied on the Word of God, and it is a rock that never fails us in the storm. But God in His faithfulness afforded him other assistance. The burst of joy by which the multitude welcomed Luther’s theses, had been soon followed by a gloomy silence. The learned had timidly retreated before the abuse of Tetzl and the Dominicans. The bishops, who had previously exclaimed against the abuse of indulgences, seeing them attacked at last, claimed that the attack was unseasonable. The greater portion of the Reformer’s friends were alarmed. Many had fled away. But when the first terror was over, a contrary movement took place in their minds. Luther had for some time been almost alone in the Church, but a numerous body of friends and admirers soon gathered around him again.

There was one who, although timid, remained faithful during this crisis and whose friendship was Luther’s consolation and support. This was Spalatin. Their correspondence was not interrupted. “I thank you,” said Luther, speaking of a particular mark of friendship that he had received, “but for what am I not indebted to you? . . . We can do nothing of ourselves: we can do everything by God’s grace. All ignorance is invincible for us; no ignorance is invincible for the grace of God. The more we endeavour, of ourselves, to attain wisdom, the nearer we approach to folly.”

If Spalatin consoled his friend and supported him by his influence, Luther endeavoured to answer the questions put to him by the unassuming chaplain. Among them was: “What is the best method of studying Scripture?”

“As yet, most excellent Spalatin,” Luther replied, “you have only asked me things that were in my power. But to direct you in the study of the Holy Scriptures is beyond my ability. If, however, you absolutely wish to know my method, I will not conceal it from you. It is certain that we cannot attain to the understanding of Scripture either by study or by the intellect. Your first duty is to begin by prayer. Entreat the Lord to grant you, of His great mercy, the true understanding of His Word. There is no other interpreter of the Word of God than the Author of this Word, as He Himself has said: ‘They shall be all taught of God’. Hope for nothing from your own labours, from your own understanding; trust solely in God, and in the influence of His Spirit. Believe this on the word of a man who has had experience.”

We here see how Luther arrived at the possession of the truth which he preached. It was not by trusting presumptuously to his reason or by giving way to evil passions. He drank from the purest source: God Himself, whom

he consulted in humility, confidence and prayer. Luther had done nothing to circulate his theses. He declared, "My design was not to give my theses such publicity. I only desired to confer on their contents with some of those who remain with us or near us. If they had been condemned, I would have destroyed them. If they had been approved of, I purposed publishing them. But they have now been printed over and over again, and circulated so far beyond all my hopes that I repent of my offspring – not because I am afraid of the truth being made known to the people. It was this alone I sought, but that is not the way to instruct them. They contain questions that are still doubtful to me, and if I had thought my theses would have created such a sensation, there are some things I should have omitted and others I should have asserted with greater confidence."

In after years Luther thought differently. Far from fearing he had said too much, he declared that he ought to have said much more. "You will find in my earlier writings," he said many years afterwards, "that I very humbly conceded many things to the Pope, and even important things, that now I regard and detest as abominable and blasphemous."

Men's minds had recovered a little from their first alarm. Luther himself felt inclined to declare that his theses had not the scope attributed to them. But the partisans of Rome fanned the flame instead of quenching it. Tetzel and the Dominicans replied with insolence to the attack that had been made on them. Bursting with the desire of crushing the impudent monk who had dared to trouble their commerce, and of conciliating the favour of the Roman pontiff, they maintained that to attack the indulgence ordained by the Pope was to attack the Pope himself, and they summoned to their aid all the monks and divines of their school.

Tetzel indeed felt that an adversary like Luther was too much for him alone. Greatly exasperated at Luther's attack, he left the vicinity of Wittenberg, and went to Frankfort on the Oder, where he arrived in November 1517. Conrad Wimpina, an eloquent man and one of the most distinguished theologians of the age, was a professor in the university there. Tetzel requested him to answer Luther's theses, and Wimpina wrote two lists of anti-theses, the first being to defend the doctrine of indulgences, and the second the authority of the Pope.

On 20 January 1518 that disputation took place on which Tetzel founded such great hopes. Monks had been sent from all the cloisters in the neighbourhood, about 300 of them. Tetzel read his theses; they even contained this declaration, "Whoever says that the soul does not escape out of purgatory so soon as the money tinkles in the chest, is in error". Above all, he put forward propositions according to which the Pope seemed actually seated as God in the temple of God, according to the Apostle's expression (2 Th 2:4). It was

convenient for this shameless trafficker to take shelter, with all his disorders and scandals, under the mantle of the Pope.

Tetzel declared himself ready to maintain, among others, the following propositions:

“3. We should teach Christians that the Pope, by the greatness of his power, is above the whole universal Church and superior to the councils, and that we should implicitly obey his decrees.

“5. We should teach Christians that the judgement of the Pope cannot err, in matters concerning the Christian faith, or which are necessary to the salvation of the human race.

“6. We should teach Christians that, in matters of faith, we should rely and repose more on the Pope’s sentiments, as made known by his decisions, than on the opinions of all the learned which are derived merely from Scripture.”

This affair, about which there had been so much noise, seemed likely to be a sham fight, but among the crowd of students present was a John Knipstrow, about 20 years of age. He had read Luther’s theses and had found them consistent with the doctrines of Scripture. Indignant at seeing the truth publicly trodden under foot, without any one appearing in its defence, this young man raised his voice, to the astonishment of the assembly, and attacked Tetzel. Not reckoning on any opposition, he was quite confused. Soon he gave way to Wimpina, who resisted more vigorously. But Knipstrow pressed him so closely that, to finish the struggle, he as chairman declared the disputation over, and immediately proceeded to confer the degree of doctor on Tetzel to repay him for his glorious combat. In order to get rid of the young orator, Wimpina had him sent to the convent of Pyrzyce [now in Poland], with an order that he should be strictly watched. But this dawning light was sent away only to diffuse not long after a greater light throughout the district of Pomerania. When God thinks fit, he employs even learners to confound teachers.

Tetzel, wishing to recover from the check he had experienced, had recourse to the last resort of Rome and the inquisitors: fire. He had a pulpit and scaffold erected near Frankfort. He went there in solemn procession, with his insignia of inquisitor of the faith. From the pulpit he hurled thunderbolts, and exclaimed that the heretic Luther deserved to suffer death at the stake. Then, placing Luther’s theses and sermon on the scaffold, he burnt them. He knew better how to do this than to maintain his theses. His victory was complete.

Tetzel’s second theses form an important epoch in the Reformation. They changed the ground of dispute: they diverted it from the indulgence markets

to the Vatican, from Tetzel to the Pope. Luther was astonished, but it is probable that he would before long have taken this step himself; his enemies spared him the trouble. The blow by which a daring hand had tried to demolish Tetzel's shop shook the very foundations of the pontifical throne.

An uproar against Luther broke out among the monks, infuriated at the appearance of a more formidable adversary than either Reuchlin or Erasmus. The Dominicans called the bold doctor a madman, a seducer, and a demoniac. His doctrine was cried down as the most horrible heresy. "Only wait a fortnight, or a month at most," they said, and this notorious heretic will be burnt". If it had depended solely on the Dominicans, the fate of Jerome of Prague and of Huss would soon have been that of Luther also, but God was watching over him.

When Luther was informed of Tetzel's theses, and of the general attack of which they were the signal, his courage immediately took fire. He felt the necessity of opposing such adversaries face to face; his intrepid soul had no difficulty in coming to such a decision. He did not, however, give way to those sentiments of pride so natural to man's heart. "I have more difficulty to refrain from despising my adversaries," he wrote about this time to Spalatin, "and from sinning in this way against Jesus Christ, than I should have in conquering them." But the strongest encouragement to his heart, in the midst of this general hostility, was the intimate conviction that his cause was that of truth. "Do not be surprised," he wrote to Spalatin at the beginning of 1518, "that I am so grossly insulted. I listen to their abuse with joy. If they did not curse me, we could not be so firmly assured that the cause I have undertaken is that of God Himself. Christ has been set up for a sign to be spoken against."

One thing, however, sometimes agitated Luther: the thought of the dissensions his courageous opposition might produce. He knew that a single word might set the world on fire. At times his imagination beheld prince arrayed against prince, and perhaps people against people. He would have desired peace; yet he must speak, for such was the Lord's will.

He still kept silent about Tetzel's theses concerning the Pope. Had he been carried away by passion, he would, no doubt, have instantly fallen upon that astonishing doctrine, under the shelter of which his adversary sought to protect himself. But he waited, yet not from weakness. Tetzel had hastened to send his theses into Saxony. He expected them to serve as an antidote to Luther's. A man from Halle, commissioned by the inquisitor to circulate his theses, arrived at Wittenberg. The students of the university, still indignant that Tetzel should have burnt their master's theses, had scarcely heard of his arrival before they sought him out, surrounded him and frightened him. "How

dare you bring such things here?" they said. Some of them bought some of the copies he had with him, others seized the remainder. They thus became masters of his whole stock, amounting to 800 copies; and then, unknown to the authorities and Luther, they announced the burning of Tetzel's theses in the market place at 2 o'clock.

Luther was deeply pained at the disturbance. But the burning of these theses shows how the hearts of the young already glowed for the cause which Luther defended. This was a sign of great importance; for a movement which has taken hold of youth is soon propagated throughout the nation.

Though little esteemed, Tetzel's theses aggravated the dispute; they widened the rent in the mantle of the Church; they brought questions of the highest interest into the controversy. Accordingly the leaders of the Church began to take a closer view of the matter, and to declare strongly against the Reformer. "Truly," said the Bishop of Brandenburg, "I do not know on whom Luther relies, since he thus ventures to attack the power of the bishops." Perceiving that new measures were called for, the Bishop came to Wittenberg. But he found Luther animated with that inward joy which springs from a good conscience and determined to give battle. The Bishop returned in anger to Brandenburg. One day during the winter of 1518, he said, "I will not lay my head down in peace until I have thrown Martin into the fire". The revolution of the sixteenth century was not to be accomplished by the heads of the Church, any more than that of the first century had been by the sanhedrin.

Bannerman's *The Church of Christ*¹

2. Aspects of the Church

Rev A W MacColl

T*he Church in its twofold character as visible and invisible.* We come now to consider the Church in its twofold character as visible and invisible. These terms do not imply that there are two different Churches "but rather the same Church under two different characters" (p 31). The invisible Church consists of the whole number of the elect; whereas the visible Church consists of all those who profess the faith of Christ, together with their children. There is a real distinction between them, but also a real connection (p 36).

Two important points must be borne in mind here: firstly, "the Church invisible stands, with respect to its members, in an *inward* and *spiritual*

¹The first section, last month, of this Theological Conference paper was an introduction to the subject. All references in the text are to James Bannerman, *The Church of Christ*, Banner of Truth reprint, 2015.

relationship to Christ, whereas the Church visible stands to Him in an *outward* relation only” (p 33). Bannerman goes on, “Admit that some external framework of privileges and ordinances has been erected by Christ around His own elect people in this world, and you are led directly to the idea of a visible society, distinguished from the invisible by the outward form which it bears, and the outward relation in which it stands to Christ” (p 32).

Secondly, “the Church invisible is made up of true believers, and of none else; whereas the Church visible is composed of those who outwardly profess their faith in Christ, and may include not only true believers, but also hypocrites” (p 34). Visible Church membership brings real responsibilities and real privileges though it comes short of the inward, saving relationship which characterises members of the invisible Church. The visible Church will ever be mixed in this world – like the field with tares and wheat. Only at the end of the world will the invisible Church stand *disclosed* as a communion of the elect only (p 36).

The distinction between the visible Church and the invisible Church is very important if we would arrive at a correct understanding of the scriptural teaching regarding the Church. Great errors and confusion have arisen because of confounding the Bible’s statements on the Church by applying what refers to the visible Church to the invisible Church and *vice versa*. Bannerman quotes the German ecclesiastical historian Neander, to the effect that the fundamental error of both Cyprian and the Novatians, of Augustine as well as the Donatists, was confounding the notions of the invisible and the visible Church (p 43).

The Church in its twofold character as catholic and local. Both the invisible and the visible aspects of the Church share in the characteristics of being catholic and, at the same time, local. *Catholic*, of course, means “not confined to any place or people” (p 46). It stands in contrast to the Old Testament Church in this respect, which was largely confined to the land and people of Israel. The universality of the invisible Church is through the universality of the one Spirit, embracing all true disciples of Christ everywhere. The New Testament Church is limited to no one country and has the great commission to make disciples of all nations. The unity of the invisible Church is the fact that the invisible Church consists of a binding into one of all to whom the Spirit has been given (p 47). It is local in that it exists everywhere true disciples are found.

Now the visible Church is also catholic or universal. Whereas the bond of union in the invisible Church is the fellowship of the one Spirit embracing all, in the visible Church “the bond of union among its members is a common public profession, and an outward federal relationship to Christ” (p 48). Dif-

ferences in the visible Church because of distance, language, administration, ceremonies and worship “is a separation accidental and not essential, and cannot affect the fact of that higher unity that belongs to them as knit together in one profession of faith in Christ, and included together in the bond of an external covenant” (p 49).

Some important points arise from this. First of all, members and office-bearers of separate Churches are members and office-bearers in the universal Church of Christ on earth. Those who are familiar with James Durham's commentary on Revelation may recall the emphasis that Durham lays upon this point in his essay on the relation of ministers to particular congregations.

Secondly, it follows that schism or causeless separation in the Church is a great evil. Christ intended the visible Church to be catholic and one; and indeed it would be one were it not for sinful infirmities of its members. Separation, nevertheless, may be a duty, and those who are thus compelled actually maintain, and do not infringe, the unity of the Church. To cause schism is to set ourselves against the will and desire of Christ.

Furthermore, we must bear in mind that the principles of unity in the invisible Church and visible Church are different; one is higher and spiritual while the other is external and formal. The Church of Rome, however, confuses the two and claims all for herself. Again, the visible Church can only approximately aim at the unity of the invisible Church as the *ideal*.

Christ promised that His Church will never cease to exist, despite every assault of the kingdom of darkness (Mt 16:18). This *perpetuity* of the Church belongs to the Church universally and not to any local part of it; the Church may be less or more visible at some times and in some places than at others.

Likewise, Christ's promise that the Holy Spirit (Jn 16:13-4) would preserve the truth in the Church is a general one and does not belong exclusively to any particular branch of the Church. This *indefectibility* of the Church from error applies to the Church universally and not to any local part of it. It is “one of the lying cheats practised by the Church of Antichrist, first to transmute the promise of indefectibility into that of infallibility, and then to appropriate it to itself” (p 57).

In its relation to the world around it, the Church is to be Christ's witness and not Christ's substitute or vicar as we find in the Roman Catholic view. Bannerman quotes one Romanist theologian, Möhler, who goes as far as to assert that the Church is a “permanent incarnation” of the Son of God. Picking up from this dreadful error, Bannerman warns us that the Church is not to be regarded as a substitute for the Spirit of God, but rather it is ordained by God to be the “instrument of the Spirit”, the outward means

whereby supernatural grace is channelled in a spiritual manner to believers. The Roman doctrine of *ex opere operato*,² he believes, is fruitful of some of Rome's deadliest errors and makes the ordinances of Christ to become mere charms (pp 90-96).

We should briefly note that Bannerman held a distinct view on the actual *marks* of the Church. In contrast with the Reformers, such as Calvin and Knox, who held that the preaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments and the exercise of discipline were the three marks of a true Church, Bannerman contends that the only true mark of the Church is its bearing witness to the Truth. In contrast to the Roman Catholic view of the marks, he writes, "The Church was established for the sake of the truth and not the truth for the sake of the Church" (p 64). All the other marks or notes of the Church flow from the profession of the truth. As an individual Christian is fundamentally distinguished by his profession of Christ, so likewise is the Church as a body. He holds this view because he maintains that a true Church may be found where defective administration of the sacraments and inadequate discipline exist. He prefers to think of these as indications of the *well-being* of the Church, rather than of its essential existence.

All Things Together for Good (2)¹

Robert Haldane

Romans 8:28. *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.*

Even the sins of believers work for their good. This is not from the nature of sin, but by the goodness and power of Him who brings light out of darkness. Everywhere in Scripture we read of the great evil of sin. Everywhere we receive the most solemn warning against committing sin. And everywhere we hear also of the chastisements it brings, even on those who have been rescued from its condemning power. So it is not sin itself that works the good, but God who overrules its effects on His children – who shows them, by means of it, what is in their hearts as well as their entire dependence on Himself and the necessity of walking with Him more closely.

Their falls lead them to humiliation, to the acknowledgment of their weakness and depravity, to prayer for the guidance and overpowering influence of the Holy Spirit, to vigilance and caution against all carnal security, and

²That is, the correct performance of a rite by a priest, in and of itself conveys grace to the recipient.

¹This edited extract from Haldane's *Exposition of Romans* is continued from November.

to reliance, for their appearing before God, on the righteousness provided. It is evident that the sin of Adam, which is the source of all their sins, has worked for their good by raising them to a higher degree of glory. Believers fall into sin and, on account of this, God hides His face from them and they are troubled; then, like Hezekiah, they go softly. God left Hezekiah to himself, but it was to do him good at his latter end.

But if our sins work together for our good, shall we sin so that grace may abound? Far be the thought from us! This would be entirely to misunderstand the grace of God, and to turn it into an occasion of offending Him. Paul contends against such an abuse of the doctrine of grace in Romans 6. Sin should be considered as to its nature. Sin as committed by us is only sin and rebellion, against God and the holiness of His nature. It ought therefore to be regarded with abhorrence; it merits eternal punishment. That it is turned to good is God's work, not ours. We ought not to conclude that we may sin because of this – any more than to say that wicked men do what is right when they persecute the people of God, just because persecutions are overruled by Him for good. That all things work together for good to them who love God establishes the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints; for if all things work together for their good, God will permit nothing to happen that will lead them into condemnation.

That all things happen for the best is a common saying among people of the world. This is a fact as to the final result of God's administration, by which all things shall be made to contribute to His glory. But as to sinners individually, the reverse is true. All things are indeed working together in one complex plan in the providence of God for the good of those who love Him; but so far from working for good, or for the best, to His enemies, everything is working towards their final ruin.

Both of these effects are remarkably exemplified in the lives of Saul and David. Even David's aggravated sin led him to deep humiliation and godly sorrow, to a greater knowledge of his natural and original depravity, of the deceitfulness of his heart, and to his singing aloud of God's righteousness. The sins of Saul, as well as everything that befell him in God's providence, led to him becoming more hardened in his impiety and at last brought him to despair and suicide. The histories of many others, both believers and sinners, as recorded in the Old Testament, abundantly confirm the words of the Psalmist: "The Lord preserveth all them that love Him, but all the wicked will He destroy". "The way of the wicked He turneth upside down."

There are two particular scriptures which should fill the people of God with joy and consolation. One is: "The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them

that walk uprightly” (Ps 84:11). The other is the passage before us: “All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose”. If then God will withhold nothing that is good for us and will order and dispose of all things for good to us, what can be lacking in our absolute security? How admirable is the providence of God, not only as all things are ordered by Him, but as He overrules whatever is most disordered and turns things to good that in themselves are most pernicious! We admire His providence in the regularity of the seasons, of the course of the sun and stars; but these are not so wonderful as bringing good out of evil in all the complicated occurrences in the lives of men, and making even the power and malice of Satan, with the naturally destructive tendency of his works, to minister to the good of His children.

Them that love God. What is said of all things working together for good is here limited to those who love God. This is given as a special characteristic of a Christian. It implies that all believers love God, and that none but believers love Him; to love Him is the peculiar characteristic of a Christian. No one can love God till He has shined into that person’s heart to give the light of the knowledge of His glory in the face of Jesus Christ. It is therefore only through faith in the blood of Christ that we can love God. Until our faith gives us some assurance of reconciliation with God, we cannot have the confidence which is essential to loving God. Till then we dread God as our enemy, and fear that He will punish us for our sins. In loving God, the affections of the believer go out to God as their last and highest end. In everything else, there is only a finite goodness, and we cannot absolutely rest in it.

This is the rest that the Psalmist had when he said, “Whom have I in heaven but Thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. . . . God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever” (Ps 73:25,26). What satisfies the believer in his need and poverty, in every situation in which he may be placed, is to have God for his heritage and his possession, since God is his all. And as this divine love expels from the believer the love of the world, so it overcomes the immoderate love of himself. He is led to love what God loves and to hate what God hates, and thus he walks in communion with God, loving God, and more and more desiring to comprehend “what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge”.

To those who are the called according to His purpose. This is a further description or characteristic of God’s people. They are called, not merely outwardly by the preaching of the gospel, for this is common to them with unbelievers, but they are called also by the Spirit, with an internal and effectual calling, and made willing in the day of God’s power. They are called

according to God's eternal purpose, according to which He knew them and purposed their calling before they were in existence, for all God's purposes are eternal. It implies that their calling is solely the effect of grace; for when it is said to be a calling according to God's purpose, it is distinguished from a calling according to works. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began" (2 Tim 1:9). It implies that it is an effectual and permanent calling, for God's purposes cannot be defeated. "The counsel of the Lord standeth for ever." Their calling is according to "the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph 1:11).

Our Eternal Destiny¹

Rev Donald MacLean

Another year has drawn to its close and the new begins to unfold, with all its unknown events as yet hidden from our eyes. And as we cast our minds back over the year that is gone, how different are the sensations which we feel in our bosoms. How thankful many of us should be as we survey our family circle and see it still complete and its members preserved from sickness and death! It was this that added peculiar point to Job's confession: "I have sinned; what shall I do unto Thee, O Thou preserver of men?" (Job 7:20). God is our preserver and therefore we should heed God's counsel: "In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths" (Prov 3:6).

To others of you, this day is marked by a shadow. A loved and loving figure has been removed from your home. Last New Year's day, they were with you; perhaps you read my letter to them, or they read it to you; but today that voice is silent on earth and they are in eternity. So death stalks through our families and congregations, armed with divine authority to remove such as are reaching the end of life's journey, from the presence of men, to appear before God. Surely it is a solemn business to live, to have an immortal soul and to expect that, shortly, the issues of our eternal destiny, either in heaven or in hell, will be irrevocably settled. To the bereaved, I extend my heartfelt sympathy and my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that these sore strokes may work, through God's blessing, for their salvation.

The world situation continues dark and troubled. We are already partially

¹The pastoral letter that Mr MacLean wrote to his Portree congregation at the beginning of 1951, printed here with some editing.

engaged in war² and there is every appearance of that war spreading and involving, in all its tragic suffering and sorrow, multitudes of the families of the earth. In face of such clear evidences of God's displeasure, our rulers and people remain hard of heart and impenitent. Instead of seeking mercy and forgiveness, we seem determined to provoke God more and more. Such a spirit has been clearly seen in the recent Act for keeping open the 1951 Festival of Britain on the Lord's Day. This black spot on our national history shall surely be visited with retribution from heaven.

Our own personal and individual sins are more than can be numbered, and if God was to mark the iniquities even of the year that is now past, who could stand? Yet there is forgiveness with Him, that He may be feared. This forgiveness becomes the priceless possession of all who have Christ as their Saviour. All others are under condemnation. "He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God" (Jn 3:18). Whatever distinction of position, wealth, or age may exist among us, the issues for eternity are sharply defined. We are either in Christ, the Ark of eternal safety, or exposed to the floods of divine wrath against our sins.

It is in the means of grace that Christ is exhibited as the Saviour of the lost. By the Word of God in preaching, praying and singing of His praises, Christ is revealed as the Redeemer. In the glory of His person, in the perfection of His finished work, and in the suitability of His offices as prophet, priest and king, Christ is set before sinners. And the invitation, full and free, is sent out: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest" (Mt 11:28).

It is a mark of God's love to any people that He should leave His Word with them. This was true of Israel. "He showed His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgements unto Israel." The Psalmist, taught by the Holy Spirit, found material for praise in such a blessing.

"To any nation never He such favour did afford;

For they His judgements have not known. O do ye praise the Lord"

(Ps 147:19,20).

The same mark of divine love has been ours, for, in the testimony handed down to us by our fathers, at no little cost to themselves, we have God's Word in its purity, God's worship in its scriptural simplicity, and God's testimony in its spiritual fulness.

Heavy indeed will be our guilt if we despise such evidences that God is not willing that any should perish, and, by persevering in our sins, enter a lost eternity! Heavy also is the guilt of those who forsake this testimony as

²A reference to the Korean War (1950-53).

some have done during the past year. Other considerations have weighed more heavily with them than the salvation of their souls and they have turned their back on Christ's cause. To them now such an act may appear of little moment. How different matters will appear before the Judgement seat of Christ!

Let us therefore seek that the Holy Spirit may be poured upon ourselves, our families and congregation, that Christ may be made precious to us and that, in Him, we may obtain everlasting salvation. "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you" (Lk 11:9). Only by an outpouring of the Spirit from on high can the wilderness begin to blossom as the rose and the captivity of Zion be returned, so that those who go forth weeping, bearing precious seed, may return rejoicing, bringing their sheaves with them.

With best wishes for your spiritual and temporal welfare.

Book Review

Jan Hus, Reformation in Bohemia, by Oscar Kuhns and Robert Dickie, Published by Reformation Press, paperback, 208 pages, £9.75, obtainable from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

Hus (c1369-1415) was one of the best-known reformers before the Reformation; he was almost as prominent as John Wycliffe in England (c1325-1384). Indeed Hus was very much influenced by Wycliffe's writings. The book begins with two chapters giving the historical background to Hus's life and witness. He became a prominent preacher in Prague, then the capital city of Bohemia and now capital of the Czech Republic. The Foreword summarises his early career: "Hus denounced the moral degeneracy and corruption of the clergy and bishops, and eventually even the papacy itself. He contended for the laity to receive wine in the Eucharist."

Like Luther, Hus opposed the sale of indulgences. Hus declared that "the whole system of selling indulgences [was] utterly at variance with the spirit of Christ and the teaching of the gospel". His influence arose in large part from his position as preacher in the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague; particularly important was his influence on the students of Prague University. His sermons "showed the contrast between the teachings of Christ as seen in the Gospels and the whole system of the Roman Catholic hierarchy". It was while preacher in the Bethlehem Chapel that Hus had his eyes "opened to see the whole truth as it is in Christ Jesus. In preparing for his sermons, he studied the Bible thoroughly, and more and more he realised how great the

contrast was between the gospel and the Church of his own day. . . . He thus laid the foundation of that unshakeable principle, that the Bible alone is the only code of the Christian life, a principle that was later to lead him to the stake.”

In 1410 Hus was excommunicated, but his followers enthusiastically supported him and large crowds continued to come to hear him preach. Later he had to leave Prague and, like Luther holed up in a castle, used his time to translate part of the Bible into Bohemian.

Hus appealed to a general council against the decisions of the Roman Catholic authorities. When such a council was called to meet in Constance in 1414, Hus was invited to come and was promised a safe conduct by the Emperor. Some days after arriving in Constance, Hus was arrested. When examined by a commission appointed by the Council, he refused to confess any errors; “he constantly declared that he would only recant if they would show him to be in error, based on the Scriptures”.

Worn out and ill after months of imprisonment, Hus first faced the Council in June 1415. Several attempts were made to force him to recant, even of doctrines that he had never held, but in the end he was condemned to be burnt at the stake – in spite of the safe conduct promised by the Emperor, who was present at his trial. As the wood was being piled up around him, Hus confessed, “The chief aim of all my preaching, writing and acts was that I might save men from sin. And today I am willing and glad to die for that truth of the gospel which I have taught, written and preached.”

A chapter is devoted to the story, over a considerable period of time, of Hus’s followers, known as Hussites, which is recounted in some detail. It is largely an account of military conflict.

Hus no doubt did considerable good in his time, particularly through his preaching. Also significant was his effect, about 100 years later, on Luther, who stated, “In my opinion Jan Hus bought with his own blood the gospel which we now possess”.

The book was first published in 1907; its original author, Oscar Kuhns, was an American professor. Dr Dickie, a Free Presbyterian elder, has edited the book, providing considerable extra material “to give useful historical context and relevant topographical information”. A short guide to Czech pronunciation has also been included, to help with names. An appendix provides thumbnail biographies of the people referred to. It should be noted that Hus was not Reformed in some of his doctrines, but he is an important figure in church history because of his opposition to the corruptions of Rome and to many of her doctrines. Accordingly it is useful for us to learn something about him, and to read this book is an excellent way to do so.

Notes and Comments

No-Fault Divorce

Recent reports reveal that well-respected senior judicial figures are joining forces with *The Times* newspaper in an attempt to place “no fault” divorce onto the statute books of England and Wales – so seeking to bring them into line with the divorce laws in Scotland. They denounce what they call the “antediluvian, damaging” 50-year-old laws governing marital break-ups, asserting that they are unjust and outdated. *The Times*’ campaign to achieve sweeping reforms followed the release of a Nuffield Foundation report condemning existing divorce laws in England and Wales. The report maintained that current laws “forced” couples “to make false and exaggerated allegations of adultery or bad behaviour, causing bitterness and harm to children” during divorce proceedings.

Ironically this campaign claims to support the institution of marriage, stressing the necessity to “bolster family stability, end financial injustice and remove acrimony from divorce”. The changes sought include “scrapping fault-based divorce laws, allowing divorce within a year where both sides agree, and two where they do not – as in Scotland; ending the outdated . . . ‘meal ticket for life’ that can result from present laws on splitting assets and awarding maintenance after divorce”. Additionally there is a call to give pre-nuptial contracts the force of law, which they do not have at present. There is much cause for concern in these new proposals. If a couple (or even one of them) feels a pre-nuptial contract is necessary, perhaps they should be thinking twice before taking solemn marriage vows.

While reassessing the split of assets may, in some complex circumstances, have validity, the “no fault” scheme has a disturbing ring to it. Under the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 the only ground for divorce in England and Wales is very clear: the marriage must have irretrievably broken down. To prove that, the person desiring a divorce must produce at least one of five reasons. Two of these reasons are adultery and desertion – both based on fault. Does this not agree with the teaching of the Bible and with our subordinate standard, *The Westminster Confession of Faith*? Are these campaigners and their supporters forgetting God’s purpose in marriage or are they just conveniently bypassing it to conform to society’s current norms? Yes, there may be dishonest claims and acrimony between divorcing parties, but these are sins and should not be covered over. Every endeavour should be explored to get to the truth and save the marriage – not to end it as easily and swiftly as possible with no blame attached to either party.

Sadly the Law Commission supports the new proposals, having put pressure

on successive governments to change the law. Nick Hopkins of the Commission said: “We recommended the introduction of no-fault divorce decades ago. The law isn’t working as it should be and we stand by our recommendations in the recent past.” Last year more than 100 lawyers marched to Parliament calling for more liberal laws. Nigel Shepherd of Resolution, a 6000-strong association of family lawyers and advice workers in England and Wales, said, “Our members have met with MPs from all parties on this very issue and received an almost universally positive response”. The Justice Secretary is also on record as saying he is “open minded” about a change. He added that, although the Government itself is unlikely to have the parliamentary time to introduce a family law reform bill, he made it clear that it could support a private member’s bill. This would almost certainly receive the backing of Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs.

Coalition for Marriage (C4M), a leading British pro-marriage group, however, warns that weakening the law on marriage will cause great damage to society. It says that this campaign “would make divorce an administrative process that could not be defended in court by the abandoned party”. C4M fears that the introduction of no-fault divorce could result in the loss of 10 000 marriages a year and reduce the status of marriage “to that of a tenancy contract which can be dissolved at minimal notice”. It also cautions that weakening the law would put “the most vulnerable at risk” – for example, those who become disabled or suffer financial losses. Under current legislation they have protection and cannot be divorced on these grounds.

When these plans were mooted a few years ago, Sir Edward Leigh MP said that, while introducing “no-fault” divorce might appear a “common-sense thing to do”, it would have a “large, widespread and demonstrable effect” on society. Referring to Canada, which approved “no-fault” divorce in 1968, he warned that subsequently the divorce rate increased. He added, “Despite the obvious problems that sometimes occur in a marriage, the emphasis in recent years has been on strengthening marriage as an institution. Bringing in no-fault divorce, while seeking to ameliorate one problem, would undermine that new appreciation by making divorce easier, and thus [increase] the number of divorces. That is the crucial point.”

Andrea Williams of Christian Concern echoes these sentiments: “Divorce is obviously painful, but the right response is not to diminish the significance of break-up. Rather, we should work harder to encourage, support and equip people to thrive within marriage. As the evidence repeatedly shows, marriage provides the best outcome for adults, children and the wider community. This is not surprising, given that God designed it.”

We must go back to the Bible and to the *Westminster Confession*, which

states, “Nothing but adultery, or such willful desertion as can in no way be remedied by the church or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage” (24:6). Jesus solemnly declares in Matthew 19:9: “Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery”. The new proposals ride roughshod over these absolute biblical standards.

KHM

“Unkind and Destructive”

Rev Kelvin Holdsworth, the Provost of St Mary’s Episcopal Cathedral in Glasgow, has said that people should pray for Prince George to be homosexual in order to help the Church of England come to terms with same-sex “marriage”. This depraved and profoundly-ungodly idea is one further indication of how far the toleration and promotion of gross sin has advanced in Britain. It is evil enough when leading politicians use their influence to further the sin of Sodom, but when high-profile Church figures debase their office to such depths of iniquity, we may well tremble for the future of our society.

We entirely agree with the views expressed by Gavin Ashenden, a former chaplain to the Queen and a Christian Episcopal Church missionary bishop, who said the comments were not Christian: “To use prayer as a mechanism for wishing this on Prince George is an unkind and destructive thing to do It doesn’t have the Prince’s best interests at heart, but uses him as a gender-political football to please 1.7% of the population.” Mr Ashenden points out that it is now considered “totally unacceptable” to pray for people “to be free from being gay and to resume a sexuality that was in tune with their biology”. The words of Isaiah (5:20) are most applicable in this matter: “Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!” *AWM*

Free Church Film Review

A sad piece in the Free Church *Record* reviews a recent science-fiction film, comparing it with a film from 35 years ago to which it is a sequel. The purpose of the review is to show how the perspective on human life has changed over those 35 years. In the course of the review, brief descriptions are given of scenes of indecency, violence, and suffering in both films, but with no comment on the unsuitability of such material for public viewing. Even some of the language used in the review is unsuitable for a Christian publication.

The review speaks about “morality”, but says nothing whatever about Christ or religion. One wonders why it was included. The review itself is a

reflection of the age in which it was written and of the low state of Scottish Christianity – mesmerised by the world instead of looking up in faith to heaven. “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things” (Phil 4:8). *DWBS*

Church Information

Free Presbyterian Publications

Jared B Waterbury was a nineteenth-century American minister who, describing himself only as a “village pastor”, published a book entitled *Advice to a Young Christian*. The book took the form of a series of letters to a young female Christian; they are full of excellent spiritual advice and teaching. These letters were republished with editing – not least by updating the language – in 29 issues of *The Young People’s Magazine*, from 1999 onwards. The subjects covered include: “Read the Whole Bible”, “Study the Bible”, “Temptation and Prayer”, “The Danger of a Flimsy Christianity” and “So Rich a Reward”. These letters will prove helpful to those of any age who are young in the faith, and mature Christians too will find them very profitable. This excellent book has now been reprinted by Free Presbyterian Publications as a paperback of 115 pages and costs £6.75.

Another valuable book being reprinted is *Memorials of Charles Calder Macintosh*. It contains 23 sermons, a few fragments of sermons, as well as a biographical sketch and a “Sketch of the Religious History of the Northern Highlands”. Macintosh (1806-68) was a noted minister of Tain and Dunoon. This book, now scarce on the second-hand market, has been greatly appreciated. Further details will follow later.

Theological Conference 2017

It was the turn of the Glasgow congregation to host the 2017 Theological Conference over October 31 and November 1.

Rev J B Jardine was unable to complete his paper on the Temple as scheduled, so Rev A W MacColl stepped in to open the Conference on Tuesday afternoon with a paper on “Erasmus and Luther: the Debate over Divine Grace”. Although the Reformers were indebted to Erasmus for his scholarly work in producing an edition of the Greek New Testament and his witness against some of the errors in the Roman Catholic Church, he parted from Luther in maintaining that fallen man has power to turn to God and a will

capable of doing good. Luther held that fallen man was unable to return to God at any point. Erasmus' view led to a moralistic, legalistic system of salvation as opposed to the Lutheran view of the necessity of free grace.

Mr Matthew Vogan's paper on Tuesday evening, "The Early Reformation", traced the influence of the Word and illustrated this under the headings of the Word Discovered, Expounded, Defended, Translated, Circulated, and the Grace of the Word. Though he preached 4000 sermons, Luther said, "I did nothing. The Word did everything." Luther was helped in the translation of the Bible by Melanchthon and others, believing that "where the Word is, there is Christ". 3000 copies of the Bible were sold immediately and many editions were printed over the years. Luther's last words were in praise of the Word.

Rev A W MacColl's second paper, on Wednesday morning, was on "James Bannerman and *The Church of Christ*". Bannerman's divisions were the nature, power, functions and mode of governance of the Church. Different uses of the word *church* were identified and its true work as a witness to the Truth established. True power derives from the headship of Christ. The power exercised in discipline is spiritual and ministerial, not lordly. Dr MacColl quoted Bannerman as saying, "The right of conscience to be free from the commandments and authority of man is identical with the right of every man to obey God".

Rev D W B Somerset followed on Wednesday afternoon with a paper on "The Doctrine of Justification in Scotland before the Reformation." Dr Somerset noted that the term *righteousness* bore different meanings over the period studied. He then traced the biblical doctrine of justification from Abraham, through David to Paul, and the development of it from Luther (the righteousness of God), Melanchthon (imputation and renewal), to Calvin (obedience to Christ). Among its other errors, The Council of Trent condemned "faith alone" and confused justification with sanctification. Dr Somerset traced strands of Roman Catholic doctrine in the fabric of Scottish religious life, including one promoted by Archbishop Hamilton (in his *Catechism* of 1552), who held a correct view of salvation by faith alone, yet mingled it with error and persecuted Protestantism wherever it showed itself.

The final paper, on Wednesday evening, was presented by Mr Frank Daubney, on Ulrich Zwingli. Having described the political and religious background in Switzerland in Zwingli's time, Mr Daubney went on to note Zwingli's brilliance as a student, his fight against corruption and indulgences emanating from Rome, and his noble resistance to being drawn in to Rome's service, by the offer of high office. His meeting with Luther to discuss the Lord's Supper was poignant. With 14 of the 15 points of difference being resolved, no agreement was reached on the remaining point, and when Luther

departed, he refused to shake hands with Zwingli and left him in tears. Though he lectured his way through much of the New Testament and the Psalms, little survives of his literary heritage. Zwingli died on the field of battle, but the Reformation did not die and his name is in heaven above.

The discussion following each of the papers gave added value to the Conference. Though the numbers attending were disappointingly low, the quality of the papers was high and did not disappoint. Hopefully a wider audience will be found for the good work of preparation done, in the pages of this *Magazine* and on the Church website. JRT

Meetings of Presbytery (DV)

Asia Pacific: At Auckland, on Friday, January 26, at 9.30 am.

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

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

Northern: At Dingwall, on Tuesday, March 6, at 2 pm.

Western: At Lochcarron, on Tuesday, March 13, at 11 am.

Zimbabwe: At Bulawayo, on Tuesday, March 13, at 11 am.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:

General Fund: Estate of the late Euphemia Cameron, £5000.

Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund: Providence Strict Baptist Chapel, Irthlingborough, for Zimbabwe Mission, £555.

Congregational Treasurers acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:

Achmore: *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, £200.

Fort William: Anon, £500. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £25, £40.

Glasgow: Anon, for congregational car expenses, £5, £100 per Rev RML; Family of the late Margaret MacRae, £50; Estate of the late Miss Jamesina MacDonald, £1000. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £20. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £70, £60, £80, £65, £55, £70. *Magazines Fund:* Anon, £10.

Halkirk: N Pearce, £140. *Communion Expenses:* Friend, £90; Anon, £100.

Laide: Friend, Breascleite, £100; Friend, £10. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Friend, Breascleite, £150, £200; Friend, Ullapool, £10; Anon, Aultbea, £30, £30; Friend, Arrina, £40, £40; Friend, Shieldaig, £100; Friend, Holland, £10; Friend, Achgarve, £20; Isleview Residents, £3, £5; Isleview Residents, for Bibles, £4, £3, £5, £4. *Magazine Fund:* Anon, Aultbea, £30; Anon, Laide, £40; Friend, Mellon Charles, £20. *Sustentation Fund:* Anon, Aultbea, £40, £30, £30, £30; Friend, £10.

Lochcarron: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £50.

Ness: Anon, where most needed, £40, £100. Friend, Northern Ireland, £40 per Rev AWM. *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £60; IAM, £100.

North Harris: Anon, for Sabbath School outing expenses, £50, £20, £20, £20, £10; MacDonald Family, £250. *Communion Expenses:* LMA, £100; CMK, £20.

North Tolsta: Anon, where most needed, £40; Anon, £45. *Communion Expenses:* Friend of the Cause, £30; Mrs MacLeod, 10 New Tolsta, £40.

Portree: Anon, for Sabbath School books, £30; Estate of the late Calum MacPhee, £1000 per Rev IDM. *Bus Fund:* Anon, £10. *Jewish & Foreign Missions Fund:* Anon, £2000. *Sustentation Fund:* CMP, £20, £20 per Rev IDM.

Raasay: Anon, £50; Anon, In loving memory of the late Jessie Nicolson, £329.50.

Stornoway: *Communion Expenses:* Anon, £105, £20. *Eastern Europe Fund:* Anon, £130.

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. **Glendale** and **Vatten:** Sabbath 6pm, alternately. Thursday 7 pm, rotating between Struan, Vatten and Glendale. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- Dingwall:** Church, Hill Street: Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. **Beauty** (Balblair): Sabbath 6.30 pm, Thursday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr A MacLean: 01349 862855.
- Dornoch:** Sabbath 11.30 am. Manse tel: 01862 810615. **Bonar:** Sabbath 6 pm. Wednesday 7.30 pm (alternately in Dornoch and Bonar). **Laig:** Church and Manse; **Rogart:** Church; no F P services. Contact Mr A Sutherland; tel: 015494 02115.
- Dundee:** Manse. No F P Church services.
- Edinburgh:** 63 Gilmore Place, EH3 9NU, Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Thursday 7.30 pm. Rev D Campbell, 35B Barnton Avenue West, Edinburgh EH4 6DF; tel: 0131 312 8227, e-mail: dcampbell1560@gmail.com.
- 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. Rev WA Weale, F P Manse, Bridge Street, KW12 6YG; tel: 01847 831758. **Thurso:** Sabbath 5 pm; **Strathy:** Sabbath: 6.30 pm (first and third Sabbaths of month).
- Harris (North):** **Tarbert:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm. **Tarbert** and **Stockinish:** Tuesday 7.30 pm alternately. 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; Wednesday 7 pm. **Sheilebost:** as intimated. Manse tel: 01859 520271. Contact Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- Inverness:** Chapel Street, IV1 1NA, Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev K D Macleod BSc, 11 Auldcastle Road, Inverness, IV2 3PZ; tel: 01463 712872.
- Kinlochbervie:** Sabbath 6 pm; **Scourie:** Sabbath 11:30 am, Tuesday 7 pm (as intimated). Contact Mr A Ross; tel 01971 502099.
- 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 7.30 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; Thursday 7.30 pm (fortnightly). Manse tel: 01876 510233. Contact: Rev J B Jardine; tel: 01859 502253.
- 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.
- Raasa:** Sabbath 12 noon, 6 pm; Saturday 7 pm. Contact Rev I D MacDonald; tel: 01478 612110.
- 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 D Macdonald, 4 Clachan Road, 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 Briercliffe Road, Burnley, BB10 2DQ; tel: 01282 835800.
- Broadstairs:** Sabbath 11 am, 5 pm at Portland Centre, Hopeville Ave, St Peter's; Tuesday 7 pm at Friends' Meeting House, St Peter's Park Rd. Contact Dr T Martin; tel: 01843 866369.
- London:** Zoar Chapel, Varden St, E1. Sabbath 11 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Rev J MacLeod MA, 6 Church Ave, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6BU; tel: 0208 309 1623.

Northern Ireland

- Larne:** Station Road. Sabbath 11.30 am, 6.30 pm. 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; or Mr Gilbert Zekveld; tel: 519 363 5899. Manse tel: 519 363 2502.

Vancouver: Burnaby Community Room, 3605 Gilmore Way, Burnaby, BC, V5G 4X5. Sabbath 9.30 am, 6.30 pm. Contact: Mr Douglas Spratt, tel: 604 990 4051, or Mr David Kuiper; tel: 519 363 0367. E-mail: info@fpchurchvancouver.ca.

USA

Santa Fe, Texas: Church and Manse, 4031 Jackson St 77517. Sabbath 10.30 am, 6.30 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Contact Mr Joseph Smith; 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 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev G B Macdonald BSc, 60 Hamilton St, Riverstone, NSW 2765; tel. (02) 9627 3408; e-mail: sydneyfpchurch@aapt.net.au.

New Zealand

Auckland: 45 Church Street, Otahuhu. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev J D Smith, 9 Pedlar Place, Conifer Grove, Auckland; tel: 09 282 4195.

Gisborne: 463a Childers Road. Sabbath 11 am, 6 pm; Wednesday 7.30 pm. Rev C Hembd, 14 Thomson St, Gisborne 4010; tel: 06 863 3140.

Tauranga: 45 Cliff Road, Sabbath 11 am, 7 pm; Wednesday 7 pm. Contact: Mr Dick Vermeulen; tel: 075443677.

Wellington (Carterton): 124 High Street North, Carterton. 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: Ingwenya Mission, Private Bag T5445, Bulawayo.

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

New Canaan: Church.

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

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