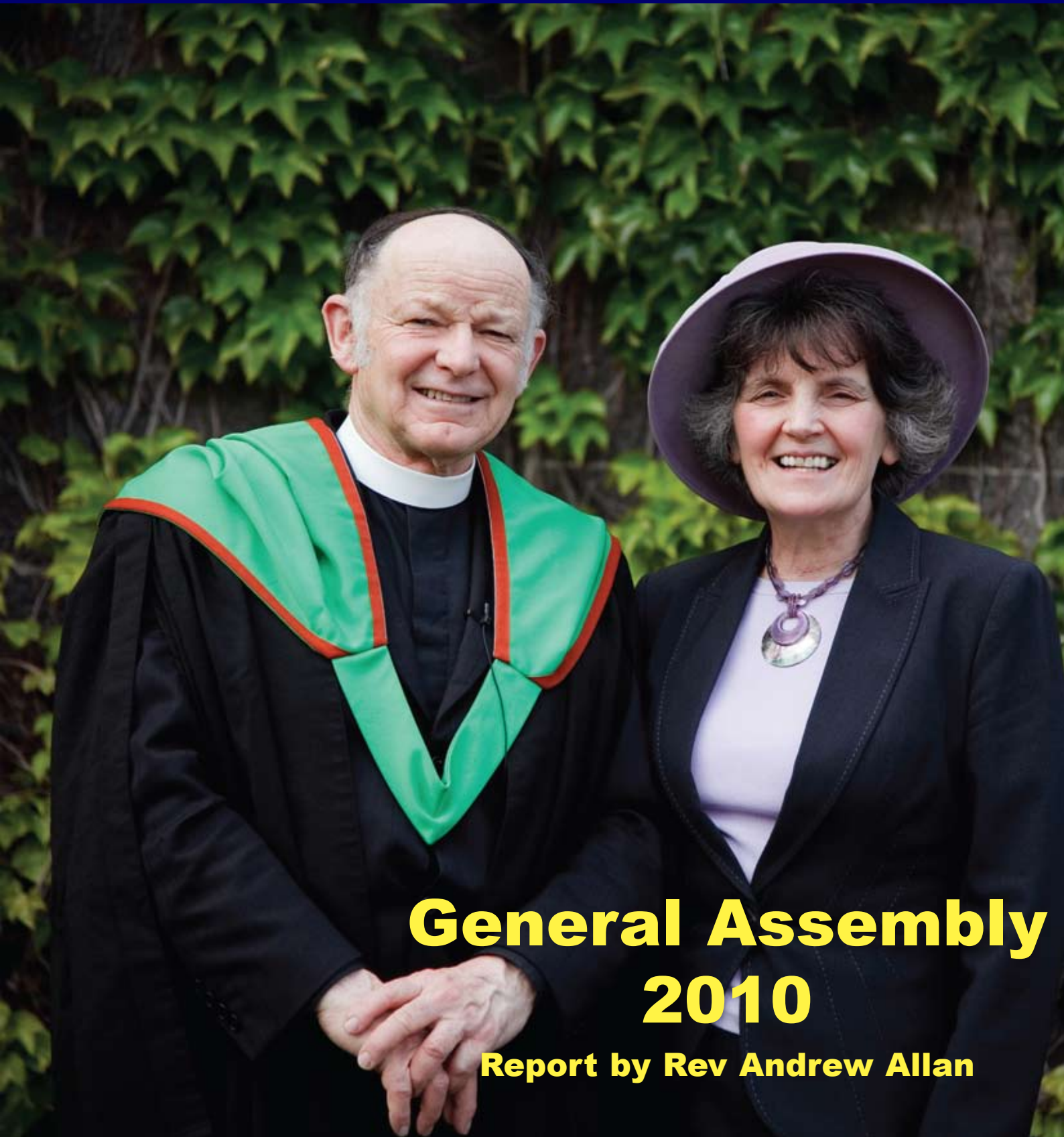


Free Church **Witness**



JULY/AUGUST 2010 ISSUE



General Assembly 2010

Report by Rev Andrew Allan



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God's Judgment

Why is the church growing in some lands and not in others? Think of China, Brazil and Zambia, to give just one example from three different continents. None can doubt that the number of born-again Christians in these lands is increasing rapidly. Then turn to look at Scotland. The last 100 to 150 years has seen a steady decline in the number of true Christians. When I began my ministry 35 years ago the Free Church was at least twice the present size of the combined two churches which have descended from it. The Church of Scotland has also halved in size. The same could be said of the other churches in our land. The Charismatics have gone through various cycles of growing and disintegrating. Gifted personalities, often with emotional contemporary music, attract a crowd for a while. This is often at the expense of other congregations. But then there is a split or a scandal and usually the church disappears. It is relatively rare to hear of conversions and to see genuinely changed lives. Why? And why is it that ministers who have struggled for years in this country, when they go abroad to other lands sometimes see dramatic blessing? Others who have experienced church growth in America come to Scotland expecting to usher in a new reformation or national revival only to return home disillusioned after a number of months or years. Britain is spiritually hard. I heard of one man who planted a church in Algeria and saw it flourish in that Muslim country into a congregation of 150. He then came to Liverpool to try to start a church but was broken-hearted at the lack of response. Why?

Church Growth is God's Work

Genuine church growth is the work of God. No one can convert a single soul by himself. The Bible teaches unconditional election and that only those whom God has predestinated will be saved. Effectual calling and the new birth are the work of God alone. Jesus said, 'I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it' (Mt.16:18). Some preachers have great gifts and speak with amazing eloquence but as Paul states: 'My speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God' (1Cor.2:4-5). It takes the power of God to save. Converts made by eloquence, persuasiveness, or the minister's charming personality will not last.

God withdraws His blessing

We are told that the wind of the Spirit blows where He desires (Jn.3:8) but that does not mean that it is completely random. God has His plan and there is a pattern to His work. As sovereign Lord He chooses to bless one country or district at one time and another place at another time. Church history reveals God moving His work from one place to another. Revivals come to different countries.

But also, in studying the Scriptures, it becomes plain that God reveals His mercy to Israel more in one century than another. There is such a thing as chastisement and also trial. God is grieved at His people's sins and their hardening of their hearts. He withdraws His blessing. At certain times His judgment comes upon His people. Cycles of judgment and blessing were particularly obvious in the days of the judges. In the letters to the churches in Asia there is a warning of the removing of the candlestick (Rev.2:5). There can be no doubt that God did remove His candlestick from Ephesus. The church there completely disappeared. Surely that is a warning to us in Britain today. As we labour to communicate the Gospel the blessing is not there.

The Cause of Judgment

In Ephesus the judgment came because they left their first love (Rev.2:4). Is that not the case with us today also? Where is our love for Christ? We love our families, our homes, our possessions, our pleasures, our selves. People grudge giving a whole Sabbath to God. Few serious Christian books are read. Fellowship has to be organised. Little time is spent wrestling with God in prayer. Fasting is almost unheard of. Spare time is spent in front of a television or computer screen. It's amazing how quickly the hours pass. There is just time for a quick prayer and off to bed. God is jealous. A girlfriend knows something is wrong if her boyfriend spends less and less time with her. Do we love God with all our heart and soul and strength and mind? We ought to (Mk.12:30). Are we not backsliders and does God not have every right to withdraw from us in judgment?

Response to Judgment

Our duty is to repent and do the first works (Rev.2:5). Search your own heart as an individual Christian. See where you have departed from the ways of the Lord and return to Him. Confess your faults to God. Lay hold by faith on the blood of Christ. Seek the grace of God to change your priorities and paths. Consider the love of Christ and let that love constrain you to new obedience. Our love arises out of His love for us (1Jn.4:19). But also as congregations and denominations we ought to humble ourselves before the Lord and return to Him in repentance. Pray to Him to return and revive His own cause amongst us. At the end of the day we are helpless to return to Him but we must pray with the Psalmist: 'Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?' (Ps.85:6).

Wait for God

Since we are under God's judgment some would argue that all we can do is sit tight waiting for God to have mercy on us and to return to save us. However when the Psalmist speaks of waiting on God, eg in Psalm 40, he was certainly not inactive. He cried and he trusted. We must pray to the Lord

for deliverance. The Ninevites cried mightily to the Lord (Jonah 3:8). What an example they are to us! Also the work for God must continue. We must preach the Word, evangelise and witness for the Lord. Even although we see nothing happening yet we must continue to sow the seed. There may at present be a famine but one never knows when the Lord

may choose to send the refreshing showers. Though little is happening yet one here, and one there, is born again. We must not despise the day of small things. What a marvellous blessing it is to be used even in a minor way in the salvation of one soul! That is worth a lifetime of labour. Remember 'Your labour is not in vain in the Lord' (1Cor.15:58).

THE GOSPEL

Oh! What a wonderful story,
Of a Saviour who died on the cross;
Of the suffering, the pain and the agony,
For the loved ones He knew that were lost.

Oh! What a wonderful story,
When I can just stand here and see;
The suffering, the pain, and the agony,
Was God's love manifest all for me.

Oh! What a wonderful story,
When I know that He rose from that pain;
And He's waiting in heaven forever,
To bring me back home once again.

Oh! What a terrible story,
If it were never now to be told;
Our children would never come to hear it,
And we would only grow old.

So tell it again my dear brothers,
Shout it out loudly and clear;
Let the whole world come to know Him,
The Saviour that we hold so dear.

Shout it out clearly my brothers,
Not a word of the story must you waive;
For though I am soon bound for heaven,
I have a dear child not yet saved.

James Frew Snr.

He wrote this poem in 1986 and passed into glory 24th May 2010

Antichrist: The Biblical Doctrine (Part IV)

Rev Malcolm H Watts

In the last issue of this magazine we examined further the Apostle's teaching on the 'Antichrist', or 'Man of Sin', as found in 2 Thessalonians 2 looking at verses 5-7. In this final study we consider verses 8-12.

The Pope's Supremacy Verse 8

'And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.'

After the removal of the Emperor, 'that Wicked' – more literally, 'that Lawless One' – will 'be revealed'. The term 'Lawless One' may at first sight simply suggest a rebel and rebellion, but true as that is of Antichrist, it does not seem to bring out the term's full meaning. It rather indicates that, in virtue of his office, he will be 'himself above law', that is, exempt from law, subject to no rule except his own.

Now let us hear various Roman authorities concerning the Pope's supremacy. Thomas Aquinas, a leading theologian for Romanists, wrote: 'The Pope by divine right hath spiritual and temporal power, as supreme King of the world'. Lucius Ferraris, who produced a standard work on Roman Catholic doctrine in the 18th century, states that 'The Pope is of so great authority and power, that he can also modify, declare, or interpret the divine Law'.

Judge of all

In Rome's *Canon Law* – Rome's Statute Book or Code – we find such statements as the following: 'The bishop of Rome is not bound to any decrees, but he may compel, as well the clergy as laymen, to receive his decrees and canon laws'. 'The yoke which the holy chair imposes must be borne, although it may seem unbearable'. 'If the Pope ... draws down with himself innumerable people by heaps into hell, and plunges them with himself into eternal torments, yet, no mortal man may presume to reprehend him, forasmuch as he is judge of all, and is judged of no-one'.

As to the claims of various Popes, we give just a small sample. Gregory IX (1148-1241): 'In the things which he (the Pope) wills, his will is taken for reason; nor is there anyone to say to him: 'Why dost thou this?' for he can dispense with the law; he can also turn injustice into justice by correcting and changing the law, and he has the fullness of power'. Innocent III (1160-1216): 'We can dispense from law, according to our plenitude of power over law'. Benedict XIV (1675-1758): 'To the Pope it belongs to declare, in what circumstances the divine precept ceases to oblige'.

Above the Law

Has the Papacy decreed laws, even such as were contrary to divine Law? Indeed it has. In its Catechisms it has expunged the Second Commandment to allow for the adoration of images, dividing the Tenth to make up the number Ten. It has overthrown our Lord's command to administer the Supper with bread *and* wine, denying the people the latter element; and it has imposed celibacy on its clergy contrary to the clear teaching of Holy Scripture. Furthermore, it has actually decreed doctrines which the Christian Church never recognized or believed before: for example, the Immaculate Conception, that Mary was born without original sin (1854); the Infallibility of the Pope, that, when he speaks and defines doctrine *ex cathedra* he speaks truth without error (1870); and the Assumption of Mary, that her body was taken to heaven and there enthroned (1950).

Yes, certainly, the Pope is above law. The evidence proves that he is a law to himself.

The apostle further tells us that 'the Lord shall consume (analosai – literally, 'cause to waste away') the Antichrist, 'with the spirit of his mouth' – a reference, it seems, to Isaiah 11:4, 'he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked' (cf Rev.19:15). This denotes the *gradual* weakening of the Papacy through the preaching of the Gospel, as accompanied by the power of the Spirit; and particularly since the time of the Protestant Reformation, Rome's power has been very considerably diminished. However the Man of Sin will continue (despite impairment) until the end of time when the Lord shall finally 'destroy (him) with the brightness of his coming'.

Satan's Miracles Verse 9

'Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders'.

The apostle proceeds to describe Antichrist more fully. 'Satan', he observes, is the one responsible for setting him up and for 'working' through him. Outside of this passage, this word translated 'working' (*energeia*) is always used of the Divine activity (eg Eph.1:19; 3:7; Col.1:29; 2:12), which strongly suggests that what Satan does in and through the Papal system is in direct *imitation* of and *opposition* to the Lord and his Church. Indeed, I believe it is true to say that this system is nothing less than Satan's grand device for the corruption of Christianity and the deception of the world.

A threefold description of miracles follows, as found in Acts 2:22; Rom.15:19; 2Cor.12:12; and Heb.2:4): namely, 'power (usually in the plural) ... signs ... and ... wonders'. According to Cardinal Bellarmine, the great protagonist of Rome, 'miracles' constitute 'one of the marks of the true church' and, accordingly, he asserts that the Church is not to be found among Protestants. Cardinal Newman (who 'converted' to Romanism in 1845) maintained the same doctrine, stating it in this way: 'It is agreed on both sides (Romanist and Protestant): the two parties join issue over a fact; that fact is the claim of miracles on the part of the Catholic Church; it is the Protestant's charge, and it is our glory'.

Amazing gullibility

In fact, Newman then proceeds to give his readers some examples of these incredible Romish 'miracles'. I can do no better here than to quote from his book: 'Crucifixes have bowed the head to the suppliant, and Madonnas have bent their eyes upon assembled crowds. St Januarius' blood liquefies periodically at Naples ... Women are marked with the sacred stigmata; blood has flowed on Fridays from their five wounds, and their heads are crowned with a circle of lacerations ... St Francis Xavier turned salt water into fresh for five hundred travellers; St Raymond was transported over the sea on his cloak; St Andrew shone brightly in the dark...' – and so Newman continues, with amazing credulity and gullibility.

If space allowed, details could be given of the so-called 'miracles' at Lourdes, Fatima, Conyers and Medjugorje; the Turin shroud with its vague imprint of a human body (which Rome falsely claims to be the dead body of Christ); and the candidates for 'canonisation', or 'sainthood', each of whom must have performed at least four 'miracles'.

What are we to make of all this? There can be little doubt that the devil with his supernatural power *can* effect some miraculous things. However the apostle writes here of 'miracles' which are simply 'lying wonders'. The word 'lying' (pseudos) qualifies not 'wonders' only, but also 'power' and 'signs'. All three are 'lying', not merely in the sense that they are wicked shams, but in that they induce people to believe what is patently untrue (Mariolatry, adoration of images, prayers to the dead, and so on).

Deceit Verse 10

'And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved'.

The Antichrist works through 'all deceivableness of unrighteousness', which means 'unrighteousness dressed up in the garb of righteousness, a false faith under profession of the true' (E B Elliott).

Romanism is a deceit through and through. In addition to what has already been noted, take, for example, Peter's alleged connection with Rome: the only early reference before AD 325 to Peter being Bishop of Rome is in the 'Clementine Homilies', which even Rome now rejects as a complete forgery. A deceit!

Then there is the 'Donation of Constantine', supposed to be Constantine's expression of gratitude to Pope Sylvester on account of his being cured of leprosy which granted to the Pope and his successors the city of Rome and other parts of Italy; however, the first mention of this in any historical record is in a letter from Pope Hadrian and written in AD 777. Another deceit!

We come now to the 'Isidorian Decretals', a collection of Epistles purporting to have been written from AD 90 to AD 385, which advanced the Roman Pope to unprecedented power, and by which Pope after Pope claimed power over Monarchs and Kings. These 'Decretals', however, originated about AD 800 and were totally 'false documents'. Yet Rome has unashamedly used them. Yet another deceit!

No wonder Paul writes of 'all deceivableness of unrighteousness'. As a result of such deceits, Rome has a large and devoted following among 'them that perish', who are duped into believing such things because they receive not the truth, being wholly destitute of 'the love of the truth', through which alone 'they might be saved'.

Strong Delusion Verse 11

'And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie'.

On account of men's wilful and persistent rejection of truth, God sends them 'strong delusion': that is, He judicially gives them up so that they fall under the power of their error. The result is that 'they ... believe a lie'. That is what Romanism is. It is 'a lie'.

It is a lie to say that: Roman Catholicism is authentic Christianity, that the Rule of Faith includes Ecclesiastical Tradition, that the Pope is the Vicar (Substitute) of Christ, that Images may be adored, that Mary reigns as Queen of Heaven, that Saints may be invoked in prayer, that Justification before God involves good works, that Baptism effects regeneration with removal of Original Sin, that Forgiveness is obtained through Priests, that Bread and Wine can be transubstantiated (or changed) into Christ's very body and blood, that Purgatory exists and for the purposes of punishing and expiating sin, and so on. Tragically, Romanism is one great and awful 'lie'.

Soul Destroying Verse 12

'That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness'.

The passage concludes with the warning that rejection of biblical truth and infatuation with this particular false religion constitutes a sin both soul-condemning and soul-destroying.

This prophecy in 2 Thessalonians 2 – 'the Divine testimony regarding Popery' – has to be taken extremely seriously. In the light of it, we must not be deceived by scheming Ecumenists, compromising Protestants, or beguiling Romanists. Rather, let us hold fast the doctrines of the Reformation, showing ourselves to be, in heart and in life, on the side of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore steadfastly opposed to the Antichrist.

The Crossing

Rev Bill Scott

Retiring Moderator

Sermon preached at the opening of the General Assembly 2010



‘And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over’
(Joshua 3:1).

Surely the most exciting thing about an open Bible is coming with a child-like expectancy – what will the Lord show me in this passage, in this verse, in this word? There are many things in the Scriptures that we think we know. There are many things in the Bible we don’t know, but there are many things that we cannot help but know. The spies had returned from their mission. Their report was accepted as from the Lord. Joshua began the preparation for crossing into the land of promise and a new and altogether different life. Many lessons are found in these verses.

The Organisation before the Crossing vv.1-4

‘So the two men returned, and descended from the mountain, and passed over, and came to Joshua the son of Nun, and told him all things that befell them.’ In their telling and in the way they told, the animation of their voices, the wonder of God’s over-ruling hand, the thankfulness of His providing, all of that and more just flowed from their testimony. ‘Truly the Lord hath delivered into our hands all the land; for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us’ (Josh.2:23-24). There isn’t room for doubt when God delivers what He has promised – the Lord hath, not might, not will, but the Lord has delivered the land and all the land into our hands.

Now Joshua didn’t sit back, as we might. He had to move and move quickly. God had opened up a way for His people and He would keep it open as long as they moved forward to claim and draw down His promise. Joshua acted at once. He had been waiting for news from the Lord of His dealing with the people of Canaan and when he recognised the fact of God’s hand working, he had believed God to provide. He believed the Lord had opened up the way to that place.

The removal from Shittim v.1 – Shittim wasn’t a healthy place. It was where Israel sinned with the daughters of Moab who had enticed God’s people into idol worship. It was not the place for God’s people to be. They would have to leave, have to get out.

This doesn’t mean we have to move, but it does mean we have to change our lifestyle day by day. The important thing wasn’t the removal from Shittim but the removal of Shittim

from the hearts of God’s people. This is what matters. This is where God’s Word makes a critical assessment of us when we open it and read it and it reads us. Not so much, what is this verse saying to me but what is my life saying to it!

The removal from Shittim is the getting away from the way we lived without God and without hope in this world. It’s the laying aside of every weight and the sin that hinders us getting to Christ. It’s casting aside everything in our lives that keeps us from growing in grace and that keeps Christ from us. God gives us the green light – the spies are back – God has worked in the hearts of others. We have got to remove from Shittim – from the sinful place – put it away from us – the spirit of judging – the hardness of heart towards our brethren.

God’s people were getting out of Shittim, getting rid of ways that had crept into their hearts and gave them no peace. They were going to the land of rest, but we don’t rest harbouring resentment, distrust, pride and a closed mind. Oh the kindness of our Lord in telling us ‘let not the sun go down on your wrath!’

The renewal of a search vv.2-3 – Note Numbers 10:33: ‘And they departed from the mount of the Lord three days’ journey: and the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them in the three days’ journey to search out a resting place for them.’ Here in Joshua 3:3 the leaders of the people said to them, When you see the ark of the covenant, the ark of the promise-keeping God, begin to move, then ‘Get up and follow it’. Until now all they did was move out of Shittim, but now even the effects of Shittim were to be expelled from their very hearts and minds. The search had to be renewed. There remains the keeping of an eternal Sabbath before us. At times we need so much to be jolted out of our complacency; to be reminded that we are a holy people and heavenbound. This world and its ways are not for us. The keeping of that Sabbath rest is to be fought for. We need to renew the search.

The reminder of a space v.4 – On the spies’ return Joshua acted at once because he believed God. He didn’t ask for more time to let the Jordan floods subside. He didn’t ask for an alternative route. He didn’t call for the committee report, the Committee on Crisis in the Contemporary Situation. He knew the situation. He was aware of the crisis. But he believed and trusted God, and God’s way with His people in the past. Without argument or delay he got the people ready to move,

"The consequences of this crossing reach down to us today; eternal consequences, because God was working His will for the salvation of sinners."



Rev Bill Scott with Rev Greg MacDonald

but to move at a distance. He reminded them of a space. They all had to hold back from the ark so that all could see it and be encouraged: that they would know God was leading each and every one. They all required to remember God is holy, righteous and sovereign. That space spoke of God being with them and yet it warned them never to presume. It led them to faith, trust and dependence on His grace. Many would turn the ark, even God's Word, into an idol and worship it instead of Jehovah. That distance encouraged them and demanded faith in their Lord who works not by might, nor by power but by His Spirit. We believe for what the Lord will yet do and yet give in abundance. Even the choice saint who is so 'far ben' with his Lord is the very one who reminds us of the space between the sinner saved and His Saviour.

The Consecration of the Crossing vv.5-13

This whole crossing while military in style is much more than that, much more than the taking over of land by a tiny upstart nation. The consequences reach down to us today; eternal consequences, because God was working His will for the salvation of sinners. He was working what would ensure the salvation of His loved ones. He would present His Son to be our Saviour in due time in history through the preservation of His chosen people Israel.

The spiritual preparation of the people v.5 – Of course it required leaders to organise the people for the march, but Joshua had a word for all: 'Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you.' 'A broken and a contrite heart' is the preparation for God to do wonders among us. Joshua, his leaders and the priests could do so much, but they and the people – none exempted, none excused – must see to the cleansing of their own heart. Joshua would see to the external organisation but the individual had to see to his heart before the Lord.

There comes a time when a believing father must stand before the Lord and say of his children: 'They are of age: ask them, search their hearts'. A time for the pastor to say to the Lord: 'They must now speak for themselves: try them and see where their heart's love lies. Ask them if they have repented and love the Gospel. Ask them if they trust Christ and only Christ. They are of age, ask them. Ask them if they are ready to cross Jordan's river'.

The sincere obedience of the priests v.6 – The priests amaze us. There is no suggestion of doubt or fear. They knew the score. They knew what was expected of them and they were sincerely willing to do what was asked of them – take up the ark – the very presence of God and go before God's people. They carried God's presence to God's people and went before them to show them the way with the Lord, and to show them how to walk in the way with Him. If the ark of the covenant signified God with them, with all His holiness and power and hatred of sin, it also spoke of the fact of faith that demanded trust and obedience from them. Could they trust God to keep His Word, and would they walk God's way as He asked of them? The priests showed the way: as brethren, we must show the way, walking together, trusting and in obedience, ever as examples to follow. And as we will be searched by the Lord and scrutinised by those who will hear and see us in our coming together.

The special awareness of Joshua vv.7-13 – Joshua was ever aware of two things: his responsibility to the Lord and under God to His people. V.7 'And the Lord said to Joshua...', v.9 'And Joshua said unto the children of Israel...' Joshua was aware of God's hand upon him in a very special way – God had called him to lead. God would justify that choice. As the Lord had been with Moses who brought them up out of Egypt on their way to the new land, so Joshua would lead them over Jordan into that land. Both were God's leaders in very different ages and situations. Joshua had the authority of the man, chosen by the Lord, and living close to the Lord, 'acknowledging the Lord in all his ways'. The man who is heard and heeded when he says: 'Come near and I will tell what the Lord has done for my soul'. 'Come hither and hear the words of *the Lord your God*' (v.9).

And Joshua gave them words of comfort, of reassurance, of hope and of exhortation. They believed and trusted him because they could see that he knew the Lord. He was in touch with God. God had his hand on Joshua's life. So they trusted the man of God in what he said, v.10: 'Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you, and that he will without fail, drive out from before you the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Hivites, and the Perizzites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Jebusites. Behold the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.'

‘**The Lord of the whole earth**’ – the God of the unconverted, of the atheist and humanist, of the blasphemer and the back-slidden believer – all are under the hand of God and will do His bidding. We must show them God and from His Word preach them Christ and Him crucified by life and lip.

Joshua knew the Lord of the whole earth and the people knew that, and were comforted to obey the Lord.

The Completion of the Crossing vs: 14-17

Now that moment of truth that shows us;

The willingness of the people v.14 – They left tents, poor strongholds, but the only place of safety they knew, to follow the Lord of the whole earth across a swollen, flooded Jordan and the hostile enemy beyond. They were willing to follow God’s Word. It was their moment to trust their God to keep His Word, and vindicate His choice of them before all the earth.

These moments come to us day by day – they will come to us in the Assembly – moments to cast ourselves on the Word of God in trust and obedience. They are moments to prove ‘His grace is sufficient’. Moments ‘to knock’ and ‘to have the way opened to us’. Moments of mercy to receive, in the obedience of trust. Or, shall we linger in our tents of unbelief, of sin, of doubts and fears, nursing grievances and unforgiving, afraid to speak our minds in love, unwilling to trust the Lord of the whole earth. God is able – are we willing? The people were.

The example of the priests vv.14-15 – Is our situation any worse? They faced a flooded Jordan overflowing its banks, threatened by the raging torrent. Yet, the priests carried the ark, the most sacred thing they had, into these waters. We don’t know fully the waters raging before us but we know that if by waiting on the Lord we discover the word is go forward, then that is where we must go, else we will never know peace or prosperity as a Church.

Many and varied are the examples from our Bibles and from the history of the church of Jesus Christ, of those who walked by faith and obedience to God’s Word, promise and warning. Hebrews chapter 11 tells of Abraham, Jacob,

Moses, Rahab, who ‘all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth’. For ‘they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them...’

Brethren is God ashamed of us?

The priests, their leaders in holy things, went forward in faith and the people followed by faith in the Lord God of the whole earth.

The openness of the passage vv.16-17 – As soon as the priests’ feet got wet, the flood was held back – the Jordan river was stopped and the way was made clear and safe to God’s people.

God had laid down one condition: faithful obedience to His Word. Today, the Lord lays before us nothing less and nothing more. The Lord knows the way through whatever difficulties lie ahead of us – not under them, over them, or around them, but through them. He opened the passage. He led the way.

‘And the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.’

Of course many were afraid – men for the womenfolk, mothers for their little ones, young ones for the helpless – of course they encouraged and helped each other, of course they were thankful for the example of the priests – but they each of them looked to the Lord. They all passed over.

I was missing something in these last verses and that was a mention of Joshua. There is none. But that is not so strange, for Joshua was no different. He too had to trust and obey – the condition was the same for him – the dangers were the same for him – the man of God who ‘rose early in the morning’.

Home Mission Worker

Donald John Morrison – Assembly Address

Recently I was deeply convicted and challenged by words that forcefully shook me. The words should shake us all: ‘If sinners must be damned I pray that they have to swim through the rivers of our tears to get there. So long as sins are sending souls to hell, our hearts should send tears to our eyes. It is far easier to complain that souls are going to hell than it is to have compassion on

these very souls that are going there.’ These words convey a powerful picture of a missionary who wept for souls and had deep compassion for the lost. Whether we are ministers in the pulpit or Christians in the pew, this kind of spirit is one we must all cultivate and wholeheartedly embrace; tears for the lost and a burden for souls. Our prayers must also be accompanied by our witnessing and evangelising. ‘A true

witness delivereth souls.' True religion consists chiefly in our love to God and our love to man.

Paul's Passion

The Bible assures us that this was what was uppermost in Paul's heart and prayers in the work to which God had called him. On his missionary journeys we read that he served the Lord 'with all humility of mind, and with many tears.' 'I made myself', he said, 'servant unto all that I might gain the more.' In other words he became all that he could possibly become in this world to win souls for Christ. 'I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.'

It is a desperately sad statistic that Christian men and women in 2010 seem to have forgotten who saved them, why they were saved and what they were saved from. 'Remember ye were once a bondsman in Egypt but the Lord redeemed thee.' Paul never forgot that he was a saved man – saved by the grace and mercy of God – saved by the love and salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ. And his greatest ambition in life was to win souls for His Master. 'He that winneth souls is wise.' Christian friend, what is your greatest ambition?

We live in days when, sadly, the last thing many professing Christians want to do is win souls. They do not want to exchange their comfortable lifestyle, cosy surroundings or worldly security for anything that interferes with their 'Christianity'. The world's song seems to be the Christian's song as well. 'Let us eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow we die.' The church is at ease in Zion – asleep in the wilderness and appearing to play out its easy part in religion, like actors on a stage. She no longer has an appetite for the salvation of souls or a vision for the cause of Christ, with the dire consequences that 'without a vision the people perish'. You and I might rightly ask, What's gone wrong? Who's gone wrong? How have things gone wrong? Surely the words of Bonar ought to arrest, alarm and arouse us: 'I looked', he said, 'for the church and I found it in the world; and I looked for the world and I found it in the church.'

My Hero

A man with a great missionary vision once said that 'the spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions, and the nearer we get to Him the more intensely missionary minded we become.' I am often carried away by the spirit of one man who was intensely missionary minded. The reason he was intensely missionary minded was because he was obsessed with this very spirit of Christ. In his life, in his heart and in his soul he lived for Christ and he worked for Christ. He had a heart-wrenching missionary spirit for the lost and he never lost it. To stir our hearts so that we might recapture our vision as a Church for the greatest and most noble cause on earth I want to reflect on the life of one man. We all have our heroes: Martin Luther, Thomas Chalmers, James Begg, John Knox, John Calvin. One of my heroes is David Brainerd. I love the man for who he was and what he did. I love the sacrificial spirit he had to win the unreached, the unchurched and the unsaved of his day. This godly and

zealous man of God forsook all of life's comforts to take the Gospel to the pagan Indians of North America. 'Here am I', he said, 'send me; send me to the ends of the earth; send me to the rough, the savage pagans of the wilderness; send me from all that is called comfort on earth; send me even to death itself, if it be but Thy service, and to promote Thy Kingdom.'

This very spirit was, sadly, very different to the spirit of a minister I recently met in my work as an evangelist in Edinburgh. As I pressed him to give an explanation of what it means to be 'born again', he retorted, 'That's simple. It means moral uprightness!'

It is said of David Brainerd that he did his greatest work by praying and weeping in secret. He spent many days in the depths of the forests all alone, unable to speak the language of the pagan and savage Indians. He spent whole days in prayer, praying simply that the power of the Holy Spirit might come upon him so greatly that the Indians would not be able to refuse the Gospel message. On hearing, on one occasion, that the Indians were planning to hold an idolatrous feast and dance, he spent a day and night in prayer. He writes: 'This morning about nine I withdrew to the woods for prayer. I wrestled for an ingathering of souls. I was in such anguish that when I arose from my knees I felt extremely weak and overcome. Sweat ran down my face and body ... I cared not how or where I lived, or what hardships I went through, so that I could but gain souls for Christ'. These were not empty words. He practised what he preached and he practised what he prayed.

He was frequently in distress for lack of food, was exposed to hunger and cold, was lost in the forests, caught in storms with no shelter available, spent nights in the woods, was constantly in danger from wild beasts and wild savages. He records one incident: 'About six at night I lost my way in the wilderness, and wandered over rocks and mountains, through swamps and most dreadful places. I was pinched with cold and distressed with an extreme pain in my head and stomach, so that much blood came from me. But God preserved me, and blessed be His name, such fatigues and hardships as these seem to wean me more from the earth and I trust will make heaven the sweeter.'

Many of the Indians would be in tears as they listened to him preach. After speaking for a short time to them about their souls and salvation, tears would flow among them producing many sobs and many groans. They would be in such great distress for their souls that some could neither leave the meeting nor stand up on their feet. They would lie on the ground crying out in anguish to God for mercy. One of the Indians who had intended to murder said to his chief, 'The paleface is a praying man. The Great Spirit is with him ... and he brings a wondrous sweet message.'

We continue to be reminded that significant financial sacrifices would inevitably have to be made if our church is going to survive. Whatever financial and administrative sacrifices are made the biggest and greatest sacrifice must be a spiritual one if we are to bring that same 'wondrous sweet message' of salvation to the perishing people of Scotland.

"As I travel across Scotland I see many things. One word sums up the scenes I often witness, both on the outside of houses and in the lives of those who live there – brokenness! As I see the social, moral and spiritual brokenness of the people I see the brokenness of human souls."



In his love for human souls Brainerd said: 'I care not where I go, or how I live, or what I endure so that I may save souls. When I sleep I dream of them; when I awake they are first in my thoughts – no amount of scholastic attainment, of able and profound exposition, of brilliant and stirring eloquence can atone for the absence of a deep impassioned sympathetic love for human souls.'

An Example of Need

As I travel across Scotland I see many things. One word sums up the scenes I often witness, both on the outside of houses and in the lives of those who live there – brokenness! As I see the social, moral and spiritual brokenness of the people I see the brokenness of human souls. Love for human souls is visibly absent. One incident, on the outskirts of Ayr, clearly reflected this. As I gave out tracts in a housing scheme there was brokenness everywhere: broken windows, broken doors, broken glass, broken homes, broken lives, broken hearts. I saw it all.

In one tenement block, as I was walking up the stair, I spoke to a little girl, about 9 or 10 years old. We walked together until I reached her flat. She shouted to her mum, who came to the door. This woman, with a bruised eye and battered face, was visibly shaken. I spoke to her about her soul and offered her a Good News magazine. On refusing, her daughter turned round to her and said, 'But mamma, it's good news. No-one comes here with good news. This nice man is bringing us good news, can we not just take it?' This little girl's words went through my heart as mum

surrendered to her pleading. As I continued up the flight of stairs, I heard a loud knock at the same door down below. As it opened again I was numbed by what I heard. As I listened to a ruthless man's threatening words I now realised why 'mamma' had been tense and scared. 'You owe me £50 which I had hoped to get today. You have 24 hours to find it. If you don't have it when I call again, I'll get rid of you. You know that I'm a man of my word. Others have found that out!'

There is only one thing that can restore and heal all that is falling apart around us and in the lives of people. It is the good news of Christ in the glorious gospel message. The gospel of God's grace can bring restoration and blessing out of brokenness. That news has to be spread north, south, east and west. To that end a mountain of literature was given out throughout the year in different languages. Around 22,500 gospel tracts in English, in addition to many foreign ones, were distributed along with 6,915 booklets and magazines. The bulk of these magazines were the Good News special evangelistic issue, which continues to be an extremely effective witnessing tool. Many copies were picked up, and countless conversations engaged in, at the 'table ministry' in Inverness throughout the year.

Friends, we are at ease in Zion and people are going to hell, and we need to waken from our deep slumber and deep sleep. We also need that spirit of brokenness in our hearts, along with the vision and compassion that David Brainerd had to reach out to the perishing around us.



Assembly Report

Rev Andrew Allan



The 2010 General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) was held at Liberton Kirk, Edinburgh from 17th to 20th May, when ministers and elders, Commissioners appointed from Presbyteries, gathered for four days of reports, debates and fellowship.

The proceedings began when the Rev William B Scott D.R.S.A.M., retiring Moderator, conducted worship and preached the opening sermon. Three portions of Psalm 66 were sung and Mr Scott read from Joshua chapter 2:23 to the end of chapter 3, choosing chapter 3 verse 1 as his text: 'And Joshua rose early in the morning; and they removed from Shittim, and came to Jordan, he and all the children of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over.'

The General Assembly recorded their thanks to the retiring Moderator for his sermon and his services in the Chair.

Election of a new Moderator

The General Assembly then proceeded to elect a new Moderator.

The Rev Kenneth Macdonald, Scalpay, proposed that Rev David S Fraser B.A. be asked to take the chair. This being seconded and agreed the former moderators then went to the vestry to announce this to Mr Fraser. They escorted him into the Assembly and presented him to Mr Scott who welcomed him on behalf of the house and invited him to take the chair. Mr Fraser then thanked Mr Scott for performing his duties as Moderator and for conducting worship.

Following this, Assembly papers were handed out including the 2010 Roll of Assembly, a note of Committees proposed to expedite the Business of the House and a draft agenda and timetable. Mr Derick Gillies was appointed Assembly Officer and Messrs Andrew Naylor, Leverburgh and Colin Crichton, Stornoway were appointed as Assembly Presentors.

Committee on Assembly Arrangements & Nominations (A)

The report of the Committee on Assembly Arrangements & Nominations (A) was presented by Mr Donald Mackay, Partick, in the absence of the convener, Rev James Clark, Knock and Point. Over the last 10 years some senior ministers have been approached but have refused to accept nomination as Moderator-designate and this has caused increasing difficulties for the Committee in fulfilling their remit of nominating a Moderator-designate. It was decided to revise the guidelines on suggestions for nomination as

Moderator-designate by reducing the number of years of prior service required to be considered for the Moderator-designate from twenty years to fifteen years, and this will be indicated to Presbyteries in due course.



Donald Mackay (Partick)

Moderator's Reception

The General Assembly then adjourned to the Anderson Hall, just across the road, for the Moderator's Reception.

As in previous years staff and trainees from the Catering Department of Jewel & Esk Valley College provided catering for the Commissioners. A good number, but noticeably less than in previous years, attended the Moderator's reception and sampled the excellent food provided by the College.

After partaking of the refreshments Mr Fraser asked a number of people to speak. First to take the floor was the Rev Robert W Josey, a Free Church College student with Mr Fraser. Mr Josey related several humorous incidents that he recalled and drew his speech to a close wishing the Moderator God's blessing during the days ahead. Next called to speak was the Rev Dr Richard Knodel. Dr Knodel, an American, made contact with Mr Fraser when he arrived in the country, as he was interested in street evangelism and had heard that Mr Fraser and his Shettleston congregation regularly undertake this form of evangelism. Dr Knodel was keen to see first hand how it was done in this country and also to join in. Dr Knodel spoke of Mr Fraser's infectious evangelistic zeal



Speakers at the Reception: Robert Josey, Richard Knodel, Alex Fraser, Matthew Fraser, Colin Wilson & Donald J. Morrison

and boundless energy which he has for all aspects of Gospel work. Then followed Mr Fraser's eldest son Alexander who spoke for some time relating humorous and not-so-humorous stories from the time when the Fraser family were resident in Africa and engaged in missionary work. Again Mr Fraser's energy, prayerfulness and dedication to missionary Gospel work were highlighted. The fourth speaker was another family member, the Moderator's son-in-law, Canadian Matthew Fraser, who is currently studying in the Free Church Seminary and is married to Mr Fraser's daughter Daisy-Joan. Matthew indicated that his father-in-law was a source of inspiration for him as he prepares for the Holy Gospel ministry. Then followed Mr Colin Wilson who is an elder and clerk to the Deacons' Court at Shettleston Free Church (Continuing), Glasgow. He spoke very highly of Mr Fraser's qualities as their minister. The last person Mr Fraser called to speak was Donald J Morrison, our Home Mission Worker, who has spent many a day with Mr Fraser and his congregation as they seek to evangelise the east of Glasgow. Mr Morrison humorously referred to the green hood that the Moderator was wearing, indicating that the Moderator must have spent too much time in West Central Scotland! On a serious note Mr Morrison reiterated the point made by several of the speakers testifying to David Fraser's zeal, boldness and commitment to Gospel work. The evening concluded when Mr Fraser read from Isaiah 25:6-9 and prayed.

Tuesday Morning

On Tuesday morning the Moderator took the Chair at 9.30am and conducted worship which included the singing of Psalms 100, 11 and 48: verses 10 to 14. The Scripture reading was from Isaiah 51 and the Moderator's Address was based on the topic of 'Foundations'. Following this the Junior Clerk, the Rev Graeme Craig, Stornoway, thanked the Moderator for his address and proceeded to read the Minutes of the previous day's sederunt. The Report of the Committee on Bills, Overtures etc., and the Report of the Business Committee were presented by Rev Harry J T Woods, Kilmorack & Strathglass and the Rev John J Murray, Edinburgh (Rtd) respectively. Thereafter there followed the Loyal & Dutiful Address to Her Majesty the Queen which was read by the Moderator as the Commissioners stood.



Rev John J Murray

Ecumenical Relations

The Report from the Committee on Ecumenical Relations was then presented by the Convener, the Rev John J Murray.

Rev Maurice J Roberts, Inverness, highlighted current ecumenical trends within the Reformed and Evangelical communities citing the Manhattan Declaration and the Westminster Declaration as developments that the Commissioners should be aware of.

The Rev John MacLeod, Tarbat along with the Moderator, had been appointed by the 2009 Assembly as delegates to the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) held in Christchurch, New Zealand in October 2009. Mr MacLeod was able to relate to the Commissioners that on this occasion there was a unanimous decision by the ICRC to receive the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) into full membership. This action was facilitated by the correspondence of the Ecumenical Relations Committee with the ICRC Interim Committee and the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt) (GKNV) and the Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (CGKN). Following the 2009 October Commission of Assembly the delegates were charged to make an appeal to any member church of the ICRC willing to act as a mediator to seek to find a solution to the differences with our separated brethren. Mr MacLeod indicated that the delegates have fulfilled



The Moderator & Rev John Ross (APC); Desmond Biggerstaff & Rev Gavin Beers; Precentors Colin Crichton & Andrew Naylor

their remit and have not compromised the fundamental principles of the FCC as defined by successive General Assemblies and Commissions. And furthermore the ICRC has an overwhelmingly sympathetic attitude towards our position.

The report was seconded and received by the House.

Delegates

During Tuesday afternoon greetings were received from the Rev John Ross, Edinburgh, representing the Associated Presbyterian Churches. In his address he asked the question, 'How can we become better leaders?' He sought to answer the question by urging the House to love God and to love our neighbours more. Following Mr Ross, Mr D P Rowland from the Trinitarian Bible Society was asked to address the Assembly. He brought the Assembly up to date with the current work of the Society highlighting a number of new staff who have recently joined the Society. Mention was also made that the Society are noticing the effect of the current economic climate. However the work of Scripture translation and distribution proceeds and the Society asked the brethren to remember this important work in prayer. Afterwards both delegates were warmly thanked by the Moderator, and each - and all subsequent delegates - were presented with a 'Worthy to be Praised' Volume 6 Psalm-Singing CD, and two new booklets published by the Publications Committee, *The Reformation 1560* by the Rev John J Murray, and *The Five Points of Calvinism* by the Rev John W Keddie.

There followed a number of letters of greetings which were referred to by the Principal Clerk and replied to as agreed by the House.

Committee on Finance & Sustentation

Following this, the Report of the Committee on Finance & Sustentation was presented by the Vice-convener Mr Desmond Biggerstaff, Edinburgh, who was deputising for the Convener, the Rev Murdo A N MacLeod, Partick. Mr Biggerstaff said that remittances from Congregations in 2009 were up by £20,260 (4%) on the previous year. This gave a total for 2009 of £572,152 of which £92,847 was recovered through Gift Aid. He noted it was a matter of concern for the Committee that as they reviewed the financial situation for 2009 the Church had no surplus funds over the year. Indeed, even after the receipt of a legacy, there was a deficit

of income over expenditure for the year of £83,076. This was largely due to exceptional legal costs and provisions of £126,750 and an increase of £63,834 in the Ministerial Stipend and Pension costs. Further significant deficits were predicted for this year and next. It was observed that such a situation cannot be sustained for any length of time and in order to address the problem of ongoing deficits, the Committee, at their meeting in March 2010, requested the General Treasurer (Designate) to prepare a discussion paper in order to assess what level of remittance would be required to allow a surplus of between £50,000 and £100,000 per annum.

An addendum by the Rev Graeme Craig was presented: 'The General Assembly instruct the Finance & Sustentation Committee to review and revise as appropriate the manner in which the various categories of Congregational Income are defined and calculated for remittances and statistical purposes. Further they direct the Strategy Committee to review and revise as appropriate the Schedules of statistics'. After deliberation and discussion the addendum was passed. It is expected that the new General Treasurer will implement some of the changes when he officially takes over the post. Afterwards the General Treasurer (Designate), Mr Angus Macmillan, Stornoway, was introduced to the Assembly and invited to speak to the Commissioners.

The retiring Honorary General Treasurer, Rev John W Keddie, Bracadale, who announced his retirement at last



Rev John Keddie



Mrs Fraser with Martin & new daughter-in-law Becky; Rev Bert Pohl; From Skye: I MacPherson, A MacDonald & Rev R Ross

year's Assembly was presented with a gift by the Moderator and thanked for his sterling service for the past ten years. Following prayer offered by the Moderator, Mr Keddie addressed the gathering and highlighted a number of financial concerns he had that he felt the Church would have to address in the near future.

Brief Items

There followed the Report of the Committee to Investigate Allegations of Conspiracy presented by Rev Graeme Craig, and the Report of the Committee to Review Recent Acts & Findings of the General Assembly by Maurice Grant, Edinburgh. It was agreed that both committees would be continued.

There was then the presenting of three petitions. The first was from the Presbytery of Inverness about the appointment of General Assessors presented by the Presbytery Clerk Rev John Macleod, Duthil Dores (Rtd). This was followed by the Presbytery of Skye & Lochcarron presenting two petitions. They were presented by the Rev Andrew R Allan, Poolewe & Aultbea. The first petition was a request to consolidate the Lochalsh & Glenshiel and Glenelg & Arnisdale congregations. The next was a petition to link the new congregation to Strath (Broadford), the new congregation to be known formally as Lochalsh & Strath. The Assembly granted all three petitions. A petition was then presented to the Assembly from the Free Western Synod asking that the date of the Synod be changed from the 3rd Tuesday in March to the 4th. This petition was also granted.

Tuesday Evening

Welfare of Youth & Education Committee

After tea the Assembly met for the 3rd Sederunt and the Report of the Welfare of Youth & Education Committee was presented by the Convener, Rev Kenneth Macdonald. The Committee expressed concerns about the religious education which is being taught in our state schools. Recent research shows that the vast majority of British children are ignorant of even the basics of Christianity and most interviewed could not even name the four Gospels. What was once common instruction, the fundamentals of the Christian faith, is now part of a mish-mash of religious education. Added to the plethora of faiths, all taught as being of equal value, we now have the unbelievable situation where our young people are instructed in so called sex 'education' from



Rev Kenneth MacDonal

the time they enter school at 5 or 6 years of age. If we believe that all Christian parents should strongly object to this, how much more when we are told that homosexuality and transsexual behaviour are also to be taught to our children as being normal and on an equal footing with Christian marriage. Scripture makes clear, and we should not make an apology for it, that such behaviour is an abomination to the Lord and is to be utterly condemned.

The role of the Sabbath Schools, and the Family and Youth Camps of our Church along with the usual preaching in our congregations become more important than ever before. The Committee are thankful for those who give of their time to teach in our Sabbath Schools. Over the next few months it is intended to have meetings in Lewis and Inverness with Sabbath School teachers and other interested parties to get feedback as to the way forward with the Syllabus.

The Committee expressed their thanks to Mr Stanley Munro and Mr David Lachman who prepared the Bible Class and Sabbath School examinations respectively. This year 10 pupils from 5 congregations sat the Sabbath School Examinations and 8 pupils from 5 congregations sat the Bible Class Examinations, a slight decrease from last year. It is hoped that the Shorter Catechism will be reset and printed in a new format which will make it easier for children to memorise.

All judged the 2009 All Age Holiday held in Carronvale, Larbert a great success. The Rev Richard Ross, Portree, gave the main addresses each evening from Psalm 116 and Mr David Keddie led the morning worship on the 'I AM' sayings of the Lord. The same venue has been provisionally booked for this year's holiday and the Rev Gavino Fioretti, Duthil-Dores, has kindly agreed to be the speaker.



Austen & Sacha Little & Kayleigh Nicholson;



Isla MacDonald;



Christina MacLeod with parents John & Joy

The Youth Camp at Badaguish under the guidance of Rev Greg MacDonald, Cross, went well. Eleven girls attended the girls' camp and two boys attended the boys' camp. The low numbers attending the boys' camp were in part due to a major setback the week before the camp when one family had to pull out for medical reasons. It is hoped to hold the camp this year from 31st July to 7th August.

The Olivet Correspondence Course run by Rev David Fraser would like to receive more persons enrolling. One of the enrolled students has completed the part, 'An Introduction to the Gospel of Matthew' and has earned a Distinction.

The Committee are keen to show their support in a practical manner to establish Christian Education by making some grants available to those who are involved in Christian Schools and Home Schooling. The Committee will however continue to recognise the difficulties and pressures faced by children and staff in state schools and will uphold them in prayer.

The report was seconded by Donald MacKay, Glasgow, and received by the Assembly.

Prizes

During the Tuesday evening there was an Order of the Day when the Moderator presented the Sabbath School and Bible Class Examination prizewinners and Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme winners with their awards.

The Bible Class Prizewinner: Christina R MacLeod, Tarbat.
Sabbath School Prizewinner: Isla G Macdonald, Stornoway.
Shorter Catechism Diploma Scheme, Silver Stage (Question 39-81)

Cross: Leanne Campbell, Catherine Morrison and Katie Morrison

Snizort: Kayleigh Nicolson

Gold Stage (Questions 82-107) Snizort: Austin Little, Sacha Little.

Reformation Lecture

There then followed another Order of the Day when the Rev Timothy McGlynn, Aberdeen, addressed the General Assembly on the subject 'Scotland's Reformation - A Blueprint for Progress Today' to mark the 450th Anniversary of the Scottish Reformation.

This then led to another Order of the Day when Mr. Harold Gibson from the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Ireland was invited to address the Commissioners.

Psalmody Committee

The Psalmody Committee reported on their work of overseeing a completely new re-setting of the Gaelic Psalms in a much more readable format. The Committee are hopeful that this project will be completed in the very near future with the new words edition available for purchase and distribution by the Assembly of 2011 if not by the end of the year. The Committee reported that they have reached the half way mark in the production of the projected twelve double 'Worthy to be Praised' CDs. At a time when others are considering abandoning both the principle and the practice of unaccompanied singing of the Psalms in verse the Committee were happy to record that there had been a 30% increase in the number taking the Psalmody Test, including some adults. Maurice Roberts praised the work of the Committee and asked if they would consider making an audio recording of the complete Psalter. The Convener, Rev Bill Scott, Dumfries (Rtd) replied that the Committee would seriously consider the request. Two addenda were also moved. One came from Rev John MacLeod, Tarbat and stated, 'The General Assembly direct the Psalmody Committee to ensure that information regarding the Psalmody Test is available timeously to all congregations'. The other came from Rev Andrew R Allan and stated, 'In an attempt to seek to improve the congregational singing of the Psalms in our congregations, the General Assembly request the Special Committee on Psalmody to consider making the published fruit of their labours available free of charge to all congregations on application'. Both addenda were accepted. The Assembly was then dismissed with prayer to meet on Wednesday at 9.00 am.

Wednesday Morning

The first hour of the morning was devoted to worship when the Scriptures were read, Psalms sung and several ministers and elders were called upon to pray. Following the devotional exercises the minutes of the previous day's sederunts were read, adjusted and approved.

PQRM Committee

Then the House received the report of the Committee on Public Questions, Religion & Morals. The Convener, Rev David M Blunt, North Uist & Grimsay, delivered this lengthy and detailed report. It focused on matters to do with the Constitution of our country, which includes its



The new General Treasurer Angus MacMillan; Rev Allan Murray & S. N. Partheepan; Rev James Clark (Knock & Point)

Protestant heritage. This is a very important subject in the light of the proposed forthcoming official state visit of Pope Benedict XVI. The Committee had written to the former Prime Minister and intended to write to the new incumbent of 10 Downing Street to express their sadness and dismay at the invitation being extended to the 'Man of Sin'.

Rev James Gracie spoke on the topic of multiculturalism. He said that the Government at Westminster had to some extent changed their policy. He pointed out that since its formation the United Kingdom has been multicultural yet integrated: whatever differences belong to its constituent parts the Christian faith has been held in common.

Rev John J Murray referred to the subject of the Sabbath and the Lord's Day Observance Society. John Roberts was retiring as the Society's General Secretary after many years of service and efforts were now being made to reactivate the work in Scotland. Rev. Kenneth Stewart, Glasgow, is the new chairman of the Scottish Council.

Mr Callum MacLean (Stornoway) referred to the fact that in his youth he was taught 'civics' in school, consisting of the sort of subjects contained in the report. He suggested that the report should be given in the evening and regretted the absence of the media. He highlighted the issue of the Sabbath in Stornoway. There had been a protest at the pier when the first Sabbath ferry sailing took place in June 2009. The main body of the protest was from the Free Church (Continuing) and Rev Tim McGlynn spoke effectively to the media. On Monday of this week an application from the Stornoway Golf Club for a Sunday drinks licence was considered by the local Licensing Board. He had written on behalf of the Outer Hebrides Presbytery and understood that we were the only denomination which brought an objection to the Board, but he was pleased to say that the licence had been refused.

Rev John MacLeod (Tarbat) said that the Report should have included something about the problems being experienced in open-air preaching. He also referred to immigration as a benefit to the country and cited particular groups and individuals who had made a valuable contribution. He felt that a Scottish perspective was somewhat lacking from the report and that we needed to take onboard Scottish thinking on constitutional matters.

Rev. Allan Murray (Brora) said that democracy in our country is failing, by stealth. Law is replacing conscience and the result is law upon law upon law.

Mr Blunt thanked all who had spoken. He agreed with Mr Gracie regarding his description of the United Kingdom as having diversity yet unity because of the Christian faith. With regard to the Sabbath and the LDOS he would make sure that these matters were kept on the agenda of the Committee. He was delighted to learn of the news from Stornoway concerning the refusal of a drinks licence for the Sabbath: this shows what can be done effectively at a local level. With regard to recent cases of police interference in open-air preaching he emphasised that the report was attempting to give the broad picture on religious and civil liberties in the United Kingdom rather than cover particular instances where problems are occurring. There were so many cases, many of which were covered by a recent booklet published by the Christian Institute. The arrests of Shawn Holes and Dale McAlpine had literally just occurred in the last few weeks and the Committee would take up this issue at their June meeting. He referred to the history in the United Kingdom, going back at least to the time of the Huguenots, of providing asylum for those who share our Christian faith and was happy to acknowledge that because of the Christian faith we have a close affinity with people from the Caribbean and parts of Africa, among other places. In terms of the constitutional position regarding Scotland and the United Kingdom the report deals with the situation as it has developed post-Reformation. It attempts to set out things as they actually are, not as they might be or even should be in the opinion of some.

The report was seconded by the Vice-convenor, Rev William Macleod, and warmly welcomed by the Commissioners.

Committee on Publications

The next report to be presented was from the Committee on Publications by the Convener, Mr Glenn Fraser, Inverness. They reported that two new booklets had been published and were now available for purchase at the Assembly. *The Five Points of Calvinism* by Rev John W Keddie is a 20-page booklet and costs £2.00 per copy including postage and packing. *The Reformation 1560* by Rev John J Murray is a 60-page booklet and costs £3.00 per copy including postage and packing. Thanks were expressed to all involved in the

production of the denomination's magazines, the *Witness* and the *Explorer*. The current print run of the magazines is 1100 copies. The June issue of the *Witness*, which has been designed for use in the purpose of evangelism, had a print run of 13,000 copies this year. The Committee hopes to publish booklets on the Lord's Supper and the Eldership in the not too distant future. Other material on the Sabbath, Baptism, Funerals, Courtship and Marriage and Bringing up of Children is being actively sought and pursued by the Committee. It is anticipated that a new Year Book will be published during 2011. A book developed from *Explorer* articles on the Shorter Catechism by Rev Murdo A N MacLeod is ready to be printed and the Committee are considering the best way to proceed. Grateful thanks were expressed to Rev Greg MacDonald for his work as Editorial Overseer of the Church's website. Mr MacDonald has requested that he may be relieved of this responsibility and the Committee are giving consideration to a suitable replacement for him. Thanks were also expressed to Mr Donald Morgan of Stornoway who continues the Audio Ministry. This ministry provides a selection of sermons from our ministers in CD format at a price of £1 per CD, including postage and packing. In the period from January to April orders for 172 CDs had been received, most from Scotland but some from other parts of the UK. Some of these orders go to the housebound and to people beyond our denomination.

There followed an Order of the Day when three delegates were introduced to the Moderator and invited to address the Assembly. First to speak was Rev Dr Peter J Wallace from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church of America. He was followed by Dr Bill Schweitzer from Gateshead who was representing the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England & Wales and Affinity. The last delegate to speak at this juncture was Rev. Arthur Bentley-Taylor, (Evangelical Connexion) Free Church of England. All delegates were thanked by the Moderator and presented with the customary gifts.

Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee

The Report of the Training of the Ministry & Admissions Committee was presented by Rev Timothy McGlynn, Convener. It began by stressing the varied roles that the



Rev Timothy McGlynn

congregation, Deacons' Court, Kirk Session and Presbytery have in the approval and preparing of a candidate for the Gospel ministry. Current candidates for the ministry include Mr Calum Smith (Stornoway) who is due to enter a four-year course of study at the Seminary later this year. Mr James MacInnes is nearing the end of his second year of studies and Alasdair Macleod has commenced his studies and is approaching the end of his first year. A candidate from the USA, Mr Jonathan Mattull, has completed a year of study by distance learning under the supervision of the Seminary. In the report it was noted that Mr Donald Robertson is expected to begin the Resident Lay Preachers Training Programme through the Free Church Seminary. Thereafter the Free Church Seminary Principal, Rev William Macleod, presented the Seminary report. This year has seen the largest number of students attending the Seminary. No students graduated last summer and two new students began studying so that makes a total of eight regular students as well as those studying by distance learning. One of the new students is Joachim Parker, an Englishman who had completed a BA in Theological Studies at Highland Theological College, Dingwall, and has recently become a



From the Seminary: Harry Woods, William Macleod & Gavin Beers;



Rev Warren Gardner & Assembly Officer Derick Gillies

member of Kiltarn Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). Some years previously he had obtained a BA (Hons) in English Literature from Lampeter University in Wales. He came to the Seminary with a widely varied past having among many other things worked as a tourist representative in North Italy, an IT trainer in Cardiff and a tree cutter in the Scottish Highlands. The other new student is Alasdair Macleod from Glasgow and Skye. He is an MA and MLitt graduate in History from Glasgow University. It is expected that two students will graduate this summer, both for the Free Church (Continuing) ministry – Raymond Kemp, Alness, who is a member in Beaully and David Lachman who is a member in Shettleston.

The students themselves have throughout the year organised weekends together which has helped them both to encourage one another in the work and bond together. They have a great love and concern for each other and this bodes well for the future of the Church. The students also have a great love and respect for all their lecturers and believe they are privileged to be studying at one of the best seminaries in the world.

Over the past year intense training in evangelism and preaching was given during a week which students and Rev Harry Woods spent in Knightswood, Glasgow, and another week in Evanton. Do remember the work of the Seminary in public and private prayer.

A petition from the Free Presbytery of the USA anent training of students from the USA was presented by Rev Warren Gardner, Atlanta, and approved in part by the Assembly.

Call to Snizort

Towards the end of the 4th sederunt on Wednesday the Appeal of the Free Southern Presbytery against a finding of the Free Mainland Synod with regard to the Call of the Snizort Congregation addressed to Rev M A N MacLeod was heard. Members of the Skye & Lochcarron Presbytery along with members of the Mainland Synod were called to the Bar and Rev James Gracie and Mr Maurice Grant, representing the Free Southern Presbytery, and Rev Gavino Fioretti, representing the Synod, were invited to address the Assembly. (Because of time constraints the matter had to be adjourned and was dealt with later on Wednesday evening

following the report of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee.)

After a full and frank debate a vote was taken with the result being a tie with five votes each side. The Moderator *pro tem*, Rev Graeme Craig, gave his casting vote in favour of the appeal and so it was decided that the call should not be placed in Mr MacLeod's hands.

Home & Foreign Missions

Because Liberton Kirk was not available on Wednesday evening the Assembly had to meet in the nearby Anderson Hall to conduct the 5th Sederunt. After the Assembly was constituted the report of the Committee on Home & Foreign Missions was presented by Mr Callum MacLean, Stornoway, Convener. Rev Gavin Beers, Vice-convener, spoke of the four 'alls' found in the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20 – 'All power', 'All nations', 'All things' and 'I am with you always'. There was an Order of the Day in which various delegates were presented to the Moderator and invited to speak. Mr Mike Moore, Christian Witness to Israel, related that they had had a good year, employed more staff and yet managed to reduce their financial deficit considerably. He told of the number of good opportunities he had to speak to Orthodox male Jews who were on holiday in Aberystwyth and bathed very early in the morning. He asked for prayer for his wife and himself as they planned to return this August for three weeks of evangelism. Rev Calum Iain Macleod spoke of the ministry he was invited to undertake in Kenya lecturing to pastors and divinity students as part of the African Centre for the Great Commission. Mr Macleod told of his experience under four headings – Great Commission, Great Admission, Great Provision and Great Vision. The Korean brethren who organised the trip had a deep desire to spread the Gospel message far and wide and the Africans had a hunger and thirst for Reformed teaching. Mr Donald John Morrison, Home Mission Worker, was invited to take the floor. He spoke of his varied and extensive work throughout Scotland seeking to bring the Word of Life to poor needy sinners. Afterwards Rev Bert Pohl, Smiths Falls, Canada addressed the Assembly and told how the Gospel work is progressing there. They have two Lord's Day services and a midweek prayer meeting. Currently Mr Pohl works part-time as a wedding photographer and is finding that he has plenty of work to sustain him. He is the only photographer



Some young ministers: Revs R Ross, C I Macleod, G Fioretti, G MacDonald;

Angus & Ann Shaw with Alasdair MacKintosh



Delegates: Mike Moore (CWI), Peter Wallace (OPC), Arthur Bentley-Taylor (FCEEC), Bill Schweitzer (EPCEW); Rev G Craig

in the area undertaking wedding photography. Last to speak was Rev Warren Gardner, Atlanta, USA, who gave an update of the situation in the United States. They are facing up to financial constraints but he did report of the possible opening of a new preaching station.

the good offices of two Dutch churches who are members of the ICRC a further attempt to bring about meaningful negotiations with our separated brethren may result. The Broadford situation was mentioned but nothing new was highlighted in the report since the matter was before the Commission of Assembly in April. The report was written four days after the Commission of Assembly. Action has been taken against our Partick Congregation with regard to church, hall, manse and funds. It is significant that in spite of 'assurances' that the Residual Body would not evict ministers from manses, yet this would seem the logical outcome of their action. Since the report was initially drafted, the Committee have been notified of an attempt by the Residual Body to raise an action for interim interdict against the Partick Congregation in an attempt to prevent the use of the manse as a dwelling for any person in future other than the present minister. The effect of this will be obvious were the present minister to leave the congregation. During the report the Commissioners were brought up to date regarding various issues including Frozen Accounts, Denominational Trustees, Disclosure Scotland, Knock Mission House, Contracts of Employment, Public Liability and other Insurance and Pensions matters. The Convener noted with regret the resignation of the clerk, Mr David Macrae, and thanked him for his sterling service.



Rev Gerald Kastelein

Thursday morning

The 6th Sederunt on Thursday got quickly underway and after the proceedings were opened by the Moderator an Order of the Day was held when Rev Gerald Kastelein brought greetings from the Presbyterian Reformed Church of Australia. Afterwards he addressed the Assembly on the theme 'Prayer, the Well-spring of Revival'. Taking his text from Psalm 85:1-6 Mr Kastelein opened up his first heading, 'Who are the subjects of revival?' – the professing Christian church – and his second head was, 'Means of Revival' – prayer. His address was challenging and encouraging.

Legal Advice & Property Committee

This was followed by the Report of the Legal Advice & Property Committee which was presented by the Convener, Rev John MacLeod, Tarbat. Mention was made of the considerable amount of work undertaken by the Committee following the aftermath of the 2000 division. An overview of the current situation was given. It was hoped that through

The Church's Law Agent, Mr Robert Miller, was present at the Assembly and was introduced to the Moderator and was able to address the gathering. Commissioners asked him a number of pertinent and relevant questions.

Rev William Macleod, Knightswood, proposed an addendum to paragraph 2 of the proposed deliverance: 'The General Assembly, in consideration of the critical state of the Church's finances, determine not to proceed with any reclaiming motion against the Opinion of Lord Uist; The General Assembly, in consideration of the critical state of the Church's finances, determine not to proceed to the Court of Session in the defence of the Partick property'. In response to this the Assembly Clerks' department produced a sheet outlining 13 reasons why it was incompetent to move such a motion. After considerable debate and discussion the addendum was ruled incompetent, against which decision several Commissioners recorded their dissent and one Commissioner asked that his protest be recorded.



Miss M MacIver, Mrs A Henderson, Rev J MacLeod, L MacCallum;



Liberton Kirk

Strategy Committee

Following the report from the Legal Advice & Property Committee the report of the Strategy Committee was presented. Among some of the items mentioned in the report was the acquisition and purchase of buildings on a planned basis. This item is continually before the Committee in the hope that a variety of proposals can be drafted by the Committee taking into account a variety of scenarios in order that progress can be made once the legal situation facing the Church becomes clearer. The Committee, aware that there are matters relating to pensions of ministers over critical ages of 60, 65 and 70 which require urgent consideration, are continuing to pursue these matters in consultation with the Legal Advice & Property Committee. At the October meeting of the Commission of Assembly there was some dispute about the mechanism for the calling of special meetings of the Commission. The Strategy Committee having carefully considered the matter concluded that the historic position, as understood and explained, may appear to vest a great deal of power in one individual. However, given that the Moderator's actions, either in calling or not calling a special meeting of the Commission, are open to discussion either for approval or disapproval, it appears that the rights of individuals, members of the Commission, Church Courts and Standing Committees of Assembly are safeguarded. The report concluded by highlighting that the Committee continue to be greatly handicapped by the lack of availability of a suitable time-slot for their meetings during the stated days on which Committee meetings normally take place. They are giving consideration to the question of whether an appropriate time for meeting can be obtained without undue extra burden on members of the Committee.

A motion was put forward by Rev James Frew, Adelaide, 'That the General Assembly ordain that ministers serving in foreign countries under the administrative care of the Home and Foreign Missions Committee are to be associated with and have a seat on a Presbytery. That the GA also ordain that such ministers will be associated with and have a seat on that Presbytery geographically nearest to the congregation where the minister serves. That the GA also ordains that for administrative matters such ministers shall remain under the care of the Home and Foreign Missions Committee.' After discussion the motion was withdrawn.

Overture from the Free Northern Presbytery

Rev Allan Murray, Brora, presented an overture from the Free Northern Presbytery about circulation of Assembly Findings. The overture requested that in place of Assembly Extracts of a general nature being sent out to all congregations, a brief digest of the findings of Assembly, insofar as they bear upon local congregations, be produced for general distribution soon after the Assembly, such digest to be generally brief enough to be contained on one side of an A4 sheet, expressed in straightforward non-technical language and presented in a form in which it will be physically easy to read. The overture also asked that an electronic copy of the Acts and Proceedings of Assembly be made available soon after the Assembly for download by all courts and committees. The overture was accepted.

Adelaide Matters

After tea the Assembly began the 7th Sederunt and received in private the Supplementary Report of the Home & Foreign Missions Committee, a petition from Rev Jack Grubb and Mr Richard Bell and another petition from Mr Richard Bell. It was decided to remit the matter in the petitions to the Home and Foreign Missions Committee with the instruction that they should report to the Commission in October. These private matters being dealt with the Assembly went back into open session and sought to conclude the business of the Assembly.

Concluding Business

The Report of the Assembly Arrangements & Nominations Committee (B) – nominations; Report of the Committee anent Visitation of records; and Report of Committee anent Printing of Acts of Assembly were all dealt with efficiently and quickly by the House. The Report of the Committee preparing a Minute anent Deceased Ministers & Elders was taken upstanding and delivered by Mr Glenn Fraser. Appointment of the Commission of Assembly was made and thanks recorded for all the help which was given to the 2010 Assembly. It was moved, seconded and agreed that the General Assembly appoint the next General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) to meet in Edinburgh on Monday 23rd May 2011 at 6 o'clock in the evening. The Minutes of this day's sederunt were read and approved. The General Assembly was dissolved with prayer, the singing of Psalm 122 and the Apostolic Benediction.



News



Black Watch Appeal

Derick Gillies

Imagine working in a job that pushes you mentally and physically harder than you've ever worked in your life. Imagine having to carry enough food, water and ammunition for up to twelve days, with temperatures up to 50°C and you are having to engage the enemy daily. Imagine when on patrol attacks come that are designed to drive you into mined areas for cover and these areas are contaminated with poisons to cause maximum infection to the wounded. Imagine coming back to base with the knowledge that anywhere out of sight of the sentries back at base can have IEDs (improvised explosive devices). This is happening day in and day out, 24/7. Then you receive a parcel with special treats, the chance for a cup of coffee with something sweet. A letter

telling you that your extraordinary efforts are not going unnoticed. It is hard to tell how much that parcel can boost morale. I know because I served in both Gulf Wars and wanted this time to pass that benefit on with one vital addition.

In March 2009 the Third Battalion Black Watch Royal Regiment of Scotland set off for Afghanistan. Given the different roles each company had to fulfil while there, they had months of intense training before leaving. The priority was to get

the gospel message to the soldiers. A door was opened which enabled us to give Bibles to them. The aim was to send a parcel which would provide something for their physical, emotional and spiritual needs with the hope that the Bible inside would be blessed to each soldier. Both the Army and RAF donated the cardboard boxes.

I am very grateful for the advice and expertise provided by various people throughout the process of setting up the appeal so that the whole church could contribute. To realise our goal a sum of £2,500 was needed but the church's response was an incredible £8,000. We were conscious of a dovetailing together of all the different elements required to ensure each box could be packed and addressed. At very short notice a number of volunteers came and packed including a teenage girl just out of hospital three days earlier after having an operation. A special thank you to BN Chaplain Captain Anderson, the Gideon Society, Mary Gillies and to all who so generously contributed to this appeal at its every stage.



Desk



Seminary Graduation 2010

Current Divinity students with Rev Iain H. Murray (seated): (Left to Right):
S. N. Partheepan, David Lachman, Raymond Kemp, James MacInnes,
Davide Ratti, Joachim Parker, Alasdair Macleod, Matthew Fraser.

Graduation

The closing lecture of the Seminary on Friday 18th June was given by Rev Iain H Murray who spoke on the theme: 'Raising the Standard of our Preaching'. Much sound and helpful advice was given in an interesting and informative lecture. The attendance was large and appreciative. Two students graduated – Mr Raymond Kemp and Mr David Lachman – both of whom, we expect, will shortly be licensed and so be available to receive calls.

Young People's Weekend

The next Young People's weekend will take place from 15th-18th October 2010 in Arbroath. The speaker will be the Rev Geoff Thomas, and the topic 'Being Different: The Christian in the World'. Costs are: Booking before 1st Sept: Waged £55 / Unwaged £50

Booking after 1st Sept: Waged £60 / Unwaged £55 Part weekend: Arrive Friday leave Saturday £20 / Arriving Saturday £35 Day Visitors £7.50. The weekend is for those aged 16 and over. For booking form and further details, see the Church's website, or email arbroath@bible-sermons.org.uk or contact Nathan Roberts, 26 Philip Avenue, Linlithgow, EH49 7BH. Tel 01506 668162.

New Publications

Two new titles are now available from the Publications Committee. *The Five Points of Calvinism* by John W Keddie is a 20-page booklet and costs £2.00 per copy including postage and packing (£1.50 for ten copies or more). *The Reformation 1560* by John J Murray is a 60-page booklet and costs £3.00 per copy including postage

and packing (£2.00 for ten copies or more).

In *The Five Points of Calvinism* John Keddie sets out the historical background to the formulation of the Five Points and then expounds them one by one, showing how they are derived from Scripture. He gives suggestions for further reading. In his conclusion he says: 'The doctrines of grace proclaim that "Salvation is of the Lord", and therefore we should exult in those doctrines, acknowledging as they do the sovereignty of God, and the efficacy of the work of Christ. There needs to be a recovery of such uncompromising Biblical doctrine. This is the truth that must thunder through our land again, calling men and women to yield themselves to the Triune God, and to a Saviour who is King, and who is "the head of the body, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col.1:18)'.

In *The Reformation 1560* John J Murray shows why this year should be regarded as 'The Greatest Year in Scotland's History'. He explains the purpose of his booklet as follows: 'This short overview of the Scottish Reformation is a contribution to the commemoration of the 450th anniversary. It is designed to show: 1) the darkness from which the country was delivered; 2) the battle that was engaged in by the Reformers, especially John Knox; 3) the spiritual renewal that was at the heart of the change; 4) the principles for which our Reformers contended; and 5) the need for the recovery of these principles today'. Comprised of seven brief chapters the booklet includes a

'Reformation Timeline' of significant dates and a Select Bibliography. Mr Murray states: 'Living as we are in a new age of darkness, with the Gospel almost buried out of sight, not only by an unchanged Roman system but by a Protestantism largely devoid of the authority of Scripture, the saving truths of the Gospel and holiness of life, we need to urgently reconsider the lessons of the Scottish Reformation.'

To order please contact: Rev David Blunt, (Clerk to Publications Committee), Free Church Manse, Knockintorran, Isle of North Uist, HS6 5ED, Tel. 01876 510305, email: davidblunt@fccontinuing.org.

Proposed Visit of the Pope

We agree fully with the following statement which was made by the Reformed Witness Committee of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland regarding the proposed visit of the Pope to the United Kingdom in September 2010:

'We must express our dismay and sorrow at the proposed visit of Pope Benedict to the UK. We regard his claim to be the Vicar of Christ on earth as false and eternally ruinous to those who are deceived by it and who put their trust in it. We hold no ill will to the Roman Catholic community. On the contrary, we desire their highest and everlasting good in being brought to faith in the 'one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus' (1 Tim.2:5). Only in this way can any of us go to Heaven instead of Hell. We consider this proposed visit to be a further instance of the United Kingdom turning from the true Biblical Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe the Lord will continue to be against the nation until there is a general turning from our current love of false religions, unbelief and wrong morals to seek God's forgiveness through Christ. It is the prayer of our church that God would bring about this change by his Holy Spirit.'

Salisbury Conference

The fourteenth Salisbury Conference (Emmanuel Church, Wilton Road, Salisbury) is due to be held on Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd October 2010 (DV). The theme is, 'Stand Fast in the Faith', the Chairman, Rev Malcolm H Watts and the guest speakers: Francis J Harris, Neil Pfeiffer and Pooyan Mehrshahi. Rev John P Thackway will preach at both the Sabbath services on 3rd October, at 11am and 6:30pm, and also at the after church meeting at 8:30pm. A warm invitation is extended to all. For further details please see: www.salisburyemmanuel.org.uk.

Head-teacher Required

Newcastle Christian School is seeking to appoint a head-teacher. It is a new, private school in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, providing a distinctively (Reformed) Christian education for Years 1 to 8 (5-13 year-olds). They are seeking a Headteacher who:

- Is committed to the Reformed faith.
- Is passionate about Christian education.
- Has the character and gifts necessary for leadership.
- Has proven teaching skills and relates well to young children.

The salary will be £30,000, £10,000 of which is contingent on fundraising.

For further information, or to apply for the post (letter and CV required), e-mail: newcastlechristianschool@googlemail.com

Launching the Inverness Science Festival

Donald J Morrison

Prof Richard Dawkins officially launched the Inverness Science Festival on the 1st of June at the Drumossie Hotel. Tickets were free and there was a full audience – many hundreds, I imagine. Permission was granted to me to place a couple of tables in the car park for the purpose of giving out various items of gospel literature. Amongst the various booklets was the latest booklet written by John Blanchard entitled *Dealing with Dawkins*. This book has just been released very recently. I managed to obtain some 300 copies from Evangelical Press.

With the help of brethren from the Church we spoke to many people about the fact of Creation, had a number of interesting conversations and gave out some 90 copies of the book. In fact one of the last people to receive the book was Prof Dawkins himself! I made the most of an opportunity afforded when he and his team were leaving the hotel and presented him with his own copy. Although he immediately realised I was not for the fiction of evolution, he was happy (as were his four colleagues) to accept the book. He asked if I was John Blanchard! I wasn't too sure what to make of that, although for a few moments I felt pretty large! He was in a hurry to get away but I did manage to speak to him about the reality of Creation, a Creator God and his need of the 'one thing needful'.

It would be wonderful if, by the grace and mercy of God, this man, like Saul of Tarsus, was gloriously converted. Prayer was truly answered through the opportunity that was afforded to us of spreading the truth through literature distribution. Together may we continue to earnestly pray that the Word of truth would speak to the hearts of every reader, including that of Mr Dawkins. May each of us also rejoice that the truth is always victorious.

I made contact with John Blanchard and shared with him what happened for his encouragement. Needless to say he was delighted to hear that his book was now in Mr Dawkins' possession. They have never met. Our hope and prayer is that they will meet in Christ.

1000 U S Deaths in Afghanistan

Christian Observer

The 1000th U S serviceman of the Afghanistan War was killed by a roadside bomb on 29 May 2010. A 2nd June 2010 Assist News Service article by Dan Wooding titled 'Afghan Parliamentarian Calls for Execution of Christians: Taliban Ideals Alive and Well in the Parliament' reports that after a video was broadcast by the Afghan television network Noorin TV, of Christian men being baptised and praying in Farsi, deputy secretary of the Afghan lower house in parliament Abdul Sattar Khawasi said: 'Those Afghans that appeared in this video film should be executed in public. The house should order the attorney general and the NDS

(intelligence agency) to arrest these Afghans and execute them.

Child Brides Flogged for Escape Attempt

A 4th June 2010 Assyrian International News Agency article titled 'Child Brides Escape Marriage But Not Lashes' reports that two teenage girls, age thirteen and fourteen, forced to marry men much older than themselves, donned boys' clothing and escaped from their husbands. The girls travelled for two days until they were detained by police and returned to their home village in the Ghor Province, where the girls were publicly and savagely flogged for running away from their husbands.

Videos of the beatings were smuggled out to the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, which released them on 29 May 2010 after unsuccessfully lobbying for Afghan government action.

Pakistan's Christian Children in Danger

Barnabas Fund

Christian parents in Pakistan are terribly afraid for their children. Some do not want even to let them out of the house. Pakistan is no longer a safe place for Christians. Violent incidents against individuals and churches have increased recently, as part of a growing campaign of violence by Islamist militants against the country's religious minorities. The fears of the Christian community have been fuelled further by recent co-ordinated attacks on two

mosques in Lahore belonging to the minority Ahmadi sect. Ninety-three people were mown down in a hail of gunfire or blown up by grenades or suicide bombers. Nearly a hundred more were injured.

In this climate of chronic instability and insecurity, Christian children are especially vulnerable. Not only are they easy targets for violence, unable to protect themselves or to flee; girls in particular may also be kidnapped and forcibly converted to Islam.

Unfortunately most non-Christian schools, whether government-run or private, tend to worsen the plight of Christian children instead of helping them. Christian pupils frequently face discrimination, and they may be publicly ridiculed or even beaten by teachers because of their faith. In 2009 Nadia Iftikhar, aged 11, was beaten unconscious with a bamboo rod by a Muslim teacher at her school in Dharema, Punjab, after she said in class that she was both a Pakistani and a Christian. The teacher had read from a textbook stating that all Pakistanis were Muslims.

So Barnabas Fund helps to support Christian schools in Pakistan that provide a safe and nurturing environment for Christian children. They already contribute to the running costs of four schools, attended by more than 2,000 Christian pupils. But on his recent visit the Fund's Regional Coordinator met Christians who were asking for help to build twelve new schools and extend three existing ones.

Prayer the 'Well-spring of Revival'

Rev Gerald Kastelein

An Address delivered to the 2010 Assembly - Part I

Rev & Mrs Kastelein



For most of us these days, water is available at just a turn of the tap – no effort involved. It is not so with revival – quite the contrary. It may well be compared with the digging of a well which in times past was the usual way of obtaining water. It was hard, back-breaking work. Can you imagine what it must have been like to dig a well some six feet in diameter and some 213 feet deep and that in solid sandstone? This feat was accomplished about the year 1000 AD, for that was the only way in which the inhabitants of the Chateau de Bouillon could get themselves a secure supply of water, so vital in times of trouble. A gargantuan task, in anyone's language. You can still visit that well today in the cellars of that castle in the south of Luxembourg.

There must have been times when the engineers responsible for this undertaking despaired of ever reaching that precious liquid that alone would enable them to withstand a siege.

As we consider revival this morning, our point of reference is found in Psalm 85:6: 'Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?'

1. The primary subjects of revival

More often than not, when folk think about revival, they envisage their churches, which are rarely more than half full – perhaps only quarter full – these days filled to overflowing. They have in mind a movement in which countless thousands of people, once ignorant of the gospel, are brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. In other words, they look upon those outside the church as the primary subjects of revival. Now it's true that you can hardly pick up a book about the revivals of the past, but you read of many from outside the kingdom that are drawn in and converted. Revival rarely fails to touch those that are outside. For all that though, the Scripture shows that they are not the primary subjects of a God-sent revival.

Concern for the lost

Of course Christians ought to have a concern for the lost. After all, did not Jesus Himself show a deep concern for the lost? Did He not tell us that He, the Son of Man had come to

seek and to save them that are lost? If we be true followers of Christ, ought we not to feel the same way? Isn't this what makes us true followers of Christ? Yes, but this desire to see once half-full churches filled to overflowing can be and often is motivated by diminishing numbers. It makes one feel uncomfortable to see so many empty pews. It tends to produce a feeling akin to loneliness. And so we begin to pray for revival as a remedy for that and after praying on for years and years we wonder why God has not answered our petition.

The reason why such prayer remains unanswered is that it has more to do with a desire, a quite natural desire, for personal comfort! 'Ye ask,' says James, 'and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts' (Jas.4:3), or if you like, upon what makes you feel good. That being so it is hardly surprising that Scripture shows that those outside the sphere of the church are not the primary subjects of a God-sent revival.

Our Psalm makes that abundantly clear. The first few verses reveal that the Babylonian captivity is over. The Lord had stirred up Cyrus' spirit to pass a decree, that all Jewish captives of Babylon who so wished, were free to return to their homeland and rebuild the temple of God. 'Then rose up,' so Ezra tells us, 'the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord, which is in Jerusalem' (Ezra 1:1 & 5).

Note that the people of our Psalm were men and women, whose heart the Spirit of God had amazingly transformed. From being a people who had abandoned Jehovah, who thought, 'we will be as the heathen, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone' (Ezek.20:32), they were transformed into a people willing to face untold hardships to serve the Lord.

That had taken place of which Ezekiel had spoken earlier, when he quoted God's words: 'Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart ... and I will put my spirit within you...' (Ezek.36:25-27). Today we speak of people in whom God has done such a work, as converted.

Just look at their first reaction, as they return from Babylon – all may be in ruins, the city of Jerusalem little more than a heap of stones – yet none of that is important now, for they have a mind to serve God. And all their feelings find expression in the prayer recorded in this Psalm: 'Lord thou hast been favourable unto thy land: thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin.' Such words reflect not only their feelings, but those of all those who, having discovered the exceeding sinfulness of sin, have come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

As now we read on in the Psalm, we discover that in time a change has come over them, as a result of which they need to be revived. What was it?

Subtle changes

Now the people, having returned from Babylon, are finding the work of rebuilding the temple far more demanding than ever they imagined. What's more, it just seems to go on and on! Isn't it right to devote some time and effort to their own comfort? And as they do just that, the concern for ease and comfort seems to take on a life of its own. It becomes the focus of their lives and the things of God fade into the background.

It is at this point that the prophet Haggai bursts in on the scene with a message from God: 'Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, 'This people say, The time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built. Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses and this house [referring to the temple] lie waste? Now therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Consider your ways (Hag.1:2, 4). And so they did, for the faithful preaching of the word was taking effect, making them see themselves through the eyes of God, as it were; they are 'pricked in their hearts'. The petition in Psalm 85:6 appears to be the direct outcome of this: 'Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?' It is a converted person's prayer, for as we noted earlier, the Spirit of God has been at work in them.

It is sad when God's people begin to drift away from Him, when no longer He is their all in all, when in the service of their God and Maker they begin to lose sight of the chief end of man, namely to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever, when other interests stake a claim on their hearts and little by little they are being conformed to the world, when the delight in earthly possessions begins to replace the joy of an interest in heaven and the love of the world overtakes the love of the brethren.

This very thing can and does happen to Christians too. We need to remember that we are saved not in order to be relieved of all hard work, so as to have a wonderful and carefree time here on earth, as some Christians would have you believe. The truth is that living for God does not come easily. Often sin gets in the way. It can and does happen that Christians lose their first love, they can at best be described as lukewarm only, or even cold, a fact to which the apostle John testifies in the book of Revelation (2:4 & 3:15 ff). It happens only too often that something of the unconverted man asserts itself, some of the old compulsions raise their head. That is why revival must begin in the house of God and why God's people are the primary subjects of revival. What's more, it must begin with them, before ever it affects any who are outside.

The far-reaching effects of the church's revival

The 1910 revival in China is a very powerful example of this, for then backslidden Christians began to confess their sins and forsake them. When, like Levi the tax collector, those same backsliders also began to make restitutions, then those outside were deeply impressed and began to say such things as: 'The God of the Christians is visiting them and is among them.' Many were persuaded about the reality and power of such a God and began to seek Him out, and were converted and added to the church.

2. The means of obtaining Revival

In certain circles you may occasionally hear preachers announcing their intention of 'preaching up a revival'. While it is true that preaching plays a very important role in revival, the Psalmist makes it clear that prayer is the means of revival. The inspired writer looks within himself and evidently discovers there an insufficiency and barrenness, he finds a lack of power, an inability to mend what is broken. He finds there the very thing Christ sums up in these words: 'without me, ye can do nothing' and so he implores God: 'Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?'

Asking, you see, is the rule of the kingdom. 'It is', says Spurgeon in his comments on Psalm 2, 'a rule that will never be relaxed in anybody's case, not even for God's own Son.' And, so Spurgeon goes on to say, 'if the royal and divine Son of God cannot be exempted from the rule of asking, you and I cannot expect the rule to be relaxed in our favour. God will bless Elijah and send rain on Israel, but Elijah must pray for it. If the chosen nation is to prosper, Samuel must plead for it. If the Jews are to be delivered, Daniel must intercede. God will bless Paul and the nations shall be converted through him, but Paul must pray. Pray he did, without ceasing; his epistles show that he expected nothing except by asking for it. There are some things in the church of God, which we cannot have in any other way than by prayer.'

Confirmation from the past

In connection with this, it is worth noting that the 1858 revival in New York found its beginning in the Fulton Street prayer meeting. The origins of the '59 revival in Ireland can be traced back to four young men, who met regularly to pray earnestly for the church and the conversion of souls. The 1910 revival in China found its roots in a little gathering of missionaries, who prayed for a reviving of the church. And was it not the same with revival on the island of Lewis?

Let us, you here in Scotland and we in Australia, determine to follow that biblical pattern and seek the Lord, while He may be found and like Jacob, by the river Jabbok, not let Him go until He bless us!

Conclusion

If prayer is the God-appointed means of obtaining it, if all we need to do is ask, then why is revival such a rare phenomenon? There are many things that may hinder us in this use of the God-appointed means, more than we have time to look at today. The chief reason however, I believe, is discouragement.

If you, like we in Australia, have been praying for years for a God-sent revival and still see no sign of it, then discouragement may well take hold of us. That inhibits heartfelt, believing, prayer, so that our entreaties become lifeless, perfunctory, formal and in due course we'll stop praying for it altogether.

The Master no doubt foresaw this and therefore gave us the ever-so-brief, stand-alone history of the experiences of

the Syrophenician woman whose young daughter had an unclean spirit – so that we might find help in time of need in God's word. The account is given by Matthew and also by Mark. They tell us that Jesus went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon and entered into a house and 'would have no man know it'. Yet somehow the woman concerned heard of it and set about catching the Saviour, as it were, and when she saw Him stepping out of the house where He and His disciples were staying, she begins to follow Him around, one day, two, three – the Bible does not tell us how long. It seems that she has difficulty in getting close to the Lord, which is hardly surprising, what with the twelve all around Him.

But if she cannot get near the Lord, perhaps her voice can, and so she begins to call out loudly: 'Have mercy upon me, O Lord, thou son of David'. We are told that she kept on at it (present continuous tense), yet, never a response from the Lord.

Before long her constant shouting just gets too much for the disciples! Distressed, no doubt, by the indignity of it all, they ask the Lord to 'send her away, for she keeps on crying after us'. If ever anyone might feel discouraged, surely it is her. It is clear from what follows, that Jesus has heard her, yet still not a word for her. Instead, He comments to the disciples: 'I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel'. This surely is the moment for her to withdraw with perhaps still something of her dignity intact, but instead she breaks into the inner circle, falls down and worships Him and presents her petition yet again, 'Lord, help me'.

And now at last He acknowledges her presence and speaks directly to her, but surprisingly not to grant her request. In fact at first glance one would think that His words are meant to discourage her even further: 'It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to dogs'.

'Truth Lord', she says, and explains that it's only the leftovers she seeks. The stupendous miracle she looks for is to the Lord, the Son of David, hardly more than just a little handful of mere crumbs. Is it a profession of faith? Certainly Jesus treats it as one, equal to that of Peter in Matthew 16:16, or Martha in John 11:27. No wonder Jesus says to her: 'Oh woman, great is thy faith ... be it unto thee even as thou wilt'.

Prayer is the well-spring of revival, but is discouragement taking its toll? Does it inhibit heartfelt, believing prayer? Have our entreaties become lifeless, perfunctory and formal? Then let us learn from the Syrophenician woman. When she pleaded with the Lord to intervene for her child, it must have seemed like an eternity to her, before the Lord finally granted her petition. Let's learn from her that delay did not mean a denial. Let us follow her example and 'give him no peace, until he have mercy upon us'.

'Call unto me', so said God to faltering Jeremiah (Jer.33:3), 'and I will answer thee and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not'. Let our prayer ever be: 'Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?' And to Him be the praise and the glory. Amen.

Foundations

*Opening Address delivered to the 2010 General Assembly by
Rev David S Fraser, Moderator*



It is now 10 years since a fateful stand had to be taken by 22 men, many of whom are spared to be with us to-day. I confess that I was lifted from my despair of our Church when I heard in distant South Africa that a stand had been taken for truth and righteousness. Though my situation was complex, I felt led out of one mission and into another very rewarding one. But now, ten years later, where do we stand? Where do we go from here? I therefore wish to share some thoughts with you on the subject of 'Foundations'.

1. The Foundations of the Nations

We have just emerged from a general election and a new government has been formed by David Cameron. The nation has spoken but not decisively. The issue was clear: When you are heavily in debt do you spend your way out of it or do you cut back painfully to get your house in order? Our nation has become so accustomed to facing bills with a bigger credit card or a gamble in the lottery or Social Security that we are unable to face stark realities – there must always be someone to come to our aid when we mess-up! There must come a time when I win the £84m in the Euro Lottery to solve all my problems – if not, it's not my fault, I tried! This is the attitude we have had over the last fifty years. We have been building our house on sand and we are surprised it falls down! The financial malaise is just a symptom of the deeper moral and spiritual malaise produced by a departure from the good foundational principles which can be traced back to King Alfred, who incorporated the Ten Commandments into his system of Law. Now we have rulers who believe they are wiser than God and can do without His advice! Perhaps the church is largely to blame for this. We see even theologians such as Paul Helm advocating Principled Pluralism. They argue that in a multi-faith world we have no right to demand a Christian state and the most we can ask for is the norms of the world in Abraham's day! Since Christ came the Older Covenant is abrogated except where it is relevant to the life of a Christian and his church. This view demands that we sift through books like the Psalms and Proverbs and discard anything apart from personal and church injunctions. They rob us of our authoritative Scriptures, they take away our Sabbath and they leave principles of government in the hands of humanists. If we believe all authority belongs to

Christ and 'Thy word is truth', there is not one verse of Scripture which does not have relevance for us today! Not only does every Civil Law of the Old Testament exhibit the 'general equity' required of nations but the good kings of Israel set out timeless examples of administering justice, defence, industry, education and agriculture. It says of Uzziah, 'He was marvellously helped' and 'the Lord made him to prosper' (2Chron.26). It is the duty of the church to search out the social principles found throughout the Holy Scriptures and instruct and challenge our governments and political parties to bring their policies into accord with the will of the God of Nations, the Lord of Hosts.

2. The Foundations of our Faith

As we look to the days ahead, is our view bright with the confidence of those who daily take the path of faith? Is our daily experience one of a walk with the Saviour or are we just going through the motions? Where do we find this faith-life? The most important part of our day is our time spent with our Lord in prayer. From that foundational time we go out, directed by the Lord, to accomplish whatever He has purposed for us and we know we can only do it in the strength which He supplies. Of course, this is impossible if we have not allowed the Lord in His truth to scrutinise our souls and dismantle the elements of self-will and self-interest which befog our efforts. This applies, not only to individuals, but also to families, congregations, presbyteries, denominations and nations – 'Blessed is that nation whose God is the Lord'.

3. The Foundations of the Church

As a Church, are we persuaded about our calling and testimony? We have been given a noble heritage to maintain with which we believe we can serve our generation and see the Kingdom of God come in our time. For some in the past it has meant a fiery trial – as Maurice Grant points out in his biography of Donald Cargill – but how fruitful for succeeding generations! So we need to have a clear perspective on our role appointed us by Christ! What foundation are we on? One of our foundation principles which we dare not forsake is the Establishment Principle. This is one poorly understood around the world and yet, I believe, of crucial importance

even when the state is becoming more and more hostile to Christ. I believe that when we ask, as in recent days, the state to judge our right to our property, we are telling them, You must fulfil your God-given role of protecting the truth and protecting the cause of Christ. In the same way, Christ placed Himself willingly in the hands of Herod and Pilate so that they had opportunity to show whether or not they could fulfil their God-given role. In each case they failed woefully and Christ suffered gross injustice. In the same way, we placed our cause in the hands of our magistrates, and history will judge not only us but them. How far we should follow this course is not for me to say, but for the brethren to judge, in the light of other responsibilities, not least to seek agreement with our estranged brethren.

What we must guard against is sacrificing principle for pietism. Pietism is the belief that our religion is, above all, a private affair between ourselves and our Lord. All that counts in the end is the care of our own souls, our devotional life with Him and our making sure of Heaven at the end. Let the dying world attend to all material things, we belong to another world. This is not a Reformed position though it has a long history in the Roman Church, in the Lutheran and in some parts of our own churches. I greatly believe in a vital devotional life. I believe, like many others here, we need to rise early and spend time with the Lord before facing the world. Without this our ministries will die, but an over concentration on the individual's piety is not the biblical balance. Let us go to our Psalms. The burden and inspiration of David is as much on the material creation and the external life of nations as it is on his soul's experience (cf Ps.8, 72, 104). Read Isaiah's prophecy and you must grapple with the politics of the surrounding nations as much as with the sufferings of the Messiah. This is because God's great and glorious comprehensive purpose is more than our personal salvation and must therefore claim our attention. The hyper-individualism of the Pietist is not so much biblical as Cartesian, it is a product of the fragmentation of Western Culture. Let us rather 'Seek first the kingdom of God...' We dare not shift from the foundation of Scripture and the perspective it promotes – and even more, the God it promotes. God is interested not only in persons but also in structures and institutions.

Our Creator wants us to see Him set out an orderly creation one day at a time. We see Him prepare an orderly garden, more suitable for man than the wilderness. We see Him establish a structure of relationships, with nature around him, with the animals, with the woman. We only come to a true value of ourselves when we see our place in the overall system which God has built for His glory. We need to see our place in the overarching process of history; we need to see our role in the world-wide church, we need to take part in the overthrow of the kingdom of darkness and we need to prepare a legacy for future generations. Yes, let us think big rather than be overwhelmed by depressing introspection – always measuring the success of God's kingdom by the state of our own souls. This is another form of humanism, ie making man the measure of God! So the context of the

pervasive purpose of God must be the starting point of our thinking on the church. From there let us see the church in its relation to other divine institutions: the state, the moral law, the Sabbath, the family etc.

Again, we need to guard against an inadequate foundation. We may understandably think of the Reformation of 1560 as the foundation of our Church, as many of our treasured Presbyterian structures date from that time, but our church, the church of Jesus Christ, existed in the time of Columba and Patrick and all the way to the Apostles. There is our foundation, nowhere else, 'built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets' (Eph.2:20). Our Master was building His church in every century according to His fixed purpose, despite all the corruptions of Rome. We are builders and see the work done in the past. We can go back to Wycliffe and Augustine and Athanasius and say, they are ours. The battles they won and the truths they affirmed are ours!

We are builders. Let us rise up again and build the walls of Jerusalem and join with all of the same mind! It is a 'great work' and a worldwide work! It is for this reason that our fellowship in the ICRC is important. It delivers us from parochialism and corrects a small-minded delusion that nobody is right except ourselves. It gives us a share in the expanding Reformed churches in India, Pakistan, the Ukraine, Serbia, Poland and Sweden. It gives us a testimony to truth and righteousness that needs to be heard where sister churches may be under temptation to weaken their stand. In turn, we may be strengthened by their courage in the face of their foes! But it is not only on practical grounds that we unite with brethren. We unite because the express will and prayer of our Lord and Master demands that we be one as He and the Father are one. Anything else would be disobedience.

4. The Foundations of Worship

We might say that the church has three activities: worship (upward), fellowship (inward) and witness (outward). A malformed church will accentuate one of these to the detriment of the others. There has been much shifting from the foundations of worship in recent times. There has been much emphasis placed on man. This is largely caused by the infiltration of our humanist culture into the church. We all know of the increasing intrusion of non-inspired materials of praise. What such innovators do not realise, in their attempts to make the church more acceptable to the natural man, is that God is obscured from the seeker by man-made hymns, by man-made instruments and by man-made ornaments or ceremonies not authorised by God. The Spirit and the truth are the only God-given and authorised aids to true worship, and additional aids are an insult to God and His provision. Singing is the way the gathered believers are united in testimony to their true faith in the true God. If they do not unite in the Psalms, they are uniting on something other than God's truth and so are setting up a man-made substitute for the foundation of worship which God has provided. We warn other churches in Scotland today that are departing in any way from

"Our Master makes clear that missions are not optional but foundational to our faith and obedience and blessing."



praising in Psalms, You are laying a new foundation which God has not laid! Even Scriptures other than the Psalms are unacceptable because God has not included them in His manual of praise.

This is not to say that our presently-used version of the Psalms cannot be improved. We have a wonderful version diligently revised by the Church of Scotland Assembly and presbyteries in 1650 but we all know that it is not the language that our people speak today. The dangers are two: firstly, we place an unwarranted barrier in the way of seekers and the young attending our services, and to obscure the Scriptures is a very serious sin and yet we may be guilty of it if we cling to archaic language (1Cor.14:9, 15). Secondly, we can use an artificial language in an attempt to elevate our worship and make it reverent but this is straying into ritualism. There is no special language in Scripture to sanctify it. It is plain language inspired by the Spirit. Nevertheless, we do not need as some others have done a new version of the Psalms. Let us largely retain the old version in essentials while bringing the language up to date where necessary.

5. The Foundations of Mission

Some may entertain the notion that mission is optional and feel content if they are maintaining gospel ordinances in diets of worship. This is to deny the whole emphasis of the risen Christ's directions to His disciples. 'You are my witnesses,' said he before ascending, 'both in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth'. One remembers Erskine's speech to the General Assembly over two centuries ago, when great reluctance was shown to reach out to the world: 'Rax me that buik,' said he and opening at Matthew 28 he read the Great Commission. Yet we as a church have to admit today that we have not sent one overseas missionary since I returned in 2004. Let us do all in our power to remove this blot from our record. The Free Church has been a missionary church from its inception. By 1880 she was giving 20% of her income to missions. Out of total annual givings of £626,000, £126,000 was directed that year to missions. We have only to look at our sister church the Free Presbyterians for an example; out of a total of £420,000 they gave above £77,000 to missions which is

well above a sixth of their income. Brethren, I suggest that our Master makes clear that missions are not optional but foundational to our faith and obedience and blessing.

6. The Foundations of Science

One might claim that the application of the scientific method has transformed our way of life more than any other influence in the last 100 years. This innovation has brought numerous blessings, comforts and opportunities to our hand that our fathers could not have imagined. How would we function without our cars? We are now in the age of ever-advancing computers and mobile telephones. I now do much of my outreach follow-up by text messages from my study! But alongside this there is a pseudo-science which rides on the reputation of true science but does not stand up to the same rigorous scrutiny, yet it is widely accepted while gravely undermining the credibility of God's revelation in the minds of the general public. I refer to Darwinism, which celebrated its 150th anniversary last year. What are its foundations? Are they scientific or not?

The claims of the Darwinian hypothesis are that, by a process of natural selection under competitive conditions, the fittest of several variations will survive to produce improvements so that simple forms will give way to more complex until such sophisticated organisms as man will emerge. The problem with this theory is that it requires the acquisition of increased genetic information to produce these more complex forms, eg to form an eye. Since no one can tell where this information can come from and no one is able to reproduce this process, the theory is nothing more than a figment of Darwin's imagination. This is not science but mythology, yet it masquerades around the world as the replacement for God as our Creator. It in fact claims that we have created ourselves. This is why this fallacy has gained the allegiance of popular and scholarly minds worldwide. It answers the craving of modern man to be self-made and therefore able to totally escape from his accountability to God. The rebellious heart has the tool it was looking for to renounce God's ownership of him. He has jumped off the foundation of his existence and built his own foundation. But how well our Lord knew what it was; it's a foundation

of sand. It is suicidal, for the house he has built upon it will collapse and destroy him.

7. The Foundations of Society

Upon these false scientific premises, the fabric of our modern society is being built, independently of God, as they think. Many examples spring to mind:

A. We have increasingly imposed upon us a series of measures which seek to curb the output of carbon dioxide into our atmosphere as this, we are told, is having a devastating effect on our climate through the 'greenhouse effect'. What we are not told is that the so called 'greenhouse gases' constitute only 38 parts in 10,000. 200 years ago this was 30 parts, so there has been an increase of only 8 tiny parts in all that time. The effects of this tiny increase compare with the great changes caused by eruptions on the surface of the sun. We have just had a severe winter because activity on the sun has subsided. In fact, we might be glad of more greenhouse effect in the next decade or more if sun activity remains low. Scientists were surprised by our cold winter. Again they have discounted that the Lord does as He wills in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth.

B. Who is not worried by our financial uncertainty and the failure of the banking institutions which once were proverbial for their rock-like security? Why is all so insecure? There was a day when all economies rested on the gold standard. Every currency was backed with gold. All exchequers and borrowers were tied to the limits of the gold deposits. Modern man discovered he could cut free from this restriction and we now have paper economies based on promissory notes. Eventually the banks were lending on the basis of the slenderest of guarantees. No government should have allowed this but who was to impose the limits when the gold standard was abandoned? When God was laying the foundations of the earth we are told (Gen.2:12) that He deposited gold in the Garden of Eden, the home particularly prepared for Adam's race. What would Adam want with gold? Gold deposits have controlled much of human history because God placed them there for the future trade and commerce of the race.

C. In recent years couples who want to commit themselves to a life-long biblical marriage have been penalised by the tax system. Our new government promises to remedy this somewhat and we applaud them for this declared aim. The twist to this proposal is that same-sex partnerships will receive the same benefit. We are not here to ferret into people's private lives but we understand that our leaders have realised that many children are being scarred for life by being born into unstable homes where parents can swap around and role-models of father and mother are not permanently in place to provide the stable consistent security, care and discipline essential for the healthy development of a child. How can a same-sex couple even begin to produce the child which society needs for a stable future? The problem is compounded when the National Church sees fit to induct a practising homosexual

into one of its pulpits. A man who is appointed to faithfully proclaim the whole truth of God must deliberately ignore some passages of the Scriptures such as in Romans 1. Such moves by a professing church of Jesus Christ seem to be made without realising that there are commensurate judgments following from such unfaithfulness. We must lift up our voices to our brethren and say, 'Consider the sure consequences of your departure from the creational foundation.'

D. The Fourth Commandment's provision of a Sabbath rest, one day in seven, is arguably the single greatest institution for all mankind. It is the foundation for family fellowship, needed respite from work and essential for man's physical, mental and spiritual needs. But our generation recklessly disregard it and find another foundation. There is a relentless demand for seven-day transport, shopping and refuse collection. This has no regard for families, looking for their fathers. It has no regard for fathers left at a loose end mid-week with the house empty and the pub open to receive squandered wages. Church attendance is discouraged and society dislocated. This is the wisdom of our modern unfettered authorities.

Conclusion

There was never an age when the true foundations were so ignored. This spells disaster in the church and society unless we can expose the fatal delusion to our fellow-citizens. As I go around from door to door, as I preach in Glasgow's streets, I find these groups:

1. Those who want nothing of God or the gospel. They must be warned.
2. Those who will listen politely but consider other matters more pressing. They must be pressed.
3. Those who are trusting in false religion. They must hear of our acquaintance with the Christ they need to know.
4. Those who say they believe but have no personal knowledge. They must be offered the promises and encouraged to enter into a personal relationship.
5. Those who have a defective faith. They must be presented with the only path to forgiveness of sins.

Brethren, we have a great foundation. God has enabled us to hold to that foundation. Is that enough? Will He be satisfied if we bury our talent in the earth? No, we must go out and trade it in the market-place of the world! We must take it into every sphere of human activity and we must be skilled in bringing to every area of life the foundational principles of the Word of the Lord which apply there. If our nation continues unchanged there will be many failed hopes and lives in the next few years. Are we ready to offer a foundation that we know will stand firm when the storm comes, when others fail, 'for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ' (1Cor.3:11)?

Obituary

John Mackirdy, Elder, Rothesay

Rev Murdo A N MacLeod (Partick)

For many years the name of Mr John Mackirdy was synonymous with Rothesay Free Church. That is an indication of his diligence, zeal and love for the local congregation on Bute and indeed for the wider denomination. For many years he served the Rothesay Congregation faithfully and through his membership of Presbytery and other church courts made a valuable and gracious contribution to the wider work of the church.

John Mackirdy was born on the island of Bute in July 1923 and like most of his generation he saw action in the war, serving in the navy. He was torpedoed three times and on one occasion drifted on a raft for three days before landing on the Caribbean island of Mayreau. Following war service he enrolled at the West of Scotland Agricultural College where he obtained a Diploma in Agriculture and in 1951 returned to his native Isle. He joined the family haulage business which was engaged in coal and agriculture contracting. Over the years the company expanded and John maintained his interest in the work right to the end. Shortly after returning to Bute he married Jean McMillan who, like himself, was a native of the island.

From childhood his church association had been with the Free Church of Scotland but his lifelong attachment to the denomination did not merely arise from family association. John himself was wholeheartedly committed to its historical position and had a clear grasp of its doctrine and practice. John professed faith during the ministry of the late Rev Hugh Mackinnon and it was towards the end of Mr. Mackinnon's ministry that he was ordained to the office of Deacon. The congregation's confidence in him was further evidenced by his election as an elder in April 1978. That confidence

was not misplaced and for over 30 years he shouldered the burdens of office and bore, particularly in periods of vacancy, an especially heavy burden. He lovingly tended to the property

and it was a great sadness to him when the church was eventually sold. It was a still greater sorrow to John when the decision was made in 1997 that, due to declining numbers, all services at Rothesay should cease. He was delighted when, four years later, services recommenced through an electronic link which allowed the small group at Rothesay to join in the services from Partick, Crow Road, Glasgow.

Failing health saw John's powers decline and in October 2009 he passed away peacefully. The esteem in which he was held was evidenced by the large congregation gathered at Rothesay Trinity Church of Scotland for the funeral service which was conducted by the minister of Partick assisted by Rev Donald N MacLeod, Arran, a close friend for many years.

John is survived by Jean who was his faithful companion for 54 years. For many years she kindly entertained visitors, selflessly providing hospitality to supply preachers and to the assisting ministers at communion seasons. And those who stayed with them can testify to the Christian kindness of the home. We commit Jean and their children Anne, Janet and Johnnie and the six grandchildren to the God of all grace and the Father of mercies.



Letter from Sri Lanka

Rev S D Vijayenthiran

Trinity Reformed Presbyterian Church, 35 Boswell Place, Wellawatte, Colombo 06

Dear Brethren,

We in Trinity Reformed Presbyterian Mission rejoice in the grace of God for the year of 2009. The Lord is faithful to His covenant people, He has proved His love once and again towards His church. As you may know, the year of 2009 was a year of great trials for us. We faced many satanic accusations and attacks. But the Lord of Hosts has showered His mercies to protect and preserve us for His glory. We still face lots of false accusations and criticism today. However, we are rejoicing because the Lord is on our side and He fights for us. We did not promote ourselves but God made things to work for good as He promised (Rom.8:28). As we look back at the path behind us, it is evident that the

Lord has carried us. Therefore we are motivated to love Him more and serve Him in faith and to rest assuredly in His grace. We also thank the Lord for the blessed fellowship in Christ with many churches who stood with us, and prayed and gave their unfailing support to us. We thank God for Bible Presbyterian Churches in Singapore, the Free Church (Continuing) in Scotland and other Reformed churches all over the world. We especially thank God for Calvary Bible Presbyterian Church, Jurong, Singapore which has been our main supporting church from the beginning till now. Calvary Jurong also has gone through many challenges and trials with us and they have proven their love and commitment toward the work of the Lord and His kingdom in Sri Lanka.

Through all these we have learned that God who has blessed us will continue to do so till the very end: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ' (Phil.1:6).

Colombo

We thank God for His manifold blessings to us. We have moved to our new four-storey building which is being used for all ministerial purposes including Trinity Kindergarten and the minister's accommodation. We also thank God for the faithfulness of the families whom the Lord is using in the ministry here. They have been very helpful and faithful in serving the Lord at the church, especially through the most difficult and challenging times.

Tamil Service: We have about 45 to 50 regular worshippers in Colombo. Rev Kerey Thayananth and myself are the preachers and we ended the year with 1Samuel 15. We have now commenced the Epistle of James. Please pray that God's Word will be preached faithfully and observed by all of us for God's glory alone.

English Bible Study: We also have Lord's Day English Bible Study to minister to the non-Tamil speaking people. However, most who attend are Tamils. Pray that God will give the increase.

Sunday School: We are grateful to God for opening a door for children through the Sunday School ministry. We started to invite children outside the church families. The Sunday School (SS) is increasing in number by God's grace. We are also commencing a Gospel Bible study for the parents of those SS children.

Home Bible Study: Wellawatte BS group is gathering at Mr Donald's house twice a month. We also meet for Bible Study at Dehiwalla. Nawalla Home BS will be started (DV) at Mr Sathiyendra's house.

Theological Classes: The monthly theological classes are conducted at Colombo for all mission workers and students. God willing, the first batch of students will be graduating with the Diploma in Theology in July 2010.

New Gospel Mission: Mr Thyananth and his family are moving to Trincomalee town to start a new ministry. Please pray for God's guidance and blessing on the new work. Also pray for this young family in the challenging new situation they will have in the vineyard.

Trinity Kindergarten (TKG): This is an English medium Kindergarten taught by qualified experienced teachers. Sinhala and Tamil languages are taught as second languages. Individual attention is being paid to needy students. TKG is a gospel outreach to the neighbourhood families. We thank God for bringing some new children from TKG to our Sunday School, and parents for Bible study. We pray that the Lord will use this ministry to extend His Kingdom.

Missions

Jaffna: The Jaffna mission was started in mid-2009. Our student workers Sivabalan and Sujeendran with the help of Dr Dinesh are the pioneers of this gospel ministry. This mission focuses on gospel visitation to families, hospitals and schools. Currently, there are 20 to 25 adult worshippers

and 50 children gathering for Sunday School. Jaffna is a stronghold of Hinduism and Atheism with high literacy and emphasis on education. Thank God for the gospel that has been preached which also brought fruit. Pray that the Lord may continue to bless this gospel door for His elect's sake.

Hatton: This mission, located in a place called Norwood, is about four years old. The person in charge is Mr Jeyamoorthy. Hatton is hill country and the work is among tea plantation workers. By God's grace He is sustaining the witness faithfully with 35 to 40 people worshipping and 45 children gathering for Sunday School. They are now worshipping at a community centre and they are praying for a permanent place of worship. Please pray that the Lord may continue His blessing upon these brethren for His glory.

Trincomalee: This mission has two outreaches (Thambalagamam and Kappalthurai). Mr Vijendran is in charge with a sub-committee consisting of local leaders. The outreach at Thambalagamam started with a small group of believers and now they have grown to reach out to nearby villages. Two years ago they reached out to a nearby village called Kappalthurai and now Kappalthurai has started its own worship service separately, with Mr Vijendran pastoring both. We thank God for a new building for worship on land sold by one of the church members last year at a very low rate. All the church members and members from other mission stations came to render physical help in the building so as to reduce the labour cost. It was encouraging to see how our people love the Lord and His church by working together on the building of His house. Currently in Thambalagamam we have about 45 to 50 adults worshipping and 30 children gathering for Sunday School and in Kappalthurai we have about 25 adults and 35 children. It is a joy to see the Lord working mightily for His kingdom by the faithful preaching of the gospel of Christ. Pray that the mission may grow from strength to strength till we meet our Saviour.

Upcoming Events of TRPC Mission

1. Wedding of Rev Vijayenthiran and Thanuja on 16th March 2010, officiated by Rev Isaac Ong from Calvary BP Church, Singapore.
2. TRPC mission camp will be held on 13th to 15th April 2010, main speaker Rev Isaac Ong from Calvary BP Church, Singapore.
3. Theological Training graduation will be held on 30th July 2010, graduation speaker Rev Harry Woods from Free Church of Scotland (Cont.).
4. The children's Daily Vacation Bible School will be held in August 2010 by Calvary BP Church, Singapore's team. We are greatly thankful to God for all His provision in the work. We also thank God for using our ministers to teach at Bible colleges in Sri Lanka. The colleges have testified of their faithfulness in teaching the Word of Truth. May the Lord continue to use our men to accomplish His eternal purpose in Christ and for the good of His people.

In Christ,

Rev S D Vijayenthiran

Remittances - June 2010

	2010 June	2010 Total	2009 Total to June				
Presbytery of Inverness				Outer Hebrides Presbytery			
Aberdeen	800	6,479	6,332	Cross	1,817	11,382	11,847
Duthil-Dores	1,286	11,461	10,039	Harris - Leverburgh	2,000	7,658	6,774
Inverness	2,000	14,000	14,000	Harris - Scalpay	1,700	12,400	9,951
Kilmorack & Strathglass	1,400	9,944	8,656	Knock & Point	1,100	7,673	5,400
Total Inverness Presbytery	5,486	41,884	39,026	North Uist	1,000	7,278	5,641
Northern Presbytery				Stornoway	7,363	43,303	32,058
Assynt & Scourie	0	563	2,325	Total Outer Hebrides Presbytery	14,980	89,694	71,672
Brora	2,000	11,192	9,153	Presbytery of Skye & Lochcarron			
Kiltearn	1,800	10,800	10,800	Bracadale	0	6,607	5,688
Tarbat	800	4,623	5,922	Duirinish (Waternish)	0	2,000	2,000
Total Northern Presbytery	4,600	27,177	28,200	Glenelg & Arnisdale	246	1,200	1,173
Southern Presbytery				Kilmuir & Stenscholl	1,300	7,646	8,512
Arran	272	4,052	3,582	Lochalsh & Glenshiel	560	4,008	4,289
Ayr	0	1,348	613	Poolewe & Aultbea	1,300	5,921	5,657
Dumfries	0	0	0	Ullapool	0	400	0
Edinburgh	4,000	16,571	15,279	Portree	1,200	7,200	7,200
Glasgow - Partick	2,750	16,750	15,000	Snizort	1,200	9,643	7,433
Glasgow - Shettleston	1,000	10,443	5,300	Strath	0	337	3,074
Glasgow - Knightswood	2,000	14,324	12,195	Total Skye Presbytery	5,806	44,963	45,026
Rothesay	0	147	73	Total From Congregations			
Total Southern Presbytery	10,022	63,635	52,042	Other Donations	1,250	7,991	8,567
				Legacy	0	0	0
				TOTAL	42,144	275,344	244,534
				Including Gift Aid		49,344	38,359

The Modern 'Downgrade'

Rev James Clark



120 years ago CH Spurgeon 'contended earnestly for the faith' on the principle that to hide the Truth is as much unorthodoxy as to deny it. In addition, many were using orthodox terms such as 'grace', 'atonement' and 'sovereignty', but either refused to define them or blurred them so vaguely that heretics were not offended. It was an age when 'good men' were men who would tolerate anything and only 'extremists' were dogmatic in their pronouncements. Reformed preachers are again living in such an age. It is again unfashionable to criticise 'good men' for supporting anti-Scriptural corruptions in their denominations and refusing to separate themselves (by more than using words). Such continue to accrue 'guilt by their association' with evil (2 John 10, 11). We disagree that we are 'one in Christ' with them if they are wilfully disobedient to the revealed Truths in Scripture. Rhetoric is NOT synonymous with faithfulness. Those who submit to the authority of God's Word will not

tolerate teaching which is contrary to it. Compromise is to be condemned and neutrals ought not to receive comfort. 'Who is on the Lord's side?' As Spurgeon said in the April 1887 *Sword and Trowel*, 'It is exceedingly difficult in these times to preserve one's fidelity before God and one's fraternity among men.' Many sermons nowadays studiously avoid mentioning the essential work of the Holy Spirit and the words 'sin' and 'repentance'. The ecclesiastical *status quo* is a lack of commitment to doctrinal reading, devotional meetings and an increasing commitment to the things of the world. 'Laxity of doctrine is the parent of worldliness... There must come with decision for Truth a corresponding protest against error... Fellowship with known and vital error is participation in sin' (Spurgeon, 1887). Revelation 18:4 is a clear call to all those who profess to be the Lord's: 'Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues!'

Mission Trip to Kenya

Rev Calum Iain Macleod (Evanton)



It was my great honour and privilege to visit the Nairobi College of Intercultural Studies and Theology / Africa Centre for the Great Commission (ACGC) in Nairobi, Kenya, in January of this year. It took a couple of days to get over the initial shock of the invitation from Rev William Macleod, and at many points during the following weeks of preparation I felt all too inadequate for the responsibility. Arriving in Nairobi on Friday 22nd January I was warmly greeted at the airport by Korean brethren involved in or connected with ACGC (including Rev Enoch Song, Brighton Korean Church, UK). On Saturday 23rd I was taken to the National Park, and spent a heart-warming day of fellowship in delightful Nairobi surroundings with Korean and Kenyan brothers and sisters – which was a great start to the visit. It enabled us to get to know each other.

On Lord's Day 24th, I was invited to attend and preach at the church of one of the Kenyan pastors I'd be with during the week at ACGC. It was an experience quite different from our Lord's Day services, in more ways than one! After a considerable time of exuberant African singing and interesting testimonies, I was invited to preach. It took about five minutes to get used to preaching through a translator! We soon got in step with each other!

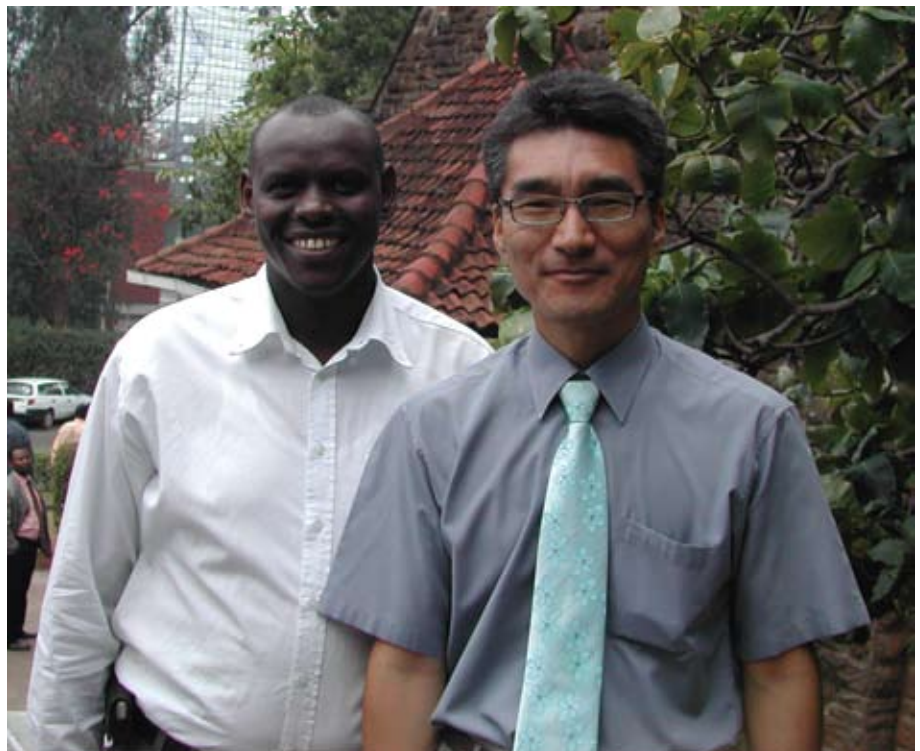
Monday 25th to Friday 29th involved daytime addresses at ACGC from 9am till 4pm, on General Canonics and the Pauline Epistles. The week-long series was hugely condensed from a course of studies usually delivered at ACGC in detail and depth over a period of weeks, so only main themes in some of the Pauline Epistles could be covered.

Varying numbers attended from day to day throughout the week, with brothers and sisters from all over Africa, including Ethiopia and Sudan, as well as Kenya. I found among them a massive appetite for the Bible, and was amazed and delighted with the amount and kind of questions that were being asked. Though largely unclear on Reformed theology, they rejoiced in studying the Bible from a Reformed perspective (as their smiles throughout testified!) and in seeing the truth presented from an angle unfamiliar to them. I tried to make it an interactive week, asking questions and inviting comment as we went along, and found it both helpful for them, and enriching for me.

The Christians I met – Koreans and Africans alike – made a deep impression on my heart, as men and women who truly know God and live close to Him, with hearts blazing with love for Jesus, and the souls of men and women – which was a humbling experience, when compared with many, including myself, who having the immense blessing of Reformed theology as the staple spiritual diet, yet lack (in degree) the godliness, zeal, passion and vision these brethren have.

It was my great privilege to witness first hand and be part of this work, and I believe it remains a great and vital opportunity for our Church to maintain links with our Korean and African brethren in ACGC, not least because it is an open door to share our Reformed theology not only with Kenya, but (through ACGC) with many countries in Africa. It is a platform from which we can, with God's help and blessing, share in potentially reaching out to countless numbers of men, women and children who are this day needing salvation, and need sound Bible teaching.

May I record my thanks to the Home and Foreign Missions Committee for the opportunity and privilege to be part of this work, and also say that it is my prayerful hope that I was able, at least in some measure, to fulfil my remit.



Rev Francis Kimani with Rev Kyung-Bae Lee, respectively the African and Korean leaders of the work in Kenya.



General Assembly Group Photo (Courtesy of Rev Bert Pohl)

Rear: Captain Callum Maclean, Rev Bill Scott, Iain MacPherson, John MacDonald, Rev Greg MacDonald, Alasdair MacDonald, Alasdair Macleod, Maurice Grant, Rev Kenneth MacDonald, Colin Crichton, Rev John MacLeod, Lindsay MacCallum, Rev Gavin Beers, David Lachman, James MacInnes, Rev Warren Gardner, Rev Gavino Fioretti, Rev Allan MacIver, Rev James Gracie, Alasdair Nicholson, Rev Andrew Allan, Richard Bell, Rev Gerald Kastelein, Alex Campbell, Rev Timothy McGlynn, Rev Harry Woods, Rev James Clark, Mrs Janet Mackenzie, Rev Graeme Craig, Glenn Fraser, Mrs Campbell, Miss Kirsty-Ann Macleod, Mrs Ann Shaw, Angus Shaw, Rev William Macleod, Dr Andrew Naylor.

Front: Miss Mairi MacIver, Mrs Adeline Henderson [both seated], Donald MacKay, Rev John Keddie, Rev Robert Josey, Rev David Fraser, Mrs Marion Fraser, Rev John J Murray, Rev David Blunt, Mrs Sybil Blunt, Donald John Morrison, Rev Murdo Angus Macleod, Mrs Una Naylor, Rev James Frew, Donald Robertson, Rev John MacLeod, Hector Campbell, Desmond Biggerstaff.

So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun.
When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.

Isaiah 59:19