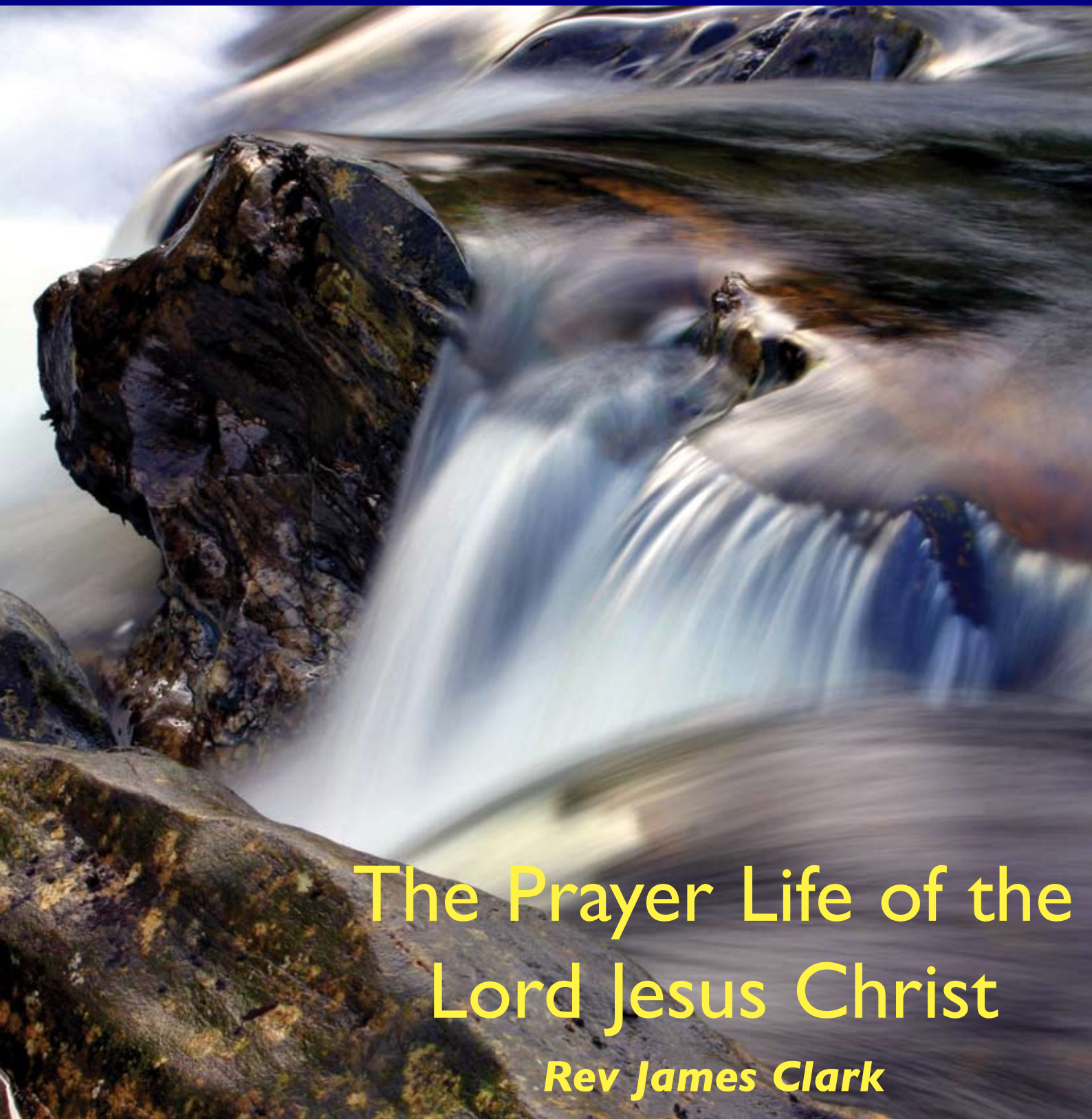


# Free Church **Witness**



**NOVEMBER 2011 ISSUE**



## **The Prayer Life of the Lord Jesus Christ**

**Rev James Clark**



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# Jesus Stripped that we might be clothed



**T**he Gospels record that our Lord Jesus was stripped, His clothes shared among the soldiers and He Himself crucified naked. If this was a detail of lesser importance it might be found in one or at the most two gospels. However the fact that it is recorded by all four evangelists emphasises that here we have a fact of great significance.

## **Clothes are natural**

The wearing of clothes is natural. If, on a warm evening, someone stripped off all in church we would be shocked. Occasionally at large sporting events 'streakers' take their clothes off and run around naked making an exhibition of themselves. Stephen Gough, known as the Naked Rambler, became famous, or rather infamous, for walking the length of Great Britain from Land's End to John O'Groats in 2003–2004 with nothing on except boots, socks, rucksack and sometimes a hat. He repeated his ramble in 2005–2006. He was arrested several times and put in prison in the course of both his rambles. Since then he has been convicted several times of refusing to wear any clothing or otherwise cover his private parts and committing a breach of the peace. Recently after just 60 seconds of freedom he was jailed for another 657 days. But in the beginning there was no law against nudity. Adam and Eve were naked and felt no sense of shame.

The Fall changed this. When our first parents ate the forbidden fruit they immediately felt naked and made 'aprons' of fig leaves. Their sense of nakedness was not in the presence of one another – they were man and wife – but rather before God. They hid themselves from God among the trees of the garden. Their sense of shame was focused in the organs of reproduction indicating that their descendants were spiritually defiled. God, in His great mercy, made them clothes of animal skins.

In some nightclubs women are paid to do what is unnatural – to strip off all their clothes. Not only is this a form of immorality and adultery for those who strip and those who watch but it is also rebellion against God's order. Clothes are natural to every culture and only the most degraded savages wear none. When God made clothes for Adam and Eve He laid down that clothes should be worn. The wearing of clothes is a divine institution just like the Sabbath, marriage and work. The Bible stresses modesty of dress: 'In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel' (1Tim.2:9). As our society moves further away from its Christian heritage it has become fashionable for women to wear skimpy clothes which reveal more than is right.

## **Jesus was stripped naked**

Have you ever thought of the fact that our glorious Lord Jesus was stripped naked and hung on a cross near Jerusalem, close to a busy highway and in front of a mocking crowd? What shame He suffered! It was the common practice of the Romans when crucifying individuals, to remove their clothes. Brutal regimes today strip men and women naked to degrade, humiliate and torture them. King David sent servants to Hanun, king of the Ammonites, to comfort him following the death of his father. David's men were suspected of being spies and, on the orders of Hanun, his servants 'shaved off the one half of their beards, and cut off their garments in the middle, even to their buttocks, and sent them away' (2Sam.10:4). The men were greatly ashamed as they walked naked through the land of Ammon and into Israel. It led to terrible reprisals and the devastation of the country of Ammon.

Can we see any purpose in Jesus being made naked? First, it was so that He might suffer what others suffer. We have a wonderful High Priest who has a fellow feeling with us in our infirmities because He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin. Many disciples being persecuted were stripped. What a comfort it is for such to remember that their Saviour also went through such humiliation! Second, He who was rich was for our sakes made poor so that we might be made rich. He was made so poor that the very clothes were taken from His back. Third, He bears our shame and nakedness to cover and clothe us eternally.

Four soldiers crucified Jesus. His clothes could be divided into his headgear, his outer garment, his belt and his sandals. Each one got something. Then there was His inner garment which appears to have been special, woven in one piece. Rather than tearing it into pieces, they cast lots who should have it. Little did the soldiers know that they were literally carrying out what David had prophesied centuries before: 'They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture' (Ps.22:18). We can think of no situation where this would have happened to David. He spoke here of his greatest Son. What a wonderful confirmation of the inspiration and truth of Scripture!

## **Our Nakedness**

When God created man He clothed him in glory and dignity, making him in His own image in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, but the fall left man in shame and nakedness. We stand 'naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do' (Heb.4:13). We may hide from man but we cannot



'One individual who entered refused to wear the wedding garment. He was obviously proud of his own clothes. He felt in his self-righteousness that he could clean the stains and patch the holes.'

hide from God who sees behind the fig leaves and into every hiding place. Our righteousness is as filthy rags, full of holes and unable to cover our shame. The more we try to pull these rags over us the more they tear. God sees our covetousness, lusts, deceit, pride, idols and unbelief. Our hearts are deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know how bad we are? Only God. On the great day when the books are opened many will call on the mountains to fall on them and to cover them from the presence of Him who sits upon the throne. Will you be naked that day?

#### **Our new clothes**

See Adam and Eve stand naked and blushing before God. Even as He addresses them the fig leaves fall. The animals which God kills to provide clothing for our first parents are types of Christ. God here is instituting sacrifices as a covering or atonement for sin. Christ, our sin offering, was made naked so that we would be clothed. Remember Noah drunk and lying naked in his tent. Ham sees him and calls his brothers to gloat over their father's shame. They refuse, and, when Noah awakes, and realises what has happened, he curses Ham in his son Canaan who, very likely, had been involved in the wickedness. But now consider Christ naked on the cross. The whole world mocks and jeers. Now turn and look into heaven. There we see the Lord's people clothed in white robes which are the righteousness of Christ (Rev.6:11; 7:13).

Jesus told a parable about a wedding feast which represents the blessedness of heaven. Those invited, the Jews and other privileged people, refused the invitation. Poor people from the highways and byways were persuaded to come instead. They were furnished with wedding robes in place of their rags. One individual who entered refused to wear the wedding garment. He was obviously proud of his own clothes. He felt in his self-righteousness that he could clean the stains and patch the holes. When challenged over his failure to wear a wedding garment he was speechless and so was cast out into hell. Could that be you?

The soldiers who returned home from their crucifying of Christ took with them a pair of second-hand sandals or a belt and one of them proudly displayed the tunic which he had won in the gambling. You and I can be so much wealthier than they by receiving the Lord Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel. Earthly clothes wear out – even the most expensive, but here is a garment that will last forever. It will clothe us all our days in this life, through death and the grave and eternally in heaven. It is beautiful, spotless and white and a perfect fit. Take Christ's righteousness. 'But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof' (Rom. 13:14).



## The Prayer-Life of Jesus Christ

**Rev James Clark**

**C**hrist was in full communion with His Father before He was born, and after His birth as a man He continued this fellowship in a life of prayer. He was, and is, perfect

God and perfect man, and thus the supreme example to all His creatures. He prayed because He was a man, a dependent being, made for fellowship with God. His personal sinlessness

did not detract from His human sense of dependence upon His Father for everything. We have doubtless only a few instances recorded of our Lord in prayer, much of it being done in secret, as He taught His disciples to do likewise. If He could find no solitude in the house, He would go outside to seek it. Sometimes He did enter into public prayer in the midst of the disciples or so that a crowd might hear something important. He did pray with and for others, but mostly He prayed in private. The Gospel according to Luke, in particular, emphasizes the prayerfulness of Christ. When the Master wanted to be alone in prayer, it was often the precursor of important events. For example; before His Baptism (Lk.3:21), before the election of the Twelve (Lk.6:12,13. – all night in prayer), before the discourse in the synagogue at Capernaum (Mt.14:23), at any time of crisis or heavy labour (Lk.5:15,16), before He told His disciples that He must suffer and die (Lk.9:18-22), before His Transfiguration (Lk.9:28), as He approached the cross, in Gethsemane (Lk.22:44). On three occasions there came the voice of the Father from Heaven to Him, a voice which, during His life on earth, attested His Divine mission. It is notable that this voice came to Him at a time of (perhaps in answer to) prayer: at His Baptism, Transfiguration and in the courts of the temple (Jn.12:28).

### Examples of the Lord in Prayer

In Matthew 11:25, 26 the Lord declares that He fully agrees with the Father's wisdom. His Person and His message were widely rejected, yet He expresses His adoring acquiescence in the Father's plan, His 'good pleasure'. In the parallel passage in Luke 10:21 we read that he 'rejoiced in spirit', resting in the Divine wisdom which was powerfully erecting His kingdom. 'Events are God's, let Him sit at His own helm', says Spurgeon. In Matthew 14:19 He 'looked up to heaven' as He gave thanks for the five loaves and two fish. All the crowd would see that He looked to heaven, to God, in acknowledgement of the provision, and in expectancy of the power for the miracle. Even His manner in prayer pointed men heavenward and the prayer preceded the miracle.

In Matthew 19:13 and Mark 10:16 infants are brought by their mothers to Him for His blessing as High Priest. They saw how important it was to have a place in the intercession of Christ. His prayers as Mediator are essential for our salvation. The

disciples were doubtless struck by the manner and matter of our Lord's prayers and in Luke 11:1 they said, 'Lord teach us to pray' – a good prayer for us to imitate! Here was One who, as He prayed, was fully aware of the Divine Presence and conveyed the sense of this Presence to others. Those who lead others in prayer should follow this example. There was always great reverence in Christ's prayers. There are too many who address God nowadays as if they were addressing an equal and not the blessed God.

In Mark 1:35 the Lord was praying while it was yet night (very early in the morning). He was about to begin His first preaching and healing circuit and, as on similar solemn occasions, He spends time in special prayer, doubtless with a view to this. There is a temptation for preachers to end their preparation for the pulpit when the preparation of the message has ended. 'After I had prepared my sermon, then I prepared myself', said that godly preacher Robert Bruce. Even as the Lord directed His disciples to pray for labourers (Mt.9:37,38), so in Luke 6:12, 13 we find Him in prolonged prayer with His Father in preparation for the solemn appointment of His twelve disciples. Would that this example were heeded in the calling of a minister, instead of a congregation rushing into it. In John 11:41, Christ gives public thanks for answer to His prayer (when He heard about Lazarus, vv 3, 4), showing to the people His union and constant communion with the Father. The fact that He was 'heard always' must often have calmed His soul in times of suffering, eg in Gethsemane, and especially on the cross (Mt.26:53) when He expressed His assurance that He had but to ask for legions of angels and they would come immediately. The importance of prayer and how it honours the One who is prayed to, was made manifest when the Lord whipped the money-changers and dove-sellers out of the place which had been dedicated to the worship of God (Mt.21:12, 13). The Lord Christ says that the house dedicated to His Father's worship is not to be a music-hall, theatre, social club or political forum, but a 'house of prayer' (Mk.11:17), Lk.19:46). It is important to note that our Lord not only prayed *before* labouring but also *after* (Mt.14:23, Mk.1:35, Lk.5:16). We thus learn from our Lord's example that Christian workers should begin and *end* their labours with prayer, and if we are earnestly seeking blessing, we shall do so. Simply to do what is our duty



'The perfect Man and Son prayed perfectly. His Example and devotion both challenge and humble us, leading us to cry for more grace, 'for we know not what we should pray for as we ought' (Rom.8:26).'

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does not guarantee any automatic blessing. The Lord's Supper was consecrated in prayer (Mk.14:22, 23). There is no *ex opera operatum* here, ie the blessing does not come simply as a result of 'the work performed' – a Roman Catholic heresy which seems to be adopted by many others. There is prayer because only God can sovereignly impart the blessing, not the priest but the High Priest.

In Gethsemane there was prayer indeed (Heb.5:7)! Before His arrest the Lord Jesus went there often to pray (Lk.22:39, Jn.18:2). Now, commencing His final conflict with the powers of darkness, He prepared Himself by prayer (Mt.26:36-44). As the Lord taught His disciples, 'Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation', so He practised what He taught, and prepared Himself. The disciples did not watch and pray, and when the crisis burst upon them they panicked and fled, while He Himself met His enemies calmly and controlled the events. Gurnall draws the lesson for us, 'The only armour in which temptation can successfully be met is prayer (Eph.6:18); and when the enemy is allowed to come upon us before we have buckled it on, we have not a chance of standing'.

### **The Word Christ used in Prayer**

The word which Christ invariably uses in 'asking' in prayer is the Greek word '*erotao*' (Jn.14:16; 16:23, 26; 17:9, 15, 20). It signifies that one asks, not as a suppliant, but familiarly as an equal, as king with king (Luke 14:32). His is not the petition of a creature to the Creator, but the request of the Son to the Father. Christ is conscious of His equal dignity with the Father. Martha, on the contrary, plainly reveals her inaccurate conception of His dignity, when she uses an inferior word for 'ask' in John 11:22 – the word for 'ask' which He never uses in referring to His own prayers. He uses this other word which carries an authority which would be unfitting for us to use. In the 'High Priestly prayer' (John 17:24) Christ uses His divine 'I will...' to declare His equality with the Father in essential power and glory and this was declared publicly in the ears of

the disciples for their comfort and edification. Luther bids us consider, 'who the Man is that thus prays, who is prayed to and how great a thing is prayed for?' Perfect feeling is expressed in intense thought. This prayer, because of who utters it, must have the most perfect and exact arrangement in prayer. 'He prayed thus in testimony of how He would henceforth intercede for and represent them in Heaven' (R Stier). Note the dignity of the 'we' in verse 11.

In the 'Lord's Prayer' (Mt.6), Christ taught His disciples the priorities in prayer; that it is mainly a private business and that 'much-speaking' is to be avoided. It is evident from our Lord's warnings to the Pharisees that a man may pray much publicly and yet have little or no communion with God, as the Pharisees, whose 'hearts were far from Him'. They prayed outwardly to God but their desire was to be heard by man. 'They have (in full) their reward', said the Lord. Christ sought solitude for sincere, personal prayer to God and teaches His followers to do likewise (Mt.6:5, 6).

The perfect Man and Son prayed perfectly. His Example and devotion both challenge and humble us, leading us to cry for more grace, 'for we know not what we should pray for as we ought' (Rom.8:26). His life on earth was one of continual communion and intercession with God. Christ died praying, His last words were prayers, (Mt.27:46; Lk.23:34, 46). 'The habit of life was strong in death'. After His resurrection, how did His disciples at first recognise Him? – By prayer, as He blessed the bread and broke it (Lk.24:30). It might be thought that Christ, being the Son of God, should have less need of prayer because of the special relationship which He enjoyed with the Father. Yet, the contrary is true. He prayed more than any man, because He was closer to God than any man. If, then, we were in closer communion with God, would we not then pray more than we do now? Is it not sin that hinders us? Seeing that we are to be 'conformed to the image of His Son' (Rom.8:29), we do well to study the perfect prayer life of the Son, Christ Jesus.

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## **Obituary**

### **David Murray, Elder, Dores**

On 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2011, David Murray passed to his eternal rest. He was one of nature's gentlemen, but more than that he was a gracious and godly man, and is greatly missed by his family and congregation. The funeral service, which was largely attended, was held in W T Fraser's Funeral Home, Inverness, and was taken by Rev Harry Woods, Interim Moderator, and Rev John MacLeod, the retired minister of Duthil-Dores Free Church (Continuing).

David was born in Coll, Isle of Lewis on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1923, the youngest of a family of six. After leaving school he joined the RAF and trained as a pilot in South Africa. After the war he worked with the Met Office in Lewis. From 1953 to 1981

he worked with British Telecom in Inverness, Glasgow and Aberdeen, taking early retirement on health grounds.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1949 David married Mary Ann MacLeod from Coll and they had two daughters, Wilma, the wife of Rev John McCallum, Sydney and Catriona, the wife of Mr Harry Smart, Montrose. On three occasions David and his wife spent six months with their family in Australia, and when ill-health prevented visits to their family in Australia and in Montrose, they were delighted to have frequent visits from one or another of the family members.

During their early married life the Murrays attended the Free North Church, Inverness, and when they moved to Glasgow,

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where they were to spend nine years, they worshipped in Partick Highland Free Church. Thereafter they spent eleven years in Aberdeen and it was there that David first made profession of his faith in Christ. From 1969 to 1976 he was Clerk to the Finance Committee of St Columba Free Church, Dee Street, Aberdeen. David and Mary Ann returned to Inverness in 1976 and some time later David was made an elder in the Free North Church and Clerk to the Deacons' Court. These offices he adorned, and discharged his duties faithfully. When the division in the Free Church came in January 2000 the Murrays joined Duthil-Dores Free Church (Continuing) and David was appointed an elder in Dores. More recently he was for some time Treasurer in the congregation. Over the last number of years David was increasingly incapacitated with heart problems and Parkinson's Disease. These trials he bore with a consistently gracious and uncomplaining spirit and was nursed selflessly and devotedly by his wife.

To his widow and their daughters and their families and to other relatives, we extend our prayerful sympathy.

'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord'.

*Rev Hugh M Ferrier*



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## Obituary

### *Martin Kirkwood, Elder, Beauly*

On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2011, the congregation of Kilmorack and Strathglass (Beauly) suffered the loss of a much-respected elder and friend with the passing of Martin Kirkwood of Broallan. Although his health had been failing for a time his death came suddenly. Born in 1922, Martin joined the Beauly congregation in 1959 by certificate from Gilcomston South Church of Scotland, Aberdeen. He was ordained as an elder of the congregation in 1960 and served in that capacity until his death. His quiet Christian manner and courtesy was a pleasant introduction to anyone visiting the congregation and his presence at the door at each service became a 'fixture' that is now sorely missed by all who knew him.

An architect by profession, Martin was well-known throughout the Church as the architect involved with the Drumchapel, East Kilbride, Paisley and Shiskine church buildings.

We greatly miss Martin yet our sorrow is mingled with the joy of knowing that as a consistent Christian man his departure to be with the Lord is a great gain for him. We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow Mary; to his daughter Rosemary; to his son James; daughter-in-law Dawn and his grandchildren Murray, Steph and Kris. We commend them to the Lord who alone is able to comfort them in their loss.

*Rev Harry Woods*



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# Thoughts on the Holy Trinity

**Rev Maurice Roberts**

**G**od is the ultimate and most sublime mystery in all existence. No being has ever equalled him in majesty and sovereignty and no being ever shall. God's greatness is not relative or proportional but infinitely and transcendently great. What we know of God in this life from a study of the Bible is accurate and true but vastly less than what is in heaven to be yet known of Him. In this life 'we see through a glass darkly'. The knowledge of God which awaits His people in the life to come is vastly greater than what the most learned of scholars have attained to here below. In heaven God's children will see Him 'face to face' and enjoy Him to the uttermost for ever.

All our knowledge of God in this life must be drawn principally from the Bible. There is a knowledge of God to be known from the created universe. This knowledge is sufficient to render all persons guilty who seek to suppress it in their minds.

However the knowledge of God to be obtained from a study of the natural world is not sufficient to bring us as sinners to know and love Him, as we ought to do. Therefore our knowledge of God must be learned principally from what God tells us in the Bible. It is what we learn from Scripture, either explicitly or by good and necessary inference, that must be allowed to shape and control our formulation of the doctrine of God. What is drawn from other sources will tend to mislead our minds and so cloud our understanding with a measure of idolatry.

## **Defining the Holy Trinity**

1. There is one essence or substance of God shared equally by the three Persons of the holy Trinity, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

2. Each of these three Persons is God but there are not three Gods but one only.

3. The names of Father, Son and Holy Spirit belong to the Persons necessarily and are not the result of God's plan of redemption.

4. God may be thought of in two ways. We may think of God as He is in Himself; and we may think of Him as He is related to the world which He has created. It is customary to refer to God in this first sense as the Ontological Trinity; and in the second as the Economic Trinity.

5. Within the Ontological Trinity there are the following properties special to each Person. The Father eternally begets the Son; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and from the Son. These properties belong to the eternal and necessary existence of God. They have no beginning and they will have no end.

6. The Son of God and the Spirit are, like the Father, of themselves (the technical term which we use to express this truth is 'autotheos'). The Son and the Spirit do not owe their origin or their being to God the Father. Like the Father they are eternal and uncreated.

7. The Second Person of the Holy Trinity is called the Son of God. In respect to His personal property of Sonship He is of the Father and in Scripture has the designation of the 'only-begotten Son'. In respect of His deity He is of Himself God.

8. The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity. In that He is the Holy Spirit He proceeds from the Father and the Son. In that He is God He is of Himself God.

9. Whilst our definitions of God must always conform to the evidence of Scripture, our terminology may legitimately include words which are not found in Scripture. These words, such as the term 'Trinity', are used as necessary technical terms to convey accurate Scriptural teaching about the being of God. Such technical terms are not wrong, in that they enshrine concepts which are entirely scriptural.

10. The Persons of the Godhead eternally indwell one another. The Father indwells the Son and the Spirit. The Son indwells the Father and the Spirit. The Spirit indwells the Father and the Son.

11. The technical term which we use to designate this mutual indwelling of the persons of the Godhead is the term 'Circumincession'.

12. The three Persons of the holy Trinity each love one another and delight in one another. Each Person perfectly and fully knows the other two Persons. When in Scripture one Person refers to another it is with the utmost honour, respect and affection. For example, the Father refers to Christ in these words: 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased'. Christ says: 'My Father is greater than I'. The Holy Spirit 'shall not speak of himself...he shall glorify me' (John 16:13-14). The Spirit does not speak of Himself but of Christ.

13. For the purposes of redemption these three blessed Persons have each a work of their own. We are now referring to the Economic Trinity.

14. The Father's work is to send the Son and to call the elect and to adopt them as His own dear children.

15. The Son's work is to become incarnate of the Virgin Mary, to fulfil the Moral Law, to die for us on the cross, to rise from the dead, to ascend to heaven in order now to intercede for us and at last to come again to take believers home to glory.

16. The Spirit's work is to give to Christ all needed strength for His ministry on earth, to regenerate the elect, to sanctify them in this world and so prepare them for heaven, where they will be with God in glory eternally.

17. The soul of each believer enters into glory at the moment of death. There is no delay in point of time between a believer's death and his, or her, entrance into glory. We refer to this as the Intermediate State of the believer.

18. The body and soul together of each believer will enter into heaven after the Resurrection and the Judgment.

19. At the Judgment each believer will receive praise and commendation from Christ, who will welcome us into glory.

Believers will then take their places in the eternal world of heaven. We refer to this as the Eternal State of the believer.

20. Christ's love for believers is a special love arising from the fact that they are His Bride, whom He has loved with an everlasting love and for whom He has paid the extremely great price of His own blood and sufferings while on the Cross.

### **Privileges and Duties of Christian Believers**

1. Christians have a relationship with each Person of the Holy Trinity. We are sons of the Father, disciples of Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit.

2. Believers make up Christ's church and are referred to in Scripture as His Bride, bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh.

3. Those who have Christ as their Saviour have also God as their Father and the Spirit as their Comforter.

4. Prayer is usually made to the Father, through the Son as Mediator, and in the Spirit. However prayer may be made to all three Persons of the Godhead.

5. Our first and supreme duty is to love the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

6. God is to be worshipped only in the ways which He has commanded in His Word; to worship God in any way not commanded by Him in the Bible is vain and idolatrous.

7. We are to receive the Bible as the inspired Word of God and as the only rule of faith and life.

8. It is our happy and blessed duty to meditate on this holy Trinity with affection and gratitude, especially for the gospel of saving grace.

9. We are to trust in God and to rely on Him to supply all our needs both temporal and eternal.

10. We have the great honour of serving this holy God for the short time that we are on earth.

11. The ultimate joy which we have as believers will be to see and to be with this blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in heaven forever.

12. We refer to this glorious sight of God as the 'Beatific Vision'. The beauty of God is infinite and surpasses all created beauty. The sight of God will ravish the hearts of believers forever in glory.

13. The blessed vision of the Triune God, together with a full enjoyment of His love to us in Christ, will be the chief source of our endless happiness as believers in the world to come.

### **Lessons which we are to seek to Learn from the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity**

1. To make it our great aim in this life to walk in fellowship with these three holy Persons.

2. To pray without ceasing to God to carry us safely through this short life and to sanctify our experiences here on earth so that they might be profitable to us and to others, especially in matters of salvation.

3. To obey the will of the Holy Trinity as that will is revealed in holy Scripture, especially to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and to keep carefully God's Moral Law in public and in private.

4. To seek to make known the truth of God to as many persons as possible so that they also may share with us the blessings of the gospel of Christ.

5. To foster fellowship with those who share our precious faith, even though in this life we do not yet all see eye to eye in all things, and to promote love and joy among one another in this sad and fallen world.

6. To remember that the Persons of the holy Trinity cannot fail to bring to pass all that they have promised in Scripture and that as Christ, our great Head, is alive from the dead for evermore, so we who are believers shall soon be with Him in glory.

7. In this way we may and ought to soften to our own minds and to the minds of our Christian brothers and sisters that natural fear of death which tends to terrify us. This we should do by reminding ourselves that to be with Christ is far better than life in this present world.

8. Let us then ever remember that as Christians we were once in a state of sin but are now redeemed by Christ; that we are now in a state of grace and are soon to be taken out of it at our death; and that after death we are to pass from a state of grace to a state of glory, which is the most blessed state of all.

'We refer to this glorious sight of God as the 'Beatific Vision'. The beauty of God is infinite and surpasses all created beauty. The sight of God will ravish the hearts of believers forever in glory.'





# News



**Left to Right: (Rear)** Rev Marcus McCullough, Rev Aaron Lewis, Bill McQueer, Rev Sam Tamata, James Haram, Rev Ian Budgen, Murdo MacIver, Dr Donald Boyd, Joachim Parker, Alasdair Macleod, Rev Graeme Craig, David Dunlop, Rev Derek Petrie, Rev Kenneth MacDonald, Rev David Silversides, Matthew Fraser, Roddy Mackay, Rev Andrew Allan.  
**(Middle)** Donald Robertson, Rev Young Chul Whang, Calum Smith, Rev John Keddie, Rev David Fraser, Sam Semmens, Dr David Chin, Rev John J Murray, Glenn Fraser.  
**(Front)** Rev Harry Woods, Rev Sam Watson, Rev Tim McGlynn, Rev Trevor Kirkland, Rev Richard Ross, Rev Pooyan Mehrshahi, Rev William Macleod, Rev Richard Brooks.

## School in Theology 2011

*Alasdair Macleod*

The 59<sup>th</sup> Free Church School in Theology was held at Carronvale House, Larbert, from 5 to 8 September 2011. The School is an annual conference in theology intended particularly for ministers and divinity students, though

with much also to benefit the intelligent layman. Although it is organised mainly by ministers of the Free Church (Continuing), a number of brethren come each year from various denominational backgrounds, with some this year from

England, Ireland, Korea and Singapore. This year, the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the translation of the Authorised Version encouraged a close focus on the Word of God, and Rev Trevor Kirkland (Templepatrick Reformed Church) gave

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# Desk

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an excellent paper on the 'Development of the Authorised Version'. Mr Kirkland stressed the godliness and scholarship of many of those involved in the translation work, showing the care and diligence with which the work was done, and particularly highlighted the Puritan involvement throughout the project, refuting the accusation sometimes made that the AV is a 'high church' translation. He also spoke of the enduring value of the AV in a world offering a multiplicity of alternative translations, usually based on a demonstrably inferior, artificially reconstructed Greek text.

A challenging address was given by Rev Pooyan Mehrshahi of Providence Chapel, Cheltenham, who is working with the TBS in the revision of the Farsi Bible, originally translated by British missionary Henry Martyn. He spoke movingly of the sufferings of believers in his home country of Iran (Persia in the Bible) who face unspeakable persecution, including physical torture, from a hostile state. The powerful picture he painted of believers continuing courageously to meet in secret for worship, despite constant threats of surveillance and infiltration, put the challenges to Gospel work in the UK in perspective.

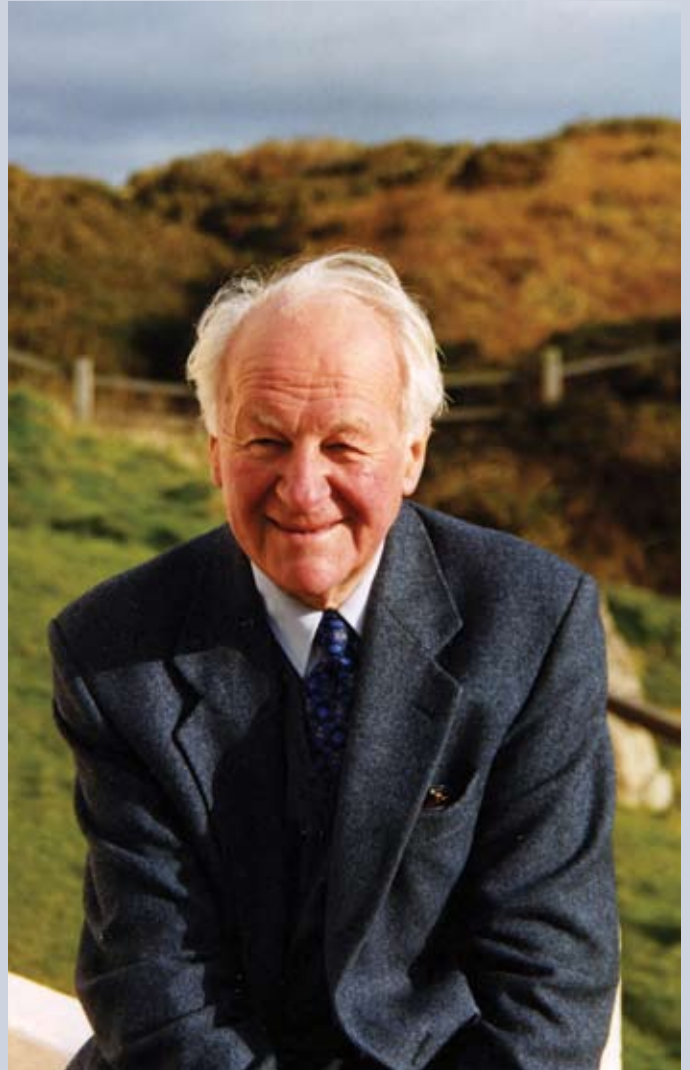
Another highlight was a powerful address from Rev Gavin Beers (Ayr) on the 'Collapse of a Culture', showing how the marks of cultural disintegration given in Romans I diagnose the deterioration in British society, especially since the 1960s. He showed how characteristics such as crime, drug abuse, rampant homosexuality and rioting as seen in London are all predictable signs of a civilisation in decline. He finished with a bold call for the preaching and proclamation of the Gospel as the only effective antidote to the contagion of secularism.

Other highlights included a warmly practical message on 'How the Caring Church Shows Love' by Rev Richard Brooks (Dales Evangelical Church), and further papers from Revs Tim McGlynn, Sam Watson, William Macleod and Richard Ross, with stirring morning devotional messages from other brethren. Next year's school will be held from 3 to 6 September, and the Secretary is Rev Andrew Allan, who may be contacted at [revara@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:revara@tiscali.co.uk) or on 01445 731064. Talks may be obtained on CD from Mr Bill McQueer, at [bill@snizort.com](mailto:bill@snizort.com).

## Death of John

### Stott

John Stott (1921-2011) passed away on the 27<sup>th</sup> of July 2011. Time Magazine (April 2005) rated him as 'one of the hundred most influential figures in the world'. In 1945 he became curate of All Souls Church, Langham Place, London and vicar in 1950 (when just 29) and retired in 1975. He never married. In 1954 he became a close friend of Billy Graham and along with his church supported the Harringay Crusades. He was somewhat Arminian in his theology as can be seen in his



*Rev John Stott*

most popular book, *Basic Christianity*. In 1974 he was appointed chief architect of the Lausanne Covenant. All his life he was an active supporter of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES, earlier known as IVF). He established the Langham Partnership International to provide books and theological training for students and pastors in the developing world. He wrote about fifty books and in total

millions of his books have been printed. They have been published in 67 different languages. He was tremendously diligent in his sermon preparation, reckoning on one hour's preparation for each minute in the pulpit. He was a chaplain to the Queen (1959-75). He is said to have refused the bishopric of Winchester and later of Sydney, Australia. He was a kindly dedicated man who did much good.

Sadly however John Stott was not without his faults and some of these were serious. We have already referred to his Arminianism. He was ecumenically-minded – an Anglican first and an evangelical second. His ecumenicalism led to his famous clash with Dr Lloyd Jones at the Evangelical Alliance's National Assembly of Evangelicals in 1966. Dr Lloyd Jones called for evangelicals to separate from the mainline denominations which were dominated by liberalism but Stott, as chairman, at the close of the lecture, voiced his dissent. He influenced the Anglican evangelicals at the later 1967 Keele Anglican Evangelical Conference in the ecumenical direction. He encouraged them to ally themselves with the Anglo-Catholics against the liberals. This has led over time to a diluting of evangelicalism in the Church of England. Most disappointing of all was when he wrote in *Essentials: A Liberal Evangelical Dialogue* that he found the prospect of the eternal punishment of the wicked 'intolerable'. He argued that the Scripture's teaching on hell might legitimately be interpreted to teach annihilation after death for the wicked. If we were more aware of the majesty and transcendence of God and therefore of the wickedness of sin, we would have no problem with the eternity of hell. When one considers the love of Christ and the immensity of the sacrifice which He made, hell is too short to properly punish those who reject this gospel offer of salvation.



**Left:** Dr Nigel Lee

### **Illness of Nigel Lee**

Rev Professor-Emeritus Dr Francis Nigel Lee of Queensland Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Australia writes: 'I am now home after 13 days in hospital. I have been diagnosed with incurable Motor Neurone Disease, alias Amytropic Lateral Sclerosis or Lou Gehrig's disease. While my nerves die, I have been given approximately two years (variable) to live. Your prayers are appreciated, for me to complete my life's work in peace'. Dr Lee is well-known as the author of *The Covenantal Sabbath* and numerous other works.

### **Church takes over schools in Hungary**

(EPI)

Local government officials in Hungary are handing state-owned schools over to churches, unable to afford their upkeep during the economic recession, according to church

sources. 'Churches are entitled to run schools in Hungary as public service providers, receiving the same taxpayers' money as public sponsors', said Balazs Odor, ecumenical officer of Hungary's Reformed Church, in an interview with ENInews. 'The school system has its own problems here, which affect church-run schools as well. However, it's generally true that the wellbeing of church schools is better looked after since each has a community behind it', he added. Hungary's *Heti Valasz* weekly newspaper reported this summer that local councils had been forced to abandon schools in the face of shrinking state subsidies, heavy municipal debts and a decreasing number of children, adding that more than 60 had been given to religious associations in recent months.

How good it would be if the Church was able to run schools again in Scotland. The handing over of schools to the government in 1872 was a spiritual disaster.

### **Public Prayer Service at Ground Zero**

*Christian Observer*

After New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg banned clergy from the official memorial service marking the tenth anniversary of the 11 September 2001 attacks by Muslim terrorists, New York City clergy and national faith leaders received permission from the New York City Police to hold a prayer service at Ground Zero at 10:00 am on 11 September 2011. Reformed Presbyterian pastor and Director of the Christian Defence Coalition the Rev Pat Mahoney stated: 'In the dark days after 9/11, millions of Americans turned to God in prayer for strength, comfort, guidance and assurance. This was especially true for those who lost loved ones. During the past 10 years, it has only been faith in God and prayer that has enabled so many to move forward and rebuild their lives and protect America from another major terrorist attack. Therefore, it is extremely troubling for Mayor Bloomberg to exclude public prayer and expressions of faith from the 9/11 Memorial Service. In response to this tragic decision by the Mayor, we felt it was imperative to have a public prayer service at Ground Zero during the 9/11 weekend. We will seek God for His continued protection, especially with new credible terrorist threats, pray for those who lost loved ones, pray for our leaders and elected officials and turn to God in repentance recognizing only He can bring healing and restoration to our nation'.

*The only one who can give security is God. To Him the nations should turn in prayer and repentance.*

### **Rev Donald Macdonald leaves the Free Church**

The Rev Donald Macdonald, senior Free Church minister of Carloway, Isle of Lewis, has resigned from the ministry of the Free Church following the decision to depart from purity of worship and introduce hymns and musical instruments. He wrote to the Lewis Presbytery: 'I am writing to inform the Presbytery of my decision to resign from the ministry of the Free Church of Scotland and to request that my name be removed from the Register of Retired Ministers. This has been the hardest decision I have ever had to make and one that I never thought I would have to make – especially at this late stage in my life after 47 years in the ministry of the Free Church and all of them as a member of this Presbytery. I have not come to my decision lightly or in haste. Neither am I motivated by



**Left:** Rev Donald Macdonald

a petulant and defiant spirit that cannot accept defeat: this matter is far too serious for such superficial and infantile reactions. I have come to this painful decision after much soul-searching, reading, consultation, meditation and prayer. I can see no other honest and honourable course of action'. He proceeded to give his reasons. Among other points he stated: 'This decision [of the Plenary Assembly in November 2010 to allow hymns and musical instruments in public worship] was unconstitutional because it changed the Formula which safeguards the Constitution. This is true despite the fact that the wording of the Formula and the Questions has not been changed because its meaning or reference has, as Act 48 Class 2, 2011 states: "Act 1 Class 2 Nov 2010 allows for a wider understanding of the Questions and Formula with regard to worship". The supposed "wider understanding" imposes an understanding on the Formula and Questions that was never envisaged by the original authors and cannot be deduced from them. This is absolutely ultra vires and contradictory to the Free Church's own case in 1900'.

Mr Macdonald added: 'The supposed provision for the relief of the conscience of any office-bearer who is not in agreement with the new mode of worship now allowed is either a delusion or a deception. No matter what statement is made by an office-bearer when newly ordained or subsequently, the fact of the matter is that he must either subscribe or acquiesce to "sincerely own the purity of worship presently authorised and practised in the Church" and, of course, the worship presently authorised and practised in the Church is Psalms, Hymns and Musical Instruments. Furthermore, he avows that he is "persuaded the said worship is founded upon the Holy Scriptures and agreeable thereto" as also to "firmly and constantly adhere to ... and to the utmost of (his) power assert, maintain and defend the said worship". This is one series of direct contradictions of the supposed conscience-relieving statement just made and amounts to a delusion and a sham'.

Some of us were able to see in 1999 where the trends in the Free Church were leading. We sought to bring a libel against the one who in direct contradiction of his ordination vows was leading the move for a change in the worship practice but were silenced. We do not for a moment believe that the decline will stop with the introduction of hymns and musical instruments.

### **Scottish Council on Human Bioethics**

*Dr Calum MacKellar*

**F**irst of all, can I ask you to thank God for His goodness and faithfulness in providing a grant to the Scottish Council on

Human Bioethics that will enable it to function for the next two years. Secondly, please ask for God's help and assistance in the writing of two books the Council is preparing for publication on the ethical issues related to (1) the new eugenics (a dangerous science which is aiming to 'improve' the genetic composition of the population) which is developing in our society and (2) the creation of animal-human embryonic hybrids and chimeras. Please pray that God will very much help all those working on these books by giving them wisdom, that God will guide their thoughts and that nothing will be written that is contrary to His will. Finally, could you pray that these books will have a very positive and influential impact for good in our society.



**Above:** Dr Calum MacKellar

### **Public consultation on changing the definition of marriage**

*Christian Institute*

**A** public consultation on whether to change the definition of marriage to allow for same-sex marriage in Scotland has been launched. The Scottish Government is also asking the public whether religious ceremonies should be allowed for homosexual civil partnerships. The consultation document says the Scottish Government's initial view is that it supports redefining marriage for homosexuals. Scottish Health Minister Nicola Sturgeon said: 'Although the Government has set out its initial view, we give an absolute assurance that all views will be listened to. No final views have been reached and no decisions have been taken'. The consultation will run until 9 December. The Christian Institute has published a statement in response to the consultation's launch.

The Institute's Mike Judge said: 'All the legal rights of marriage are already available to homosexual couples through civil partnership registrations. Last year only 465 civil partnerships were registered in Scotland. This is not about rights, this is about redefining marriage for the whole of society at the behest of a small minority of activists'.

Marriage is an institution of God and from the beginning, and indeed in every culture, has been defined as a union between a man and a woman. It is the bedrock of society. To use the dignified name of marriage to describe what the Bible defines as a sinful relationship between two men or between two women is obviously wrong.



# Books

## **John Calvin Man of God's Word, Written and Preached**

*Peter Barnes*  
Banner of Truth Trust  
pbk, 144pp, £5.50

The Word of God had the supreme place for John Calvin. Peter Barnes looks first at Calvin's writings, his Institutes and his commentaries, and shows the way Calvin used the Bible by constantly quoting from it as the source-book of all true knowledge of God and man and the only rule to direct us as to how we can glorify and enjoy God. For Calvin it was unthinkable that there should be any fault in Scripture: 'He accepted what later came to be known as the complete verbal inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture'. The second half of the book quotes extensively from the sermons of Calvin displaying how he preached the Word. Thankfully about 1,500 of Calvin's sermons have survived. In these he shows himself a systematic expositor of the Bible, preaching his way through whole books of Scripture. The basis of his authority as a preacher was Scripture as the Word of God. Christ was central to his preaching. He believed that the life of the preacher was vital because it was only as the preacher applied the Bible to himself that he could authoritatively and profitably preach to others. Barnes writes well and this is a helpful little book on Calvin.

*William Macleod*

## **Smooth Stones taken from Ancient Brooks Being a collection of sentences, illustrations and quaint sayings from that renowned Puritan,**

**Thomas Brooks**  
*C H Spurgeon*  
The Banner of Truth Trust  
pbk, 197pp, £5.75

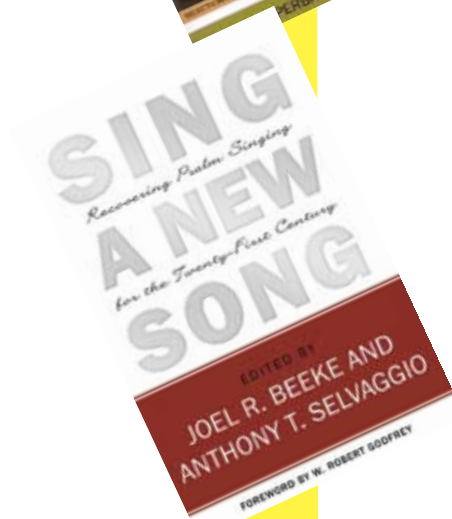
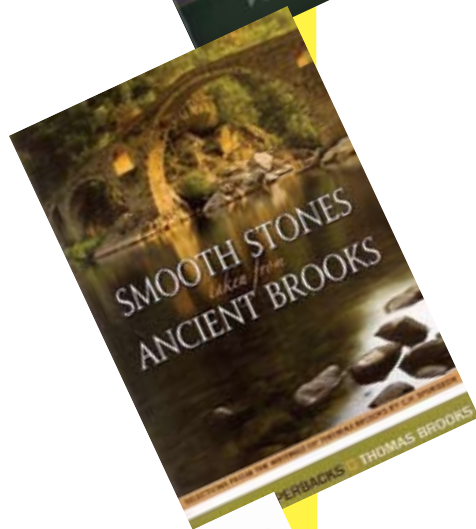
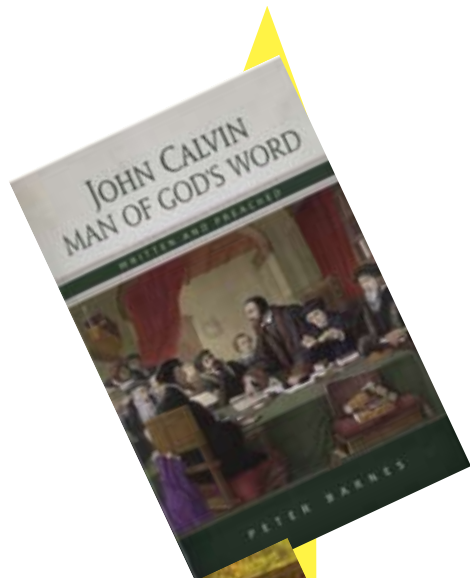
Generally I find books of this nature tedious and difficult to read. This one is certainly an exception. Spurgeon has a knack of gathering sayings that are most interesting and challenging. Brooks had a forceful turn of expression and an amazing ability to illustrate. Quickly I found myself hooked. My practice is to read two or at the most four pages at a time. I found it a helpful devotional. In the space of two pages there are several, truly fresh, stimulating thoughts which you can take away with you and on which you can meditate. I warmly recommend it. I could give many examples but must limit myself to four.

'Christ often takes the crown off His own head, and puts it upon the head of faith; witness such passages as these which are frequent in Scripture: "Thy faith hath saved thee" (Luke 7:50). "Thy faith hath made thee whole" (Matt.9:22). And no wonder that Christ crowns faith, for of all graces, faith takes the crown off man's own head, and puts it upon the head of Christ'.

'It was a saying of Augustine, "He that willingly takes from my good name, unwillingly adds to my reward"'.  
'True repentance is never too late, yet late repentance is seldom true'.

'Prayer is nothing but the breathing that out before the Lord, that was first breathed into us by the Spirit of the Lord'.

*William Macleod*



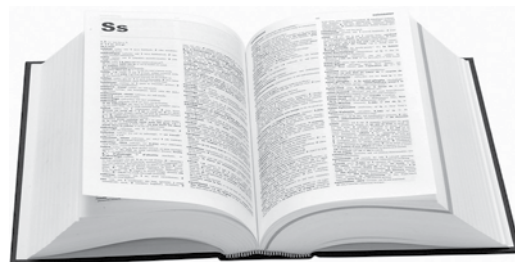
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# Books

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## Puritan Reformed Journal

Volume 2 Number 2

Edited by Joel Beeke

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary,  
pbk, 378pp, \$35.00 for two issues

This journal contains a wide range of materials. There are Biblical studies, systematic and historical theology, experiential theology, pastoral theology and missions and contemporary and cultural issues as well as a section devoted to book reviews. The *Journal* is aimed at ministers and divinity students. The quality of the articles varies as one would expect when lots of different authors are involved. Some sections are quite heavy and scholarly and others are much more readable. There are many excellent chapters from which all could profit.

Dr David Murray has a chapter on 'Our view of the Old Testament' which, as we would expect, is very helpful. Paul Smalley's 'Reformed, Puritan and Baptist: A Comparison of the 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith to the 1646 Westminster Confession of Faith' is interesting. 'An Uncommon

Union: Understanding Jonathan Edwards's Experimental Calvinism' by Dr Bill Schweitzer is stimulating. Dr Joel Beeke gives lots of encouragement to Christians in the midst of trials in 'Consider Christ in Affliction: An open letter to true Believers'. All in all, warmly recommended. You are sure to find something here which will interest you.

*William Macleod*

## Sing a New Song Recovering Psalm Singing for the Twenty-first Century

Edited by Joel R Beeke

and Anthony T Selvaggio

Reformation Heritage Books, pbk,  
196pp, \$18.00

Not all the authors who contribute to this symposium are convinced of exclusive psalmody. However they are all committed to serious worship and recovering a central place for the Psalms in worship. Sadly most churches have little if any place for the Psalms in public worship. People want user-friendly worship, with easily-understood songs. The Psalms are too deep, too intellectually and theologically challenging, for modern churches. Psalms are God-centred, while today's fellowships are man-centred.

The first section of this valuable book deals with Psalm singing in history. The first chapter: 'From Cassian to Cranmer: Singing the Psalms from Ancient Times until the dawning of the Reformation' is fascinating in demonstrating that the Psalms were the songbook of the early church. Joel Beeke shows that Calvin and the Puritans shared the same Psalm singing practice. Terry Johnson discovers that almost all churches till the onset of

modern liberalism sang only the Psalms. David Murray deals helpfully with cursing Psalms (imprecatory Psalms) and shows how they too are to be sung to God's glory and our profit. Malcolm Watts gives a masterly treatment of 'The Case for Psalmody, with some Reference to the Psalter's Sufficiency for Christian Worship'. I was a little disappointed with J V Fesko's 'Psalmody and Prayer' where the author draws heavily on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Prayerbook of the Bible*. It seems odd in a book like this to give such prominence as a guide to devotion to a work by a neo-orthodox theologian.

Michael LeFebvre in his chapter 'The Hymns of Christ' writes something of which I had never thought before. I had often thought of Christ as our priest presenting our prayers to the Father. But LeFebvre goes further. He writes: 'For the New Testament disciples, who grew up singing the Psalms in expectation of a royal song leader who would one day personify and fulfil them, it must have been thrilling to meet Jesus.... The church today often recognises that the Psalms are *about* Jesus. But the New Testament enthusiasm for the Psalter goes beyond that ... the New Testament authors want us to recognise Jesus, not simply as the one who fulfils things about himself in the Psalms, but as the song leader who leads us in the singing of them'. LeFebvre quotes Romans 15:8-9, Hebrews 2:11-12 and Hebrews 10:5-7 to prove his point. Christ leads our singing as well as our prayers.

This is a valuable book which I would warmly recommend.

*William Macleod*



## Noted Preacher Turned Down

### *Rev Anthony Dallison, Virginia, USA*

**A** church was in need of a minister. One of the elders wrote the following letter, as if he had received it from an applicant, and read the letter before the Vacancy Committee.

Gentlemen,

*Understanding that your pulpit is vacant, I should like to apply for the position. I have qualifications that I think you might appreciate. I have been blessed to preach with power and have some success as a writer. Some say that I am a good organiser. However, some folk have things to say against me. I am over fifty years of age. I have never preached in one place for more than three years at a time. In some places I have left a town after my work caused riots and disturbances. I have to admit that I have been in jail three or four times, not because of my wrong doings; my health is not good, though I still get a great deal of work done. I have worked at my trade to pay my own way. The churches I have preached in have all been small, though located in several large cities. I have not got on*

*too well with the religious leaders in different towns where I have preached. In fact, some of them have taken me to court and have violently attacked me physically.*

*I am not too good at keeping records, for instance I have been known to forget whom I have baptised. However, if you can use me I shall do my best for you even if I have to work to help with my support.*

After reading this letter to the Committee, the elder asked if they were interested in this applicant.

They replied that he would never do for their church; they did not want an unhealthy, contentious, troublemaking, absent-minded jail-bird. In fact they were insulted that this applicant had been presented to them.

Then they inquired as to who the applicant was and received this answer:

The apostle Paul.

## Pride Humbled

***From the Life of John Warburton.***

**W**hen I went the second time [to preach for William Gadsby] the room was quite full, and the Lord was with me very sweetly and precious, and the people seemed all alive. As soon as I had finished my message, pride began to boil up in my heart: 'They think you will be a very great preacher. See how the people are pleased, and how cheerfully they sing'. And I thought so myself too. After concluding, I overheard some of the people whispering how well I had preached, and they had no doubt I should be a very great preacher, and one of them whispered to another that he was sure I should be a second Gadsby. How sweet was this to my old man! How it gratified him to the very heart! Poor fool! I was carried away with pride to such a degree that I blush to write a thousandth part of it. All the way home I was so carried away with my greatness and what I was likely to be, that at times I hardly knew whether I was upon my feet or my head. Sometimes I wondered in what place I should be settled. Surely, thought I, it must be in some great town or other; it will be in London. If I am to be so great a man and to have so great a work to do, it must be in London, for all the great, thought I, go there, and that, thinks I, will be my place in the end. I must add one thing more about this accursed pride, how far it carried a poor blind fool. I had thought to have kept it out

of sight, for I do confess it is too base to name, but it must come out, base as it is. Before I went again the third time, I actually went to Manchester to see Mr Mouncey, the acting deacon, with a pretence to tell him that I could not come and preach any more, on purpose to draw it out of him whether he thought I was likely to be a great man. When I arrived at his warehouse, there was another deacon, a Mr Holt, with him. They were both very glad to see me, and asked how I was getting on. I told them that I was come to inform them that I could not attempt to speak any more, for that I was such a blind fool that it would be madness in me to attempt it, and that I therefore hoped they would not expect me to come again. And I tried to put on as miserable a dejected countenance as I could while relating my lying cant, and tried with all my might to squeeze out some tears.

The two deacons, believing I was an honest lad and that the devil was tempting me to give up the work, encouraged me to go on, and spoke very freely how well they were satisfied, and how confident they were that God had a work for me to do, and there was no more fear of my going on than of Paul's going on; for they believed that Paul's God was my God, and that He would bring me through. Oh, thinks I, what! am I likely to be a second Paul, then? But I told them that I was certain

they would never speak to me in that way if they knew my unfitness; and sure I am that, if they had known my abominable hypocrisy, they would have kicked me out of the warehouse, and served me right, too. But God knew how to manage me better than they. One of them said he did not wish to lift me up with pride, but to encourage me. He would say that he had no doubt God had a great work for me to do. Oh that word, 'a great work to do!' I was blown up by it like a balloon. He said, further, that he durst not but insist on my coming at the time appointed. Many things more they said to me, which suited my old man very well. So, having got such a bundle of food for the old wretch, off I went home and began to think what text I should preach from, for, thinks I, as they have such views of my becoming a great man, they will expect that I shall come with some grand, mysterious text. I was safe enough, however, from meddling with any part of God's Word but what I had myself experienced. I tried with all my might to get into some dark text, but in vain. Well, then, thinks I, I will try an old text, one that my soul has been in hundreds of times. I am sure to get on with it, and shall have plenty to say. This was the text: 'We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God' (Acts 14.22). 'Oh', thinks I, 'that is the text!' Oh how pleased I was in thinking how I could divide it! Such wonderful light and such grand things were brought to my mind, day after day, that I was quite astonished. 'Oh', thinks I, 'whatever will they think when I come to preach of these things? They will be quite astonished'. And indeed, it proved so, for they were astonished, but not at my greatness, but at my littleness.

The time came and off I went, hoping there would be many people present. The most I could ask God for was that He would incline many to come and hear what I could do, and this but my third time of preaching. When I got there I found the house quite full of people. I gave out a hymn with wonderful zeal and boldness, and then went to prayer, in which I had great liberty. 'Oh', thinks I, 'this will do!' But when I had read my text, such darkness and confusion overwhelmed my soul that I could hardly read the words a second time. I trembled till my knees smote together. For about five or ten minutes I tried to say something, but what I said the Lord knows; I cannot tell a word of it. All my pride and presumption, my hypocrisy and lies, stared me in the face, and stopped my mouth completely. I was forced to confess before all the people that God had stopped my mouth and that I could not speak another word. I dropped on the seat, and verily thought that God would have

struck me dead and sent me to hell, as I so richly deserved. There was a profound silence for some time. The people were all astonished, and wondered what it could all mean. Dear Mr Mouncey, as soon as his feelings would suffer him to speak, said, 'The Lord opens, and none can shut; He shuts, and none can open. I have often read it, but never have been an eye-witness of it in such a public manner until now'. He begged of me to try again. 'Perhaps', said he, 'the Lord may open your mouth to speak, for it is all in His hands'. But I assured him that I durst not attempt it, for the Lord had stopped my mouth, and I was determined never to try any more. The dear man concluded with prayer, and I believe it was a time of prayer with him and the people, for I believe there was not a dry cheek in the place. But as for me, I was distracted nearly beyond my senses.

After he had concluded and dismissed the people, I got my hat, being determined to put an end to my existence that very night. I had something else to do now than to wonder where so great a man as I was to be settled. Oh the miserable journey I had home that night! What with the sight of my most abominable conduct in going to the deacon's house with such lies and devilish hypocrisy, and the dreadful accusations of the devil, I felt confident that I could be nothing but a hardened wretch whom God had given up to a reprobate mind, and who would soon be proved to be a complete apostate. I was determined to go that very night and try to get on board a man-of-war, and leave wife and children and all.

Just before I got home, I turned out of the road to go to Liverpool, wringing my hands, sobbing, crying and groaning, till my very soul was in an agony. When I had gone on the Liverpool road about two stone throws, these words sounded as loud as if someone had spoken them aloud behind the hedge:

'Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan His work in vain;  
God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain.'

I stood astonished, and got over the hedge to see if any person was there. Finding no creature there, a hope sprang up. 'Who can tell', thought I, 'but the Lord will make *this* plain?'

*The Gospel Standard, September 2011*



'All the way home I was so carried away with my greatness and what I was likely to be, that at times I hardly knew whether I was upon my feet or my head. Sometimes I wondered in what place I should be settled. Surely, thought I, it must be in some great town or other; it will be in London.'

## Congregational Remittances - September 2011

	2011 Sep	2011 Total	2010 Total to Sep				
<b>Presbytery of Inverness</b>				<b>Outer Hebrides Presbytery</b>			
Aberdeen	900	11,111	9,179	Cross	1,810	17,370	16,900
Duthil-Dores	3,195	18,497	15,466	Harris - Leverburgh	1,250	13,092	10,758
Inverness	4,000	22,000	25,000	Harris - Scalpay	1,800	19,904	17,500
Kilmorack & Strathglass	1,500	13,846	14,344	Knock & Point	1,125	12,420	10,973
<b>Total Inverness</b>	<b>9,595</b>	<b>65,454</b>	<b>63,989</b>	North Uist	2,000	11,204	10,278
				Stornoway	6,388	67,441	60,610
<b>Northern Presbytery</b>				<b>Total Hebrides</b>	<b>14,373</b>	<b>141,431</b>	<b>127,019</b>
Assynt & Scourie	3,000	4,056	563	<b>Presbytery of Skye &amp; Lochcarron</b>			
Brora	1,200	17,086	15,692	Bracadale	0	9,689	9,607
Kiltearn	500	8,093	16,200	Duirinish (Waternish)	0	4,215	3,500
Tarbat	800	9,403	7,223	Kilmuir & Stenscholl	1,300	13,256	7,646
<b>Total Northern</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>38,638</b>	<b>39,677</b>	Lochalsh	512	7,710	6,236
				Poolewe & Aultbea	641	8,440	7,590
<b>Southern Presbytery</b>				Ullapool	0	81	400
Arran	351	6,836	5,228	Portree	1,400	14,948	10,800
Ayr	200	2,328	1,748	Snizort	1,200	15,728	13,243
Dumfries	0	0	0	Strath	300	1,175	2,037
Edinburgh	1,100	24,365	25,671	<b>Total Skye</b>	<b>5,353</b>	<b>75,242</b>	<b>61,060</b>
Glasgow - Partick	983	26,000	23,000	<b>Total Congregations</b>	<b>38,554</b>	<b>416,425</b>	<b>380,976</b>
Glasgow - Shettleston	1,100	18,784	14,143	Other Donations	3,669	24,022	14,242
Glasgow - Knightswood	0	17,347	19,294	Legacy	0	18,153	0
Rothesay	0	0	147	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42,223</b>	<b>458,601</b>	<b>395,219</b>
<b>Total Southern</b>	<b>3,734</b>	<b>95,660</b>	<b>89,231</b>	Including Gift Aid		77,560	43,408

## Zambia Newsletter

**Phil Bailey**



*Jackson receiving the award on behalf of the College Farm from local MP Doris Siliya*

**Dear Friends,**

### **Covenant College Farm**

July was the time for the regional agricultural shows. We put up a stand at the Petauke Show for the first time to promote Farming God's Way and some of the products we produce at Covenant College Farm. Our 'home' produced coffee and chilli powder was recommended by our local MP Doris Siliya as a means whereby local farmers could earn extra income. Overall there was a lot of interest and Jackson and Bilison were kept busy answering questions and explaining Farming God's Way. As it was our first attempt we were pleased to get second prize for our stand and Jackson received our award from Doris Siliya.

By the end of July the Government Food Relief Agency had opened its maize market at a nearby village. We heard one afternoon at 5pm that the market was opening the next



*Covenant College Farm Maize waiting to be sold*

morning. So it was a big scramble to get there as quickly as possible to get close to the front of the queue. This meant starting immediately and working through the night to transport the 500 plus bags we had at the farm from our



*The Covenant College Farm Stand*

harvest and that of Bilison and Samuel our farm workers. By 10am the next morning all our maize was piled up waiting to



*The Boys' Camp at OMF*

be checked and weighed. Bilison and Samuel were exhausted having not slept for 24 hrs but still managed to raise a smile and their thumbs! This is the final result from planting the seed last November.

### **Boys Camp At OMF**

In August a team from Hesketh Bank Christian Centre (HBCC) near Southport arrived at Old MacDonald's Farm (OMF) to run an activities camp for the boys. Everyone was presented



*The boys prepare their musical 'stomp'*

with a nice red OMF polo shirt. The boys were split into three groups and the activities included daily sessions of computer lessons in which they learnt how to write a letter, do spread sheets in Excel and make a PowerPoint presentation.

Then they moved on to the music and drama sessions where junk material from the farm shed was used to produce a musical 'stomp' and stories from the Bible were acted out. Pastor Carl was faced with many serious biblical questions from the boys.

Their third session was sports training with Nic and Jenny, and later in the afternoon they organised 'Team Challenge' at a nearby sports field, where the boys were split into five teams and competed against each other in many different games. Points were given for results of course but also for gamesmanship which added an interesting aspect to the events!

The two weeks were a real blessing and the effort put in by the HBCC team was tremendous and must leave an impact on the boys' lives for which we give thanks.

### **Prayer Points**

Give thanks again for the harvest and the funds raised from selling the maize.

Give thanks for the HBCC team and pray that the boys will remember their Christian witness .

Pray for Don and Christine in all they do for the boys at their home.

Thank you for your continued support,

**Love Phil**

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”

**Hebrews 2:9**