

Grace & Truth

“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ”

Magazine
of
North Uist & Grimsay
Free Church of Scotland
(Continuing)

Vol. 1 No. 5

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Minister's Message: *Repentance Required*

The twelve disciples were sent by Christ to preach the good news of the kingdom of God. A vital part of their message was the need for repentance. The disciples “went out, and preached that men should repent” (Mark 6:12). The Bible closely connects repentance and the forgiveness of sin. Consider for example Peter’s words to the people at the temple gate: “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19). No-one may expect pardon if they are not penitent. We should ask ourselves, Have I really turned from my sins?

Repentance is an essential note in gospel preaching. This is seen in John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ. He preached “the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:4). The first recorded words of our Saviour as He began His public ministry were: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). This theme was reinforced by Christ after His resurrection (Luke 24:46,47) and by Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2:38).

The call to repent is not merely good advice but an exhortation to duty. “God...now commandeth all men every where to repent” (Acts 17:30). A minister of the gospel is an ambassador for Christ, the King of kings. Through His servants Christ makes a royal proclamation and lays a solemn obligation upon all who hear. He is coming again to judge the world and to punish the wicked. In the light of this great event we must repent of our sins! Is this not so often a missing note in preaching today?

Repentance is also an essential note in true spiritual experience. An awakened man gets a sight and sense of his sin which shames him. He is awed by the holiness of the Most High God. Then he learns a wonderful thing: this same God is rich in mercy to all who repent! This melts him and produces a brokenness. By grace he gets strength to turn from his sin.

We need repentance in *coming* to Christ. Faith without repentance is merely intellectual; it is not true faith at all. There is much of this in the church! We see many ‘converts’ who do not seem to have a godly sorrow for sin and a hatred of it. There has been no radical change in the course or conduct of their lives. But saving faith and repentance are like the two sides of a coin: they may be distinguished but must not be separated.

We need repentance too in *continuing* with Christ. We are called to a life of repentance, for sin will remain in our hearts until our dying day. From glory the risen and ascended Lord calls upon His people to repent of their sins (Rev.2:5,16; 3:3). Our comfort as believers is that Christ has paid the penalty we deserve for our sins and has reconciled us to God forever.

Finally we should see that God also requires repentance of us as a people. Britain is sinking under the weight of her national sins. Having rejected Jesus Christ as Lord we are being chastised by God with the spread of immorality and false religion, especially Islam. Sadly our present politicians are wilfully blind and are part of the problem, not part of the solution. What is the remedy? It is in these encouraging words of Scripture: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2Chron.7:14). May God grant that it shall be so. □

Helps to Devotion (Rev. James Smith)

COMFORT. *"Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us"*
(Psalm 4:6)

There is a restless desire in our minds by nature for some good which we have not, nor do we exactly know what it is: therefore many ask, "Who will shew us any good?" But when we are taught by the Holy Spirit, and become experimentally acquainted with divine things, we know that the presence, favour, and smile of God, are enough to satisfy and make us happy. Having once enjoyed such a privilege, we cannot be satisfied without it, and therefore few petitions are more frequently repeated than this: "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." Is not this the desire of our souls this morning? Do we not turn away from the objects which attract, fix the attention, and draw out the desires of the many, and say, Lord, bring me into thy gracious presence, unfold to me thy glorious perfections, assure me of thy favour, and grant me one loving smile. Let me enjoy a sweet sense of thine approval. O look upon me, and be gracious unto me, as thou usest to do unto those that love thy name. Shine away the darkness, doubts, and fears from my mind; and reveal thyself to me afresh in the person of thy beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. O to feel the sunshine of thy love! O to enjoy the balmy breezes of thy grace! May my soul be weaned from earth, and be filled with a sense of thy glory, grace, and love. O to see thee as my Father, looking down and smiling lovingly upon me; and to hear thee say, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." Let me then, through the hours of this day, walk in the light, as thou art in the light, and enjoy hallowed communion with thee. □

Parables of Jesus: 5. *The Two Debtors*

(Please read Luke 7:36-50)

Jesus told this story in the house of Simon, a Pharisee, after a woman notorious for her sins arrived. Overcome, she washed the Lord's feet with her tears, wiped them with her hair, kissed them and anointed them with a costly ointment. Proud Simon was angry that Christ should allow such a woman to touch Him.

Debts

The parable concerns a creditor or money-lender who is owed a sum by each of two men. One of the debtors owes ten times as much as the other but neither of them has anything with which to pay his debt (v.41).

This represents exactly our position before God. He requires of us perfect obedience, His law being the standard. Adam when created had this ability but lost it when he fell. His account with God entered into massive debt. As his descendants we have inherited this great burden. We are debtors to divine justice but we cannot pay what is legally due from us. We are bankrupts and beggars.

Knowledge

We are not to think that because one debtor owed relatively little that therefore some have not sinned much or that certain sins are not very serious in God's sight. Every sin merits God's wrath and every sinner deserves to be punished eternally. Rather we should understand that while some men *know* that they are sinners others still believe themselves to be righteous. We need to be convinced of our sins before we will do anything about them. "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom.3:20). Simon did not yet realise his guilt.

Forgiveness

A wonderful thing then takes place in the parable. Just as the debtors are in despair over their plight the creditor completely cancels their debts! It is an act of sheer grace.

The forgiveness of sins is like this. We can never merit it or earn it. The law condemns us but the gospel proclaims a free pardon to every penitent soul. Christ said: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17).

Gratitude

The conclusion of the parable is in the form of a question. Jesus asks Simon: “Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most?” (v.42). Even the Pharisee can see that the man who had the greater debt would be the most grateful to the creditor.

Jesus now tells Simon the humbling truth. The woman he despised had a good heart full of gratitude to God. She showed a kindness to Him which Simon did not. “She loved much” (v.47). This was evidence that she was pardoned. For all his religion it was Simon who was still in his sins.

We should beware of easy belief or ‘cheap’ grace. “Ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1Cor.6:20). If we have “tasted that the Lord is gracious” (1Pet.2:3) then surely we will serve Him gladly with all that we are and have. □

Sermon: *The Inward Experience of Believers* (Rev. Robert Murray M’Cheyne)

(It is evident that M’Cheyne preached this sermon to his congregation to help them in the needful duty of self-examination prior to partaking of the Lord’s supper.)

“For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” – Romans 7:22-25

A believer is to be known not only by his peace and joy, but by his warfare and distress. His peace is peculiar: it flows from Christ; it is heavenly, it is holy peace. His warfare is as peculiar: it is deep-seated, agonizing, and ceases not till death. If the Lord will, many of us have the prospect of sitting down next Sabbath at the Lord’s table. The great question to be answered before sitting down there is, Have I fled to Christ or no?

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?

To help you settle this question, I have chosen the subject of the Christian's warfare, that you may know thereby whether you are a soldier of Christ—whether you are really fighting the good fight of faith.

I. *A believer delights in the law of God.*—"I delight in the law of God after the inward man," v22.

(1). Before a man comes to Christ, he hates the law of God—his whole soul rises up against it. "The carnal mind is enmity," etc., Rom. 8:7.

First, Unconverted men hate the law of God on account of *its purity*. "Thy word is very pure, therefore thy servant loveth it." For the same reason worldly men hate it. The law is the breathing of God's pure and holy mind. It is infinitely opposed to all impurity and sin. Every line of the law is against sin. But natural men love sin, and therefore they hate the law, because it opposes them in all they love. As bats hate the light, and fly against it, so unconverted men hate the pure light of God's law, and fly against it.

Second, They hate it for *its breadth*. "Thy commandment is exceeding broad." It extends to all their outward actions, seen and unseen; it extends to every idle word that men shall speak; it extends to the looks of their eye; it dives into the deepest caves of their heart; it condemns the most secret springs of sin and lust that nestle there. Unconverted men quarrel with the law of God because of its strictness. If it extended only to my outward actions, then I could bear with it; but it condemns my most secret thoughts and desires, which I cannot prevent. Therefore ungodly men rise against the law.

Third, They hate it for *its unchangeableness*. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot or one tittle of the law shall in no wise pass away. If the law would change, or let down its requirements, or die, then ungodly men would be well pleased. But it is unchangeable as God: it is written on the heart of God, with whom is no variableness nor shadow of turning. It cannot change unless God change; it cannot die unless God

die. Even in an eternal hell its demands and its curses will be the same. It is an unchangeable law, for He is an unchangeable God. Therefore ungodly men have an unchangeable hatred to that holy law.

(2). When a man comes to Christ, this is all changed. He can say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." He can say with David, "Oh how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day." He can say with Jesus, in the 40th Psalm, "I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

There are two reasons for this:-

First, The law is no longer an enemy.—If any of you who are trembling under a sense of your infinite sins, and the curses of the law which you have broken, flee to Christ, you will find rest. You will find that He has fully answered the demands of the law as a surety for sinners; that He has fully borne all its curses. You will be able to say, "Christ hath redeemed me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me, as it is written, Cursed," etc. You have no more to fear, then, from that awfully holy law: you are not under the law, but under grace. You have no more to fear from the law than you will have after the judgment-day. Imagine a saved soul after the judgment-day. When that awful scene is past; when the dead, small and great, have stood before that great white throne; when the sentence of eternal woe has fallen upon all the unconverted, and they have sunk into the lake whose fires can never be quenched; would not that redeemed soul say, I have nothing to fear from that holy law; I have seen its vials poured out, but not a drop has fallen on me? So may you say now, O believer in Jesus! When you look upon the soul of Christ, scarred with God's thunderbolts; when you look upon his body, pierced for sin, you can say, He was made a curse for me; why should I fear that holy law?

Second, The Spirit of God writes the law on the heart.—This is the promise: "After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jer. 31:33. Coming to Christ takes away your fear of the law; but it is the Holy Spirit coming into your heart that makes you love the law. The Holy Spirit is no more frightened away from that heart; He comes and softens it; He takes out the stony heart and puts in a heart of flesh; and there He writes the holy, holy, holy law of God. Then the law

of God is sweet to that soul; he has an inward delight in it. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." *Now* he unfeignedly desires every thought, word, and action to be according to that law. "Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes: great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." The 119th Psalm becomes the breathing of that new heart. Now also he would fain see all the world submitting to that pure and holy law. "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes because they keep not thy law." Oh that all the world but knew that holiness and happiness are one! Oh that all the world were one holy family, joyfully coming under the pure rules of the gospel! Try yourselves by this. Can you say, "I delight," etc.? Do you remember when you hated the law of God? Do you love it now? Do you long for the time when you shall live fully under it—holy as God is holy, pure as Christ is pure?

Oh come, sinners, and give up your hearts to Christ, that He may write on it his holy law! You have long enough had the devil's law graven on your hearts: come you to Jesus, and He will both shelter you from the curses of the law, and He will give you the Spirit to write all that law in your heart; He will make you love it with your inmost soul. Plead the promise with Him. Surely you have tried the pleasures of sin long enough. Come, now, and try the pleasures of holiness out of a new heart.

If you die with your heart as it is, it will be stamped a wicked heart to all eternity. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still." Rev. 22:11. Oh come and get the new heart before you die; for except you be born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God!

II. *A true believer feels an opposing law in his members.*—"I see another law," etc., v.23. When a sinner comes first to Christ, he often thinks he will now bid an eternal farewell to sin: now I shall never sin any more. He feels already at the gate of heaven. A little breath of temptation soon discovers his heart, and he cries out, "*I see another law.*"

(1). Observe what he calls it—"another law;" quite a different law from the law of God: a law clean contrary to it. He calls it a "law of sin," v.25; a law that commands him to commit sin, that urges him on by rewards and threatenings—"a law of sin and death," Rom. 8:2; a law which not only leads to sin, but leads to death, eternal death: "the wages of sin is death." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit," etc., Gal. 5:17. It is the same which, in Eph. 4:22, is called "*the old man,*" which is wrought according to the

deceitful lusts; the same law which in Col. 3 is called “*your members*”—“Mortify, therefore, your members, which are,” etc.; the same which is called “a body of death,” Rom. 7:24. The truth then is, that in the heart of the believer there remains the whole members and body of an old man, or old nature: there remains the fountain of every sin that has ever polluted the world.

(2). Observe again what this law is doing—“*warring*.” This law in the members is not resting quiet, but warring—always fighting. There never can be peace with God, but constant war with sin. This law in the members has got an army of lusts under him, and he wages constant war against the law of God. Sometimes, indeed, an army are lying in ambush, and they lie quiet till a favourable moment comes. So in the heart the lusts often lie quiet till the hour of temptation, and then they war against the soul. The heart is like a volcano: sometimes it slumbers and sends up nothing but a little smoke; but the fire is slumbering all the while below, and will soon break out again. There are two great combatants in the believer’s soul. There is Satan on the one side, with the flesh and all its lusts at his command; then on the other side there is the Holy Spirit, with the new creature all at his command. And so “the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these two are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.”

Is Satan ever successful? In the deep wisdom of God the law in the members does sometimes bring the soul into captivity. Noah was a perfect man, and Noah walked with God, and yet he was led captive. “Noah drank of the wine, and was drunken.” Abraham was the “friend of God,” and yet he told a lie, saying of Sarah his wife, “She is my sister.” Job was a perfect man, one that feared God and hated evil, and yet he was provoked to curse the day wherein he was born. And so with Moses, and David, and Solomon, and Hezekiah, and Peter, and the apostles.

(1). Have you experienced this warfare? It is a clear mark of God’s children. Most of you, I fear, have never felt it. Do not mistake me. All of you have felt a warfare at times between your natural conscience and the law of God. But that is not the contest in the believer’s bosom. It is a warfare between the Spirit of God in the heart, and the old man with his deeds.

(2). If any of you are groaning under this warfare, learn to be humbled by it, but not discouraged.

First, Be humbled under it.—It is intended to make you lie in the dust, and feel that you are but a worm. Oh! what a vile wretch you must be, that even after you are forgiven, and have received the Holy Spirit, your heart should still be a fountain of every wickedness! How vile, that in your most solemn approaches to God, in the house of God, in awfully affecting situations, such as kneeling beside the death-bed, you should still have in your bosom all the members of your old nature! Let this make you lie low.

Second, Let this teach you your need of Jesus.—You need the blood of Jesus as much as at the first. You never can stand before God in yourself. You must go again and again to be washed; even on your dying bed you must hide under Jehovah our Righteousness. You must also lean upon Jesus. He alone can overcome in you. Keep nearer and nearer every day.

Third, Be not discouraged.—Jesus is willing to be a Saviour to such as you. He is able to save you to the uttermost. Do you think your case is too bad for Christ to save? Every one whom Christ saves had just such a heart as you. Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life. Take up the resolution of Edwards: “Never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.” “Him that overcometh will I make a pillar,” etc.

III. *The feelings of a believer during this warfare.*

(1). He feels wretched.—“O wretched man that I am!” v.24. There is nobody in this world so happy as a believer. He has come to Jesus, and found rest. He has the pardon of all his sins in Christ. He has near approach to God as a child. He has the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. He has the hope of glory. In the most awful times he can be calm, for he feels that God is with him. Still there are times when he cries, O wretched man! When he feels the plague of his own heart; when he feels the thorn in the flesh; when his wicked heart is discovered in all its fearful malignity; ah, then he lies down, crying, O wretched man that I am! One reason of this wretchedness is, that sin, discovered in the heart, takes away the sense of forgiveness. Guilt comes upon the conscience, and a dark cloud covers the soul. How can I ever go back to Christ? he cries. Alas! I have sinned away my Saviour. Another reason is, the loathsomeness of sin. It is felt like a viper in the heart. A natural man is

often miserable from his sin, but he never feels its loathsomeness; but to the new creature it is vile indeed. Ah! brethren, do you know anything of a believer's wretchedness? If you do not, you will never know his joy. If you know not a believer's tears and groans, you will never know his song of victory.

(2). *He seeks deliverance.*—"Who shall deliver me?" In ancient times, some of the tyrants used to chain their prisoners to a dead body; so that, wherever the prisoner wandered, he had to drag a putrid carcass after him. It is believed that Paul here alludes to this inhuman practice. His old man he felt a noisome putrid carcass, which he was continually dragging about with him. His piercing desire is to be freed from it. Who shall deliver us? You remember once, when God allowed a thorn in the flesh to torment his servant,—a messenger of Satan to buffet him,—Paul was driven to his knees. "I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me." Oh, this is the true mark of God's children! The world has an old nature; they are all old men together. But it does not drive them to their knees. How is it with you, dear souls? Does corruption felt within drive you to the throne of grace? Does it make you call on the name of the Lord? Does it make you like the importunate widow: "Avenge me of mine adversary?" Does it make you like the man coming at midnight for three loaves? Does it make you like the Canaanitish woman, crying after Jesus? Ah, remember, if lust can work in your heart, and you lie down contented with it, you are none of Christ's!

(3). *He gives thanks for victory.*—Truly we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us; for we can give thanks before the fight is done. Yes, even in the thickest of the battle we can look up to Jesus, and cry, Thanks to God. The moment a soul groaning under corruption rests the eye on Jesus, that moment his groans are changed into songs of praise. In Jesus you discover grace sufficient for you,—grace to hold you up to the end,—and a sure promise that sin shall soon be rooted out altogether. "Fear not, for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine." Ah, this turns our groans into songs of praise! How often a psalm begins with groans and ends with praises! This is the daily experience of all the Lord's people. Is it yours? Try yourselves by this. Oh, if you know not the believer's song of praise, you will never cast your crowns with them at the feet of Jesus! Dear believers, be content to glory in your infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon you. Glory, glory, glory to the Lamb! □

Christian Doctrines Explained: 5. The Trinity

Q.5. *Are there more Gods than one?*

A. There is but one only, the living and true God.

Q.6. *How many persons are there in the Godhead?*

A. There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

The doctrine of the Trinity is fundamental to our faith yet many have little grasp of it. Some openly attack it. We need to “search the Scriptures.” What do we find there?

One God, Three Persons

The Bible plainly shows one glorious God whose name is Jehovah; “I am the LORD...there is no God else beside me” (Isa.45:18,21). Even reason tells us there can only be one infinite Being, one God whom we are to love and serve supremely. He is the *living* God: self-existent and self-sufficient, He gives being and life to His creation. He is the *true* God: unlike every false god and idol He really exists and He is really God.

God is *personal* or self-conscious. The Bible reveals three Persons in one Godhead—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. By the Trinity we mean that God is one in nature but three in person. This is not contradictory. We do not believe there are three gods but three mutually-dependent Persons each possessing the one, undivided, divine essence.

Necessary personal properties distinguish the members of the Trinity but they are the same in substance, equal in power and glory. We see the Trinity in baptism, the benediction and bearing record in heaven (Matt.28:19; 2Cor.13:14; 1John 5:7). Divine titles, powers, works and worship belong to each of the Persons.

God the Father

The Father eternally *begets* the Son by generation. “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee” (Psa.2:7). He is called “Holy Father” (John 17:11), “the Father of glory” (Eph.1:17). All that is necessarily ascribed to God—every attribute and wondrous work, every praise and honour—belongs to the Father.

God the Son

The Son is eternally *begotten* of the Father: “we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father” (John 1:14). He is “The mighty God” (Isa.9:6), “the first and the last” (Rev.1:11,17). He is eternal (Mic.5:2), unchangeable (Heb.13:8), all-powerful (Heb.1:3) and all-knowing (John 21:17). He creates and preserves everything (Col.1:16,17); He redeems (Heb.9:12) and forgives sinners (Mark 2:5) and finally judges all mankind (Rom.14:10). The Son of God is worshipped by men (Matt.28:9) and angels (Heb.1:6).

God the Holy Spirit

The Spirit eternally *proceeds* from both the Father and the Son: “the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father;” “God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts” (John 15:26; Gal.4:6). As a person the Spirit guides (John 16:13), teaches (John 14:26) and comforts (Acts 9:31). To lie to Him is to lie to God (Acts 5:3,4). He is eternal (Heb.9:14) and present everywhere (Psa.139:7). He regenerates sinners (Tit.3:5). Worship is due to the Spirit of God (Rev.1:4-6).

Well may we say: “Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods?...glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Exod.15:11). □

The Reformation in Scotland: 5. The Martyrdom of George Wishart

(The articles in this series are taken from “History of the Church of Scotland” by William M. Hetherington, first published in 1842.)

He [i.e. Cardinal Beaton] was soon to stain his soul with the blood of a more distinguished victim. This was the celebrated George Wishart, brother of the Laird of Pitarrow, in Mearns. He had been banished by the instigation of the Bishop of Brechin, for teaching the Greek language in Montrose, and had resided for some years at the University of Cambridge. In the year 1544, he returned to his native country, in the company of the commissioners who had been sent to negotiate a treaty with Henry VIII. of England. Immediately upon his arrival in Scotland, he began to preach the doctrines of evangelical truth, with such warm and persuasive eloquence as at once to attract, and soften, and convince the crowding audiences, who wept, and glowed, and trembled as he preached. In the

accounts transmitted by contemporary writers of this eminent Christian martyr, we seem to trace the features of a character of surpassing loveliness, bearing a close resemblance in its chief lineaments to that of the beloved Apostle John,—so mild, gentle, patient, and unresisting,—his lips touched with a live coal from off the altar, and his heart overflowing with holy love to God, and compassionate affection to mankind. The citizens of Montrose, and especially of Dundee, felt and owned the power of his heavenly eloquence; and much of his time and labours were spent in the latter city.

The Cardinal was soon informed of Wishart's preaching, and of the deep impression it was producing in Dundee. Instigated by him, Robert Mill, a man of great authority in the town, openly commanded him to leave the place, and trouble them no more with his sermons. Expressing his pity and regret that they were thus refusing to listen to the message of salvation, he took his departure, along with some of his friends, to Ayrshire. There his preaching was attended with equal success, and, of course, excited equal hostility in the breasts of the bishops and clergy. The Archbishop of Glasgow hastened to the town of Ayr, to prevent Wishart from preaching in the church; and the sheriff of the county prevented him from preaching in the church of Mauchline. But this was a small hindrance to the zealous martyr. He could preach in the market-place, in the fields, or on the hill-side, with equal readiness, and with equal success in convincing his hearers.

Hearing that the plague had visited Dundee, he hastened to return thither, that he might bring the hopes and consolations of the gospel to perishing men in their hour of extreme need. There he braved the horrors of the plague, ministering comfort to the miserable sufferers, both speaking peace to their souls, and supplying their temporal necessities. Even when engaged in this work of mercy, an attempt was made upon his life by a priest; and he escaped narrowly from a plot laid to get him into the power of the Cardinal. Soon afterwards he proceeded to Edinburgh, and from thence to Haddington, beset by enemies, yet for a time delivered from their snares. During his abode in that neighbourhood he was very constantly attended by John Knox, who was at that time residing as tutor in the family of Douglas of Langniddrie, and who scrupled not to wear a sword for the defence of his beloved friend, the gentle and unresisting Wishart.

But the time of his martyrdom was at hand. After preaching at Haddington, he went to Ormiston, accompanied by the proprietor, and by Crichton of Brunston and Sandilands of Calder. John Knox wished to have accompanied him also, but Wishart refused to permit him, saying, "God

back to your pupils: one is sufficient for one sacrifice." During the night, the house was beset by armed horsemen, headed by the Earl of Bothwell; while the Regent and the Cardinal were but a short way distant with a larger force, so that resistance was in vain. Ormiston, however, refused to yield up Wishart, till Bothwell pledged his honour to protect his life from the Cardinal's hatred; or, if he should find that to be impracticable, to restore him again to the protection of his friends. But the Cardinal and the Queen-dowager persuaded Bothwell to violate his pledge; and Wishart was carried to St Andrews, and left there a prisoner, in the power of his deadly foe.

While the Cardinal was summoning together his prelatial council, that he might with the utmost pomp and ostentation proceed to the destruction of his victim, David Hamilton of Preston endeavoured to persuade the Regent not to consent to the death of so distinguished a servant of God. The Regent yielded so far as to write to the Cardinal not to precipitate the trial of Wishart till he should himself come to St Andrews. The Cardinal haughtily returned this answer: "That he wrote not to the governor as though he depended in any measure upon his authority, but out of a desire he had that the heretic's condemnation might proceed with a show of public consent, which since he could not obtain, he would himself to that which he held most fitting."

He proceeded accordingly to the execution of his bloody purpose; gave orders that Wishart should be summoned to trial; and marched in state to the Abbey Church, accompanied by the Archbishop of Glasgow, and a great number of bishops, abbots, and other clerical dignitaries, and attended by a large body of retainers in military array. The sub-prior, John Winram, by the Cardinal's command, preached a sermon on the nature of heresy, but expressed in such guarded terms, that it gave no countenance to the ruthless deed about to be perpetrated. Then rose up John Lauder, a priest, and, entering fully into the spirit of the Cardinal, began, in a strain of the coarsest and most ferocious invective, to enumerate eighteen articles of accusation against Wishart. He answered them all calmly and mildly, but with great strength of reasoning, and full proof of all his opinions from the Scriptures. He was nevertheless condemned by the unanimous voice of the assembled popish prelates and clergy, and sentence passed, adjudging him to be burned to death, as a heretic, on the following day.

Wishart passed the intervening night in the chamber of the captain of the Castle, occupying the greater part of it in prayer. Early next morning, the second day of March 1546, after refusing to hold intercourse with two friars who had been sent to hear his confession, he requested to converse with Winram, the sub-prior. Winram came immediately, and, after some

private conversation returned to the Cardinal, to request that the sacrament might be given to the prisoner. This was refused; but being invited by the captain to breakfast with him, Wishart prayed, exhorted, and distributed bread and wine to those who were present,—thus commemorating, as fully as circumstances would permit, the dying love of Him for whose sake he was himself soon to die. He then retired to his private apartment, and remained in prayer till those came who were appointed to take him to the place of execution. They divested him of his usual attire, clad him with a loose garment of black linen, and fastened bags of gunpowder to various parts of his body; and when thus arrayed, he was conducted to an outer room near the gate of the Castle, to wait there till the rest of the hideous preparations should be completed.

The Cardinal, in the mean time, had commanded a stake to be fixed in the ground, and combustible materials to be piled around it, in front of one of the castle-gates, near the priory; and, lest the friends of Wishart should attempt a rescue, he had also given directions that all the cannons and other ordnance of the castle should be pointed to the place of execution. The battlements and windows of the fore-tower of the Castle were hung with tapestry and spread with rich cushions, that the Cardinal and the prelates might in state, and at their ease, feast their eyes upon the torments of the martyred servant of the Lord.

All things being now prepared, Wishart was led to the stake, with his hands bound behind his back, a rope round his neck, and an iron chain about his waist. When he reached the spot, he kneeled down and prayed aloud, saying thrice, “O, thou Saviour of the world, have mercy on me! Father of heaven, I commend my spirit into thy holy hands!” He then rose and addressed the people, exhorting them not to be offended with the Word of God, notwithstanding the torments which they saw prepared for him; entreated them to accept, believe, and obey the Word of God; and expressed entire forgiveness of his enemies and persecutors. Then the executioner, casting himself upon his knees before the martyr, begged to be forgiven for the deed he was about unwillingly to do. Wishart desiring him to draw near him, kissed his cheek, saying, “Lo, here is a token that I forgive thee; my heart, do thine office!” The sounding of a trumpet gave the signal; the martyr was tied to the stake, and the fire was kindled around him, exploding the gunpowder, but not putting an end to his sufferings. The captain perceiving him to be still alive, drew near the pile, and bade him be of good courage. Wishart replied with unflinching voice, “This fire torments my body, but no way abates my spirit.” Then looking towards the Cardinal, he said, “He who in such state from that high place feedeth his

eyes with my torments, within few days shall be hanged out at the same window, to be seen with as much ignominy as he now leaneth there in pride." As he ended these words, the executioner tightened the rope that was about his neck; and the fire now blazing fiercely, he was speedily consumed to ashes. □

Precious Psalms: 5. Rejoicing in the Lord

"But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee." (Psalm 5:11)

Many things in this life sadden the believer's heart. Some sorrows he shares with his fellow men, such as unemployment, sickness and bereavement. Others are peculiar to him as a Christian. He mourns over sin, firstly in his own life (Psa.39:12) and then in the lives of others (Psa.119:136). He may even suffer for righteousness' sake (1Pet.3:14). Because of their troubles God's children shed many tears in their souls.

Difference

There is a great difference though between the man in Christ and the man of the world. To hide his sorrows the unbeliever will make merry, but it is all a delusion. "Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful" (Prov.14:13). Pleasure taken from the creation alone must be short-lived and cannot satisfy the soul. In contrast the sincere believer, though besieged by many difficulties and facing many foes, has a deep-seated joy which is never overcome.

Victory

Sometimes our minds so dwell on our sins and circumstances that we lose sight of the evidences of our conversion. The devil loves to bring God's children into despair. David though saw things in their proper perspective: none should be joyful like the Lord's people, whose sins are forgiven! Shout for joy! There should be the note of victory in our lives, for "in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Rom.8:37).

Secret

The secret of true joy is that it is *in God*. "I will rejoice in the Lord"

(Hab.3:18). That is why it is constant and everlasting. We find joy in the gospel of Christ and the sure word of God's rich grace; "I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil" (Psa.119:162). We eagerly await that perfect day when we shall meet our Saviour, for "in thy presence is fulness of joy" (Psa.16:11). □

For Young People: *Birds of the Bible*

5. The Dove – Bird of Salvation

"Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes" (Song of Solomon 1:15)

We have already learned about the need to truly believe in God. The vulture with its far-seeing eye showed us what it is to look to Jesus Christ by faith. But why is this so vital for us? What is the benefit we receive by trusting in Christ? In a single word, *salvation*. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa.45:22).

Salvation is the chief concern of the Bible and it should be our great concern too. It is very easy to let other matters get in the way. When we are young there are so many things to learn, to see and to do. Our hearts are filled with hopes and dreams. We make our plans for the future. But what of our souls? Life is very brief and we will soon be in eternity. Are your sins forgiven? Are you saved?

There is a bird in the Bible which can teach us lessons about salvation. It is not a bird renowned for its size or strength or splendid colours yet it is valuable all the same, for it signifies some important spiritual things. Let us take a look at the *dove*.

Doves are very similar to pigeons but are generally smaller. They are found in various types of country, feeding mainly on seeds and grain in the fields. As well as the wild birds people have also kept flocks of doves in special houses or 'dovecotes'. These birds often have the pure white feathers which we associate with the dove.

We see that the dove is linked with *peace*. We first meet this bird when Noah is waiting to leave the ark after the Flood. He sends out a dove which eventually returns with an olive leaf in its beak (Gen.8:11). This meant that the waters had gone back and it would soon be safe for Noah and his family to return to the land. Life had begun again.

Do you know that there is a fearful flood which threatens mankind now? The deadly waters of divine wrath will one day overwhelm us in judgment upon our sin. But is there an olive branch for us today? Yes! The gospel is an olive branch sent from God, carried in the mouths of preachers. It tells us that Jesus has “made peace through the blood of his cross” (Col.1:20) and we are safe only if we trust in him. Then we will enjoy peace with God. For believers the waters of wrath are dried up, never to return again.

Next the dove is a symbol of the *church*. There is a book in the Bible called the Song of Solomon. It is very precious to believers because it tells us about the love that Christ has for his church. He says of her: “Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves’ eyes” (1:15); and, “sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely” (2:14). What does Jesus see in his believing people to admire?

He sees *harmlessness*. The eye of the dove is beautiful in its appearance. There is no guile or any other evil in it. So true Christians are “harmless as doves” (Matt.10:16) in the purity of their lives. He also sees *gentleness*. What bird can rival the dove for its soft, soothing voice and mild character? So we learn to “speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle” (Tit.3:2). And he sees *faithfulness*. The dove pairs for life and is very attached to its mate. So believers are careful to keep Jesus as their “first love” (Rev.2:4).

Salvation comes from the love of God and brings us to know that love. There are times though when Christians do not sense their Saviour’s love. He seems far away. Then we are sad, like a dove which has lost its mate. “I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me” (Isa.38:14). But this Friend will always return. He has promised, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Heb.13:5).

At other times the difficulties of living for the Lord in a hostile world seem almost too much to bear. Perhaps there is a desire to flee to a secret hiding-place. “Oh that I had wings like a dove! for then would I fly away, and be at rest” (Psa.55:6). We are learning that salvation does not free us from every trouble in this life; we must learn instead to be content with God’s will for us and to face our foes.

Lastly the dove reminds us of the *Holy Spirit*. John the Baptist testified of Christ, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him” (John 1:32). Jesus was given great grace for his work of salvation and now he has great grace to give to sinners like ourselves. There is righteousness, pardon and everlasting life. Are *you* one of his doves? □

**Gàidhlig: Ghlaodh mi lem uile chridhe – Salm 119:145
(Seonaidh Mac‘ill Eathainn)**

Nach math an t-eisemplair a tha an salmaidh a’cuir an cèill do gach neach a’ leughas na briathran seo. ‘S docha gu bheil thu fhein cho tric a glaoth ris an Tighearna agus gu sònraichte ma tha dragh neo uallach ort a bhios ga d’fhagail iomaganach ‘s nach fhaigh thu freagart iomchuidh bho do cho-chreutairean. Nach math gu bheil slighe na h-urnaigh fosgailte dhuinn airson a bhi dortadh ar cridhe am fianais an Tighearna.

Chleachd mi am facal ‘eisemplair’. Saolaidh mise gu bheil dealbh air a ‘dheanadh air an seo dhuinn a tha chum ar feum n ‘ar n’uile shuidhichidhean. Bha a’ ghlaodh a ‘mhain a, dhionnsaigh an Tighearna agus rinn e sin le uile chridhe. Tha cho cudromach dhuinne cuideachd gur e seo an doigh a ‘dh’fheumas sinne tighinn a dhionnsaigh an Tighearna ann an urnaigh. Chan fhaod ‘ur suil neo ur n’inntinn a bhi claonadh gu nithean eile fhads’ a tha sinn a’ deanadh gnothach ris. Tha Dia ag iarraidh gun toir sinn dha ‘ur n’ fhaire gu h-iomlan aig caithair grais.

Bha iarrtas sonraichte aig an t-salmaidh air an Tighearna: thubhairt e: “Eisd rium, a Thighearna”. Tha e cho soillear dhuinn an seo gun ro dàimh air leth aig an t-salmaidh ris an Tighearna. Is toigh leis an Tighearna a bhi cluinntinn a’ shluagh fhein a’ glaothaich ris le n-uile chridhe ‘s gun eisdeadh e riutha. Tha e na thlachd dha.

Nach mor na, ur sealladh an t-aobhar a dh’iarr e gun “eisdeadh” E ris: “gleidhidh mi do reachdan”. Tha e ag aideachadh ris an Tighearna gur e Esan bun-steidh a bheatha. Mar sin gabhaidh mise ri do reacdan chum is gun bi iad na stiur nam bheatha.

Tha e math dhuinn teachd dluth do Dhia. De do dhaibh fhèin ris an Tighearna an diugh? An iarradh tu fhein gum biodh do ghlaodh ris, agus sin bho, uille chridhe agus gun eisdeadh e riut? Thubhairt an salmaidh ann an aite eile:

Do ghlaodh mi ris gu h-àrd le m’bheul:

Le m’theangaaidh dh’àrdaich’e.

A’m’chridh’ ma bheir mi spéis do’n olc,
cha-n éisd an Tighearn mi.

Gu dearbh dh’éisd Dia rium: thug fa’near

Guth m’urnaigh Rìgh nan dùl,
Moladh do Dhia, nìor cheil a ghràs,

’s mo ghuidh’ nìor chuir air cùl. [Salm 66:17-20] □

Congregational News

Baptism

On Sabbath 24th August nine children of the Rev. Alan & Mrs Peigi Spencer were baptised in the congregation. They are: Branwen Isla, Gethin Eifion, Cadi Eleri, Ifan Alan, Osian Huw, Llio Arianwen, Sian Anwen, Rhian Alwena and Dafydd Phillip. Although the family now live in North Wales let us continue to remember them all in prayer.

Communion Services

The services at our Communion will be as follows (D.V.):-

Thursday 11th September: 12.00noon; 7.30pm

Friday 12th September: 12.00noon; 7.30pm

Saturday 13th September: 12.00noon; 6.00pm (prayer meeting)

Sabbath 14th September: 11.00am (prayer meeting);

12.00noon (the Lord's supper); 6.30pm

Monday 15th September: 11.00am

The ministers expected are the Rev. Richard Ross, Portree, and the Rev. Murdo A. Macleod, Partick. Please pray that the Lord will bless these services and that they will be well attended.

Fellowship

In our monthly fellowships we have been considering the theme of 'The Worship of God' and the next meeting is due to be held in October when we intend to look at the subject of Preaching. Further details will be intimated in due course. For this and other information please visit our website: www.northuistandgrimsayfcc.org.uk

Trianaid

As of August the minister has been involved in the rota for conducting worship on Sabbath afternoons in the Trianaid Care Home in Carinish. We are due there every six weeks. Please pray for God's blessing upon both residents and staff and upon the weekly services.

Presbytery

The General Assembly which met in May agreed certain changes in the boundaries of presbyteries, including the removal of our own congregation from the Presbytery of Skye & Uist to what was previously the Presbytery of Lewis and which has now been renamed the Presbytery of the Outer Hebrides. □

**North Uist & Grimsay Free Church of Scotland
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Services:

Sabbath: 12.00noon; 6.00pm

Wednesday: 7.30pm

Communions: 2nd Sabbath in April and September

All services are held in the church at Bayhead.

Website: www.northuistandgrimsayfcc.org.uk

Sermons preached in the congregation are recorded and may be downloaded from the website. Alternatively they are available in CD or tape format. Please contact the minister for further details.

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