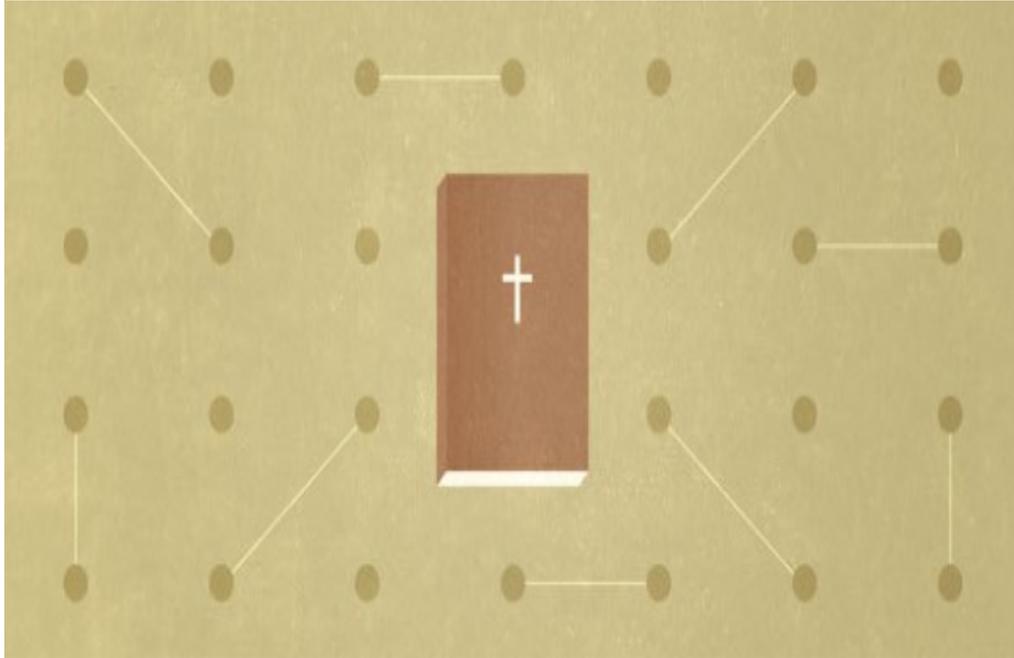




**STORNOWAY**  
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CHRIST JESUS CAME INTO  
THE WORLD TO SAVE SINNERS  
(1 TIMOTHY 1:15)

## July 2021 Newsletter



### WELCOME

### LORD'S DAY

Morning Worship—11.00am

Evening Worship—6.30pm

### PRAYER MEETING

Thursday—7.30pm (Currently meeting via Zoom)

#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Word from the Manse.....	2
News & Events.....	3
Gleanings by Bill Lucas.....	5
Are There Contradictions in The Bible?.....	7
What We Give and Receive In Gathering Together.....	9
Puritan Publications.....	11
Children's Corner.....	12

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Scottish Charity No: SC043043

## WORD FROM THE MANSE

Dear congregation,

Previously, we saw how Richard Cameron came to embrace a strict, but consistent position against compromise during the time of the Covenanters. Barred from preaching by the more moderate field preachers, Cameron went to Rotterdam where he was ordained by Presbyterians in exile. On his return to Scotland he threw his energy behind the cause of Christ. Remember that Cameron (and others such as Donald Cargill, the 60 year old senior field-preacher) was struggling for freedom in a context of ecclesiastical and civil tyranny. He believed in Christ's kingship and could never submit to Charles as head of the church. With this cause we not only sympathise but must commend it as righteous. As we examine the principles that Cameron defended there are two important documents to consider: the Queensferry Paper and the Sanquhar Declaration.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1680, two Covenanters, Henry Hall and Rev. Cargill, were discovered in Queensferry by the Governor of Blackness Castle. When he sought to apprehend them Hall was fatally wounded, but Cargill escaped. In Hall's possession was found an unsigned draft Covenanter manifesto, referred to as the Queensferry Paper. The substance of it was:

1. To covenant with God and own His Word as the only rule of faith
2. To advance His kingdom by establishing the true religion and freeing the church from Prelacy and Erastianism, removing those who had forfeited their authority.
3. To confirm they held to Presbyterianism, the standards, and pure worship.
4. To fulfil the covenant obligations of purifying the church from gross errors.
5. To denounce and refuse allegiance to the royal family because of their manifold sins and tyranny.
6. To refuse to hear or receive sacraments from the indulged ministers.
7. To refuse the ministerial office unless duly called and ordained.
8. To defend their worship and liberties and to consider all who attack them as declaring war.

Not long after, on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1680, Cameron rode into the town of Sanquhar accompanied by twenty armed men. They published a statement at the town cross – a radical statement of revolt, disavowing the authority of the king. The Sanquhar Declaration began with a humble remembrance of the mercy of God to always preserve a remnant of His people. It denounced the king and inferior magistrates as enemies of King Jesus and the Protestant and Presbyterian interests of the covenanted nation, and concluded with a declaration of war against the tyrant ruler. The authors make it clear that they are not anti-government (anarchists) but rather for the government proscribed by the Scriptures and the Covenants. They claim for themselves the title of “*the Representatives of the true Presbyterian Church and Covenanted Nation of Scotland.*” The reasons given to denounce Charles as a tyrant with no right to the crown of Scotland are as follows: his “perjury and breach of Covenant with God and His Church, and usurpation of His crown and Royal prerogatives.” Furthermore they disown the Duke of York (“a professed Papist”) and deny his legal right to succeed Charles.

We must admit that these two documents are controversial. Although many have condemned them, the substance is not unbiblical. It is often falsely argued that we must submit to any government that exists in God's providence. That is manifestly not a Biblical or logical position. When Hitler tyrannised Europe would it have been wrong for the citizens of Germany to revolt and resist? Romans 13 cannot be twisted to forbid resistance to tyranny. “Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God.” Interestingly, the argument of these two papers would be part of the basis for the “Glorious Revolution” when tyranny was finally overthrown and the persecution of Christ's people brought to an end. To condemn these Covenanters for declaring war on the king means that, to be consistent, you must argue against the Revolution in its totality and consider yourself a Jacobite!

Matthew Hutchinson, a 19<sup>th</sup> Century moderate Scottish RP who joined the Free Church, defends the Sanquhar Declaration, saying: “*That the authors of this Declaration were not wild enthusiasts, but the true representatives in their day of constitutional government, was shown by the fact that they by this bold act only anticipated the judgment of the nation by eight-and-a-half years. In 1688 the Scottish Convention of Estates declared that James VII had, by his tyranny, his violation of the rights of Parliament and of the constitution of the kingdom, forfeited the crown of Scotland.*” J. G. Vos, the American RP, also defends the Sanquhar Declaration: “*The position taken in the Declaration was revolution, not rebellion, not a lawless refusal to obey legitimate authority, but a formal appeal to the law of the land and to the nation as such, against tyrannical usurpation and a power which claimed to be above law.*”

Even those who have never been part of our denomination offer agreement. Dr J. D. Douglas (Tyndale House, Cambridge) states: *“Yet there is more clear-sightedness in the Sanquhar Declaration than is at first apparent. If it represented only a small minority in 1680, it is remarkable that nine years later it expressed the mind of Great Britain as a whole.”* Likewise, Prof. Hetherington (Free Church) compares the declarations made by Cameron and the Convention of Estates in 1689: *“The only essential difference between their declarations and that of the convention is, that the Covenanters took for their central and leading principle that which forms the essence of religious liberty, and at the same time renders absolute civil despotism impossible, namely the sole sovereignty of Christ, as the only Head and King of His free spiritual kingdom, the Church.”*

Unsurprisingly Cameron’s zeal led to intensified persecution for Christ’s people, but also caused the circulation of both these documents throughout Britain. Perhaps the dissemination of these doctrines helped hasten the end of the persecution. Cameron’s days, however, were numbered and he paid with blood for the positions he defended. With a band of men at Airdsmoss near Cumnock, aware that their persecutors were advancing and that they were soon to face the sword, Cameron famously prayed, “Lord, spare the green and take the ripe.” On this day, 20<sup>th</sup> July 1680, Cameron became a martyr for King Jesus. His head and hands were cut off and taken to Edinburgh. On route they were shown to Cameron’s father, who poignantly submitted to the painful providence, saying, “I know them... they are my son’s, my own dear son’s; it is the Lord: good is the will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me nor mine, but has made goodness and mercy to follow us all our days.” Concerning the death of Cameron, Cargill preached, “Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?”

## **Conclusion**

Cameron has been falsely accused . It has been said that he did not receive a credible ordination. However, as we saw last time, he was ordained by ministers of good standing in the Netherlands who had sufficient time to observe his character. During this season of persecution, when the church courts were not free to meet, maintaining smooth Presbyterian practice was difficult. Cameron’s ordination was unusual, but the extenuating circumstances argue that it was not an invalid ordination. He has also been called schismatic. He may have occasionally got himself into trouble, perhaps, with poorly chosen words about particular ministers. Nevertheless, Cameron consistently applied the principles of the Covenanters. He tried to maintain the principles of the Second Reformation, and therefore, was not afraid to call out sin. His rigidity to these standards was not all who Cameron was. His preaching was also replete with warm-hearted evangelical piety. Finally, Cameron has been branded a rebel because of the Sanquhar Declaration and his willingness to take up arms against the king’s soldiers. The Christian is not compelled to submit to tyranny as the ordinance of God. Resistance may be a Godly duty. We might say that Cameron was a leader of a revolt – one which was clearly articulated and argued from Scripture. His ministry exemplifies the principle: “we ought to obey God rather than men.”

Cameron is innocent of all these charges. He lived during the most ferocious persecution that has ever been in our land. In a time of peace we can learn from Cameron that our duty is to be faithful no matter what. Although the persecution has ended, sin in church and state remains, and the cause of Cameron – that is the Covenanters’ and indeed Christ’s cause – has not reached its culmination. Will we be witnesses for these truths in times of peace?

Every blessing,  
Stephen

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## NEWS & EVENTS

### PRESBYTERY

At the recent Presbytery meeting on Friday 18th June, Mr Ian Gillies was tested in the last remaining areas of Scripture (Wisdom Literature, Revelation, and Pauline Epistles and Hebrews) and the theology of the last third of the Westminster Confession of Faith. After a thorough examination there was an opportunity for Presbytery to examine Ian on other topics that were deemed relevant, such as distinctive principles and the work of a minister.

Presbytery was satisfied by Ian's responses and, upon assenting to the vows, he was licensed as a minister of the Gospel and declared eligible to receive a call, whether from within the Presbytery or from our sister RP Churches.

We are thankful for this step in Ian's life and pray for him and Shelby for the future. Additionally we pray the Lord of the Harvest to raise up more labourers to preach the everlasting Gospel.

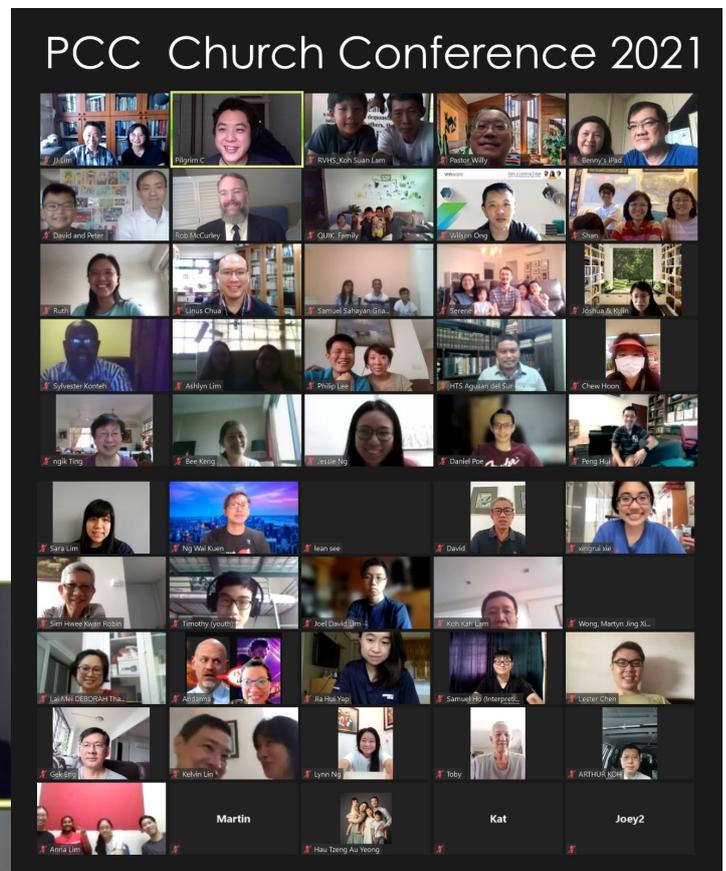


*Ian Gillies & Dr. Barry York*

PILGRIM COVENANT CHURCH (SINGAPORE) - ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Sylvester Konteh recently attended the 21st Annual Family Conference of Pilgrim Covenant Church, Singapore. The speaker was Rev. Robert McCurley, Greenville Presbyterian Church and the theme was, "Looking Unto Jesus: The Mystery of Glorification."

The conference was streamed via Zoom, which meant that Sylvester was able to attend, albeit virtually, all the way from Gambia. The time difference between Singapore and Gambia meant that he had to tune in at 2am! Prior to the first address, he was given a few minutes to briefly introduce himself and the congregation in Gambia, which was a great opportunity to acquaint the Church in Singapore with the work in Gambia.



**21st Annual Family Conference**  
 17 - 19 June 2021  
*Looking unto Jesus:  
 The Mystery of Glorification*



**Speaker:**  
**Rev. Robert McCurley**  
 Greenville Presbyterian Church, Free Church of Scotland  
 (Continuing), Greenville, South Carolina, U.S.A.

**Venue:** Online Zoom and Homes  
 (Subjected to Safe Management Measures)

Reverend McCurley was educated at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and was ordained to the ministry in 1998. He has been the pastor of Greenville Presbyterian Church for ten years. He has also pastored churches in Virginia and Ontario. He is an editor of *The Master's Trumpet*. He is currently engaged in research in the field of Post-Reformation Orthodoxy, specifically Samuel Rutherford's polemic against the Antinomians. Reverend McCurley is married and has five children.

## GLEANINGS BY BILL LUCAS

### GETTING OLDER

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. (Ecc. 12:1)

Ageism is discrimination against older people in employment, healthcare and so on. The American Association of Retired Persons has secured legislation against ageism covering working conditions of forty to sixty-nine-year-olds. That such legislation has been necessary indicates the lack of appreciation of the benefits of maturity.

Youth is the springtime of life with vibrancy, vigour and vitality. The summer is yet to come and autumn and winter seem far away. Whatever the task, enthusiasm and energy can be poured into it.. These advantages of youth can be squandered if not properly regulated, as is vividly seen in the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:13). Greater energy misdirected results in greater catastrophe. The advantages of youth are best utilised and preserved by serving one's Creator in a godly way.

Our generation despises old age, identifying it with weakness, incapacity, and incompetence. Old age is preoccupied with infirmities and is devoid of former pleasures. The light of life is in decline. The godless feel cheated and want their time over again, but the life focused upon Christ cannot wither and disintegrate because there is a spiritual springtime in the soul.

In the metaphor of the house, the "keepers" (arms) tremble, the "strong men" (legs) weaken, the "grinders" (teeth) diminish, the "watchers" (eyes) darken and the "doors" (ears) shut. The aged are up with the skylark, heights frighten, and normal paths contain hazards. The hair, like the "almond" turns white just before petals fall. The slightest thing is a "burden" and the appetite declines. The "mourners" are ready at hand.

The Christian has more knowledge of the afterlife and this produces a wonderful assurance. To die is "gain" (Phil. 1: 20-24). The Preacher, however, has no doubt that there is more to come. When the body is committed to the dust, the spirit has an appointment elsewhere. Death is not the end, though it represents a very significant terminus. The gold lamp suspended by its silver cord is fragile and breaks. Functioning ceases. The wheel is broken. The mysterious union of body and soul is terminated and the spirit goes to God.

Make your life a significant testimony to youngsters like the girl who wrote: "I am fourteen years old and already feel my life has been a waste of time."

**Roy Mohon (Minister in the Presbyterian Reformed Church)**

### THE STAFF OF DISAPPROVAL

George Graham of Golspie, one of the "men of Sutherland," when listening to sermons that had not the Gospel ring about them, gave his outward expression of his dissatisfaction by tapping with his staff on the floor. One day one of the Cooks occupied the pulpit of Golspie Church. Seemingly it was the first occasion that George had the privilege of hearing the preacher. The people noticed during all the sermon the services of the stick were never called for. As the congregation were moving out, George said loud enough to be heard over the church, "Thanks be to Thee for Thou has sent us today a Cook, who has prepared for us a wholesome meal which we could partake of without fear of being choked with hairs."

On one occasion at a Communion during a very dry summer, Gearge was earnestly praying for rain, and in his supplication, he used the words: "Cuir an t-uisge a-nuas ach dean a'chriaradh chum is nach bath e sinn." (Send down rain but sieve it so that it won't drown us.)

He died in 1847.

From Records of Grace in Sutherland by **Donald Munro**

### PRAYER

There may be no beauty of delivery in your prayers, no length of expression, no depth of doctrine, or precision of diction; but if your whole heart be found in your prayers, they will find there way to the throne of grace, sanctified by Christ our Mediator and High Priest. "Hear me, O Lord!"

**Jerrold H Lewis**

## THE LOST SOUL

When the Rev John Mackay of Lairg was engaged in catechising the families of his extensive parish, he asked the owner of the house in which the people were assembled whether all belonging to the household were present. "Oh yes," was the reply, "All are here except for the half-witted lad who looks after the cattle, but I did not think it necessary to call him in."

"Oh send for him," said the minister, "for he has a soul." Presently the lad appeared. When it came to his turn to be examined, the minister asked him whether he had a soul. "Oh no, I have not," said the youth. Instead of feeling disconcerted by such an apparently unhappy answer, the minister enquired, "Have you ever had a soul?" "Oh yes, that I had," was the reply. "And what has become of your soul?" was the next question, to which the very striking reply was given: "I was once herding and I felt my soul had become sick, for the pains of hell took hold of me. I soon found that I could not do anything for my soul, so I gave it over to Jesus and left it in His safe keeping; and oh, Minister, that is what I meant when I said I that I had no soul."

**Donald Munro**

## REACHING FORTH

*This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before. (Phil.3.13)*

Baggage or luggage? Which are you carrying around today? Baggage is all the things of the past, the good and the bad; the successes and failures. Luggage is what we pack when we are moving forward. Paul not only had to forget his old life of sin, but also the good things such as his education, upbringing, his status in the Jews' religion -- everything. So dear reader, let us discard the old habits, thoughts and ideas and let's press towards the mark of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

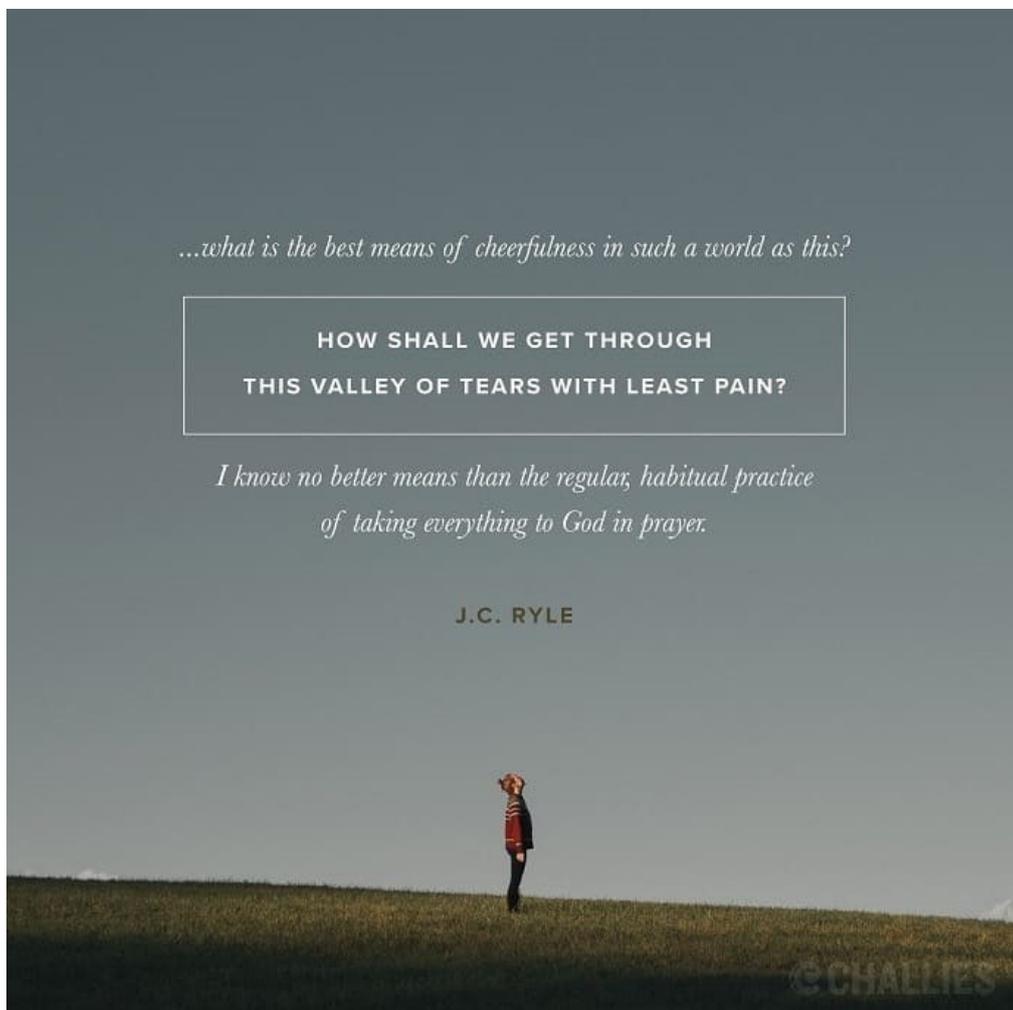
**Eleanor Isaccson**

*...what is the best means of cheerfulness in such a world as this?*

HOW SHALL WE GET THROUGH  
THIS VALLEY OF TEARS WITH LEAST PAIN?

*I know no better means than the regular, habitual practice  
of taking everything to God in prayer.*

J.C. RYLE



## ARE THERE CONTRADICTIONS IN THE BIBLE?



We live in a day when consistency of thought is demeaned by many people, and individuals maintain that contradiction is the hallmark of truth, particularly in religious matters. Yet, in practice, human beings seek consistency. Consider liberal Protestantism. Decades ago, most of the mainline denominations abandoned the infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture. Originally, these denominations thought they could continue affirming the other core tenets of Christianity. As the years passed, however, it became clear that the rejection of the infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures leads to the denial of Christian orthodoxy on other matters. Most churches that abandoned biblical inerrancy and infallibility eventually rejected the atonement, biblical sexual ethics, and other teachings. Those denominations had to do that for consistency's sake. To deny that God's Word is without error is to deny that we have a trustworthy revelation from Him. Thus, it doesn't ultimately matter what the Bible says about anything.

When it comes to studying the actual consistency of Scripture, it's not long before we have to deal with allegations that the Bible is full of contradictions. This can be devastating to the Christian faith, because we know that if the Bible has real contradictions, it's not a consistent account, and if it's not a consistent account, it can't be divinely inspired.

The main thing I want to say about this issue is that most alleged contradictions turn out not to be contradictions at all. When I was a seminary student, my professors frequently taught the theories of "higher" critics who refused to affirm the infallibility of Scripture. One of my fellow seminarians, a brilliant fellow, struggled with these theories. He had come to seminary believing in Scripture's consistency, but by the time he was a senior, he was one of the casualties of the exposure to this relentless skepticism about the Bible. I remember one discussion in the hallway of the seminary where he said: "R.C., how can you still believe in the inerrancy of Scripture after all we've gone through here? Don't you see that the Bible is full of contradictions?"

At the time, he couldn't list even ten examples of contradictions in the Bible. So I suggested he go home and come up with thirty contradictions that we could look at together. When we met the next day, he brought a list of about twenty. He gave me the first "contradiction," and we looked at the apparently contradictory passages together, and we found that there was variation between the two accounts. But variation and contradiction aren't the same thing. We're familiar with how two eyewitnesses might see the same crime but report it differently. They remember different things about the event because of their different perspectives, but the details of the two accounts don't conflict. In fact, the authorities like to have many witnesses to a crime because comparing the stories gives a fuller view of what happened. The same thing happens when historians research an event and read eyewitness accounts of it.

As my friend and I looked at the first alleged biblical problem, we found it was possible for the two accounts to agree. Then, we looked at the rest of the "contradictions." Some examples were more challenging than others, but what happened was this: in every example, we concluded together that there was no real contradiction.

Read the Bible carefully, and you'll find variations of perspective. Consider the Gospels' presentation of the resurrection. For example, Matthew 28:1–10 and Mark 16:1–8 say there was one angel at the empty tomb, while Luke 24:1–12 mentions the presence of two angels at Jesus' grave. That was one of the "contradictions" my friend brought to me. So I said we should assume for the sake of argument that two angels were present. If so, would it not be possible for one eyewitness to be more concerned about who wasn't there—Jesus—than he was about the number of angels present, especially if one of them did not speak? The disciple could have said, "I went there, and I saw an angel, who said x, y, and z," without mentioning the second angel because the presence of two angels wasn't that significant to the disciple who was writing. I asked my friend, "What word is conspicuously absent from this disciple's report that must be there to have a true contradiction?" The answer was clear: the word *only*. If there were two angels, we know there had to be at least one; thus, since Mark and Matthew don't say there was *only* one angel there, there's no contradiction between them and Luke. Instead, there's variation in perspectives because they're relying on different eyewitness reports of the same event. Such variation is exactly what we should expect from independent accounts.

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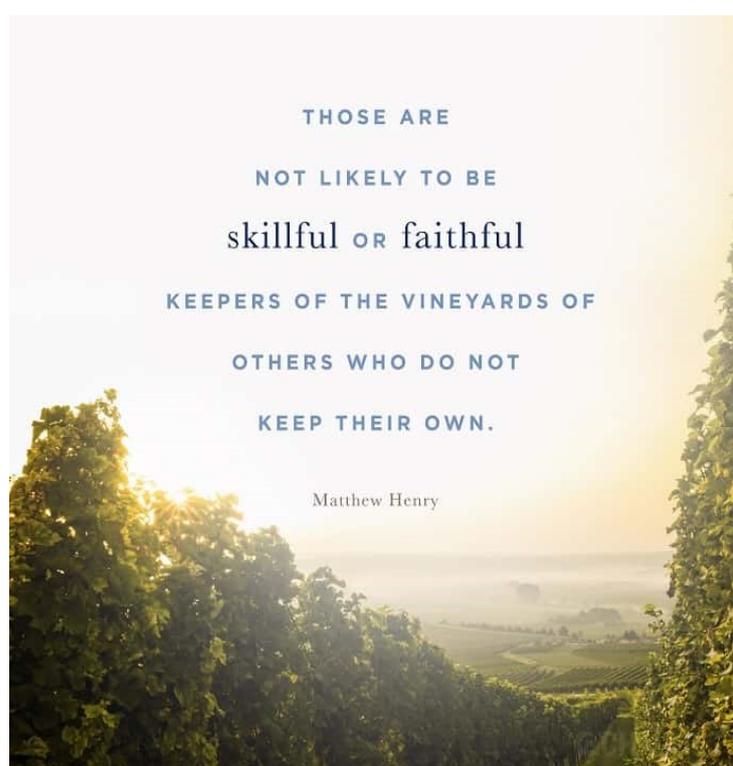
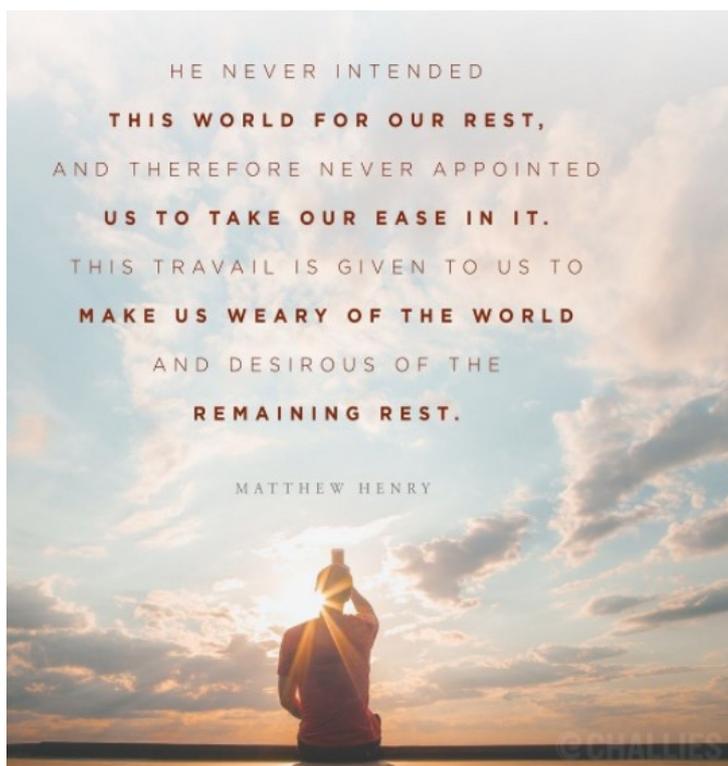
*"Difference does not mean contradiction."*

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It took many centuries and many different writers to give us the Bible. It didn't drop from heaven on a parachute. The doctrine of inspiration doesn't mean we won't find difficult-to-reconcile texts in Scripture. The Bible is a divine book—but it's also a very human book, not in that it is filled with human errors but in that it reflects how human beings tell stories. No two people write in exactly the same way, and no two human beings report their perspectives on the same event identically. Two people can accurately represent the same event without covering all the same details. That's the kind of thing we find in Scripture. Difference does not mean contradiction.

**R.C Sproul, Ligonier Blog**

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## WHAT WE GIVE AND RECEIVE IN GATHERING TOGETHER

What are some of the unique blessings of gathering together for worship? What have we missed when it was not available? It is not simply a matter of what we have not received personally. Our responsibility is to give just as much as receive. Primarily we give worship to God and also receive spiritual blessings. The Lord's people are also meant to strengthen one another as one body, we are not meant to "go it alone". One coal taken out of the fire cannot preserve its heat like those that are together in the fire. We need each other and there are many mutual duties we owe to one another as we gather for worship more publicly and fellowship more privately.

Much has been written recently about the importance of gathering together physically, there are many aspects to consider. One of these is our mutual duty, giving and receiving from one another. There is a lot more involved in coming together than simply occupying the same location as individuals. We are able to consider one another and edify one another in provoking each other to love and good works as we obey the command to gather (Hebrews 10:24-25). We are required to be helpful and a support to each other (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

Gathering together also strengthens us in a time of difficulty, darkness and discouragement. We read of this in Malachi 3:16-17 and of God's special approval, reward and promise. As John Brown of Wamphray asks, "would not this encourage Christians to meet together? What will do it, if this will not do it?"

As John Brown also observes gathering together for worship has often brought rich spiritual blessings in the experience of believers. When the Holy Spirit blesses such gatherings in this way they receive "life and quickening grace" and have often "found their souls revived and their hearts enlarged, their eyes enlightened, their drooping spirits encouraged, their feeble knees lifted up, their doubts answered and cleared, and their souls lifted up in the ways of the Lord, and strengthened to turn the battle to the gate and to stand against corruption".

John Brown goes on to speak of some general comprehensive "one another" duties required of Christians, which will necessarily require their meeting together or show it to be necessary.

- They are commanded frequently to love one another (John 13:34 and 15:12 & 17; Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; 1 John 3:11 and 4:7 & 12; John 13:35; 1 Thessalonians 3:12). Just as love in other communities necessarily effects frequent assembling together, Christian love draws Christians together for the ends and purposes which love spurs them to do to each other.
- They must be kindly affectioned one toward another (Romans 12:10) as parents to their children. Is it not an ordinary thing to see parents and children together?
- They must be of one mind and of one mouth (Romans 15:5-6; 2 Corinthians 13:11; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Philippians 1:27 and 2:2, 10; 1 Peter 3:8). And how is this possible unless they meet together to communicate their minds to each other and to pray to God for light in any point of difference?

Gathering together therefore helps to nourish union, standing fast in one Spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel (Philippians 1:27). No doubt we can encourage one another by engaging together in the same worship but these duties also require an individual interest in each other. In the following updated extract John Brown of Wamphray focuses on twelve "one another" duties emphasised in the New Testament need us to come together and interact with each other.

### 1. GIVING AND RECEIVING ENCOURAGEMENT TO LOVE AND GOOD WORKS

They must consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works (Hebrews 10:24). And this will necessarily imply their familiarity with other and assembling together frequently to provoke to love and good works.

## 2. GIVING AND RECEIVING EXHORTATIONS

They must exhort one another (Hebrews 10:25 and Hebrews 3:13). Can this be done if they cannot confer together and assemble for this purpose?

## 3. GIVING AND RECEIVING COMFORT

They must comfort one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18 and 5:11). They must meet together and speak together for this purpose and pray that God would bless the means and press home the words of comfort.

## 4. GIVING AND RECEIVING EDIFICATION

They must edify one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11). And is it possible for them to do this duty and live as strangers to one another? This duty of edifying one another is a very comprehensive thing. It necessarily implies the saints assembling frequently together so that one may be helpful, strengthening and encouraging to another.

## 5. GIVING AND RECEIVING INSTRUCTION

They must admonish one another (Romans 15:13). This means to press or urge a thing on the mind of another and so instruct them aright as children are instructed. This requires that they must often be together for this purpose.

## 6. GIVING AND RECEIVING IN SINGING PRAISE

They must teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Colossians 3:16) and can this be done unless they assemble together?

## 7. GIVING AND RECEIVING PRACTICALLY

They must be kind (literally useful or profitable) one to another (Ephesians 4:32) and this requires that they must not be strangers to each other.

## 8. GIVING AND RECEIVING IN SERVING ONE ANOTHER

They must serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13). That is, they should in love spend themselves for one another for their spiritual advantage and does this not require assembling together?

## 9. GIVING AND RECEIVING IN ACCEPTING ONE ANOTHER

They must receive one another (Romans 15:7). that is, receive with affection and embrace, one another: And must they then be frightened of the company of one another? And not rather receive other into their intimate fellowship?

## 10. GIVING AND RECEIVING IN SUBMISSION

They must be subject to one another (Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5). Everyone should be ready to give, and to take reproofs to and from one another as well as to do service to each other as we are called to. This requires that they must not live as strangers to each other.

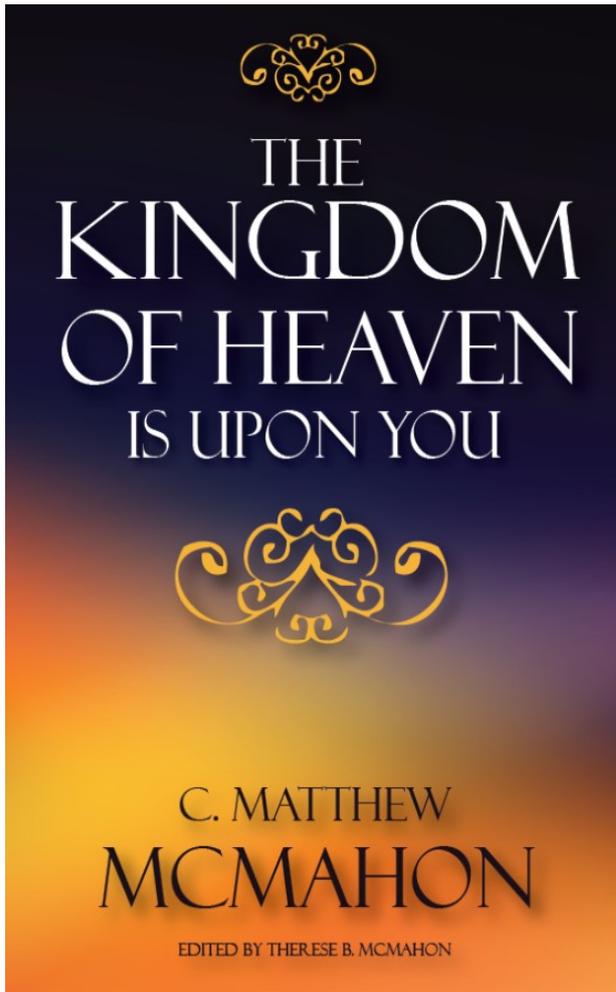
## 11. GIVING AND RECEIVING IN PRAYER FOR EACH OTHER

They must confess their sins to one another and pray for another (James 5:16).

## 12 . GIVING AND RECEIVING IN SPIRITUAL GIFTS

They must minister their gifts to one another (1 Peter 4:10).

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS UPON YOU

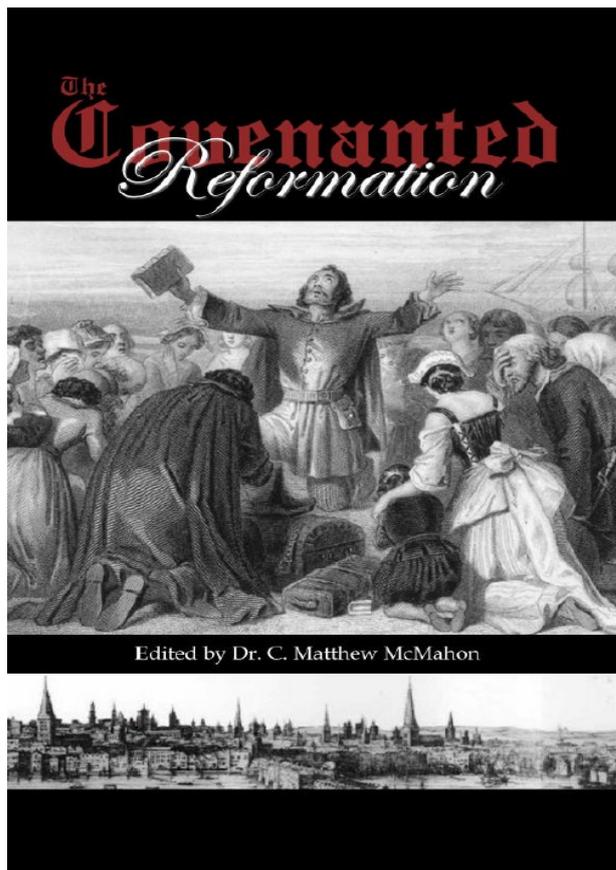


Jesus preached, “Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” (Matthew 4:17). This is the Gospel. But what did Jesus mean by preaching in this way? Is Christ’s gospel the gospel we know and love as Paul preached, and many ministers preach today, “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified,” (1 Cor. 2:2)? Is this what Jesus preached or even meant in his heralding of the good news or the kingdom of heaven? What did Jesus consider the good news, and is it the same as what Paul considered good news? Is the message of the gospel different for the Apostles than it was of Jesus?

This work will cover ideas such as what does it mean that the kingdom is upon you, or for that matter, that you must repent in light of it? What did Jesus expect his listeners to do in hearing him preach this way? How is this kingdom important in light of who Christ is, and what he commissioned his ministers and preachers to preach about him? What didn’t Jesus tell his disciples to preach about him going to the cross, or rising from the dead, or ascending into heaven in his exaltation? Or did he?

McMahon unfolds Christ’s kingdom proclamation, and how it relates to who he is as King, what he does as King, what his kingdom is like, what he considered “God’s kingdom” from the Old Testament, what he taught about the kingdom in the Gospels, and what the response should be to his kingdom as a result of his preaching. Christ spoke extensively in both didactic teaching and preaching, as well as illustratively in his parables about the “kingdom of heaven” and “kingdom of God.”

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS UPON YOU



The history of the covenanters is heart wrenching and faith affirming. This is one of the only works available that comprehensibly deals with that period of persecution in the time of the Covenanters in Scotland. Awesome faith-building reading.

This work has been brought up to date and revised to drink from the wells of its zealous and hearty resolve for the truth by those who both preached and taught the doctrine which stood behind both the National Covenant in Scotland, and Solemn League and Covenant. These documents create a religious and binding foundation for the framers of the Westminster Confession of Faith, and the Catechisms. What was their purpose? To uphold the “reformation and defence of religion.” They desired this, 1) to preserve “the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against our common enemies,” and 2) to bring about the “reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, according to the Word of GOD, and the example of the best reformed Churches.” Such a consensus of unity on the issue of doctrine should be a hearty witness to the 21st century’s church.

# Children's Corner



Dear Children

Let me tell you this month about a young man who wrote one of the books of the Old Testament and who had an unforgettable meeting with some lions. Can you guess who this is? His name is Daniel, of course. The story begins when Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, besieged Jerusalem and took some of the inhabitants captive to Babylon. He ordered his officers to choose the best young men, good looking, intelligent and well educated, who would be able to learn the literature and language of the Babylonians. Amongst these was Daniel and three other young men - Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Once King Nebuchadnezzar had them in Babylon he changed their names - Daniel to Belteshazzar; Hananiah to Shadrach; Mishael to Meshach; and Azariah to Abednego. This was so that they would forget about their homeland and their God and would, from then on, live as Babylonians and worship their gods.

Nebuchadnezzar soon discovered that Daniel and his three friends were not prepared to forget their upbringing and their God even though it would mean they would have to suffer many things for their faith in God. On the contrary, they were determined to be faithful to Him believing that He would be faithful to them. You can read the story for yourselves in the book of Daniel and see how Nebuchadnezzar had to admit that the God of the Hebrews was greater than the gods of Babylon. He also saw that there was something about Daniel that made him different. He recognised that Daniel had great wisdom and he gave him the honour of being ruler of the whole province of Babylon and chief over all the wise men of Babylon. In 1 Samuel chapter 2 and verse 30 God says: "Those who honour Me I will honour but those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed." Daniel and his three friends honoured their God even in a foreign and heathen country and God honoured them. Next month we will look at the very difficult tests that God gave to Daniel and his friends and how they passed them with flying colours.

This story reminds me of a verse written long ago by an American called Philip P Bliss. He was converted and became a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ when he was twelve years old. He became a music teacher and wrote gospel songs. This is the verse he wrote:

**Dare to be a Daniel!**

**Dare to stand alone!**

**Dare to have a purpose firm!**

**Dare to make it known!**

By using the word 'Dare', Philip Bliss was probably writing about his own experience as a young boy knowing how difficult it can be to stand for what you believe and especially if you are the only one in a group. What we always need to remember is that, if we are standing on the Lord's side, we are never alone. God is with us. God promised Joshua in Joshua chapter 1 and verse 5 that He would never leave him, nor forsake him. This is also true for all of God's people.

The lesson for us all is that we should never be afraid to be a witness for the Lord however difficult it may be. Always think of Daniel how he was faithful to God and how God was faithful to him. My prayer for each one of you is that you too will be prepared to stand on the Lord's side even amongst His enemies. God will be with you and give you strength. The Apostle Paul tells the Ephesians in chapter 6 and verse 10: "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." Remember if you are on the Lord's side you are on the winning side because God reigns and "must reign until He puts His enemies under His feet." (1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 25)

We are living in a day when God's Word, the Bible, is despised and rejected. People don't believe what the Bible has to say on many different things, for example, the creation of the world and the creation of man; marriage; and abortion. These are some of the questions that we have to deal with and we need to know what God's Word has to say to us about them. No matter what others may think, if you believe what God's Word teaches, you should not be afraid to accept what it teaches and to say what you believe.

I pray that each one of you will be strong and faithful witnesses to God and to His Word.

With my love and prayers.

Granny M