

This rare set of fine articles takes you to the heart of what was moving a generation of young men around 1960 to take up and spread the convictions formerly strong in England and Scotland. The value is not dated.

— **Iain H Murray**, Author and a founding trustee of The Banner of Truth Trust

Our good friend, John J Murray, edited a periodical that he called *Eternal Truth* from 1959-1961, prior to dedicating most of his writing and editing energy to the then young Banner of Truth ministry. The issues of *Eternal Truth* were packed with short, edifying articles and snippets of biblical, Reformed, experiential, and practical truth. This delightful book brings all of Murray's past issues under one cover in their original form. It is a treat to read, not only to get an insight into what was precious and eternal truth to this dear brother's heart, but especially for personal application of these glorious truths to our own needy souls today. I would highly recommend using this book as a daily devotional, reading perhaps just a few of its short articles and entries per day. By the Spirit's grace, your mind will be stimulated, your soul examined, your affections aroused, and your whole being will break out into doxology to our great and worthy Triune God. Highly recommended!

— **Joel R Beeke**, President, Puritan Reformed Seminary

The preaching and ministry of Rev. John J Murray has been blessed to many. However, one largely forgotten aspect of his ministry was a magazine titled *Eternal Truth*. This magazine reprinted extracts from historic Reformed writers, and called for faithfulness to these 'old paths' in the present day. It is an encouraging to see *Eternal Truth* being reprinted, and my hope is that this reprint will inspire a new generation to return to the wisdom of our forefathers.

— **Donald John Maclean**, Trustee of Tyndale House, Adjunct Professor of Historical Theology at Westminster Presbyterian Theological Seminary and Editor of *Foundations Journal of Evangelical Theology*

One of my first acts as Editor of the *Banner of Truth Magazine* was to republish two articles by John J Murray written over thirty years ago. I did so for two reasons: I wanted our readers to become acquainted or reacquainted with the name John J Murray, a man of godly faithfulness and gentle strength. Second, the articles were models of engaging, well written gospel expositions. It is therefore a great privilege to commend this collection of articles edited over fifty years ago by John J Murray. They reflect both his deep understanding of the grace of God and his deep experience of God's often 'strange' dealings with him. Read and be nourished, challenged and humbled.

— **Ian Hamilton**, Principal of Westminster Presbyterian Theological Seminary,
Newcastle

John J Murray had a deep and serious attitude to the Bible. He was a man of true Puritan convictions and beliefs. As a preacher his sermons were biblical and reflected the theology of the Westminster Confession. I personally owe a real debt to John J Murray for his godliness, his spirituality and his fine writings. I hope many people will read his books now that they are becoming available once again.

— **Maurice Roberts**, Former editor, *The Banner of Truth*

ETERNAL TRUTH



Bound June 1965
John J. Murray

Rev John J Murray (11 September 1934 - 1st April 2020)
and the autograph note in front of his bound volume of Eternal Truth

ETERNAL TRUTH

A complete reprint 1959-1961

edited by
Rev John J Murray



Ettrick Press

© Ettrick Press, 2022

ISBN 978-1-8380775-9-4

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Ettrick Press, or as expressly permitted by law, by licence, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographic rights organisations.

Ettrick Press, 98 The Brow,
BRIGHTON, BN2 6LN, UK

www.ettrickpress.co.uk

ettrickpress@gmail.com

*Dedicated to
John J Murray's grandchildren:
James, Calum, David, Alasdair and Fraser*

Psalm 25 v 14

CONTENTS

Publisher's Foreword.....	6
Introduction.....	7
John J Murry: An Appreciation.....	11
Eternal Truth.....	15
Volume 1, Issue 1.....	17
Volume 1, Issue 2.....	33
Volume 1, Issue 3.....	49
Volume 2, Issue 1.....	65
Volume 2, Issue 2.....	81
Volume 2, Issue 3.....	97
Volume 2, Issue 4.....	113
Volume 3, Issue 1.....	133
Volume 3, Issue 2.....	153
Index.....	173

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD

It is a tremendous privilege for Etrick Press to republish the complete run of *Eternal Truth* in memory of the Editor, the late Rev John J Murray. The magazine has been virtually impossible to obtain, and those who still own fragile loose copies of individual issues prize them highly.

Rather than re-typesetting the whole magazine, we took the decision to publish it as a facsimile so you could see and experience the magazine in its original form. It stands testimony to what was possible before the days of desktop publishing from the front room of a remote Scottish croft, where hard work was joined with the spirit of prayer.

The facsimile has been produced from what is believed to be one of the very few complete bound sets of the magazine. This belonged to the late editor, and each issue had 'guard copy' written in his writing on the front, being the proof copies received from the printers.

Obtaining a good facsimile relies heavily on a good copy to work from. In this case, we have been limited to the choice of a single copy. This has been challenging, especially as blue-grey paper was used for the covers on the magazines for the first two volumes, and then coated paper for the magazines in the final volume. We have combined images, the output of several scanning techniques, to produce the best copy possible. We trust the value of the contents will outweigh the disadvantages of the facsimile production.

INTRODUCTION

Andrew Murray

My late father, the Rev John J Murray, kept everything. No clipping, no article was too insignificant for my dad's collection. When he passed from this scene on 1st April 2020, aged 84, I inherited a lifetime of papers, magazines and, perhaps most surprisingly, diaries covering every year stretching back to 1952. In his diary for 7th April 1959, he simply writes, 'Put material for magazines into the printers.' The young 23-year-old insurance salesman from Dornoch had just sent the first issue of *Eternal Truth* to the printers. Although he didn't realise it at the time, it would be the first step on a lifetime of Reformed writing and leadership that was to take him around the world. In the same month, April 1959, he gave up his job in insurance and began to get the necessary qualifications that would eventually lead to the ministry.

My father had come to Christ in his teenage years and had a deep sense of the fear of God, the infallibility of God's word and the importance of biblical doctrine which never really wavered for the next 65 years. Growing up he read Thomas Boston, John Bunyan and William Guthrie, which had a profound impact on him. He heard Prof John Murray preach in Dornoch in 1953, and having been under deep conviction of sin he came to see Christ as his greatest need. Being brought up in the Highlands in the post-war era, my father was exposed to the rich Puritan theology of the Shorter Catechism and the Scottish metrical Psalms, which he memorised at home and school. He was to spend his life writing and preaching about the doctrines he was introduced to at such a young age.

Although only 9 issues were published from 1959 to 1961, *Eternal Truth* was to create a 'common banner' for those who felt that 'the Reformed faith had fallen on evil days.' My father's first editorial in *Eternal Truth* reads prophetically as we look back at the trajectory of the church in Scotland over the last 60 years: 'What then is our motive in publishing this magazine? Briefly, it is the need of the hour. If there was ever a time in which the truth, the honour and the cause of Christ needed to be published and defended it is today.' Almost 60 years later he would write of the great need for Christian leadership in a booklet entitled *The Dog that*

Does not Bark: A Plea for Leadership. It was a great theme throughout his life and it started in this little magazine.

As my father says in his first editorial: ‘Our greatest need today is for evangelical leadership. Where is it to come from?’ Over the next 60 years my father contributed to that leadership. In June 1960 he joined the Banner of Truth Trust as it began to republish long forgotten Reformed and Puritan books. In 1962 there was a conference in Leicester of like minded men with a concern for reformation and revival. Along with my father, men such as Iain H Murray, Errol Hulse and Humphry Mildred were all key in the revived interest in the ‘old paths’. They saw this in the spirituality of the Reformers and Puritans, whose writings had profoundly influenced them. In 1973 he began studies at Edinburgh University that would lead to the Free Church College and ultimately the Free Church ministry. He ministered in Oban and Edinburgh, before 17 years of fruitful retirement, preaching, writing and looking after numerous vacant congregations. My father’s booklet *Behind a Frowning Providence*, published by the Banner of Truth and dedicated to the memory of my sister Lynda who died in 1980 from a brain tumour, was first delivered at the Leicester Conference of 1989. Since it was first published in 1990 it sold over 70,000 copies and it has been translated into 17 different languages. Other books and booklets followed in a prolific writing career. The crofter’s son from Dornoch went on to have a significant influence on the Reformed and evangelical world.

Looking through the *Eternal Truth* correspondence kept by my father, it is interesting to see how far and wide this little magazine went. There are orders from Canada, USA, New Zealand, and all over the British Isles. My father had regular correspondence with Geoffrey Williams from the Evangelical Library, and also with the Inter Varsity Press. There is also correspondence with Rev Kenneth Macrae, Free Church minister in Stornoway from 1931–64. In his first letter to my father in April 1959, Mr Macrae wrote, ‘I am delighted to receive the copy of *Eternal Truth* which you so kindly sent me. One of the favourable indications in our day of a turn in the tide is the surprising demand there is for the writings of the divines of the past both in America and in this country, and the particular value of a venture such as yours is that it gets at people who, because of ecclesiastical prejudice, would never come to hear sound preaching; and then if the truth does convince them they can no longer rest content under the ministrations of a dead preacher.’ The correspondence continued regularly over the next 4 years with my father writing in 1962 to

arrange a visit for Kenneth Macrae to the Free Church in London. The final letter from Mr Macrae is written from Ward 6-7 of the Inverness Royal Infirmary just 6 months before his death. In great weakness Macrae warmly congratulates my father for his recent ‘telling, timely and readable’ contributions to the *Banner of Truth* magazine.

While *Eternal Truth* as a magazine did not last for long, it was part of a movement in the mid-20th century for the recovery of Reformed doctrine and clear biblical teaching. When it was discontinued in 1961, the circulation figures were around 1,500. By 1961 my father was in London, working for the Banner of Truth Trust. The final edition (April/June 1961) has a Scottish address (my uncle in Dornoch), an English address (my father in London) and an American address (Bible Truth Depot, Pennsylvania, USA). There is extensive correspondence between my father and the manager of the Bible Truth Depot, Mr Donald Reiner. In a letter in 1961, Mr Reiner encourages my father to ‘... keep it going. It may take some time to catch on. I trust you can hold on till it catches on.’ After nine issues *Eternal Truth*, the magazine, came to an end. I suspect that it was less out of lack of interest but simply that it was overtaken by the *Banner of Truth* magazine that had been launched in 1955. It would have made little sense to have two rival magazines with largely the same theology competing for subscriptions and distribution.

It is my hope that in the republication of these little magazines you will appreciate the ground-breaking work of my father and other men in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Today we take for granted the plethora of Reformed books that pours out from the Banner of Truth, Christian Focus Publications, Reformation Heritage Books, and countless other publishing companies. Conferences in the UK, the USA, Australia and across the world host hundreds of pastors who love the doctrines of grace and are involved in global church planting. This did not happen overnight. Men such as my father saw the need for change. As he said in the first edition of *Eternal Truth*, ‘The great doctrines of free and sovereign grace are unknown to the masses of our people and ignored by many in the church. Even those who profess to hold to them have fallen into the habit of apologising for their beliefs.’ The publication of this little magazine was part of a movement to ‘return to the old, simple and sharply cut doctrines of our fathers,’ as J. C. Ryle put it. It was the need of the 1950’s and it remains a great need of our day.

JOHN J MURRAY: A TRIBUTE

John W Keddie

I first met John J Murray in September 1967, around the time of my birthday. It just so happened that Mr Murray's birthday fell on the same day as mine (11th), though he was twelve years older than me. The occasion was a meeting in connection with the launch of a branch of the Evangelical Library in Edinburgh. The location was the main hall of the Protestant Institute on George IV Bridge. The premises were owned and run by the Scottish Reformation Society. I can't now remember who the chairman was that evening, though the leading light in the establishment of the library was Maurice Roberts, then a teacher in Whitburn Academy and later a minister in the Free Church of Scotland, and a great lover, like Mr Murray, of the Reformed, Puritan and Presbyterian theology of the best days. That evening, Mr Murray was speaking on the heritage of Reformed literature and the impact it can have in the lives of Christians. Bear in mind that it wasn't that long since the Banner of Truth, for whom he then worked in London, had been established (1955), with that end in view: to advance the cause of truth and the historic Christian Reformed faith through the reprinting of long-forgotten classic works of the past. Mr Murray had joined the 'Banner' in London in 1960.

John J Murray's lecture that night in a packed hall made a profound impact on my brother and myself. The next day (Saturday) we scoured second-hand bookshops, which were then still plentiful in Edinburgh, in order to locate some of the books Mr Murray referred to. We went by names mentioned: Thomas Boston, Samuel Rutherford, 'Rabbi' Duncan, Thomas Watson, John Owen and many, many others. I can't remember now what we picked up on that initial sortie, except that I found a copy of Rutherford's *Letters* (which I still possess), and my brother purchased an 18th century copy of Thomas Watson's *Body of Divinity* (which he subsequently had rebound). My brother and I subsequently became avid collectors of Banner books and other publications, second hand or new, expository of the Reformed and evangelical faith.

At any rate that was my first, and very influential, experience of John J Murray. We knew he was working for the Banner of Truth in London, and that he was an elder in the Free Church of Scotland (to which he was

ordained in 1962), a denomination of which we became members around that time in 1967. In 1970 my brother went west, to the USA to study theology and subsequently enter the ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America. As for myself, at the beginning of 1971 I took up a position as accountant in the Lord's Day Observance Society in London, then located in Fleet Street. This brought me into closer contact with Mr Murray, whose fellowship I greatly valued. It was a time of a vacancy in the congregation and Mr Murray often would take the prayer meetings, which were invariably edifying and instructive. He was a man of knowledge and enthusiasm for the Reformed faith, as is clear from his book *Catch the Vision* published by the Evangelical Press in 2007 and sub-titled 'Roots of the Reformed Recovery: The Men and Movements in the Mid-20th century.' I have a prized copy of this book, signed by the author with a note to my wife and myself: 'With thanks for your friendship and fellowship over the years.'

Although I did not sit under Mr Murray's ministry at any point, my twin sons both became members in the congregation of which he was minister in Edinburgh (Free St Columba's) both before and after the sad division in the Free Church in 2000, and they appreciated very highly his preaching and counsel. Indeed, Mr Murray conducted the wedding of the (slightly) older of the twins in Skye in 2002, in which I assisted. Both my son and his wife were members in Mr Murray's congregation in Edinburgh.

John J Murray and myself had something in which we had a strong common interest. It was the history of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in Scotland, not least the Free Church of Scotland. He had been brought up in the Free Church in Dornoch and adhered to the church all his days. The experience in the Free Church was not an untroubled one, especially in the closing years of the 20th century. He did say to me more than once how he was surprised that there was not universal enthusiasm for the work of the Banner of Truth, so close to his heart, among the ministry of the Free Church. But the Banner of Truth Trust was responsible for a resurgence of the works of early Free Church fathers, such as William Cunningham, James Buchanan, Patrick Fairbairn and George Smeaton. Many, however, including the writer of this tribute, found the reprints of the major works of such writers to be of inestimable benefit and blessing, doctrinally and experientially.

The sad events of a division in the Free Church in 2000, in which Mr Murray was among the 'minority' who became part of what became

known as the 'Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)', cast a pall over church life within the Free Church of Scotland. His own contribution to the work and witness of the Free Church (Continuing) was invaluable, right up to his closing years. His books, conference lectures and addresses, and sermons were always well received. He wrote some excellent booklets, such as *Behind a Frowning Providence* (Banner of Truth, 1990), a booklet feelingly written from the sad experience of losing his oldest daughter, Lynda, by a brain tumour in 1980. This booklet has been greatly blessed to many.

In 2010 there appeared his brief history of the Scottish Reformation, *The Reformation 1560: The Greatest Year in Scotland's History* (Free Church of Scotland (Continuing)). Then there was his tribute to *John Knox* (Evangelical Press Bitesize Biography, 2011). Also on John Knox he penned *A God-Centred Vision for Church and Nation: Celebrating Our Debt to John Knox on the Quincentenary of his Birth* (Scottish Reformation Society, 2014). His concerns for the church of the present day were expressed in *Problems Confronting the Church Today. Marks of a Declining Church and the Remedy Prescribed* (Scottish Reformation Society, 2018). This was his last publication. He had been supportive of the Scottish Reformation Society for years and for a time was editor of its magazine, *The Bulwark*. In a project close to both our hearts he did give counsel and encouragement to me with my project on the history of the Free Church of Scotland in the 20th century, *Preserving a Reformed Heritage* (Scottish Reformed Heritage Publications, 2017). He generously provided a foreword to this book. It was generous because his own knowledge of the Free Church doubtless exceeded the author's!

Providence frowned again for the Murray family with the passing of their second daughter, Anna, in 2019, through pancreatic cancer. The following year Mr Murray himself, in his 86th year, fell prey to coronavirus and it pleased the Lord to take his soul to himself after a short illness, on 1st April. His passing was greatly lamented throughout the churches and among all his Christian friends, but not least of course by his widow, Cynthia, whom he had married in 1966, and his son, Andrew, and Andrew and Kirsteen's five sons.

To me, John J Murray was the model of an old-school Free Churchman. He understood and exemplified the old-school piety of the Free Church in the Highlands of Scotland in its best days. At the same time, there was nothing parochial about him. He was by no means an extrovert but, if anything, was a bit on the diffident side. Nevertheless, he

was a man of integrity and principle, a man of God and a skilled writer and churchman. He left his mark on the churches in which he served Christ faithfully, as well as the wider Reformed community of churches. It was my privilege to have known him, and, truly, I still miss him.



John W Keddie with John J Murray (left) in Kampen (2002)

ETERNAL TRUTH

ETERNAL TRUTH

CONTENTS

Page

1	EDITORIAL	
3	WHAT IS CALVINISM?	Warfield
4	SIGNS OF GODLINESS	Brainerd
5	DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL LOVE	Kennedy
7	BRIEF EXTRACTS	
7	SOME GOOD RULES	North
8	SIGNS OF SANCTIFICATION	Watson
9	A COMPARISON	Ryle
10	A GOOD KIND OF DESPAIR	Baxter
11	SHORT BOOK REVIEWS	

"It was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

— Jude 3.

ETERNAL TRUTH

“ His truth endureth to all generations.”

Editor:

JOHN J. MURRAY

C/O BUCHANAN

16 COMISTON TERRACE, EDINBURGH, 10

This is an undenominational magazine for the Cause of God and Truth. The price has been kept to a minimum so that the magazine may be within the reach of everyone.

Additional copies may be had from **the above address** or from—

Mr W. MURRAY, LONEMORE, DORNOCH, SUTHERLAND.

It is hoped to publish the magazine quarterly during the current year.

Subscription for 1959, 2s. 3d. including postage. All orders and remittances should be sent to the Editor at the above address. (P.O.'s made payable to J. J. MURRAY.)

We shall be greatly indebted to ministers of the Gospel and other Christian readers if they will seek to make this magazine as widely known as possible.

EDITORIAL

“The first want of our day is a return to the old, simple and sharply-cut doctrines of our fathers.”—J. C. Ryle.

“Of making many books there is no end.” So said King Solomon of old and the truth of that statement is even more marked in our day. It is obvious that it is not because of a lack of reading matter that we are venturing forth with this publication. It is not even due to the lack of *good* reading matter. No, our reason is more compelling than that.

What then is *our motive* in publishing this magazine? Briefly, it is **the need of the hour**. If there was ever a time in which the truth, the honour and the cause of Christ needed to be published and defended it is to-day. We believe that the present state of the evangelical witness in Scotland is causing grave and increasing concern to many of God’s people. Those who hold steadfastly to the truth have to pursue a lonely course and some have become despondent, even saying like the prophet of old “And I, even I only, am left.” We are convinced that something must be done to reach all such and to unite them under the common banner. We trust that this new venture will be a step in that direction. Our greatest need to-day is for evangelical leadership. Where is it to come from?

The Reformed Faith may seem to have fallen on evil days. The great doctrines of free and sovereign grace are unknown to the masses of our people and ignored by many in the Church. Even those who profess to hold to them have fallen into the habit of apologising for their beliefs. They tell us that we must suit our message to the age in which we live. What is this but conformity to the spirit and ways of the world (Romans 12 v. 2)? “Like its Divine Author, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. If we basely merge one part of Scriptural teaching for the sake of charity and courtesy, it is not, therefore, really merged; it will bide its time and demand its due with terrible reprisals for our treachery and injustice towards it; for more than half the sorrows of the professing Church arise from smothered truth. False doctrine is not rendered innocuous by its being winked at, and the doctrine that ceases to be proclaimed from the pulpit soon ceases to be believed in the pew. It is, therefore, forever imperative that the whole counsel of God be uncompromisingly and unequivocally proclaimed.” (Spurgeon.)

The movement away from vital religion and fixed belief has been going on for many years. It is not surprising, therefore, that the present generation has little or no use for doctrine. In the 18th century Jonathan Edwards had to contend with those who were decrying a speculative knowledge of Christian truth as unimportant compared with the practice of Christian duty. They were “the fashionable divines of the age.” But Edwards arose to reassert the doctrine of Scripture and it is highly significant that the discourses which were occasioned by that controversy led to one of the greatest awakenings since the time of the Apostles.

We need not go so far afield to illustrate the vital importance of doctrine. It was doctrine which awoke Scotland at the time of the Reformation and we believe that it is doctrine, “clear ringing doctrine” which is

best fitted to awaken Scotland again. When we say that we are not unmindful of our desperate need of the Holy Spirit, but, as Spurgeon said, the Holy Ghost never sets His signature to a blank. "If we do not speak clear doctrine with plainness of speech, the Holy Ghost will not put His signature to our empty prating."

Further, can we really expect the Holy Spirit to set His seal to something that is not God-glorifying and Christ-honouring? God's grand design is to glorify Himself. The supreme object of preaching the Gospel is to glorify God. We venture to say that the weakness of modern evangelism lies in the fact that other objects have usurped that chief place. Some have made the salvation of souls the chief end of preaching. This done, they go on to say that "the end justifies the means" and in their endeavour to multiply conversions they use means of their own which have no sanction in the Word of God. When our aim and end is wrong we are sure to fall into error.

We are convinced that here we have the reason for the ignorance and neglect of the doctrines of free and sovereign grace. The evangelist who makes the salvation of sinners his all-consuming end has no use for the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty. Such a doctrine stands in his way. If he can but persuade men and women that it is in their power "to decide for Christ" he thinks that he has accomplished a great work. But how can such a work be God-glorifying when the Bible clearly states that "Salvation is of the Lord" Jonah 2 v. 9; Psalm 3 v. 8 and that "Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death" Psalm 68 v. 20? How can the Holy Spirit own such preaching when His purpose is to glorify God, as Christ Himself said: "He shall glorify Me"?

The perplexing problems which confront the Evangelical Church of to-day can be resolved into three questions. 1. Why is it that, notwithstanding all the conferences and conventions for "the deepening of spiritual life," Christian life remains so shallow? 2. Why is it that, notwithstanding all the evangelistic campaigns, there are few who show "fruits meet for repentance"? 3. Why is it that, notwithstanding concentrated prayer for revival, revival tarries? Is the answer not found in Isaiah 42 v. 8 "I am the Lord: that is My name: and My glory will I not give to another"? Whether we like it or not, we are forced to admit that Arminianism, which, even in its purest manifestation, leaves some occasion for glorying in the flesh (1 Corinthians 1 vv. 29-31), is the popular theology of to-day. This is what is sapping the vitals of evangelical Christianity. This, more than anything else, is what is grieving the Holy Spirit and withholding the blessing.

It is evident therefore that the first want of our day is a return to the God-honouring doctrines of free and sovereign grace which are in very truth the doctrines of God's Holy Word. In this magazine we are committed to the task of reasserting and expounding these blessed truths. The dissatisfaction with modern thought is causing many to go back to the writings of our fathers and it is from there we intend to take most of our material.

Let none who love the truth be discouraged. The dawn of a new day seems near. The battle will not be long, the warfare will soon be over, and, in the words of John Kennedy, "an assured victory is the destiny of the cause of truth."

WHAT IS CALVINISM?

BY B. B. WARFIELD, D.D. (1851-1921)

Being part of an address on "The Present Day Attitude toward Calvinism" which is contained in the booklet "Calvin as a Theologian and Calvinism To-day" published by the Sovereign Grace Union, 34-40 Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.4.

Calvinism is evangelicalism in its pure and only stable expression, and when we say evangelicalism we say sin and salvation. It means utter dependence on God for salvation. It implies therefore, need of salvation and a profound sense of this need, along with an equally profound sense of helplessness in the presence of this need, and utter dependence on God for its satisfaction. Its type is found in the publican who smote his breast and cried, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" No question there of saving himself, or of helping God to save him, or of opening the way to God to save him. No question of anything but "I am a sinner, and all my hope is in God my Saviour!" This is Calvinism, not just something like Calvinism or an approach to Calvinism, but Calvinism in its vital manifestation. Wherever this attitude of heart is found and is given expression in direct and unambiguous terms, there is Calvinism. Wherever this attitude of mind and heart is fallen away from, in however small a measure, there Calvinism has become impossible.

For Calvinism, in this soteriological aspect of it, is just the perception and expression and defence of the utter dependence of the soul on the free grace of God for salvation. All its so-called hard features—its doctrine of original sin; yes, speak it right out, its doctrine of total depravity and the entire inability of the sinful will to good; its doctrine of election, or, to put it in the words everywhere spoken against, its doctrine of predestination and preterition, of reprobation itself—mean just this and nothing more. Calvinism will not play fast and loose with the free grace of God. It is set upon giving to God, and to God alone, the glory and all the glory of salvation. There are others than Calvinists, no doubt, who would fain make the same great confession. But they make it with reserves; or they painfully justify the making of it by some tenuous theory which confuses nature and grace. They leave logical pitfalls on this side or that; and the difference between logical pitfalls and other pitfalls is that the wayfarer may fall into the others, but the plain man, just because his is a simple mind, must fall into those. Calvinism will leave no logical pitfalls, and will make no reserves. It will have nothing to do with theories whose function it is to explain away facts. It confesses, with a heart full of adoring gratitude, that to God and to God alone belongs salvation and the whole of salvation; that He it is, and He alone, who works salvation in its whole reach. Any falling away in the slightest measure from this great confession is to fall away from Calvinism. Any intrusion of any human merit, or act, or disposition, or power, as ground or cause or occasion, into the process of divine salvation,—whether in the way of power to resist or of ability to improve grace, of the opening of the soul to the reception of grace, or of the employment of grace already received—is a breach with Calvinism.

Calvinism is the casting of the soul wholly on the free grace of God alone, to whom alone belongs salvation.

The Calvinist is the man who has seen God, and who, having seen God in His glory, is filled on the one hand, with a sense of his own unworthiness to stand in God's sight, as a creature, and much more as a sinner, and, on the other hand, with adoring wonder that nevertheless this God is a God who receives sinners. He who believes in God without reserve, and is determined that God shall be God to him, in all his thinking, feeling, willing—in the entire compass of his life activities intellectual, moral, spiritual—throughout all his individual, social, religious relations—is, by the force of that strictest of all logic which presides over the outworking of principles into thought and life, by the very necessity of the case, a Calvinist.

SIGNS OF GODLINESS

BY DAVID BRAINERD

[EDITOR'S NOTE: The following fragment from Brainerd's writings gives the distinguishing marks of a true Christian.]

1. He has a true knowledge of the glory and excellency of God, that He is most worthy to be loved and praised for His own divine perfections: Psalm 145 v. 8.
2. God is his portion: Psalm 73 v. 25. God's glory is his great concern: Matthew 6 v. 22.
3. Holiness is his delight; there is nothing he so much longs for as to be holy as God is holy: Philippians 3 vv. 9-12.
4. Sin is his greatest enemy. This he hates for its own nature, for what it is in itself, being contrary to a holy God. Consequently he hates all sin: Romans 7 v. 24; 1 John 3 v. 9.
5. The laws of God alone are his delight: Psalm 119 v. 27, Romans 7 v. 22. These he observes, not out of constraint, from a servile fear of hell; but they are his choice: Psalm 119 v. 30. The strict observance of them is not his bondage, but his greatest liberty: Psalm 119 v. 45.

He that negotiates between God and man,
As God's ambassador the grand concerns
Of judgment and of mercy should beware
Of lightness in his speech, 'tis pitiful
To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;
To break a jest when pity should inspire
Pathetic exhortation; and t'address
The skittish fancy with facetious tales,
When sent with God's commission to the heart!

—From William Cowper's poem *The Task*.

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL LOVE *

By Rev. JOHN KENNEDY, D.D., Dingwall

To what practical use is such a doctrine intended to be applied? Is it devised with a view to the removal of hard thoughts of God? If so, it is just the very way to suggest them. If the Almighty loves all, and yet leaves such multitudes to perish, what desperate thoughts the view of God, which this presents to our minds, is fitted to suggest. If even the love of God is such that it will leave its objects to perish, oh, what then? We can conceive of such a doctrine, as that of universal love, being very effectual in removing all heathful fear of God's righteous judgment from a heart that knows no earnestness. We can conceive of its being effectual in persuading careless sinners that it is safe to remain far off from God. But we cannot conceive of its affording any relief to a penitent sinner. What is it to him that God loves him in common with all mankind? That is not what he cares to know. What he desires to be assured of is — 1. That God so loved as to provide a sure salvation, and, self-condemned as he is, he knows, that if He has done so, it was only because it so seemed good in His sight. 2. That the love of God, commended in the death of His Son, in order to the redemption of a people who deserved to die, can be expressed in the actual salvation of a sinner, in consistency with His holiness, and truth and righteousness. And, 3. That he may approach, through the mediator, towards the proffered embrace of that love, as one who, because of sin is a child of wrath. But this figment of universal love can only exercise a baneful influence on any mind that receives it.

For — I. It offers encouragement to keep away from God, rather than an inducement to draw near to Him. "Don't be afraid of God, for He loves you," is its counsel. This is the salve it administers to an anxious soul — to a soul that should be afraid of God, when viewed along the line of the only relation then subsisting between him and the Most High. It helps him to cast off the fear, without inducing any anxiety to be delivered from the danger, of God's awful wrath.

II. It tends to supersede the Cross of Christ. If we believe in God's love to us, irrespective of our interest in Christ crucified, and if we are encouraged to hope for salvation because of that love, then we feel as if we could quite dispense with an atonement. It helps to take off the terror which shuts us up to Christ as our only resource. We learned about divine love without going as sinners in faith to the Cross, and the hopeful feeling thus engendered makes us feel independent of the blood which "cleanseth from all sin".

* The following article is an extract from the booklet entitled *The Present Cast and Tendency of Religious Thought and Feeling in Scotland* by Dr John Kennedy. Copies may be had from Rev. W. MacQuarrie, Free Church Manse, North Kessock, By Inverness. (Price 1s. 9d.)

III. To a great extent this doctrine brings the name of God into disrespect in the heart of him who entertains it. We are led by it to think that God loves us while we are yet in our sins, and away from Christ. And can we think of that love as holy love, or as a love whose exercise can consist with righteousness? We use it only to hide from our view the holiness and justice of God. As we do so, we cease to be afraid of God, but it is because we cease to respect Him. How much more is the Confession doctrine (i.e. the doctrine of the love of God as set out in the Westminster Confession of Faith—Ed.) fitted to exalt Jehovah in the view of a penitent sinner, and in that very measure to encourage him, as a sinner, to have hope in God? He has looked on the aspect of God's character presented to him in the light which shines from Sinai, and on his relation to Him as Lawgiver and Judge, and he has found himself to be a child of wrath and an heir of hell. As such he feels himself to be quite shut up to the hope set before him in the Gospel as his only resource. And when he looks to the grace therein revealed, he sees it so associated with Christ Jesus, that it appears to be unapproachable except through Him as crucified. The love commended in His death seems as holy as it is rich, as righteous as it is free. It is manifestly Divine love — it is such that one need not shrink from ascribing it to God. And he is called as a hateful sinner with all his guilt and corruption and helplessness to Christ; and he is assured, not that he is loved before he comes, but that if he comes, the love of God will embrace him, and that the provision it hath made, in order to salvation, shall be his in Him in Whom all fullness dwelleth. We ask any unprejudiced mind to decide whether this mode of representing the love of God is, or is not, that which is more fitted to yield encouragement to one who knows that he is a sinner and that God loveth righteousness, and whether it be not the only one which conserves the honour of God's name, and that is consistent with all portions of the scheme of truth.

This figment of universal love has been devised with a view to meet an objection commonly urged against Calvinism. Calvinists, it is alleged, make too much of God's secret purposes in their presentations of the Gospel. But these universalists are really the parties against whom a charge of that kind may be preferred. They, quite apart from God's only revealed way of expressing love to men, tell sinners that they know the heart of God, and that He loves them. The Calvinist does not profess to base the Gospel call on aught else than the revealed command of God, which requires that the Gospel be preached to every creature. This is enough for him. He goes no further back. He stands where the light of revelation ceases to shine. He believes that there is a peculiar love to a chosen people, and he believes in no love besides. He knows that God can reconcile the speciality of that love with the universality of the call in relation to all who hear it, though he cannot, and must not attempt to do so, as he has no guiding light from God. But because God commands the Gospel to be preached to every creature, and promises that every believer shall be saved, his faith in God preserves him from all embarrassment. He is content to keep his own place, and to receive and to preach as God commands him.