

# Scots' Form in the Suburbs

by [Mark Noll](#) in the [June 1, 2010](#) issue

The sedentary Presbyterians  
awoke, arose, and filed to tables spread  
with white, to humble bits that showed how God  
almighty had decided to embrace  
humanity, and why these clean, well-fed,  
well-dressed suburbanites might need his grace.

The pious cruel, the petty gossipers  
and callous climbers on the make, the wives  
with icy tongues and husbands with their hearts  
of stone, the ones who battle drink and do  
not always win, the power lawyers mute  
before this awful bar of mercy, boys  
uncertain of themselves and girls not sure  
of where they fit, the poor and rich hemmed in  
alike by cash, physicians waiting to  
be healed, two women side by side—the one  
with unrequited longing for a child,  
the other terrified by signs within  
of life, the saintly weary weary in  
pursuit of good, the academics (soft  
and cosseted) who posture over words,  
the travelers coming home from chasing wealth  
or power or wantonness, the mothers choked  
by dual duties, parents nearly crushed  
by children died or lost, and some  
with cancer-ridden bodies, some with spikes  
of pain in chest or back or knee or mind  
or heart. They come, O Christ, they come to you.

They came, they sat, they listened to the words,

“for you my body broken.” Then they ate  
and turned away—the spent unspent, the dead  
recalled, a hint of color on the psychic  
cheek—from tables groaning under weight  
of tiny cups and little crumbs of bread.