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CHURCH PRINCIPLES

Lecture given by Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow, in St. Jude's
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(Continued from page 161)

Now there is one thing I would like to mention under this heading of the testimony of Jesus, and that is, of course, church government. This is a very important matter—very important indeed. The form of church government which is set forth in the Word of God is that form which we call Presbyterianism. That form of church government contains first of all two types of office-bearer: (i) the elder, and (ii) the deacon. The deacon, as we know, and we need not mention very much more about that, is an office-bearer who was appointed in apostolic days to attend to the temporal needs of the cause of Christ, to relieve the elderhood from the necessity of attending to these temporal needs, so that they might devote themselves to meditation and prayer and preaching the Word of God. That is the function of the deacon. That is what he is there for. Now the office of the elder is divided into two functions, and the first function is that of ruling elder and the second function is that of teaching elder. The Scripture makes it plain that the teaching elder is also a ruling elder. We read in connection with them, "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine."¹ Now the elderhood from its ruling point of view is composed of ministers and elders, ruling together according to the Word of God. There are one or two points that need some clarification in connection with those men who are appointed to rule. In the case of the minister he is called by the congregation. He is set and inducted by a presbytery over a congregation. That is his position. The position of the elders is that they are elected by the communicants in the congregation to their office. The minister and elders, met in

1. I Timothy, ch. 5, v. 17.

kirk session, having a rule over a congregation, are the ruling body of that congregation. The principle is, they are to rule according to the Word of God. And as long as they rule according to the Word of God, they cannot be interfered with. You see when we elect persons to parliament, in a democracy such as we have, if we are not pleased with what they do, then when an election crops up we can put them out, because they are there according to the will of the people. That is the fundamental principle of democracy, so called. But when you come to the church, it is not the will of the people but the will of God described in His Word that the rulers have to look to, and that the rulers have to carry out; and the function of the people is to "obey them that have the rule over you," when they rule according to divine truth, when they do what in their view is for the good of the congregation. I think it is very important that this should be emphasised again and again, because a great deal of trouble has been caused in our Church and in other churches by not understanding this. When Church courts make decisions and do these in a way that I am going to explain in a moment, they are doing that and acting in that way according to the testimony of Christ, and the rule lies in their hands. They are responsible to Christ for carrying out their duties in connection with the cause of Christ in this world, and their rule is to be the Word of God. Now with regard to the people the Scripture teaches this, "Obey them that have the rule over you," and gives a mark concerning those who have the rule that should make it as clear as the sun in the sky to the people as to what principle moves the rulers of the Church. "Obey them that have the rule over you," and this is the reason, "for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief."¹ Now, that shows that the joy and grief that the rulers of the church have is joy and grief at the throne of grace, where they complain to the Lord with regard to the disobedience of those who do not conform to the rule of the Church of God in this world. It is not very difficult to discover, who are the people who are watching for souls, who are concerned, really concerned, with the welfare of souls that are going to death and eternity, and who discharge their ministry conscious of the fact that they have to account to Christ before the "great white throne." In connection with this rule, as you know, in other churches there has arisen a most sad and deplorable state of affairs and that is this: there has been an invasion by women into the rule in the Church and into office

1. Hebrews, ch. 13, v. 17.

in the Church. That is a very serious thing whatever people may think of it. There is in the Church of Scotland and other churches what is called an order of deaconesses. Now I defy anyone to prove from the Word of God that there should be such an order. We are told about the elders, what their qualifications are to be, and what their duties are. We are told about deacons, what their qualifications are, what their duties are. It is very, very strange that if there was to be an order of deaconesses in the apostolic church that we never heard of it. That is confirmed by the fact that by the express declaration of "the testimony of our Lord" and of "me His prisoner," of the Apostle Paul, women are excluded from rule and from teaching in the Church of God. The Apostle says, as you remember, in his first epistle to Timothy, "I suffer not." He is not giving his opinion. He is speaking according to the mind of the Spirit of God, and according to Christ's mind as the Head of the Church. "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."¹ Both teaching and ruling are excluded as far as women are concerned. Now the reason for that has nothing to do with the view that the Apostle Paul had of women, nor has it anything to do with the view that others may have had of women at that time in the history of the world. It is amazing that men who call themselves scholars can be advocating this opinion and writing it in books, and demonstrating their own crass ignorance of what the Bible says. The Apostle Paul tells us why women are excluded from teaching. "For," he says, "Adam was first formed, then Eve." They are excluded because of creation. They are excluded because of the nature of creation. They are excluded because it was in the nature of creation that the woman would be a help to the man, not a leader, not a teacher, but a help to the man, and a help suitable to the man, and that in the service of God. Therefore the Apostle says, "For Adam was first formed." Because this is the very nature of creation, apart from the Church at all, that "Adam was first formed, then Eve," women are excluded from the rule and teaching in the Church. And the second reason is this: that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."² Now what does that mean? Well, it means this. When the serpent came to Eve, and Satan through the serpent attacked man, that he attacked man through the woman, and he attacked him through the woman in this way, by making the woman take the lead. She took the lead in sin. She was deceived "in the

1. 1 Timothy, ch. 2, v. 12.

2. 1 Timothy, ch. 2, v. 14.

transgression," he says here. "Adam was not deceived," but she was deceived, and the root of her being deceived was that she took the lead. She took the rule, and when she did so she fell, and she brought Adam down with her. To have women entering into the eldership of the Church of Scotland, and eventually into the ministry of the Church of Scotland, is nothing but the work of the devil, and it is the work of the devil to destroy that Church. I know very well what people say, that women are pious, women are zealous, women are this and women are the next thing. Very well, let them exercise their piety and their zeal in other directions, but let them keep away from the rule of the Church and away from the teaching office in the Church. You will find, and it would be very easy for me to demonstrate even from the history of our own Church, that when women begin to interfere in the rule of the Church, and set themselves above kirk sessions and ministers, there is nothing in it but the work of the devil. The Word of God makes that perfectly plain, and it is a principle in our Church, and it is a principle that will be observed in our Church, let people say what they will. There is to be no trifling with regard to this particular matter. Women are not going to rule in the Church of God. That is a principle that we stand for, and a principle that we are going to stand for, and going to continue to stand for, because, as I said, when the woman took the lead at the beginning, she fell into sin, and Adam fell also, although that did not excuse him. But because of that incident, and very much more bound up with it, women are excluded both from the office of rule and the office of teaching in the Church, and it would be their wisdom to remember that, and their wisdom to keep their own place in the Church of God.

Then, in the Presbyterian rule, there is the rule of a kirk session in a congregation, and presbyteries over a certain number of congregations in the locality, and a Synod or a General Assembly over the whole Church. Now this rule involves that there is a parity in the teaching elders. The teaching elder, by virtue of his calling, preaches and administers the sacraments. I may here remark that the Scripture teaches us that the bishop and the elder are one and the same office, and that in connection with the teaching elder, all ministers with regard to office are equal. Therefore, when ministers are ordained, they are ordained in a presbytery. They are ordained by "the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."¹ They are not ordained by the laying on of hands of a bishop who is above his brother ministers. Such

1. 1 Timothy, ch. 4, v. 14.

an office does not exist in the Church of God at all, and it only came into the Church after apostolic times. When it did come in, it found its final form in the "antichrist," "the son of perdition," the Pope of Rome. But let us remember with regard to teaching elders as far as their office and status are concerned, they are equal. They are equal in authority, they are equal in the exercises of their offices: to preach, to administer the ordinances, to act with their brother elders in kirk sessions and presbyteries and synods, and if there is a large enough Church, in a General Assembly. There is no question of bishops, or of people taking authority that does not belong to themselves and ruling over God's heritage, and exercising a lordly type of authority.

That brings me to the question of discipline. The courts of the Church are there for the protection of the Word of God, for the protection of the preaching of God's Word, for the protection of the ordinances of grace, for the protection of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. That is what they are there for, and they are to exercise their rule and authority according to the Word of God, and do it together according to the Word of God. In that connection I must notice this and stress this. When a person is disciplined by a church court, whether it is a session, or a presbytery, or a synod, the discipline of the church is ministerial. That is to say, it is to help the person to come back to repentance. One of the things I wish people would understand is this. If a person is disciplined, the intention of the Church, and the practice of the Church is that that discipline would be of such a nature that through the blessing of the Lord the person would be brought to repentance. That is the first principle. If the person does not repent, then he is excluded. That is the second principle. It is not like the discipline of the Army or the Navy or the Air Force which is lordly. The discipline of the Army and the Navy was discipline which told a person to do a thing, and if he did not do it, he was punished. Whether he repented or not did not come into it. But when the Church takes to do with an offender, and finds the offender guilty, the discipline is ministerial, intended to help the person back to repentance. Now it does not help the person to repent, if he finds out after he has been disciplined, that there are people and office-bearers in the Church who are taking his side, or her side. A great deal of damage is done by that kind of thing. If a person is disciplined by the Church, the Word of God is clear. We are not to cut them off, but we ought to make it perfectly plain that they are under the discipline of the Church. When you get

people secretly sympathising with people who have been disciplined in the Church, that is a vitiation of Presbyterianism, and it is not Christian conduct. The aim of discipline is to bring the person, under a sense of shame and confession of their sins, to repent before the Lord, and in view of their repentance to come back, and when they come back, though they would be a prodigal son or a prodigal daughter, they will find the Church of God willing to welcome them on the ground of their repentance. That is important.

I must pass on now from the testimony of Jesus to say a few words in regard to its being passed down. You know that after apostolic times there was a great falling away. The first three or four centuries after the apostolic church was set up, there was a great decay. Decay of life, decay of doctrine, and decay of church government. It was during that time that the question of bishops rose up, and then the Bishop of Rome seized an opportunity to raise himself to be the chief bishop over other bishops. Not only were there bishops over ordinary ministers, but now he was the chief bishop over all the bishops in the Christian world. At least he claimed that, and during that time the Church sank into the misery and darkness of what is called the Dark Ages—until the Reformation came. Now the Reformation was a return to the Word of God. It was a Reformation that cleansed the Church from errors in doctrine, errors in worship and errors in government. There was no country in which that light shone more clearly than in this land of yours and mine—Scotland. John Knox could stand with Calvin and Luther and Zwingli and all, for piety, for faithfulness to Christ, for his grasp of the Word of God; and those who assisted him were also men of piety. The light of the gospel, and that is what we confine ourselves to, shone in Scotland as clearly, if not more clearly, than it did in any part of Christendom. Now during that period of decline that I've referred to, from the apostolic ages down, many heresies came into the Church. There was Arianism, which denied the Eternal Sonship of Christ, and the Person of the Holy Spirit; there was Pelagianism, which denied the corruption of man, and so on. From time to time the Lord raised up men like Athanasius and Augustine and so on, to defend the doctrines of truth, and the result was that a series of creeds began to develop in the Church. These creeds were expressions of the true view of the Scripture, and of the doctrines of Scripture, against which others were contending.

When the Reformation came, the Church saw the necessity of having a creed. In 1560, we had the Scots Confession, which was mostly written by John Knox. The intention of the creed

was to give an expression of the Church's view of the doctrines of God's Word referred to in the creed. They were set down there. This was the Church's view in contradistinction to the heresies and errors that had arisen, and consequently those who were office-bearers in the Church—ministers, elders, and deacons—were required to acknowledge that this creed or this confession was a confession of their faith, and only in respect of doing that could they hold their position in the Church. Then in 1647, as you remember, the Scots Confession was replaced by the Westminster Confession of Faith, which was the clearest exposition of the doctrines of Christianity the world has ever seen since apostolic times. There is no question whatsoever about that. Those who are enemies to the Westminster Confession of Faith are enemies to Christianity, and to the Bible, because the Westminster Confession of Faith is based upon the Word of God. Therefore, the Church in Scotland, in handing on its testimony, the testimony of an inspired Bible, was also handing on the testimony of the creed of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

The form of Church government, as I have mentioned already, was Presbyterianism. That was handed down through the generations. When we come to 1843, when the Church of Scotland Free separated from the State Church, this had nothing whatever to do with the doctrines of Christianity concerning salvation. It had to do with the interference of the State in the duties of the courts of the Church. The State was prepared to put ministers in congregations whom the courts of the Church did not want there. That was an interference with the spiritual jurisdiction of the courts of the Church, and therefore the Church of Scotland Free, that is, free from State control, separated from the Established Church in 1843, which event is called the Disruption. If you ask the question, Where was the true Church of Scotland, where was the Church of Rutherford and Henderson, where was the Church of Knox and Melville, in 1843, the answer, I think, would be that it was in the Free Church of 1843. The spiritual jurisdiction of the Church involving the Headship of Christ had been maintained and sustained in that historic event of 1843, called the Disruption.

When this Church was formed, as you know, there were eminent men of God in it, like Dr. Chalmers, Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Duncan, and others with whom you are familiar. But it is one of the ironies of Church History that in this land of ours, in Scotland, where we enjoyed so much of the light of the Reformation and enjoyed so much of the light of the gospel, that after 1843 there came into the Free Church ministers who were not men of God, who did not love the Confession of Faith and

who wished to change it. There is one point I would like to make clear about this. This movement in Scotland was not confined to Scotland. Some people like to give the impression, you know, about the Free Presbyterian Church, that it is some little offshoot that is of no importance. It is not mentioned in modern history book nowadays. The movement towards weakening the Westminster Confession of Faith, and weakening the testimony of Jesus in the Westminster Confession of Faith, was a world-wide movement. There was in the Presbyterian Church in England at that very time in that century a movement to consider their relationship to the Confession of Faith. In Australia they had a Declaratory Act, in New Zealand the Presbyterian Church had a Declaratory Act, and in the U.S.A. after the turn of the century, the Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A. had a Declaratory Act too. This movement leading up to the Declaratory Act of 1892 was a world-wide movement. Rather than change the Westminster Confession of Faith, these Churches all adopted the same device, to publish an Act Declaratory, an Act that declared and set forth the Church's views of certain sections of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

That Act Declaratory, or Declaratory Act, was of this nature—the explanation it gave of the Church's view of the Westminster Confession of Faith, was not the view of the men who wrote the Confession. It was, in other words, a new creed. Now when the Free Church in 1892 passed the Declaratory Act into a binding law and constitution in that Church, it ceased from that moment to be the Church of Scotland Free. It became the Church of Scotland Free plus the Declaratory Act. It became the Church of Scotland Free, or Free Church of Scotland, with a changed creed, and therefore it ceased to be the Free Church of Scotland of 1843. In other words, it ceased to pass on to the “generations yet to come” the testimony of Jesus, and of Paul, His prisoner, and the testimony of the Reformers in this land of ours, and the Westminster Confession of Faith with its body of doctrine. It ceased to do that in 1892. Because there was a party in the Free Church called the Constitutionalist Party, who were fighting, according to what they said themselves, for the Constitution, and because they said that they were going to try to get the Declaratory Act of 1892 repealed in 1893, those who were against the Declaratory Act waited till 1893 to see what the result would be.

The late Rev. Finlay Macleod, Dornoch, told me on one occasion that Rev. Neil Cameron said to him that he had felt great darkness in his mind when he was under conviction of sin, that he had felt great darkness in his mind with regard to many temptations, but that he never felt such darkness in his mind as

he felt between May 1892 and May 1893. And why? Because Christ did not have a Church in Scotland at that time, during that year. The Free Church was gone. It had passed the Declaratory Act. Its testimony was now the testimony of the Declaratory Act, not the testimony of the Lord, and not the testimony of the Reformers. It was a new testimony altogether. Between May 1892 and May 1893, Mr Cameron felt to be the darkest year in the history of his life. Here was a man who knew and understood what the testimony of the Church of God was. He did not just have a sentimental attachment to it. He felt it in his own soul. Until 1893, when Rev. D. MacFarlane put down his Protest and separated from the Declaratory Act Church to retain the Church that had been forsaken in 1892, there was no relief for Mr Cameron's mind, and that was true of Godly men and women throughout the length and breadth of this land. Church historians may ignore them, but the God of Heaven did not ignore them, neither will He forsake those who are of the same mind as they were. When Mr MacFarlane, in 1893, came forward and made his Protest, he meant by this, a Protest on behalf of a testimony. Mr MacFarlane's Protest in the General Assembly of 1893 in the Declaratory Act Free Church was just this: it was a stand on behalf of the testimony of the Reformed Church of Scotland and of the Free Church of 1843. It was on behalf of "the testimony of our Lord," of Paul, of Isaiah, and Jeremiah, as surely as anything else that was ever done in this world. That Protest was on behalf of testimony, that Protest of Mr MacFarlane's, conserved for this land and conserved for you and for me in the Free Presbyterian Church, "the testimony of our Lord" and "of me His prisoner," the testimony of the Reformers, and the testimony of the leaders of the Disruption.

When in 1893 you look for the Church of Scotland Reformed, you go to the Established Church and you will not find it there, you go to the then Free Church and you will not find it there as they have the Declaratory Act. You come to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and that is where you would find it then, and that is where you will find it today, let people say what they like, inside, or outside the Church. That testimony was conserved, and let me make this quite plain, that when Mr MacFarlane left, and Mr MacDonald went with him together with Mr Cameron and Mr Sinclair and the other Godly men and Godly women, they left to set up and to retain the Church of Scotland Free, the principles of the Reformed Church of Scotland and "the testimony of our Lord" and "of me His prisoner," as Paul says here. When we left the Declaratory Act Free Church, we left every one of them behind, not only Dr. Rainy and his party, but the

Constitutionalist party as well. Although certain of the Constitutionalist party left in 1900 to form what they now call the Free Church, we left them behind in 1893, and we never saw any reason to come any nearer since that date. Let people remember this in connection with the Free Church. When the leaders of the present Free Church decided to remain and not join with the United Free Church, they maintained that they had always held to the constitution, and that constitutes a historical deadlock between us and the present Free Church. There is no use saying, "Oh, we both sing psalms, and we both do this and that and the next thing." There are far more important principles involved than mere outward signs—far more. Furthermore, the spirit of the testimony of the Church must be a spirit of cleaving to "the testimony of our Lord" and "of me His prisoner," as Paul says here. That is what we seek to do, and that is what is to be passed down through the generations.

Now I should like to mention this. A great deal is said about us wanting to have a pure Church as though we meant by this a Church pure in membership consisting of the regenerate only. That is not a principle of Presbyterianism. It arises from a complete misunderstanding of what we mean when we are talking about a pure Church. When we are talking about a pure Church, we are not talking about the membership of the Church. We are talking about the doctrine of the Church, about the worship of the Church, and about the government of the Church. We say that they should be pure, we say that they should be founded upon the Word of God, and we say that unless they are founded upon the Word of God, then you do not have what you can even call a Church that is consistent with the Word of God in doctrine, worship and practice. Certainly, if the doctrine is pure, and the worship is pure, and the practice is pure, we expect that the standard of communicants among Free Presbyterians will be commensurate with the privileges that they enjoy. People should not be living below their privileges in their lives, and in their walk, and in their conversation. They should not be doing so. We know very well, for Christ has told us, that there are wheat and tares in the Church. The Gospel net brings in not only good fish but bad fish, and it is for every man and woman in the Church who is professing grace to make sure that they themselves are on the right foundation. As long as their walk and life and conversation are consistent, then we are not to pull up people, although we would think that they were tares. You see the disciples knew that there were tares, but as long as their walk and life and conversation were consistent, then there was to be no pulling up of tares, just because of the personal opinion of

certain of His servants. They were to be left there until the harvest, and Christ will deal with them then. But do not let us confuse the issue. We do hold to the purity of the Church with regard to its doctrine, its worship, and its practice. We hold to that with all our heart and mind.

That brings me to notice this, the movements that have taken place outside our Church. For instance, in the Church of Scotland, which interests us because it professes to be the national Church here as you know, the Declaratory Act led to breaches being made in doctrine, and you cannot go into a Church of Scotland now and be sure that you will hear the Gospel at all. You will have difficulty in finding a place where you will hear the glorious Gospel of Christ, as far as the Church of Scotland is concerned. That doctrinal decline led to a decline with regard to love of Presbyterianism, and some in the Church of Scotland, as you know, are trying to do their best to get bishops into the Church. Why? They want bishops to effect union with the Scottish Episcopal Church. Why anyone wants to join with that Church, of course, baffles me. It never had a revival in all its days. Then through that union they will join the Church of England, and of course the Church of England is going to join with the Church of Rome. That is plain. Anybody can see that. But it is essential that Presbyterianism goes out, and that is why there have been so many attacks recently on Presbyterianism. Professor Reid of Aberdeen University says this, that no Presbyterian now holds to the divine right of presbytery. That is not true. We hold to it. He may not, but we do. Anyone who reads Witherow's "Apostolic Church" knows how these principles are founded upon the Word of God. But the whole idea is to move away from true Presbyterianism in the Church of Scotland in order to have bishops, then join the Church of England, and then join the Church of Rome. You see we are going right back into the Dark Ages. In sub-apostolic times there was a doctrinal decline, the abolishment of presbytery, the raising up of bishops, and then the Pope, "the son of perdition" and the "antichrist" appeared. At the Reformation he was given a grievous wound, and he has lain under that grievous wound until now; and now those Godless, graceless, Christless men who are in the ministry of the Church of Scotland and the Church of England are wanting the Churches back under the Pope, and they are determined to go right back into the Dark Ages.

Now, we read here, and I must come to a conclusion, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." Why should we be ashamed of it? Ashamed of the inspired and infallible Word of God; ashamed of the glorious Son of the Everlasting

Father, the Saviour Who is able to save to the very uttermost all "that come unto God by Him;" ashamed of the work of the Holy Spirit Who will make the souls of God's people shine in everlasting glory with the image of Christ; ashamed of the preaching of the everlasting Gospel, the true preaching of it, that warns sinners and deals with their understandings, deals with their consciences and deals with their souls; ashamed of the proper worship of God enjoyed by His people in which they have tasted and seen that God is good! Surely we should not be ashamed of it, we ought to be prepared to endure "the afflictions of the gospel." Afflictions there are, and afflictions there will be; and we can be quite assured of this, that once these movements for unity get under way we are next to be dealt with. There are no approaches made to us with regard to union; we are to be dispensed with. Let there be no doubt whatever about that. Therefore it is essential for young men and young women to take an interest in the position and standing of their Church; and I want to say this with regard to this particular point, that never, not in memory, and I do not think in the memory of any living person, has there been so many young men and young women professing Christ as at the present time in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It is a welcome sign, and some of us welcome it very much indeed. But what we are anxious about is, that these young people should not just be coming and going to and from Church, nor that they should just be living according to the Word of God in their walk and life and conversation, but it is absolutely necessary for them that they be well-instructed, that they have the "sound mind," well-instructed in the Word of God, well-instructed in the principles of the Free Presbyterian Church, in order to defend these principles. There is no doubt that they, and not the older people, will bear the brunt of doing this, although I would like, speaking for myself, to be with them and to share with them their difficulties when the time comes.

In the meantime, you young men and young women must be solidly informed and solidly grounded in the principles for which we stand. Do not be taken aside by gossips and ignorant people: pay no attention to such. You stick to the principles of the Church, and not to sentiment. The Free Presbyterian Church will have enough to meet with in enduring afflictions for its testimony, and it requires that all young men and young women, especially those who have grace, be not content merely with reading books on devotion, merely with coming and going to the means of grace, merely with enjoying fellowship with one another (we do not grudge that to them at all), but they must be sound and well-grounded in the principles on which we stand as a Church,

or else they will be swept away when the time of trial comes. That is what we have here. "According to the power of God." This is what is going to secure the soul. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear." Others may fear. Others may be afraid, and when the time of trial comes, perhaps some of the people who have most to say now will be found to be lacking in the necessary courage and discernment and standing when the time comes. "For God," says the Apostle, "hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power," strength, "and of love," love to Christ, love to His cause, love to His people, love to souls, "and of a sound mind"—well-informed, well-instructed, well-grounded, enlightened by the Spirit of Love, so that the sinner understands and receives "with meekness the engrafted Word which is able to save" his soul.

It was the view of many who came out at its beginning, that the Free Presbyterian Church would continue to stand, and it will do so, as long as it retains its principles, and as long as it retains in its midst men and women, ministers and elders, deacons and communicants, who not only understand the power of God in their spiritual experience bringing them from "darkness into His marvellous light," and understand the principles for which we stand, but who love them, and who embrace them, and who are prepared to deny themselves, and to suffer if need be, in connection with them. This is what we should be looking for. While there may be sufferings and there may be trials, let us remember that the Lord is able to turn "the shadow of death" into the light of morning. He is able to do that and He is able to give life to our congregations and able to give a reviving "in the midst of the years," in wrath to remember mercy. This is what we should be praying for, and this is what we should be seeking, and we believe that God's people are doing that, who are truly God's people, and who truly love the Free Presbyterian Church and its testimony, because they believe it is the testimony of Jesus, and of Paul, and of the rest of the people of God. This is what they are concerned with, seeking the welfare of Zion. "Let them that love thee . . . have prosperity." They that love the prosperity of Zion the Lord will bless them, and there is a union to one another, a union at the throne of grace, pleading for the coming of the Holy Spirit to awaken the dead and revive the living. That will secure to the Free Presbyterian Church an increase in numbers, and an increase in solid, well-informed stable Christians, whose walk and conversation, both in their private lives and in their outward lives, is in accordance with the Word of God, and evidencing that Christ is precious to them, and that the language of their soul is:—

*" Whom have I in the heavens high
But Thee, O Lord, alone ?
And in the earth whom I desire
Besides Thee there is none."*¹

May He bless His word.

NOTES OF A SERMON

Preached in Halkirk by Rev. Wm. Grant, August, 1963

Taken down by a hearer

Text " I am the way, the truth and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me." John, chap. 14, v. 6.

We are all on a journey travelling each one to an eternal destination, in bliss or woe. Christ begins this chapter with words of comfort to his disciples, and to believers to the end of time, and for all such there is a place in the Father's House. He was with them in His humiliation, but now He was going on to accomplish the work of redemption. He would come again by the messenger of death to take them to Heaven. Preparation must begin here in this world by regeneration—being born again. We read of Thomas saying—" We know not wither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" Then Jesus said " I am the way, the truth and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Firstly " I am the way." Who is this " I am "—the great " I am " of eternity? Here was God, infinitely great and glorious, in human nature. Here was Christ the gift of God—" God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." Here is the glorious " I am," veiling the glory that was His. He became man and went through the valley of humiliation to Gethsemane's garden to Calvary cross. He left the grave empty and came again the risen Redeemer. There is no other way of access to God. The cry of the publican was " God be merciful to me a sinner." Yes, this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. This is the way to holiness, for His blood cleanseth from all sin. So we are closed in to God in Christ in believing in Him.

The Mediatorship of Christ is shown here. Romanists think the virgin Mary can intercede, but there is no way of access to God by saints or penances or any such means.

The fall broke communion with God. That communion cannot be restored but by this glorious way. Here is the way—the Eternal Word became man to bridge the gulf. He leads to all

1. Metrical Psalm 73, v. 25.

the blessings of grace on earth and to all the glories of Heaven. There is reality here. This is but an empty life here without the one thing needful whatever a person may possess of wealth or earthly honours. One thing is needful, but sin has made a fool of man. Man in his folly does not rise above the world. But there is a reality here in title deeds to the mansions not made with hands. Here is the new and living way of access to God. Like Jacob's ladder this is the way of ascension to Heaven. This is the way to pardon. All the prophets witnessed to Him. This is the way to forgiveness of sin—"Through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Being justified by faith we have peace with God." We may be at peace with ourselves, asleep in indifference, but that peace is disturbed when the Holy Spirit comes to convince us of sin. It is then there is a cry—the cry of the publican—not of the self-righteous pharisee. By the finished work of Calvary, there is access to God. So we have the broad way and the narrow way before us. We are travelling on to a destination. Whose art thou?" Where there is a good hope through grace, Christ is that hope. Here is the way to peace with God and forgiveness of sin.

Not only is Christ the way, but He is the truth. He was the substance and realisation of all the prophetic shadows of the Old Testament Dispensation. He is said to be the true bread, the true tabernacle. What went before was just the shadow, now He is the substance—the Truth. Augustine said "I am the way leading to truth, I am truth promoting life, I am the life which I gave." Jesus said to weeping Martha "I am the Resurrection and the life." He is the spiritual life of believers. So they are said to be quickened by Him-born again. There is now an activity at war with what is sin. Have we an activity that brings us to God in prayer, or are we moving on in this world as if those things did not matter? It is all there—God in CHRIST REVEALING Himself to lost human beings—begetting in them a hope not to be put to shame.

Every creature has a hope of some kind—what is it? One poor atheist had to say "My hope is that the Bible is not true." That was his hope and his fear. But it is with truth we have to do. We are dealing with realities—we are going on to the Judgment seat. We need the Glorious One, the Fountain of Truth, the Revealer of Truth. Not only that He has truth, but He is Truth.

The Life. He is the life of all. Fearfully and wonderfully He has created us all. We are in a wonderful world created by Him. What is man?

Man was created in the image of his Creator. Man lost that image, but before us in the glorious gospel is the way of

restoration. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon."

Man is an enemy to himself. He needs to be delivered and liberated. The Blessed One says "I am the way, the truth and the life." We are journeying on to an end, and if we do not know Christ we will go to a lost eternity. He is the only way. This is the King's highway, and by this new and living way may each of us be journeying on. He has gone to prepare a place for His people. They go to an abode of love. It is well with the righteous, but it is ill with the wicked. An end without a hope is an end to be dreaded—a sinner dying under condemnation—destitute of the one thing needful, of the good part that cannot be taken away. We may plead human merit, no, "Not by works, but by the washing of regeneration." Salvation is the gift of God and is all of God's free grace. "It is a faithful saying and worthy of all acception that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

There is a place in the Father's house for every sinner saved. What a wonderful love the love of God is—infinite love, boundless love. "If any man love not, he knoweth not God," "for God is love"—infinite love, which provided a home of love for a loveless people and made a way for love to flow into loveless hearts. "I am the way." May we be brought to ask in faith for whatsoever is in accordance with His will. We are invited to be at the footstool of Christ asking for the blessings we need and deliverance from the curse. This is the way to God and His blessings. "Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" the Apostle Paul said. May you be brought to realise that salvation is all of grace, and ask in the Name of Christ for salvation that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Those whom He pardons find grace in every time of need.

We have here good tidings of a way of salvation—the way to the Father's house. Life and death are set before us in the Word—the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, where the broad way and the narrow way are clearly shown. Human beings will make a religion pleasing to man's wisdom, but where true saving knowledge is there is a closing in to the Lord. "Shew me thy ways, O Lord" the psalmist prayed. May we have this activity in prayer, for the Blessed One says "Look unto Me and be ye saved." We must be at his footstool in emptiness, and be stirred up to bless and magnify His Holy Name, thinking of the work and wonders He hath done.

May God give us grace to value time and to redeem it. Here

we have no abiding place—soon we shall be gone to our eternal destination. May we be enabled to say in truth with the Psalmist

“Thou, with thy counsel, while I live,
wilt me conduct and guide;
And to thy glory afterward
receive me to abide.”

FREE CHURCH CRITICISM

By Rev. A. F. MacKay, M.A., Inverness

The lecture in the March issue of the Free Presbyterian Magazine on the Lord's Care of His Church has drawn from the pen of Rev. H. Cameron, the Free Church minister of Wick, a highly critical letter which appeared in the Free Church Record for July. In particular, the letter deals with the case involving Rev. MacKinnon, at the time Free Church minister at Strathpeffer, which is referred to in the lecture, and attempts to vindicate the Free Church courts in their handling of this case. In doing so, the letter sets out to explain and in fact to justify Rev. MacKinnon and his attitude to the Sabbath, and virtually amounts to an unreserved defence of Rev. MacKinnon. The letter itself has little to contribute to this subject, discussed in the lecture, which is deserving of notice, but as repeated and extremely pointed references are made to myself, a few remarks on what the letter has to say, may not be out of place.

The main drift of the writer's arguments proceeds from a deep distrust of the public reports of the case as these were given in the newspapers. The writer admits his ignorance of the facts of the case; “What the true facts were in detail I certainly cannot profess to be sure from anything I have read or listened to. I am compelled to reserve judgment;” he must therefore, he says, rely upon “a variety of second hand reports.” Others cannot be expected to fare any better. Like himself, I too am supposed to admit that I have no clear information either, but must have had access to some “private sources.” In the writer's view, only by attending meetings of Church courts which had this case before them, can anyone hope to obtain accurate, first-hand information, and the ridiculous conclusion is seriously advanced that before anyone can even offer an opinion on the case, he must have attended the meetings and followed in person the proceedings of the Church courts, so as to obtain completely reliable information. All this is a very convenient way to stifle criticism of what goes on in Free Church Courts. Those who have public work to do, have neither the time nor the inclination to ascertain what is happening in other parts of the country by attending personally

public meetings to obtain accurate first-hand information for themselves. In the Rev. MacKinnon's case, it would not have done much good anyway, as the important meeting of the Synod of Moray and Ross, at which the final decision was arrived at, disposing of the MacKinnon case, was held in private. Contrary to the beliefs of the writer, however, most people rely for their information on matters of public interest upon newspaper reports, and apart from those national newspapers which go in for sensationalism and have therefore to be treated with caution, usually reports, particularly in our local newspapers, are for the most part quite reliable. If Free Church affairs get a bad press and reports of her proceedings are as misleading as the writer thinks, two courses are open for them to take, either make immediate and official corrections of inaccuracies as they occur, or better still, issue in advance an authoritative, clear statement to the press. Was this done in the Rev. MacKinnon case? If so, how can the Wick minister profess such ignorance of what goes on in his own church? If this was not done, was there not here a break-down in public relations between the Free Church Courts and the Press? It seems a strange procedure for a church to allow the press a free hand to publish their own accounts of important church business without making every effort to ensure accuracy, and then complain, as the writer does throughout his letter, that the newspapers are withholding news or publishing inaccurate reports. I suspect, however, that the writer has put forward this weak argument so as to discredit and finally silence all criticism of Free Church affairs. I do not think that impartial readers will be put off with such specious arguments, but will accept press reports of this case as substantially correct, and as providing adequate material to form a clear idea of what actually took place.

Objection is also made to the use of the term "sophistical explanation," as applied to Rev. MacKinnon's defence before the Presbytery and Synod, when challenged to state his views on the Sabbath desecration on the Cairngorms. When the court was discussing the deplorable conduct of the nation's youth, who flocked in their thousands to the Cairngorms on the Lord's Day for a day's skiing in open defiance of the Fourth Commandment, Rev. MacKinnon intervened with remarks to the effect that patience and understanding should be the proper attitude of the court to these young people, who were ignorant of the gravity of the sin of Sabbath desecration, though not of the more obvious sin of murder; they needed instruction, and people should not condemn them as they might do if it were the sin of murder, and Rev. MacKinnon added, 'neither do I.' This is a familiar

shift, adopted by worldly men when pressed to explain their conduct, to confuse the issue by introducing a sin of greater gravity, so as to detract from the seriousness of their own sins. This is a piece of sheer sophistry, and Rev. MacKinnon made use of it, and for the Wick minister to claim that in the opinion of competent people, he defended himself "with integrity" is no more than special pleading in favour of a minister of his own church. The conduct of this minister, I consider, highly censurable, for the purpose of his remarks was deliberately to divert the attention of the court from their clear duty of condemning a particularly flagrant instance of defiant and open, public breach of the Sabbath Law by introducing something else which was quite irrelevant.

Again, exception is taken to the enquiry as to where exactly the young ministers of the present Free Church really stand in relation to the testimony and well defined standards of their own church. If one of their number could so easily, because of some dispute in his Presbytery, have thrown overboard his Free Church connection and passed over to the National Church of Scotland, which today is regarded as the half-way house to Rome, the question is a reasonable one to ask. This young minister is a son of the Free Church Manse, and received his full training for the ministry in the Free Church Divinity Hall, which was directed to qualify him for service in his own church, whose position in doctrine, government and worship he had solemnly and publicly affirmed as defining exactly his own position, when less than 5 years ago at his induction to the Strathpeffer congregation he came under solemn ordination vows. Does this event not disturb the writer, who asks so glibly for evidence of other Free Church ministers who may be preparing to follow his example? This is not "a rhetorical question," but should be regarded as of the utmost gravity. It is sad also to see the question of discipline, as administered today in the Free Church, dismissed in the same indifferent, unquestioning fashion. If no significance can be seen in the public acclaim, the Free Church minister received from the Strathpeffer public, when he left for the Shetlands, recent events in the same Presbytery of Moray and Ross should awaken searching reflections in himself and his brethren. If the civil court passed a just sentence upon a ministerial member of that Presbytery in a case of serious misconduct, and if the same case when it came up before his own Presbytery was dismissed with a mere admonition, is it not obvious that the civil court has shown more regard for the authority of civil law which it is its duty to administer than was shown by a Free Church court for its own laws. If the Wick minister cares to consult his copy of

Moncreiff, he will come across cases of deposition from the ministry for the self same sin which was dealt with so leniently by this Presbytery. In this respect, at least, the claims made so often by Free Church controversialists that the present Free Church is the direct descendant as well as the true representative of the Disruption Free Church are hard to believe.

After examining the previous part of the letter, the friendly expressions in last part of the letter towards the Free Presbyterian Church, where the writer says he has many friends, are of little real value and inspire little confidence. We should help forward, he says, "good relations between the Free and Free Presbyterian Church," "both of them recognizable children of the Disruption," we should "advance the interests of kinship." The Free Presbyterian Church's official attitude to other religious bodies on the question of union, has not changed, for we are not religious isolationists, as was stated at the Synod in 1931: "Should a Church appear in Scotland holding our principles, we would join them whatever name they bore, and would receive such a church with open arms. The Free Church is not such a church"—Free Presbyterian Magazine, Vol. 36, page 91. Some years ago, I remember overtures for union containing expressions of friendship, were made by the Free Church Assembly's Union Committee to the Free Presbyterian Church. They were met courteously by the Synod with a Statement of Differences which divided the Free Church from ourselves, a Statement which had to no effect been repeatedly brought to the attention of the Free Church authorities in previous years. We were then told: "The Free Presbyterian Church has neither a past to refer to nor a future to look to." More recent reactions from Free Church leaders were expressed in even more extreme language: "Judicial blindness and hardness of heart which are the precursors of destruction, that we agree with many who regard the Free Presbyterian body as passing out of existence in the Nemesis of fearful retribution"; "spurious as have been its official pretensions and misguided its leadership."

These are not the words of a young, uninfluential minister of the Free Church, but were spoken by senior ministers occupying the office of Professors on the College staff. What does the young minister of Wick think of these words? He professes that his motive in taking up his pen, as expressed in the opening paragraph of his letter, is "to preserve and promote our own or our neighbour's good name." In the furtherance of this worthy ideal, is he prepared to petition the Free Church General Assembly and ask that these unbecoming expressions be repudiated? Or is his enthusiasm for the laudable design of his letter, as is so

often the case with many of his co-religionists of the Free Church, quite proper to employ in defence of the good name of the Free Church, but of little interest when such a body as the Free Presbyterian Church is maligned?

A greater and more fundamental question, however, than even the relations of the respective denominations of the Free and Free Presbyterian Churches is involved here—the position of the Sabbath in our nation today. The Sabbath has been attacked by legislation passed by Parliament and betrayed by professed ministers of Christ and by the National Church as well as by the widespread apathy of the people, and as a result the Sabbath has fallen from the once honoured place it had in this nation and our people deprived of the blessings which the Lord has promised would accompany a carefully observed Sabbath. The letter has done nothing to help the Sabbath. On the contrary, the unwise advocacy by the writer of this letter of the case of a minister, who disclosed in the courts of the Free Church, while he was still a minister of that Church, that his sympathies lay, not in assisting his brethren to defend the Sabbath but with the profane Sabbath breakers, and since then, revealed his contempt for Free Church principles and doctrines by going over to the Church of Scotland, will do little to help Rev. MacKinnon, but has done, I believe, great disservice to the Cause of the Sabbath."

LITERARY NOTICES

The Glorious Body of Christ. By R. B. Kuiper; price 21s. The Banner of Truth-Trust.

This book, newly published in this country is what its sub-title says, "A Scriptural appreciation of the one holy Church." The most of the book appeared as a series of articles in the **Presbyterian Guardian** under the title, "The glory of the Christian Church," and is now published in its present form with many alterations and additions. In the book, the author emphatically sets forth the view that the Church is where the truth is. "Sound doctrine," he says, "always has been, is today, and ever will be the foremost mark of the true Church." This turns aside the false and arrogant claim of the Church of Rome to be the only true church, out of which there is no salvation, and shows the fallacy under-lying the claims of those so-called Protestants who are trying to unite denominations who are well advanced on the down-grade of heretical doctrines and infidelity, to say nothing of laxity of discipline and a debased form of worship. He clearly points out that the Church is the product of the Truth, being brought into existence by the revelation of truth; that it is the conveyor and

custodian of the truth and has the God-assigned task of dispensing the means of grace, that is, the Word and Sacraments. It is in His Church that God dwells on earth, not merely in a building made with hands, but wherever His people gather. Though it is necessary and convenient to erect places of worship, yet "God dwells among His people in just as real a sense when they gather for worship in a home or under the dome of heaven. The Church in which God dwells is the communion of believers. That is His sanctuary." He makes it clear that **the glorious body of Christ** is not confined to any denomination, but is made up of all true believers of whatever nation or tribe or denomination, for they are all "one in Christ Jesus." The book is written in a lucid style, in plain English, and therefore those whose attainments are of a very mediocre order can profit by it as well as those whose acquirements are more extensive. In a day when so much is written and spoken about "restoring the face of the Church of Christ" by men who are bent on shaping the Church, not according to the Word of God, but according to their own views of church union, it should be widely read. It should also have a place in the studies and homes of ministers, students, and office-bearers of the church and should be diligently studied by them.

Perhaps, in so excellent a book, one may feel reluctant to venture a criticism. On page 64 the author is definitely in favour of the separation of church and state, and points out the Church of England as an outstanding example of the baneful effects of an Established Church. It may be pointed out that the Church of England is Erastian with the State in control. The Establishment principle, as understood in Scotland, was different. Our forefathers maintained that it was the duty of the State to support religion, but that the State had no warrant to encroach on what was purely the province of the Church. The refusal of the State to concede this occasioned the Ten Years Conflict and the Disruption of 1843.

Dr Kuiper was an eminent scholar and theologian who had a distinguished career in the pastoral and teaching ministry. Among other offices which he held were President of Calvin College and Professor of Practical Theology at Westminster Theological Seminary. He died in 1966.—John Colquhoun.

Capital Punishment—A Christian Duty

This is a 4 page pamphlet published by Westminster Standard Publication, 183 Rutene Road, Gisborne, New Zealand. Price 3d per copy and to be had from 4 Millburn Road, Inverness. It consists of quotations from several writers such as Dr Hugh

Martin, D.D., and Dr Charles Hodge, D.D., and a statement by the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland in May, 1962. As this question of Capital Punishment and its restoration in Great Britain may arise again soon, this pamphlet gives sound Scriptural teaching on this vital matter.

A Sermon, or "His Name shall be called Jesus," etc., by Rev. John Kennedy, D.D., of Dingwall. This sermon appears in the volume of Dr. Kennedy's sermons, a volume very scarce and difficult to obtain. One of the original printed copies of this sermon has been sent to printers by a friend and attractively produced with a cover. It is now available at The Religious Book Room, Dingwall, Ross-shire: copy 9d, 1/- post free: and 9/- per dozen post free. This sermon reveals Dr. Kennedy in a more simple strain, yet it is full of the glad tidings of the Gospel of Jesus. He deals with the name "Jesus" and the reason assigned for this Name.

POSADH AN ANAMA RI CRIOSD

Leis an Urr. Eideard Pearce (A.D.1672)

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d. 186)

Caib. V. *Anns am bheil againn cùinntas air na nithean, ris am bheil mi'g ràdh, na gnìomharan gràis is faisg a tha'n t-Athair agus Iosa Criosd leis an Spiorad a cur a mach annain agus oirne, air son a bhi toirt mu'n cuairt a phòsaidh eadar Criosd agus sinne.*

Cha d'rinn gràs Dhé fathasd obair uile; ni-h-eadh, tha gnìomharan eile a tha e deanamh, agus a dh'fheumas e chur a mach, ma bhitheas gu bràth am pòsadh air a dheanamh suas eadar Criosd agus sinne; agus tha mi'g ràdh so an fheadhan is faisge, do bhrìgh gu'm bheil iad air an oibreachadh annainn agus oirne, agus a tha nì's dluithe a treorachadh a dh'ionnsuidh a bhi ceangal snaim-pòsaidh eadar Criosd agus an t-anam. Agus mar anns a cheud fheadhan tha'n t-Athair agus Iosa Criosd ag oibreachadh nì's motha bh'uatha agus leo Fein, mar sin anns an fheadhan so tha buaidh an Spioraid Bheannaichte a tighinn a stigh, agus tha ghràs dha nochdadh fein, agus Iadsan le oibreachadh-san. Agus is fìrinn e nach eil, thuige so, am pòsadh ach air a leth-dheanamh. Ach a nis tha Dia a tighinn, agus le a Spiorad ag oibreachadh anns an anam agus air an anam, tha E dha ghiulain air adhart agus dha chriochnachadh: nì a tha E deanamh leis na còig gnìomharan gràis so.

I. Tha'n t-anam, le Spiorad Dhé, air fhuasgladh bho'n t-seann fhear-pòsda, an lagh, agus le sin air a dheanamh freagarach agus

air ullachadh gu bhi air a phòsadh ri Criosd. Gu nàdurra tha sinn pòsda ri fear eile, eadhon ris an lagh; agus feumaidh sinn a bhi air ar fuasgladh, ar neo cha'n urrain sinn gu bràth a bhi air ar pòsadh ri Criosd. An uibhir so tha'n t-Abstol gu soilleir a cumail a mach; "Air an aobhar sin, mo bhraithrean, tha sibhse mar an ceudna marbh do'n lagh tre chorp Chrìosd; ionnus gu'm biodh sibh pòsda ri fear eile, eadhon ris-san a thogadh o na mairbh, chum gu'n tugadh-mid toradh a mach do Dhia." Ròm. vii: 4. Gabh beachd air, "pòsda ri fear eile," 'S e'n lagh, uime sin, am fear ris an robh iad pòsda, agus feumaidh iad a bhi marbh dhà, agus dealaichte ris, ma bhios iad gu bràth air am pòsadh ri Iosa Criosd. Amhairc, tha e'g ràdh (oir is e a reusanachadh fein agus a shamhladh ann an rann 2, 3) mar nach urrain boireanach dà fhear a bhi aice aig an aon àm; ach feumaidh am fear a tha aice nis a bhi marbh ma's urrain i bhi pòsda ri neach eile: mar sin cha'n urrain anam a bhi pòsda ris an dà fhear so còmhla, an lagh agus Criosd, ach feumaidh e bhi marbh dha'n aon, na bhi dealaichte ris, ma's urrain e bhi pòsda ris an aon eile. Thugaibh fa'n ear, "Tha sibh marbh do'n lagh": Ciod e bhi marbh do'n lagh, na dealaichte ris an lagh? 'S e th'ann a bhi marbh do'n lagh ach gu'n dòchas air bith, na sùil ri beatha agus fireantachd leis an lagh. Is e th'ann a bhi mothachail nach urrain an lagh ar saoradh; gidheadh, tha tuilleadh 'us sin ann. 'S e th'ann a bhi marbh do'n lagh ach a bhi dha'r faicinn fein marbh leis an lagh; is e th'ann a bhi dha'r faicinn fein cailte agus air ar dìteadh leis an lagh, air son peacaidh mar a tha e'n a bhriseadh air an lagh; agus mar sin feumaidh sinn uile a bhi marbh do'n lagh, na dealaichte ris an lagh, ar neo cha'n urrain sinn a bhi pòsda ri Criosd. Nis, 's e so a tha Spiorad Dhé a deanamh le obair lagha air a choguis. Tha e dealachadh an anama bho'n an lagh leis an lagh, 's e sin, tha E toirt dhachaidh an lagha a dh'ionnsuidh na coguis. Dh'aithnich an t-Abstol so 'n a anam fein, "Bha mise tre'n lagh marbh do'n lagh, chum gu'm bithinn beo do Dhia." Gal. ii: 19. Mar sin a ris, "Oir bha mise beo as eugmhais an lagha uair-eigin; ach air teachd do'n aithne dh-'ath-bheothaich am peacadh, agus thuair mise bàs." Ròm. vii: 9. Bha mise beo uair-eigin as eugmhais an lagha, 's e sin, smuaintich mi mi fein a bhi beo, shaoil mi mo staid a bhi maith agus sona; ach bha so as eugmhais an lagha, 's e sin, mu'n do dhearbha Spiorad Dhé le frithealadh an lagha orm mo pheacadh agus mo thruaigh. Uime sin tha e leantuinn, "Ach air teachd do'n aithne, dh-'ath-bheothaich am peacadh, agus thuair mise bàs." 'S e sin, 'n uair a thàinig an lagh 'n a chùmhachd dearbhaidh tre'n an Spiorad air m'anam, an sin chunnaic mi mo staid pheacach, mharbh, agus thruaigh. Mar so bha esan e fein air

a dhealachadh ris an lagh chùm gu'm biodh e air a phòsadh ri Criosd. 'S e so suim an nì; tha Spiorad Dhé a tighinn agus a nochdadh do'n anam teanndachd agus naomhachd, fìor-ghloine, agus spioradalachd an lagha, agus dhà dheanamh mothachail air meudachd an dleasdanaìs a thà e'g iarraidh; cho eucomasach 's a tha e dhàsan a ghleidheadh, agus cia liutha dòigh 's a bhris se e; tha e maille ri so, a toirt dhà bhi faicinn uamhas a mhallachd agus an dìteadh sin fodh'n do leag se e gu ceart air son a bhriseadh air; agus mar so tha e air a dhealachadh ris an lagh. Agus is e so an t-aon nì ris an Spiorad a bhi dearbhadh oirne ar peacadh, agus ar suidheachadh caillte agus truagh, air son an aobhair sin, nì, mar a tha fios agaibh, is e a cheud obair a chùm creidimh, agus mar sin a chùm ar pòsadh ri Criosd. Eoin xvi: 9. Mar so le Spiorad Dhé tha'n t-anam air fhuasgladh bho'n lagh, tha e air a thoirt air falbh bho dhùil ri beatha agus sonas leis a sin, agus tha e air a thoirt gu bhi faicinn a pheacaidh fein, agus mar sin fheum neo-chriochnach air Criosd, leis am bheil e air a dheanamh freagarach air son an Fhir-phòsda eile a thà nì's fearr.

II. Air do'n anam a bhi air a dhealachadh ris an lagh, agus mar sin air a dheanamh freagarach agus air ullachadh air son Chrìosd, an sin tha Spiorad Dhé a foillseachadh agus a tairgse an Tighearna Iosa Criosd dhà ann an gealladh an t-soisgeil, mar am Fear-pòsda a tha nì's fearr. A nis tha'n Spiorad beannaichte a tighinn, agus a deanamh mar a rinn seirbhiseach Abrahaim, a bha air a chur gu bean fhaotainn do Isaac; dh'innis e do Rebecca mòrachd a mhaighsteir, mu a threudan agus a spreidh, airgiod agus òr, òglaich agus a bhan-òglaich, agus mar ceudna gu'n d'thug e iad uile do Isaac. Gen. xxiv: 35, 36. Mar sin tha nis Spiorad Dhé a cur fodh chomhair an anama saoihbreas agus mòrachd, maise agus oirdheirceas an Tighearna Iosa Criosd; Tha E'g innse dhoibh cìod e'n Cuspair làn, cìod e'n Aon mhìlis, agus shaoibhir, agus mhacanta a th'ann, agus maille ri so, tha E dhà thairgse dha'n cridheachan. Tha E foillseachadh agus dha thairgse dha'n anam mar neach a tha lànachd 'n a còmhnuidh Ann, uile lànachd beatha agus sìth, fìreantachd agus slàinte, mar neach a th'anns gach dòigh cumhachdach gu bhi tearnadh a dh'ionnsuidh a cheum is fhaide a mach, nì ris am bheil Criosd ag ràdh, bhi toirt dearbh shoilleireachd mu fhìreantachd. Eoin xvi: 10. Tha E dha fhoillseachadh agus dha thairgse do'n anam 'n a mhaise bharraichte, an oirdheirceas agus mhacantas a Phearsa, air an aon laimh, mar, mar an ceudna, 'n a lànachd ghlòrmhor, 'n a mhòrachd, agus foghainteachd a ghràis agus fhìreantachd air an laimh eile. Mar so, tha mi ag ràdh, gu'm bheil E foillseachadh

agus a tairgse Chrisod, agus, maille ri sin, tha E fosgladh suas a ghlòir, agus a toirt air boillsgeadh a mach fodh chomhair; air chor agus a nis tha'n t-anam a faicinn ann an Criosd an lànachd, a mhaise, an gràdh, a mhacantas, a mhillseachd nach fhac e riamh roimhe. Tha Criosd nì eile ann an sùil an anama nach robh E riamh roimhe mar iadsan ann an Eoin i: 14. " Agus chunnaic sinn a ghlòir, mar ghlòir aon-ghin Mhic an Athar, làn gràis agus firinn." Seadh, cha'n e mhàin gu'm bheil E foillseachadh Chrisod mar so do'n anam, ach tha E mar an ceudna a socrachadh sùil an anama Air; tha E toirt air a bhi socrachadh agus ag amharc gu dùrachdach air Criosd, mar an Cuspair is ro-òirdheirc agus is maisiche, agus mar an ceudna, mar an neach air am bheil e gu neo-chrionnach a cur feum; agus tha e air a ràdh ri so a bhi faicinn a Mhic, a chùm agus gu'n creideadh e Ann; " Agus is l so toil an tì a chuir uaith mì, gu'm biodh a bheatha mhaireannach aig gach neach a chi a Mac, agus a chreideas ann: agus togaidh mise suas e air an latha dheireannach." Eoin vi: 40. Tha'n Spiorad beannaichte a deiligeadh ris an anam ann an so, mar a rinn Dia tre'n aingeal ri Hàgar, far am bheil e air a ràdh, " Agus dh'fhosgail Dia a sùilean, agus chunnaic i tobar uisge." Gen. xxi: 19. Bha i ann an suidheachadh duilich, mar a dh'fhaodas sibh fhaicinn bho ruinn 15, 16, làn searbhadas, i fein agus an leanabh, ann an suidheachadh air sheol a bhi cailte, air dhith a bhi anns an fhàsach; agus an t-uisge anns an t-searraig air cosg, nis tha Dia a nochdadh dhith tobar uisge, bh'uaith e am bheil i tarruig gu pailte na dh'fhoghnas. Mar so tha'n t-anam bochd, air dhà a bhi fodh chumhachd dearbhaidh an lagha, dha fhaicinn fein ann an suidheachadh duilich, truagh, agus cràiteach; anns am bheil e làn searbhadas a glaodhaich a mach maille ri Hàgar, " Na faiceam bàs an leinibh." Cia mar a dh'fhuilingeas mì bhi dhith gu siorruidh? Mar so a nis tha Spiorad Dhé a tighinn, agus a fosgladh a shùilean, agus a nochdadh dha Chrisod, agus Criosd mar a tha E gu neo-chrionnach freagarach air a shon. Amhaire, tha'n Spiorad ag ràdh ris an anam, air dhà bhi nis truagh agus gu'n chobhair; Amhaire, tha'n so Slànuighear air do shon, Fear-pòsda dhuit, Fear-pòsda eile a tha nì's fearr na'n lagh, a tha gu neo-chrionnach comasach air t'fhiachan uile a phaigheadh, a bhi deanamh suas t'uireasbhuidhean uile, a leighiseas do lotan uile, a nì fuasgladh air do thruaighean, a mhaitheas do pheacaidhean uile, a shàsuicheas t'uile mhiannaibh, a fhreagras do ghràdh uile, agus a bheir dhuit sonas agus sàsachadh iomlan Ann agus maille ris Fein gu bràth. Amhaire, ann an so tha E, tha e'n so anns a ghealladh, ann an so tha E's a chùmhnannt, ann an so tha E ann an tairgse agus cuireadh an t-soisgeil, ann an so tha E aig dearbh dhorus a ohridhe a bualadh agus a gairm air son E bhi

air a leigeil a stigh. Tais. iii: 20. Ann an so tha E le a ghàirdeanan gu fosgailte farsuinn gu do ghabhail agus do chuartachadh; an sin a dh'aindeoin cho salach, peacach, agus neo-airidh 's a tha thù. Amhaire, uime sin, Ris agus bi air do thearnadh.

(R'a leantuinn)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Laughter in Church

A Church of Scotland minister, Rev. Gordon Strachan, Dalmarnock Church, Glasgow, in a recent talk in Edinburgh, said: "We need a reformation in the Church now." But his ideas about reformation are very unlike what the Bible teaches. He suggested: "I would like to hear more laughter in Church, and provided the minister is genuine and serious, the more absurd he can be in the pulpit the better the response he will get." What response does Mr Strachan wish from a serious and, at the same time, an absurd minister in the pulpit? Is it repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ? It seems not; but that people will be entertained after a vain and worldly manner and will return to such a church for more laughter. How dangerously absurd can men today be, who hold the office of the gospel ministry! Rev. G. Strachan also said that the Protestant Church (why he mentioned the Protestant Church we know not) was "too serious about the wrong things." It was not reported what he thought the wrong things to be, unless it was his reference to "the institution and the minister having become more important than the prophetic message of the Gospels." Well, if all the ministers in Scotland, including Mr Strachan, were to concentrate their pulpit activities on preaching the message of the Gospels, according to Christ's doctrine and teaching, there would then be hope that many in Scotland would become serious about the right things. And those who rejoice in Christ, as their Redeemer and as believers in Him, do not need to be provoked to physical and audible laughter in the house of God. Furthermore, sin, the Cross of Christ, salvation through faith in Christ, heaven and hell are solemn matters. "Why should worship be different from other forms of enjoyment?" asks Mr Strachan. One answer is, that it is understood to have a special reference to God who is clothed with glory and majesty, and to be engaged in, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, by true Christians. But what has largely ruined the visible Church today as to the lack of spirituality in her midst is the influence of worldly professors of Christianity, by which the distinction between the vain world and the Church has been eliminated.

Sir Robert Menzies and Common Market

During a recent lecture at Oxford, Sir Robert Menzies, who was nearly 20 years Prime Minister of Australia, spoke strongly against Britain joining the Common Market. He said that membership of the Common Market, a market which might grow into a European federation, wherein Britain would lose her parliamentary sovereignty, might lead to Britain having to leave the Commonwealth. Mr Menzies was a great friend to Britain during the last war and highly respected as a statesman. Although the three main political parties in Britain, through their leaders, have declared themselves in favour of entry into the Common Market in Europe, yet at the Labour Party Conference last month there were some very strong speeches against our entry. It was rightly declared that many of the people in this country are against Britain having anything to do with the Common Market. It is known that the Roman Catholic Church is strongly behind this new "set up" in Europe which in its final organisation will be political as well as economic. The Roman Catholic Church, of course, seeks always to have a hand in politics all over the world for its own ends.

Church and State in Italy

Reports from the City of Rome tell of recent demands by certain parties in the Italian Parliament for a revision of the Concordat; called the Lateran Pact; between the Vatican and Italian Government, signed in the time of Mussolini. Some Italian leaders are to ask the Roman Catholic Church to examine possible changes in the treaty. The Concordat binds Italy to many Church laws, such as the banning of divorce, although the Pact states that the Vatican and the Italian State are both sovereign and independent. But whatever motives the politicians in Italy have in seeking revision of the Lateran Treaty, they are awake to the fact that the Vatican imposes its will upon the Italian State, although the two are supposed to be independent. The Vatican would impose all its Church laws not only upon Italy, but every other nation in the world. Communism and other modern influences at the very door of the Vatican, however, reveal in no uncertain manner, the impotence of the Pope to stem the tide of anti-Roman Catholic feeling in many quarters in Italy today. An Italian Pope is always appointed and should be expected to put his own nation "in order" before professing to be the bulwark against Communism for other nations to support.

Drug-taking Among Boys

A report from the Home Office Prison Department states that there has been a serious increase in drug-taking among boys sent

to Borstal last year. It is said that many boys aged 14 years and upwards appeared to have taken drugs to a greater or lesser extent. The report avers that for many boys drug-taking has become a "status symbol." These statements are consistent with all we read and hear concerning drug-taking by youths all over the country. And because intoxicating drink can be purchased freely and at will, the argument now being presented on behalf of drug-taking is that drugs presently unobtainable over the chemist's counter at will should be, in law, made available to any who wish to purchase these drugs. Drink and drugs! To these many of the present young generation are resorting. They may obtain a fleeting mental and physical satisfaction; but we do not hear of the real extent and depth of the misery experienced. We learn only of a fraction of the distress and trouble following upon drug-taking and drinking. Truly the kingdom of Satan and darkness is working with the design to destroy the young, the rising generation, morally and physically, by promising them pleasure, which is pleasure involving self-ruin. Behind all this there are many causes. One thing is certain, the abandonment of the Word of God and Christian principles by an older generation of parents, has left family life and homes throughout the nation without moral guidance, example and discipline. "They that sow to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption."

CHURCH NOTES

Communions

January—Fifth Sabbath, Inverness, Auckland. *February*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; third, Stornoway; fourth, North Uist, Kyle of Lochalsh. *March*—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Ness, Portree and Tarbert; third, Finsbay, Lochinver; fourth, Kinlochbervie, London and North Tolsta. *April*—First Sabbath, Breasclete, Portnalong and Fort-William; second, Fearn, Gisborne, N.Z.; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; fifth, Wick. *May*—First Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Scourie; third, Edinburgh and Breadford. *June*—First Sabbath, Applecross and Auckland; second, Shildaig; third, Lochcarron, Glendale, Helmsdale, Dornoch and Uig; fourth, Gairloch and Inverness. *July*—First Sabbath, Lairg, Raasay and Beaulay; second, Staffin, Tomatin and Tain; third, Halkirk, Rogart, Flashadder and Daviot; fourth, Bracadale, North Uist and Plockton; fifth, Achmore. *August*—First Sabbath, Dingwall; second, Portree and Stratherrick; third, Bonar, Finsbay and Laide; fourth, Stornoway, Thurso and Vatten. *September*—First Sabbath, Ullapool, Breasclete; second, Strathy; third, Tarbert, Stoer and Vancouver (Canada); fourth, Applecross. *October*—First Sabbath, Tolsta, Lochcarron, Fort-William; second, Dumbarton, Gairloch and Ness; fourth, Gisborne, N.Z., Greenock, Lochinver; fifth, Wick. *November*—First Sabbath, Oban and Raasay; second, Glasgow and Halkirk; third, Edinburgh, Dornoch, Staffin and Uig. *December*—First Sabbath, London.

Mission Communion.

Zenka: last Sabbath of February and August. Ingwenya: last Sabbath of March and September. Mbuma: last Sabbath of April and October. Donsa Dam: last Sabbath of May. Somakantana: last Sabbath of July.

London Communion Services

The services will be held as follows (D.V.):—Thursday, 30th November, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Friday, 1st December, 11a.m. and 6.30 p.m. (Fellowship Meeting); Saturday, 2nd December, 2.30 p.m. (Gaelic), 3.30 p.m. (English) and 6.30 p.m. (Prayer Meeting); Sabbath, 3rd December, 11 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.; Monday, 4th December, 7 p.m.

The weekday services will be held in the Bridewell Hall (London City Mission), Eccleston Place, S.W.1 and the Sabbath services in St. Michael's Hall, Eccleston Place (opposite Victoria Coach Station).

Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Wick and Rev. L. Macleod, Greenock are expected to assist at the Communion (D.V.).

Appeal for Broadford Manse

The Congregation of Strath, Isle of Skye, has quite recently been raised to the status of a sanctioned charge. With this incentive the work of erecting a Manse on a suitable and beautiful site has already commenced. As the Congregation is relatively small, the Deacons' Court hereby appeal to friends throughout the Church for financial assistance. Contributions will be gratefully received by the Treasurer, Mr John MacLean, 5 Upper Breakish, Broadford, Isle of Skye.

This Appeal has the cordial approval of the Presbytery.

Alfred MacDonald, Moderator *pro tem*.

John Colquhoun, (Clerk).

Beauly F.P. Church: Appeal

The above church is situated at Wester Balblair Kilmorack. A proposal was made to extend it to give more accommodation on Communion occasions. When the building was examined by an Inverness Architect and a contractor, their report was adverse to spending money on any addition to it.

It was therefore unanimously agreed by the Deacons' Court to open a Building fund for the erection of the new building in the vicinity of the present one.

While those attending the above church desire to help,—as far as in them lies,—the defraying the cost of the proposed building—which is estimated to be about £7000, they will welcome contributions from friends desiring to help.

We, as a Deacons' Court, will be most grateful for Contributions. Such should be sent to either: Mr J. MacKenzie, Dunballoch, Beauly. or to: Mr D. S. Kelly, 4 Davidson Drive, Dingwall.

D. A. MacFarlane, Moderator.

D. S. Kelly, Clerk of Deacons' Court.

Approved by Northern Presbytery.—A. F. MacKay, Clerk.

New Publications' Treasurer.

Due to the death of Mr John Grant, Inverness, the necessity has arisen for the appointment of a new Publications Treasurer. The Finance Committee, at its meeting of 3rd October, 1967, appointed Mr Roderick MacKenzie, C.A., 10 Beaufort Road, Inverness as Publications Treasurer. All Magazine subscriptions, donations to the Publications Fund, orders for Church publications etc., should now be sent to Mr MacKenzie at the above address. Orders for Church publications can also be sent, of course, to the Free Presbyterian Church Book Room, 160 Pitt Street, Glasgow.

The Finance Committee would take this opportunity of expressing its appreciation of the work done by the late Mr John Grant as Hon. Publications Treasurer and the assistance rendered by his devoted daughter, Miss Isobel Grant.

(Rev.) Donald MacLean, Convener, Finance Committee.

Acknowledgment of Donations.

Congregational Treasurers should note that all acknowledgments of donations received by them should, in future, *be sent direct to the printers* of the Free Presbyterian Magazine, Messrs ECCLES & CO., 28 HIGH STREET, INVERNESS.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Kelvindale, Glasgow, W.2, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks :—

Sustentation Fund.—Glasgow Friend, £2; Anon. Oban, £5.

Foreign Mission Fund.—A. MacPherson, Richmond, £3; Anon. Oban, £15; Miss MacKellar, Tarbert, Argyll, £1; A Friend, £2 13s 3d, per Miss Grant.

College and Library Fund.—Anon. Oban, £5; £5 from Miss A. MacLean, New Zealand, for running of Church Bookroom.

Organisation Fund.—Miss M. S., per Rev. D. MacL., £1; Anon. Oban, £5.

Home of Rest Fund.—Glasgow Friend, £3; Lisse Friends, Holland, £43 2s 6d, per Rev. A. F. M.

Mission to the Jews Fund.—A Friend, £2 13/-; Thankoffering, Anon, £1, both per Miss Grant.

The Depute Publications Treasurer, Mr Neil M. Ross, Palmerston Villa, 4 Millburn Road, Inverness, acknowledges with grateful thanks the following donations :—

Publications Fund.—Mr J. M., Islay, 8/6; Numbers 6, vv. 24-26, £7; Miss M. S., per Rev. D. M., £1. In October Magazine after C. M. should read £5; for books to hostels, etc., Anon, 11/-.

On behalf of the Trinitarian Bible Society.—Ballifeary Home of Rest, Inverness, collecting boxes, £5 12/-; Miss M., Inverness, collecting box, £1 2s 9d.

Welfare of Youth Fund.—Numbers 6, vv. 24-26, £7.

Free Distribution Magazine Fund.—Mr C. J. J., Chippenham, 10/-; Mr W. T., Wick, 14/8; Numbers 6, vv. 24-26, £9 5s 6d.

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