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A SYNOD SPEECH

by the late Rev. D. N. MacLeod (May, 1948)

Before moving the adoption of the Financial Statement, Mr MacLeod said : We have just listened to the reading of the Treasurer's Report for, not a whole year as before, but three-quarters of a year, but so far as I can see there is really no difference from former years. That is, regarding how we as a little Church is regarded by the Lord, and how that regard of His is shown to us in His bountiful goodness in giving us from year to year ever since we took up our position as a Church in 1893. As we heard on Tuesday night from our Retiring Moderator, there was great faithfulness to God and to His Church shown at that time by those who are now, we believe, at their eternal rest. That faithfulness has not been altogether lost, nor in my estimation anything near being lost, for the Church has had to contend with much — with years of trouble, indeed with fiery trials. They were years in which it was fulfilled to us : "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." She met with so much, as you well know, that some thought she was really done for — her end had come at last and she could not survive now. But here we are this evening after being brought through it all — still living, and a living Church having survived and surmounted it all and as far away from being extinct as a Church as we were at the beginning, so far as I can see. That shows and proves that the faithfulness begun at the very beginning of the Church has not died and has not been lost, and that the Church continued to contend for the Word of God, and that with a view to His glory and to the prosperity of His Kingdom in the world and the extension of it world wide. Faithfulness is a wonderful grace. Every believer requires it for himself and herself. God expects all His people to be faithful, and He promises to be faithful to them. And here is where a wonder is seen, and that by themselves, that many times when they feel guilty of not being so faithful as they should have been, they know nothing of that on His side. He is as faithful to them as He ever was. That is a

common experience of the Lord's people, and it serves a very good purpose. It makes them feel ashamed before Him, and it humbles them. And whatever really humbles a believer is for His good, whatever it be that serves that purpose. "Be ye clothed with humility." The believer is never so beautiful in the sight of the Lord as when He sees him walking in that robe of humility and the believer is never so like his Redeemer as he is when he is clothed with that robe — the robe of humility. I think that he is nearer what the Redeemer Himself was and would like him to be as resembling Him in the world as far as possibly can be, when clothed in that robe. He resembles his Saviour when he is really humbled — when he has true humility. But faithfulness requires this — a renewal of grace, an increase of grace, for without that no one can be kept faithful, and faithfulness always demands this, and courage as well. You remember how the Lord encouraged His servant Joshua when he was about to pass over Jordan. He encouraged him in battle with the strong nations of Canaan : "Be very courageous," and that more than once. Well, faithfulness needs not only courage, but it also needs that there be no cowardice. That is what the believer must be on his guard against because it is entirely of the flesh and from the enemy. The enemy will do his best to make the believer a coward. A coward may go as far to deny his Lord, and that, at a time that calls for the utmost courage and bravery, at a time when it is necessary to own, acknowledge and confess our Saviour before all, at all cost, whatever it may be. At that moment the enemy endeavours, if at all possible, to make the believer a coward. The believer has to guard against that. Faithfulness and cowardice are not companions. The Lord has no love for a coward. Our Lord Himself assured us in the days of His flesh : "For whosoever denieth me before men, him will the Son of Man deny before His Father and His holy angels."

This is a time when man must stand — not in his own strength, for we are told by the Psalmist that the Lord does not regard such as can stand on his own legs, but at the same time we must stand. There is no going back, my friends. There is no going back for the believer. There is no going back, my friends, for the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. So far as I understand things, it was not nearly so necessary in 1893 for the Church to make the stand she did, as it is now. Things have gone from bad to worse every day. This age, yes, and this land, are full of traitors to the Lord Jesus Christ, and there are many here who know more about that class of persons that I do. But I know this much, that they are persons who are never relied on and never trusted, and of whom others are always afraid, and we have every reason to be afraid of them, and this land is just swarming with traitors to the

Lord Jesus Christ, whose names, sad to say, are on many Communion Rolls, for there is a great forsaking of the true faith in this land as well as throughout the world in this sad day of ours. It is indeed a cloudy and dark day — so dark and cloudy that whoever will get through safely and be accounted worthy of the Lord will have reason to praise God throughout eternity. I am now pretty much like what the late Rev. N. Cameron, Glasgow, said to me a few years before he died. He said, “I am beginning to feel lonely, not because I am without friends, as I have many friends. That is not the cause of my loneliness. It is this, those with whom I was associated in 1893, and some before 1893, men and women, are nearly all away. They have gone before us, and when I think of them I feel lonely.” And I must make that confession here tonight too. Those whom I knew in my young days, and to whom I was exceedingly attached, and in whom I had the greatest faith, men and women too, are all away. I hope I can, as Mr Cameron said, say that I have friends in this world, but I do feel lonely, and others may have the same feeling. But I say this to the rising generation, that they have been left a goodly heritage — a heritage of which they have every reason to be proud, and it is their duty to value that heritage, and leave it to those who will come after them, unimpaired as others left it to them. Let them make conscience of that before God, to be faithful to of men and women at all. It was the Lord’s work. Well, they are what was left by those who went before them. It was not the work duty bound to serve Him. If not, I pity them when they will meet the Lord on the last day. I pity them from the bottom of my heart who will be unfaithful and will not do their utmost to preserve that heritage for the generation coming after them. We have every reason to thank God this evening for His bounty to us in giving us so much in the past year and every preceding year. Let us give Him the thanks due to Him and let us not be satisfied with mere words. Let it come straight from our hearts. Also, let us thank our Treasurer* for his labours, and I am sure that it is a great pleasure for us all to see him so much restored after a serious illness, and that he is now able to attend to his work. We thank him for his work although he is not looking for thanks from us. We know that he is looking higher than that.

* The late Mr John Grant.

LETTERS AND SAYINGS BY SAMUEL RUTHERFORD

On Early Piety

To William Livingstone,

Aberdeen, March 13th, 1637.

Rejoice to hear that Christ hath run away with your young love, and that you are, so early in the morning, matched with

such a Lord ; for a young man is often a dressed lodging for the devil to dwell in. Be humble and thankful for grace, and judge it not so much by weight, as by its truth. Christ will not cast water on your smoking coal, He never yet put out a dim candle, that was lighted at the sun of righteousness.

I recommend to you prayer and watching over the sins of your youth ; for I know missive letters go between the devil and young blood ; Satan hath a friend at court in the heart of youth ; and there, pride, luxury, lust, revenge, forgetfulness of God, are hired as his agents. Happy is your soul if Christ man the house, and take the keys Himself, and command all (as it suiteth Him full well to rule all wherever He is) ; keep and entertain Christ well, cherish His grace ; blow upon your own coal, and let Him tutor you.

Now for myself, know I am fully agreed with my Lord : Christ hath put the Father and me in other's arms ; many a sweet bargain He made before ; and He hath made this among the rest. I reign as king, over my crosses ; I will not flatter a temptation, nor give the devil a good word ; I defy hell's iron gates. God hath passed over my quarrelling against him at my entry here, and now He feedeth and feasteth with me. Praise, praise with me, and let us exalt His Name together.

Samuel Rutherford.

Advices to Youth

To Ninian Mure,

Aberdeen, 1673.

Loving Friend,

I received your letter, I interest you, now in the morning of your life, seek the Lord and His face. Beware of the folly of dangerous youth, a perilous time for your soul : love not the world ; keep faith and truth with all men in your covenants and bargains ; walk with God, for he seeth you. Do nothing but that which you may and would do if your eye-strings were breaking and your breath growing cold. You heard the truth of God from me ; my dear heart, follow it, and forsake it not, prize Christ and salvation above all the world. To live after the guise and course of the rest of the world will not bring you to heaven ; without faith in Christ, and repentance you cannot see God. Take pains for salvation ; press forward toward the mark of the prize of the high calling. If you watch not against evils night and day, which beset you, you will come behind. Beware of lying, swearing, uncleanness, and the rest of the works of the flesh ; because for "these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." How sweet soever they may seem for the present, yet the end of these courses is the eternal wrath of God, and utter

darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Grace be with you.

Your loving Pastor,
Samuel Rutherford.

Select Sayings

Think not the common way of serving God, as neighbours and others do, will bring you to heaven.

This world is a great forest of thorns in your way to heaven but you must go through it.

Why should we, believers, go to heaven weeping, as if we were likely to fall down through the earth for sorrow? None have right to joy but we; joy is sown for us, and an ill summer or harvest will not spoil the crop.

Light, and the saving use of light, are far different.

Our pride must have winter weather to rot it.

Events are Gods; let us do, and not plead against God's office; let him sit at his own helm, who moderateth all events.

It would be no difficult art to go through the market as a saint among men, and yet steal quietly without observation.

Hurt not your conscience with any known sin.

The worst things of Christ, his reproaches, His Cross, are better than Egypt's treasures.

Happy are they who are found watching; our sand-glass is not so long that we need grow weary; time will eat away and root out our woes and sorrows; our heaven is in the bud, and growing up to a harvest; why then shall we not follow on, seeing our span-length of time will come to an inch.

Think not much of a storm upon the ship that Christ saileth in; no one shall fall.

ECUMENISM

by Rev. Fraser Macdonald, M.A., Portree
(continued from Vol. 72, page 370)

Another very specious argument put forward by the Ecumenists in the hope of converting many to their way of thinking is, that our present divisions constitute one of the most serious handicaps to the effectiveness of our witness before the eyes of the world.

As might be expected they inform us that the scandal of a dis-united Christendom is most painfully evident in the mission field. We note from one Roman Catholic author ("Roman Catholics and Ecumenism" Enda McDonogh) "The spectacle of so many churches and sects, all claiming to be the authentic custodians of the message of salvation given by Christ, and competing for the same prospective converts, must have diminished considerably the credibility of the Gospel. The importing into Africa and Asia, divisions and quarrels of European and American origin has proved a major obstacle to the spread of Christianity. The Christian awareness of this difficulty bore fruit at the beginning of the century, for from the World Missionary Conference at Edinburgh in 1910 was born the Ecumenical Movement."

According to the argument just stated our conduct as churches and Christians is to be regulated by the effect which it is likely to produce upon the heathen. I have still to learn that this is a principle or line of action laid down in scripture and employed by Christ and His followers. To walk in wisdom, in love, and in honesty to them that are without, we are enjoined — but no more.

Should a preacher of the Gospel discover that his faithful conscience preaching is rousing the enmity of the carnal mind and endangering his own life, and the prestige of his church, is he thereby at liberty to modify or abandon the doctrines he preaches? Certainly not — yet this is the line of conduct underlying this argument, and advocated by it. The Ecumenists appear to have lost sight of everything but their own determination to achieve their own purpose at all costs. Have they forgotten the words recorded in the Gospel "So there was a division among the people because of Him." (John 7, verse 43). Do they think that the apostles were daunted in their missionary endeavours by the presence of those who preached contrary to them, or through strife and envy? Have they or did they ever read of the apostles seeking union with heretics to strengthen their position in the eyes of pagans? Have they never read the words of Christ, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword." (Matthew 10 : 34). Christian missionaries in carrying the true and unadulterated gospel of free and sovereign grace to the heathen, are not to think in terms of human reaction to their doctrine, or their circumstances, but in terms of the will and purpose of God. Should we as a church cease to expose the blasphemous errors and traditions of Rome, and the delusions of those who deny the necessity of the regenerating work of the Spirit — from fear of giving a wrong image of Christianity to the heathen? However telling and impressive such an argument may be, and however widely and successfully used by Ecumenicals it savours too much of that carnal wisdom and of unbelief which

leaves God and His almighty power and grace out of account. Unless the Truth is brought to the ears of the heathen — none of them will be saved, and if this can only be done in the face of, and alongside of professed Christians who teach error, the true missionary need have no misgivings.

Now, there are many other arguments wielded by the advocates for Church unity which we must pass over in silence. Time and space will only allow us to refer to one final plea. They tell us on every hand that the time for the reunion of Christendom is ripe. This insidious argument is employed with all the skill that the Ecumenists can command. By the use of mass media in churches and schools and colleges, by pamphlets and in conversation, the Ecumenical enthusiasts speak unblushingly of the great advances already made in the Ecumenical field, leaving behind what they call, the prudery, the bigotry, the narrow sectarianism, the bitterness, and the rancour of the Victorian era. All this is attributed to the fact that the winds of the Holy Spirit are blowing upon them in an unprecedented manner. A new warm climate of goodwill and mutual understanding and respect for what is good in all religions has at last arrived, and signs are not wanting to show that this is indeed the time for action.

The 20th century bears a certain stamp marking it out as an opportune time for re-thinking our divisions and seeking to resolve them. For those who can discern the signs of the times, the arrival of the new climate of love and mutual understanding could be described as the climate of modernism and free thought, which is ushering in an era of apathy and blasphemy in the churches, while it fosters vile immorality, casual sexual relationships, Sabbath desecration and the abandonment of all that is worth possessing and fighting for. We are not pessimists, but to speak of the present era as one in which the Holy Spirit of God is working and moving in an unprecedented manner is nothing less than blindness and blasphemy. One thing is certain, viz.: that the Spirit they refer to — is not the Spirit that moved multitudes on the day of Pentecost to cry out "men and brethren — what shall we do?" It is rather the lying spirit — the spirit of strong delusion, with which in other days the Lord visited the false, flippant, optimistic prophets of peace.

The shrinking universe, the united Europe, the spirit of 'togetherness' are to the Ecumenicals indications that God is calling the churches to closer and fuller unity in their apostacy from His Truth.

Let us then be aware of the false prophet, and his deceitful slogans. Let us not be moved by their naïvete, their zeal, or their spurious charity, but let us hold fast to that which is good.

It is now time to examine the **METHODS** employed to achieve

this end. These cover a wide range from prayer to propaganda of the worst kind. In trying to focus our attention on this part of the subject of Ecumenism, we were utterly amazed at the plausibility and subtlety of their tactics. We could not but think of the words of Christ in Matthew 24 : 24, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect."

The Ecumenical net is spread with nothing less than diabolical genius and industry. In striving after their ultimate objective of Unity, they have the impudence to say that this must not be done by compromise. Unity at the expense of Truth they do not wish. They would agree in all study and discussion it is essential to remember that Ecumenism is best served — not by compromising the principles of our faith, but by explaining the reasons for the hope that is in you.

They would also argue, that in spite of their ritualistic traditions and additions, that the Church has always insisted that the faithful should take care not to offend against revealed doctrine and the norms of the Church, even in Ecumenical discussions. Nor should they controvert the fact that it was the duty of the Apostles and their true successors to be faithful in the preservation and transmission of doctrine, which is essential to preserving the unity of the faith. In the same breath they can say "While we deplore that which divides us, we must not fail to recognise more and more that which already unites us. Among Eastern Rite Christians, for example, we find a regular Apostolic succession of their bishops, and with this valid sacraments, particularly the Holy Eucharist and the Mass which should be the great bond of unity. In their doctrine they present the ancient and patristic tradition. The veneration of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary is dear to them. Among our Protestant brothers we find an ardent attachment to Jesus as Lord and Saviour, a great veneration for the Word of God, and the serious effort to observe the commandments of God in their daily life, which often puts many of us to shame." ("Cardinal Meyer, A Bishop of Chicago"). This is but one example of the subtle propaganda used by Rome and other Ecumenicals to foster a spirit of unity and love — so called. To achieve their goal they insist on stressing what they call points of agreement, rather than speaking about the points of disagreement. But surely, if anything should be stressed it is that upon which we do NOT agree — that which separates. This policy of emphasising and focussing attention on the area of agreement, so highly recommended by the Ecumenicals, betrays them at the very outset. Once they have established and highlighted the points on which there is agreement, they thus pave the way for dealing with the

thorny points of disagreement. However serious the latter are, their weight and value is already reduced by the brain-washing process that went before. The points of disagreement are minimal and trivial in comparison with those upon which they agree: and which by a little juggling can be quite easily smoothed out. The hollowness and subtlety of this method of achieving unity should be apparent to all, and should even give second thoughts to the Ecumenical Brains Trust. The Jews and the Samaritans surely had something in common; even Jesus and the Pharisees held certain doctrines in common. According to Ecumenical policy and methods, the Jews and Samaritans should have united, and Jesus and the Jews should have joined hands on the basis of what they believe in common. How ridiculous! It may as well be argued that because Christianity and Communism have something in common, that they should unite. Another method without which the Ecumenists tell us, they cannot succeed is PRAYER. In the light of the more sinister and underhand methods employed by the Ecumenists we have not taken this commendation and this method too seriously. That apart, however, there already exists a wide divergence of opinion regarding the nature of true prayer. Those who pray through the Virgin Mary dishonour the only Mediator between God and man, and ensure that God will not hear their petitions. Further, the prayer that the Lord hears and answers is ascribed to the agency of the Holy Spirit who, because we know not what to ask for as we ought, helpeth our infirmities with groanings which cannot be uttered. The Spirit of grace and supplications must descend upon men, before their prayers will be heard in heaven. How many Ecumenical leaders believe this? Before commending the use of prayer as a most effective instrument to be employed in bringing about unity, they should have a clear scriptural understanding of what prayer really is. Even believers need to be reminded of David's words "If in my heart I sin regard, the Lord me will not hear," and again the words of James 4, verses 3 and 4, on the same subject, "Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." In truth, what unconverted Modernists need to learn is that the prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.

In addition to prayer it is highly recommended by Ecumenists that those who seek unity should get to know one another better. They feel that such a step would go far to remove prejudices and produce better and more fruitful results. If getting to know each other means that we study the authoritative dogmas and doctrines of those from whom we are separated, we have to admit, that the

more we do that, the more thoroughly we are convinced of the gulf that lies between us. But, while they commend the comparative study of religions, with a view to coming together, they would rather leave that to the theologians. What they mean by getting to know one another better, may be best illustrated from the words and example of a certain Professor of religion at Stamford University. Here is a specimen of how we should use this instrument in the interests of unity. I quote "Steps to Unity," O'Brien, p. 60, "I think," he says, "that I have been brought closer to understanding of the real meaning of the Roman Catholic faith, by attending Mass five times a week for ten weeks, and praying with the Council Fathers, than by all the many books of Roman Catholic theology it has been my responsibility to read in the past five years." How plausible — how compromising is the attitude commended here! The Professor's dead soul was not sickened by the empty pomp and idolatry of such a service. Just imagine the Apostle Paul or Peter coming back among us, and taking part in a pontifical ceremony in St. Peter's. It is unthinkable!

(To be continued in June issue)

THOUGHTS ON THE PSALMS

by Rev. Alex. McPherson

Psalm Fifty-one

The title to this Psalm places it very accurately in David's history. It is the inspired expression of his repentance, the beginning of which we read about in 2 Sam. 12, v. 13; "And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the Lord." The whole sad story is to be found in the eleventh and twelfth chapters of that book. At a time when the armies of Israel were engaged against the Ammonites, David chose to remain in Jerusalem. There, ease, luxury and idleness led the king, as they have done countless others, to sensual lust, then on to the grievous sin of adultery, and beyond that again to a foul murder. David intended that his wicked deeds should be known only to Joab, but chapter eleven ends with the words, "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord."

The narrative then goes on to tell how the Lord employed Nathan to bring David's sin home to him. This was probably about a year after his great sins, and that it was not a period of absolute deadness of conscience we may judge from Psalm 32 which bears the marks of having been written just after this one. There David admits: "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand

was heavy upon me : my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah." Nathan was the agent whom God used to convince David of the hideousness of his deeds, and the repentance which immediately followed is well described in the familiar language of this Psalm.

Verse 1. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness : according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions."

It is a characteristic of the saved sinner that he knows that the divine favour comes to him by way of mercy. He discounts any idea of meriting kindness from a holy and just God. The mercy of God in Christ is his one hope for escaping the punishment which his sins deserve and of obtaining that righteous status so essential to the enjoyment of God's favour. And not only does he look to that mercy in the day that he is born again and forgiven and justified for Christ's sake, but he looks to that mercy as often as he draws near to a holy God in prayer. Although justified by faith he remains a sinner, and thus mercy remains his constant need. It matters not whether his sins be of the nature of monstrous backsliding, as David's were, or simply the manifold imperfections of a life spent in pressing on towards the mark of holiness. Repeated, frequent prayers for mercy are an invariable feature of the truly Christian life.

David's sins were very great. He needed great mercy. His faith appears in his ascription of abundant mercy to the God of loving-kindness. How well he knew his God ! In that law in which he often meditated, he read that God's name, or revealed character is : "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty, etc." (Exod. 34, v. 6, 7). In the extremity of his guiltiness and wretchedness, David believed that "with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." (Psalm 130, v. 7). Knowing God's name, he put his trust in it for renewed forgiveness. In this same direction lies the hope of every sinner. Mercy has its full revelation in Christ, and the sinner who looks to the merits of his atoning death and that alone will receive an abundant pardon.

Then, after pleading for mercy in a general way, David proceeds to specify the particular manner in which he feels the need of it. He says : "Blot out my transgressions." The various Hebrew words for sin are not exact synonyms. This one "transgression" means "passing over a boundary," the boundary in this case being the moral law. So that transgression is the doing of that which God has prohibited and is therefore an act of rebellion against

the Lawgiver. God has said : "Thou shalt not kill; neither shalt thou commit adultery." David had disobeyed; he had transgressed those plain commands. Now there were crimson and scarlet sins to be blotted out from the heavenly register. Have we not transgressions also; more than we can number? Except they be removed from God's book, we shall have to give an account of them at the judgment.

Verse 2. "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."

The word "iniquity" means "that which is turned out of its proper course" and thus denotes moral crookedness or perversion. By this description sin is presented as wilful, deliberate wrong done from a bad nature. If David had supposed that years of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit had reached to the root of his depravity, he now knew better. Yet only that powerful divine agency could cleanse his wicked heart, therefore he prays : "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity." And we will pray for the same if we have discovered in some measure the truth about our hearts. God says that they are "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." What a cleansing must take place ere a sinner is made fit for heaven !

But the royal transgressor prays on : "Cleanse me from my sin." Sin is yet another term and means "missing the mark." The idea here is that of failure to be what one ought to be, or to do what one ought to do. A sinner is a person whose will is culpably out of harmony with the will of his Maker and Lawgiver. Where God requires love there is only the contrary, and therefore failure to realise the purpose of one's existence. Oh the shame of it ! The innumerable sins which mar our lives are all failures of duty. No success achieved in other departments of our lives can outweigh the ignominy of our constant moral failures. What reason we all have to echo David's prayer to have all these failures washed away in Emmanuel's blood and to be clothed with his immaculate righteousness so that the shame of our nakedness may not appear ! (Rev. 3, v. 18).

Verse 3. "For I acknowledge my transgressions : and my sin is ever before me."

David confesses his sins all to be deserving of wrath. In their guilt, vileness and enslaving power they are a burden upon his spirit — ever before him. Where there is grace, sin produces inward pain, shame and sorrow which can only be relieved by confession to God and forgiveness. Is penitent confession of sin your own daily exercise, or is sin only an occasional disturber of your peace? "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,

and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' (1 John 1, v. 9, 10).

CHRIST'S RESURRECTION

Views of Principal Geering, New Zealand, Exposed

Sermon by Rev. William MacLean, M.A. Preached and recorded at the Prayer Meeting in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, Gisborne, N.Z. on Wednesday, 8th November 1967.

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 15: 17 — "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."

The Apostle, at the beginning of this chapter says, "Brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand." And concerning the Gospel which he preached to them, we find him saying to the Galatians, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." The Gospel is called the **everlasting** Gospel (Rev. 14:6), indicating that it is an unchanging Gospel. It is like its Author, it changes not. Mathematical truth does not change; divine truth does not change. The doctrine on which the Apostle is laying special emphasis in this chapter, as a fundamental doctrine of the Gospel which he preached, is the doctrine of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, a doctrine which was denied by the Jews and ridiculed by the Greeks. But as he says in the words of our text, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins."

We may notice, that implied in the denial of the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is a denial of all the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith. The Christian faith becomes vain, meaningless and useless, if this fundamental doctrine of the resurrection of Christ is denied. And firstly, it implies a denial of the deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Apostle, through divine inspiration, says to the Romans, that Christ was declared, or manifested, to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. (Rom. 1:4). He was in a powerful manner declared and manifested, to be the Son of God. Deny His resurrection from the dead and that leads to a denial of His eternal deity. He Himself says, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10:17, 18). He had that power as the eternal Son. None could obtain that victory over

death and the grave but the eternal Son, manifested in our nature. But if Christ be not raised, He did not obtain the victory over death or over the grave, as the Apostle brings before us in this chapter. Death has conquered Him and the grave still holds Him captive. He is not the Conqueror, the Victor over death and the grave. And then, if that is so, that the grave still holds Him, the song which the ransomed Church of God, will have on the morning of the resurrection — "Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave where is thy victory?" becomes meaningless. What the Apostle is here declaring concerning the resurrection of the body, and of the song of triumph of the redeemed becomes meaningless, if the resurrection of Christ from the dead is but "a beautiful legend" as Principal Geering maintains. Then this song of triumph is part of the legend, a beautiful piece of poetry, legendary and mythical.

But not only does the denial of Christ's resurrection from the dead involve a denial of His deity, but also of His virgin birth. The human nature which He assumed, was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin Mary and born of her yet without sin. That nature He assumed into union with His divine Person. His body was incapable of seeing corruption. Although at death there was a separation put between Christ's human soul and Christ's body, there was no separation put between Christ's soul and His divine Person, or between His body lying in Joseph's tomb and His divine person. They still remained united to His Person, although for a time separated by death. In connection with the separation, the following illustration has often been made use of. A soldier has the sheath in which he holds his sword, attached to his body. He draws the sword out of the sheath and holds the sword aloft in his hand. A separation has been put between the sheath in which the sword was encased, and the sword. Although there is a separation between the sheath and the sword, there is no separation between the sheath and the soldier himself, or between the soldier and the sword which he holds in his hand. And so in the case of the separation that death put between Christ's human soul and His body. They were still united to His divine Person. And because of that it was impossible for that body to see corruption. A body that had no sin in it could not see corruption. But if His body was not raised, then that body was not miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost. That leads to a denial of His virgin birth. It is a well known fact that those who deny the resurrection of Christ from the dead, also deny and even ridicule the miracle of His virgin birth. And that leads to a denial of the promises of the Old Testament which have reference to His virgin birth, as for example the first promise — there shall come of the seed of the woman that shall bruise the serpent's head. "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son,

and shall call his name Immanuel." (Isaiah 7 : 14). All these promises become meaningless — part of the "beautiful legend." Not only does a denial of the resurrection of His body lead to a denial of His virgin birth, but also of the atonement which he made.

But before coming to that, we may observe what Geering and his school hold, that it is Christ's spirit that rose, that His body still remained and rotted in the grave. It is His spirit, they say, that rose. But His spirit was never in the grave. He committed at death His human soul into the hands of His Father. It was His body that rose from the dead and both soul and body at His resurrection were reunited. It must be observed that Geering denies the immortality of the soul, and that by Christ's spirit, he does not mean the human soul of Christ, but the principles for which He stood.

The denial of His resurrection leads to a denial of the atonement which He made. We read in Romans that He was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification. Now if Christ was not raised again for our justification, that implies that He did not make the atonement for sin which justice in God required Him to make, that He did not pay the ransom price to the uttermost farthing in the room and stead of His people. Therefore "if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." No atonement has been made for sin. Christ's resurrection from the dead is the proof that He paid the ransom price and that He made the atonement necessary for sin. A denial, therefore, of His resurrection implies a denial of Christ's atonement and that leads to the denial of the need for an atonement — a denial of the fall. We read "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." That is, all for whom Adam stood. He was the federal head of the whole human race. They all died in him. And all for whom Christ stood, as the covenant head, the last Adam, the Lord from Heaven, all for whom He stood — the whole election of grace — they shall live. But if Christ has not risen from the dead, that leads to the denial of the need for an atonement. It leads to a denial of the fall of man, that in Adam all died. Of course, according to Geering, and his school, the account of the fall is just a Jewish myth, pointing a moral, but not an historical fact.

A denial of the atonement makes Christ Himself a liar. He repeatedly said to His disciples that He must needs die, and that He would rise again on the third day. After His resurrection, when the disciples were still incredulous and supposing it was a spirit that had appeared to them, He said "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself : handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken,

he shewed them his hands and his feet." If Christ is not risen from the dead, and His resurrection is but a beautiful legend, then that implies that Christ is not the truth, that He is not, as the Scriptures declare, the "faithful and true witness." He is a false witness if He did not rise from the dead. His statements to His disciples that He would rise again on the third day must be false, and that He said to His disciples, "handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," must also be untrue. And then also, if Christ be not risen, the Apostles also are liars. Paul says, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ : whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not."

A denial of Christ's resurrection leads to a denial of the doctrine of the resurrection of the just and the unjust at the last day. In this chapter the apostle bases the proof of the resurrection of the dead at the last day upon the doctrine of Christ's own resurrection from the dead. Christ Himself says "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." If Christ therefore be not raised, there will be no resurrection of the dead, of the just and the unjust, and these words of Christ are just part of "the beautiful legend." They are false, and the testimony of the Apostles is false. They testify that for forty days after His passion He showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs and that He spake to them the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. The apostle is mentioning in this chapter different witnesses. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve : After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." But all these witnesses must be dismissed as false witnesses, and what Principal Geering and his school say, is what we must accept. "For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid : yea let God be true, but every man a liar." (Rom. 3: 3, 4).

And not only does it lead to a denial of the resurrection of the dead at the last day, but also a denial of the doctrine that is brought before us in this chapter, that the bodies of the saints shall be raised and made like unto Christ's glorious body. It is in connection with the bodies of the saints that the apostle is speaking in this chapter. Their bodies are to be made like unto Christ's glorious body, but if Christ be not risen, He has no glorious body.

He is only a spirit. But He Himself declared after His resurrection "handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." A denial of Christ's resurrection from the dead includes in it a denial of the Resurrection of the just and the unjust and a denial of the mystery which the apostle is here bringing before us that the bodies of the saints are to be made like unto Christ's glorious body.

It also leads to a denial of the doctrine of the judgment at the last day. Christ appeared first of all to take away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. The second time He is to appear unto those that look for Him without sin unto salvation. And in the context it is mentioned that it is at the Judgment He will appear "without sin unto salvation." He shall appear as the God-man to judge the world in righteousness, justice to give each one. But if Christ be not risen, then there will be no judgment, for the doctrine of the judgment of the last day is based upon Christ's resurrection. God "now commandeth all men everywhere to repent : Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judgethe world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." (Acts 17 : 30, 31).

Further, if Christ be not raised from the dead, then the sacraments of the New Testament Church — Baptism and the Lord's Supper — are no longer valid. When Christ instituted the sacrament of the supper, He said to His disciples, "Take, eat : this is my body which is broken for you" and "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." The sacrament of the Lord's supper not only commemorates the death which He died in the room and stead of His people, but is a reminder that He is to come again. But if Christ be not raised from the dead, then, as we observed, that rules out the doctrine of the atonement, for Christ "was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification." The doctrine of the atonement is in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. It is through His body being broken and His blood shed that He obtained eternal life and eternal forgiveness for His people.

The sacrament of baptism also becomes a meaningless rite. The Apostle says in verse 29, "What shall they do which are baptised for the dead?" He is bringing forward the implications that if Christ be not raised, then our preaching is vain and our faith is vain, we are still in our sins, etc. He then says, "what shall they do which are baptised for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptised for the dead?" The Mormons make much of this text and they hold the doctrine of baptism for the dead. If a person becomes a Mormon he is baptised, and he is not only baptised for himself, but for all his forbears. If they are to

be saved, it is through baptism, and the Mormons therefore have baptism for the dead. But in the light of the chapter, baptism for the dead is a belief in the doctrine of Christ's resurrection from the dead, and of the resurrection of the dead at the last day. Persons who were baptised, were received by baptism into the Christian Church. It was on the ground of their professing that Christ did rise from the dead, and that they believed also in the resurrection of the dead at the last day, that they were baptised. These were the doctrines that were denied and ridiculed by the Greeks. Not only Christ's resurrection from the dead, but the resurrection at the last day. We find Paul saying "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" But all who professed the name of Christ and who embraced Christianity and were received into the Christian Church through baptism, made this profession, that Christ was the Son of God and that they believed in His resurrection from the dead. On making this profession they were baptised. They were in this public way identifying themselves with the Church of God, and because of that, they met with ridicule and opposition and persecution. So if Christ be not raised "why are they then baptised for the dead? and why stand we in jeopardy every hour?" These people were putting their lives in jeopardy by receiving baptism and thereby making a public profession that Christ rose from the dead. If the dead rise not, why do people go and hazard their lives and meet with scorn and ridicule from both Jews and Greeks, by professing that Christ rose from the dead. Is it any wonder that the apostle says, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable?" Meeting with all these trials and troubles in connection with following Christ, if Christ be not risen, then all our suffering and all that we meet with, is in vain. "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." He fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, that is men who were just acting like wild beasts, and, of course, it was true also that the Christians were thrown to wild beasts. Those who professed Christ were subjected to that death in Rome. They were brought into the amphitheatre and before thousands of spectators, lions and wild beasts were let loose upon them, that savagely tore them to bits. They endured all that for Christ and in defence of the belief that Christ rose from the dead and that He is a living Saviour. But if Christ be not raised, What is the advantage of suffering all this? It is as well to "eat and drink; for tomorrow we die." And that is just the logical conclusion of a denial of the resurrection. It leads to the new morality. There is no judgment, no Heaven and no Hell.

But in return to the sacraments. Those who are receiving bap-

tism profess that Christ rose from the dead. It is on that basis, the basis of that profession and on the doctrines implied in that profession, that they receive baptism. But if Christ be not risen, then baptism becomes a meaningless rite. When ministers therefore, who deny the resurrection of Christ from the dead (as the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand now denies, through her Supreme Court) administer baptism, their baptism is invalid. The Reformers accepted the baptism of the Roman Catholic Church because she had not changed the doctrine of baptism. Although she has added many things to it, she baptises in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and fully believes in the resurrection of Christ from the dead and His ascension to the right hand of God. Her baptism was regarded as valid. But when we come to a Church that denies, through its Supreme Court, the doctrine of Christ's resurrection from the dead, that unashamedly seals what Principal Geering said (that His resurrection is but a beautiful legend), then the validity of the sacraments falls to the ground, and all the other doctrines that we have mentioned : they are just relegated into the region of legend and become null and void. The General Assembly instead of excommunicating Professor Geering as a heretic and as an apostate from the faith, dismissed the charges of doctrinal errors brought against him, and **DECLARED ITS CONFIDENCE IN THE PROFESSOR AS MINISTER, TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL OF THE THEOLOGICAL HALL.**

The doctrine of the new birth becomes meaningless. We find the Apostle Peter saying to those to whom he was writing, that they were begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. They were begotten again, born again, and through being born again, they came to have a lively or living hope, a good hope through grace by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. But if Christ be not risen, then their faith is vain, their hope is vain. There is no such thing as a good hope through grace. But all who have been born again, are living witnesses to the fact of Christ's resurrection, that He is the resurrection and the life. "And our preaching" he says "is vain." "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ whom he raised not up, Christ raised : And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." A denial therefore, of the resurrection of Christ, of this fundamental and cardinal doctrine, undermines the whole fabric of the Christian faith, all the cardinal doctrines collapse. A church, therefore, that publicly condones in

her Supreme Court the views of Principal Geering, that denies Christ's physical resurrection from the dead, has forfeited the right to be called a Christian Church. She has by the decision of her Assembly overthrown all the cardinal doctrines of our most holy faith, nullified the validity of the sacraments, made Christ and His apostles false witnesses, and has put the Christian Church on a foundation of falsehood.

That is the state to which matters have come in our day, not only in the Presbyterian Church, but in other churches as well, applauding through their leaders the decision of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. They are showing that they are of the same opinion. What proof that truth has fallen in the street and that there is no true witness in such churches on the side of Christ! They are dead churches and apostate from the faith once delivered to the saints. To remain in such churches is to incur the righteous indignation of the Lord for the dishonour done to His Son. No person can absolve himself from that dishonour or from the guilt bound up with that dishonour, but by separating from such churches. "Come out from among them and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing and I will receive you and ye shall be my sons and daughters saith the Lord God Almighty." "If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised : And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your sins."

But Christ is raised and exalted to be a Prince and Saviour for to give repentance and remission of sins unto Israel. He is a Saviour from sin, in its guilt, power, pollution and punishment, in virtue of the infinitely efficacious atonement He made for sin by the sacrifice of Himself. His blood alone cleanses from all sin. He is an all sufficient and an all powerful Saviour. He is a living Saviour. All who have been begotten again to a living hope, a good hope through grace, have Christ as their life and Christ as their hope, a good hope. They were born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever (1 Peter 1 : 23). They live a life of faith upon Him. It is to the Lord Jesus Christ we are invited in the gospel. He it is who says to sinners, even the chief, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The Christ of Principal Geering is a false Christ, not the Christ of God and of the church universal in all ages and lands. Whatever claims Principal Geering may lay to gifts and to scholarship, his soul is still in the death and darkness of unregeneracy. He is a wandering star without hope and without God in the world, heading heedlessly towards the blackness of darkness of a lost and undone eternity.

How is this day of blatant apostacy we should give heed to the solemn warning of the Saviour — "WHOSOEVER SHALL

DENY ME BEFORE MEN, HIM WILL I ALSO DENY BEFORE MY FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN"! (Matt. 10 : 33). These words should make the so-called Evangelicals in the Presbyterian Church tremble. Where was their witness on the side of Christ at the Assembly? The everlasting gospel of the grace of God is not to be found in the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. The notorious Declaratory Act of 1901 which is part of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church and to which all ordained in the Presbyterian Church must subscribe, robbed the Presbyterian Church of the gospel. Their so-called "evangelical" gospel is another gospel.

The Lord in His infinite mercy grant that the gospel would come to us as it came to the Thessalonians and to all who are the Lord's people, not in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance (1 Thess. 1 : 5), for apart from divine teaching, the things of the Spirit of God will be foolishness to us.

We have since been informed that not a single minister of the so-called Evangelicals of the Westminster Fellowship in the Presbyterian Church so much as recorded his dissent against the decision of the Assembly exonerating Principal Geering.

Principal Geering, in defence of his views at the Assembly, appealed to the Declaratory Act as giving him and others liberty to hold views contrary to the Westminster Confession of Faith.—W.M. (Available from Westminster Standard, 183 Rutene Road, Gisborne, New Zealand).

A CONGREGATION IN ABERDEEN ?

There are two areas of Scotland where the Free Presbyterian Church has no congregations. One is the Lowlands where our Church's only opening lay in a long series of Friday evening services held at Saltcoats during the nineteen-fifties. The other area is that extending from the Forth to the Moray Firth, and here also there was an effort at penetration made at Elgin. But here too the monthly week-day services conducted by Rev. A. F. Mackay for seven years came to an end. More recently another opportunity for establishing a regular congregation has occurred in the very heart of the North-east, in Aberdeen itself, and the circumstances are so interesting as to be worth reporting.

Beginning and Development

Present educational policy is resulting in more and more students from the north and west being admitted to Aberdeen University, and it was a few of those belonging to our Church who felt prompted to arrange a week-day service on Tuesday, 26th November 1963. This was conducted by Rev. R. R. Sinclair and about fifty persons from different churches were present. Taking

encouragement from this, the students arranged similar services, one each term, during the next two years. Mr Sinclair and several other ministers presided at these and found appreciative gatherings on each occasion.

The next milestone was the commencement of a Sabbath service on 20th February 1966. One of the Aberdeen students had been authorized to conduct this, and it took place in a rented flat.

After another four of these Sabbath morning services, application was made to Aberdeen Education Committee for the use of a room in the Girl's High School in Albyn Place. This was granted free of charge, and in this very suitable and comfortable classroom services have been conducted once and sometimes twice each Lord's Day. From the beginning of this year, however, two services have been held every Sabbath. Eight ministers and seven lay-preachers have shown them sympathy with the work by going to Aberdeen to conduct services at various times down to the present. The latest development, a Saturday Bible Study meeting, has taken place regularly since 10th February at 65 Argyll Place.

Not only students but also other Free Presbyterians resident in Aberdeen and district attend the services. The numbers vary from a faithful nucleus of twelve to around forty when a minister has been present, but recently the number of regular attenders has increased. Newspaper advertisements and tract distribution have produced only a slight response from other people in the district. This is disappointing, especially as one of the aims of those behind the venture has been to establish in Aberdeen the pure means of grace provided by our Church. Some have been conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit at the services and wish others to have that benefit also.

Prospects and Needs

Now this surely is a cause which should enlist the sympathy and prayers and help of the whole Church. Regular services in Aberdeen have become an urgent need from the point of view of the students alone. Five years ago there were three F.P. students; this year there are over twenty, and each year may be expected to see an increase. Anyone who appreciates the spiritual and moral dangers confronting our young people when they leave home to continue their education will realise that the provision of Gospel ordinances and an opportunity for gaining the fellowship of god-fearing fellow-churchmen would be no small boon. And, as we have stated, there are other people of the Church residing in or near Aberdeen who would benefit from these services. Can the Church complacently acknowledge the need and do nothing? Now to the practical question, what can be done besides praying?

1. The most urgent need is that a person who could be entrusted with the conduct of regular services should take up residence in Aberdeen. The great disadvantage of the present arrangements is that between terms the students who hold the services are away and the services cease. This lack of continuity is a great obstacle to building up a congregation.

2. It seems desirable that premises should be obtained which would be suitable for use as a place of worship and for Bible Study. A charge of 25/- per day is now being made for the classroom, and there is the added fact that people are less inclined to attend services in a classroom than in a church or hall.

3. All parents with sons or daughters studying or working in Aberdeen should do all in their power to ensure that they attend these services regularly and twice daily wherever possible. By no means all the students are doing this. The address of the school has already been given as Albyn Place, and it is not difficult to reach.

4. Information, including maps of the area, can be obtained from Mr C. Tallach, 7 Queens Terrace, Aberdeen (AB1 1XL), and Mr Tallach for his part would be glad of information of Church people resident in or going to Aberdeen in the future.

We believe that these facts are themselves sufficient justification for being published, and we would seek the prayerful interest of every reader. It would be more than regrettable if the very considerable efforts already made to fill this great need should come at last to nothing, as might well happen should no other student be available to conduct the services. We invite readers to pray for a blessing on what is already being done, and to seek the Lord's help in establishing these services on a more permanent basis. A regular congregation in Aberdeen would be matter for rejoicing. — A. McP.

POSADH AN ANAMA RI CRIOSD

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

(Air a leantuinn bho t.d.378)

II. Am bheil sibh air son saobhreas agus ionmhasan? Is e so a' nì is cudthromaich leis a chuid is motha; air son so cha'n eil aon coltach ri Criosd. Tha saobhreas cho math ri mòrachd

Aige gu bhi dha mholadh dhuibh; “Tha beartas agus urram maille riumsa; saoibhreas maireannach agus fireantachd.” Gnàth. viii. 18. Seadh, agus tha a shaoibhreas dhe’n a chu uid is fèrr; is e saoibhreas spioradail a tha Aige, ionmhasan neamh, Mata vi. 20. Saoibhreasan beatha agus gràidh, sìth agus maitheanas, gràs agus glòir, agus saoibhreasan ann an glòir. Agus O ciod e na nithean bochd a tha ann an saoibhreasan an t-saoghail so ann an coimeas riutha! Tha Aige-san fìor shaoibhreasan. Lucas xvi. 11. Tha saoibhreasan an t-saoghail-sa ’n an saoibhreasan a tha air uachdar, ach a’ nì is Leis-san is saoibhreasan iad anns am bheil suspainn. “A chùm gu’n toir mì orra-san le’n ionmhuinn mì maoin a shealbhachadh; agus lionaidh mì an ionmhasan.” ‘Gnàth. viii. 21. Tha saoibhreasan an t-saoghail so diamhain, cha’n eil iadsan mar sin. Gnàth. xxiii. 5. Tha saoibhreasan Chrìosd ’n a nì anns am bheil seadh, is e saoibhreasan a th’annta a tha buan-mhaireannach; “Tha beartas agus urram maille riumsa; saoibhreas maireannach agus fireantachd.” Gnàth. viii. 18. Tha saoibhreasan an t-saoghail so ’n an nithean a tha dol as an t-sealladh agus neo-chinnteach. I Tim. vi. 17. Nis faodaidh sinn a bhi dha mealtuinn, ach gu b-obunn tha iad air falbh agus a dol as an t-sealladh; ach saoibhreas Chrìosd is saoibhreas sìorruidh e air son anam sìorruidh. Agus mar a tha shaoibhreasan mar so dhe’n a chuid is fèrr, mar sin tha pailteas Aige dhiubh; tha shaoibhreas neo-chrìochnach agus nach gabh a bhi air a rannsachadh: “Dhòmhsa,” tha Pòl ag ràdh, “as lugha na’n tì as lugha de na naoimh uile thugadh an gràs so, saoibhreas Chrìosd, nach faodar a rannsachadh, a shearmonachadh am measg nan Cinneach.” Ephes. iii. 2. Is E “Oighre nan uile nithean.” Eabh. i. 2. Is Leis uile ionmhasan neamh agus na talmhuinn: tha gach uile iomlanachd a gabhail còmhnuidh Ann, Col. i. 19, eadhon uile iomlanachd na Diadhachd; tha Dia slàn a gabhail còmhnuidh Ann, tha gu leoir Aige gu bhi deanamh suas ar ’n uile fhalamhachd, agus gu bhi freagairt ar ’n uile mhiannaibh. Am bheil sinn ag iarraidh gràis? Tha E làn gràis. Eoin i. 14. Am bheil sinn ag iarraidh beatha? Maille Ris-san tha tobar na beatha. Salm xxxvi. 9. Am bheil sinn ag iarraidh saorsa, saorsa bho’n a pheacadh, bho’n a bhàs, bho ifrinn, bho fheirg? Maille Ris-san tha saorsa phailte. Salm cxxx. 7. Am bheil sinn ag iarraidh sìth? tha E toirt seachad sìth. “Mo shìth-sa tha mì toirt dhuibh.” Eoin xiv. 27. Am bheil sinn ag iarraidh fireantachd? Choilìon E gach uile fhìreantachd. Tha E air tighinn mar “Iehobhah ar fireantachd-ne.” Ier. xxiii. 6. Nis an cuir sibh air chùl an Tighearna saoibhir so? Tha sibh bochd, agus truagh, agus lomnochd; agus nach gabh sibh ris a Chrìosd saoibhir so, a tha dha thairgse Fein, maille r’a uile shaoibhreas dhuibh? O cia cho ceart, uime sin, a theid sibh a dhìth gu bràth! O gu’n robh anam miannach trom an so an diugh,

a bhiodh air a thogail suas le saoibhreas Chrìosd!

III. Am bheil thu air son fiadhlaidheachd, air son spiorad uasal agus còir? Tha so ionmhiannaichte 'n a leithid de dhàimh, agus tha mòran a ruith as a dheigh. Air son so mar an ceudna cha'n eil aon coltach ri Crìosd, is E Tighearna fiadhlaidh a th'ann, de spiorad uasal agus còir, cho maith ri bhi saoibhir. Is iomadh fear aig am bheil saoibhreas gu leoir, ach aig am bheil mar an ceudna spiorad suarach, cumhann, agus sanntach; agus mar sin is a gle bheag a th'aig a mhnaoi dhe'n t-saoibhreas; ach tha aig Crìosd cridhe uasal, suairc, fiadhlaidh; cha'n e mhàin gu'm bheil E saoibhir, ach tha E toileach a bhi caitheamh uile shaoibhreasan agus ionmhasan air a chèile. Le uile ionmhasan a ghraidh agus a ghràis, le uile ionmhasan fhìreantachd agus a chomhfhurtachdan, dh'iarradh E bhi dha'n lionadh gu pailte, gu pailte dha'n comhfhurtachadh, gu pailte dha'n deanamh saoibhir gu bràth. Ciod e'n spiorad còir dha'n taobh a tha E cur an ceill, 'n uair a tha E 'g ràdh, "Ithibh, a chàirdean; òlaibh, seadh, òlaibh gu pailte, a luchd mo ghràidh." Dàn v. 1. Mar gu'n canadh E, Tha gu leoir agam, neo-chrìochnach gu leoir air bhur son, agus bu mhaith leam gu leoir a bhi agaibh-se; bu mhaith leam gu'm biodh leoir bhur 'n anama agaibh dheth gach uile mhaith. Bu mhath leis gu'm biodh gràsan làn, aoibhneasàn làn comhfhurtachdan làn, agus làn-aoibhneasàn aca gu bràth. "Na nithean sin labhair mì ruibh, chum gu'm bi 'ur n-aoibhneas làn." Eoin xvi. 24. Rùnaich E gu'm biodh a leithid de shonas, a leithid de ghradh agus a leithid de dh'fhailte aca Ris-san ann an uchd an Athar, Eoin xvii. 26, agus mar an ceudna a leithid de ghràs agus de naomhachd, Eoin xvii. 22. O ciod e'n cridhe uasal, còir, agus fiadhlaidh a th'aig an Tighearna mhilis so dha chèile! Anam, nach tarraig e thu agus nach tàlaidh e thu dha ionnsuidh? Cha sàsuich nì E goirid air iad a bhi comhphartachadh maille Ris ann 'n a bheannachd Fein. Anam, ma dhiùltas tù an Tighearna saoibhir so biodh fhios agad gu'm bheil ionmhasan do fheirg Aige agus do dhioghaltas mar an ceudna, a dhòirteas E gu pailte ort gu bràth.

IV. Am bheil sibh air son gliocas agus eolas? Tha gliocas agus eolas a deanamh neach gràdhaichte agus ion-mhiannaichte; is e da-rìreadh aon de na h-oirdeirceasan agus na h-iomlanachdan is àirde as urrain a bhi aig neach. Air son so mar an ceudna, cha'n eil aon cosmhuil ri Crìosd; is E "cumhachd Dhé agus gliocas Dhé," I Cor. i. 24. Tha gliocas neo-chrìochnach an Dia shiorruidh a dealradh a mach troimhe; seadh, Annsan tha "uile ionmhasan a ghliocais agus an eolais folaichte," Col. ii. 3, nì dh'fhaodas a bhi air a thuigsinn a thaobh naomhachd a nàduir agus fireantachd

a bheatha, air Dhà aithne bhi Aige air na h-uile nì, cho math ris gach nì is feuch aithne bhi air, a bhi Aige ann Fein. Is E'n aon Dia glìce, Iud. 25. Cha'n eil fìor ghliocas ach Ann-san, agus cha'n eil fìor ghliocas ri fhaotainn ach troimhe-san, agus bh'uaithes-san. Tha E tric air ainmeachadh anns na Sgrìobhturan Gliocas, gu bhi comharrachadh a mach an gliocas neo-chrìochnach a tha Annsan. Is aithne Dhà gach neach agus gach nì, is aithne Dhà'n t-Athair, agus sin, mar is aithne dha'n Athair E. Eoin x. 15. Is aithne Dhà ìntinn agus toil an Athar; uime sin, tha e air a ràdh gu'm bheil E ann an uchd an Athar, nì is e ionad comhnuidh a dhìomhaireachdan cho math ri a ghràdh. Eoin i. 18. Is aithne Dhà uile chomhairlean agus rùintean an Athar a bha bho shean a thaobh an duine; uime sin tha sinn a leughadh a thaobh leabhar beatha an uain, agus ainmeanan sgrìobhta ann. Tais. xiii. 8. Is aithne Dhà uile oibre Dhé an Athar; "Is ionmhuinn leis an Athair am Mac, agus tha e foillseachadh dhà nan uile nithean a tha e fein a deanamh: agus foillsichidh e dhà oibre as motha na iad so, air chor 'us gu'm bi iongantachas oirbhse." Eoin v. 20. Is aithne Dhà buadhan agus iomlanachd Dhé, agus is ann Dhà-san a mhàin dha'n aithne sin, Mata xi. 27. Eoin vi. 46. Is aithne Dhà focal Dhé air fad, oir is E Fein am Facal, Eoin i. 1. Bha e air beachdachadh air le aon, nach b'aithne do na h-aingeil fein uile fhoclaibh Dhé, ach is aithne do Chrìosd iad uile, Agus mar is aithne Dhà mar so Dia agus uile nithibh Dhé, mar so mar an ceudna is aithne Dhà'n duine agus uile nithibh an duine. Is aithne Dhà na h-uile dhaoine agus cìod a tha annta. Eoin ii. 24, 25. Is aithne Dhà staid, fonnan, Smuaintean, crìochan, comhairlean, slighean, feuman, uallaichean, agus buairidhean nan uile. Ann am focal, tha E neo-chrìochnach ann an gliocas, agus ann a comhairle, agus is aithne Dhà gu h-iomlan, mar a chuireas E air adhart a ghloir Fein, agus cia car a chuireas E dìon, a thearnas, agus a bheir E comhphartachadh da chéile, agus a ghiulaineas E air adhart a sonas anns an dòigh is fearr. O cò aige nach biodh a leithid sin de dh' Fhear-pòsda! Anam, ma dhiultas tù E, biodh fhios agad gu'n cog a ghliocas 'n a t-aghaidh; agus is aithne Dhà cia mar a dhamanas agus a sgriosas E gu sìorruidh.

(R'a leantuinn)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Cremation Increasing in Scotland

Seventeen crematoria now deal with about one third of the deaths in Scotland. The trend toward cremating the dead is

increasing both in Scotland and throughout the United Kingdom. We shrink from this practice and utterly disapprove of it. Whatever the men of Jabesh-gilead did with the bodies of King Saul and his sons, in burning them there; we are told "they took their bones and buried them . . .," complete burning into ashes of their dead, was not the practice of the God fearing in the Old Testament Church. In the New Testament we find that Lazurus was laid in the grave, wrapped in grave clothes. Then the rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen, of whom Jesus tells us, when he died, he was buried. And on a certain occasion Jesus said: "Let the dead bury their dead." In this reference we are not concerned with who was to perform this duty, but with the duty itself. Then Joseph, who begged the body of Jesus from Pilate, laid it in a new tomb which he had provided for himself. Stephen, after being stoned to death by the Jews, was carried to his burial. Today, arguments for the practice of cremation include the concern for public health and the limited amount of ground now available for the traditional mode of disposal of the dead. Of course there seems to be plenty of ground available for the provision of such as stadiums for sport and other purposes for the living. Cremation clearly bears the mark of pagan practice.

Ban on Professional Boxing

We were agreeably surprised to learn that Iceland has banned professional boxing. Then, we read that Sweden's Minister of Justice had recently urged a complete ban on professional boxing throughout the Scandanavian countries and thus follow the example of Iceland. The Minister of Justice called professional boxing "this form of public cruelty." It is, of course, a brutal and degrading form of sport. Men are permitted to endeavour to injure one another severely in this sport, whereas in ordinary life men would be committing the crime of assault if they did what professional boxers do to one another. Yet there are thousands of people who pay highly to gloat over this disgusting sport. A general ban everywhere would be consistent even with a civilised outlook, not to speak of a Christian outlook.

National Lottery Plan Approved

A Bill obtained a second reading in the House of Commons in February, which would set up a national lottery board, to run a lottery to make grants to medical research, etc. There were only

86 Members of Parliament in the House to vote on the Bill and only 17 voted against it. The absentees will claim that they were for or against the Bill as it suits them, outside the House. The House of Commons has now become notorious for supporting and passing legislation which no true Christian can regard with anything but abhorrence. This is a serious state of affairs for the British nation. The mover of this Bill, Mr James Tinn (Lab., Cleveland) said that whether we liked or not, gambling was now an accepted part of our way of life. What an admission! And Mr Tinn has been doing his best to see that gambling stays with us to the ruin of many. What a miserable outlook prevails in the House of Commons as to religious and moral issues! "Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth."

Immigration

The extent of immigration from other countries into Great Britain, by those who appear to have a legal right of entry, has become a problem to the Government, and in certain areas, especially in England, controversy arose over the recent Immigration Bill, introduced to Parliament by the Home Secretary, to control the number of immigrants from Kenya. Much has been made by some that these thousands of Asians possess British passports and are entitled to entry without restriction of any kind. Others contend that it is perfectly legal to control and restrict the numbers who are at any one time permitted to enter Britain. All this presents a problem to the minds of those who are certainly not racialists; because this country, with all the goodwill it may exercise, cannot absorb thousands of other races indefinitely. There are thousands of families belonging to Britain who are waiting to be housed. Where are the immigrants to be suitably housed? Education authorities in certain areas cannot provide accommodation or teachers for the hundreds of extra children. It may be that the adult immigrants can find work when they arrive; but there is a good deal of unemployment in the country nevertheless. We are led to understand that Britain is in a serious state economically and yet people from Pakistan have been landing illegally and secretly on our shores, desperately desiring to find a footing in Britain. Surely we must be considered

by some in other lands, to be a "land flowing with milk and honey." Yet we are miscalled and criticised on every hand. The Indians as a nation were glad to see the British leave India for good. There were some who were anything but happy at this event no doubt among the Indian people. Now those who by birth belong to India and Pakistan — yet resident in Kenya — are turning to Britain for a house, work and liberty, when circumstances have become difficult for them by the actions of the Kenya African Government. Something must have taken place in Kenya, from Government level there, which occasioned the flight of Asians to Britain. We are also of the opinion that "it was necessary for the inflow to be brought under control." One thing we do not like is protest marches and demonstrations by Asians enjoying the privileges and liberties of Britain. These observations are based on a practical outlook and not racial prejudice which would be utterly unchristian and unworthy of this magazine. Another matter, not altogether irrelevant here is the fact that we permit our country to be flooded with Mormon missionaries, who are anything but Christian. These emanate from America and are deceiving many throughout the land. We are conscious of the fact that it is difficult to know where to draw the line in such matters.

CHURCH NOTES

Protest re National Lottery Bill

In view of the National Lottery Bill, at present before Parliament, which proposes that State lotteries be legalised, the Religion and Morals Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland wish to express their strong opposition to this proposal.

Gambling, judged in the light of the moral standards of God's Word, is an iniquitous trade, violating the Eighth and Tenth Commandments of the Divine Law, and it can never be made respectable whatever process of legalisation may be resorted to in an attempt to make it so. Gambling is not, therefore, in our view, a trade in which any Government can honourably engage. We

respectfully draw your attention to the views of our Church on gambling as expressed in a resolution on the subject passed at our annual Synod at Inverness in May 1967, a copy of which was forwarded to the former Home Secretary by the Clerk of Synod, Rev. R. R. Sinclair, F.P. Manse, Wick, Caithness.

We would remind the Government that Royal Commissions have twice recommended against having National lotteries. We refer also to the admission made by Mr Taverne, Under Secretary of State, Home Office, in replying to the debate on the second reading of the Gaming Bill, that there is "widespread opposition to the idea of State ownership of gambling."

In view of the foregoing, we urge the Government to abandon its attitude of neutrality to the Bill but rather to oppose it and refuse to sanction the legislation contained in it. (Copies of this protest have been sent to the Home Secretary and to the Secretary of State for Scotland). D. B. Macleod, Convener.

Meeting of Synod

The Annual Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church will meet (D.V.) in the Hall of St. Jude's Church, Glasgow, on Tuesday, the 21st of May, at 6.30 p.m. The retiring Moderator, Rev. D. A. MacLean, M.A., will conduct Public Worship. — Robert R. Sinclair, Clerk of Synod.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF DONATIONS

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