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Message from the Moderator of Synod

by Rev. Donald Campbell, M.A.

"Godliness with contentment is great gain." Neither of these is attained by man's own efforts but both are attainable by the grace of God and to be desired above rubies. In sending this message of good will to our people at home and abroad we ask all to seek this "Gain" at a time when ungodliness has reached alarming proportions and discontentment is rife throughout the world. It is the duty of us all to seek grace that we may "live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world." Titus 2:12.

The year 1974 has been a most eventful one not only in our history but in that of the whole world. Leaders, whose positions of power seemed impregnable, disappeared, some most unceremoniously. Others reasserted their power much to the detriment of God's Kingdom in the world. Infidel governments showed no sign of crumbling, while the Lord's people continued to suffer for righteousness sake.

At a time like this it is good to reflect and also look forward with the desire for better times. When we review the past year, we all agree that it was an eventful one. Let us consider our own share of and involvement in these events. Those who had bereavements will regard the year as marking the end of an era in their lives; the closing of a chapter; happy marriages ended; parents bereaved of their offspring and children of their parents. Added to the poignancy caused by death is the callous and brutal form in which it comes to some. I refer to the victims of violent death by terrorists and the fatal consequences of famine. Our sympathy is with all who have had bereavements during the year. May they be enabled to say "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Job 1:24.

The past year will also remain outstanding in our history for its political and economic crises. The Conservative government fell as a result of industrial action. We had two General Elections and the return of a Labour government. Associated with these developments, the country found itself in the grip of inflation caused by a steep rise in the price of oil. The end result of all this could have been disastrous but hitherto has the Lord helped us. One distressing aspect of our national condition is the unwillingness of both government and people to regard our misfortunes as a rebuke for our sins. Equally depressing is our failure to trace to the Lord's mercies the fact that we are not consumed. Yet notwithstanding the trials and difficulties of 1974 the year was crowned with God's goodness.

The dishonour done to God and His Anointed by unscriptural legislation alarms and grieves us. What recently was regarded a criminal offence is now deemed lawful. Sins which brought divine judgments on others are condoned in this country. Immorality and non-attendance on the means of grace are only a few symptoms of our national decay. Also in the midst of affluence much poverty is reported. Sport has become the god of the many who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. 2 Tim 3:4.

The life of the nation is no longer influenced by the Gospel because few hear it and where it is still proclaimed it is not accompanied by the Holy Spirit; at least not in the measure in which it was once in our land. The perilous times are upon us but in midst of them the Lord has a remnant. To those within our church and beyond, we say, "gird up the loins of your mind, be sober and hope to the end." 1 Peter 1:13. The Lord is not slow concerning His promise and to Him let us look for the preservation and revival of our Christian heritage.

As our people are a cross section of the national spectrum, the church has an opportunity of conveying to those without the doctrine of God's Word. Every member should be a missionary in his or her own vocation. None should be ashamed of the Gospel but should project Christianity in the factory, in the office, in the classroom and everywhere.

Every true branch of the Christian church is set for the defence and proclamation of the Gospel. The Free Presbyterian Church, having these roles to play, is aware of its duty to both its own people and the whole world. Consequently its ministers and missionaries are spread across the globe bringing with them the glorious Gospel of Christ. Far and near ministers and people are united in their desire to share with others the benefits of the testimony inherited from the fathers. For the loyalty of our people, reflected in their witness and generosity, we thank God. As we address ourselves to our people at home and abroad, our heart's desire is

that they might be saved. As we think of the aged, the infirm, the lonely and others for whom life is not easy, our best advice is the Lord's own invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28. To our ministers and all who labour in word and doctrine we say, "Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not." Gal. 6:9. For the Lord's people remains the assurance,

"Thou, with thy counsel, while I live,
wilt me conduct and guide;
and to thy glory afterward,
receive me to abide." Psalm 73:24.

Let the unconverted among us remember the words of the prophet, "Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." Is. 38:1.

As the Church is committed to the preaching of the Gospel in its purity, we appeal to all our people not "to neglect the assembling of themselves together" but to attend the services on Sabbath and weekday meetings. On such occasions when the Gospel is preached and prayer is offered the blessing may be expected. The impotent man waited for 38 years but in the end the Lord appeared and he was healed. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." 2 Peter 3:9. The time factor is subject to the sovereign will of Him who invites us to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Moses' advice to his father-in-law expresses our desire for all who have not yet cast in their lot with us. "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Numbers 10:29.

May the year 1975 bring the Lord's rich blessing to all our people and see the end of ungodliness throughout the World. The God of peace be with you.

Retirement gives an opportunity for meditation and communion with God; even they who are called to the most active life, must yet have their contemplative hours, and must find time to be alone with God.

Matthew Henry.

The virtue of abstinence is rarely exercised where there is an abundance of provisions.

John Calvin.

Whose I am and Whom I Serve

Words such as these were hardly spoken in less propitious circumstances. They were uttered by the Apostle Paul in the very midst of danger and death, when, as it were, the very elements were uniting in all their fury to bring the Apostle and all aboard the broken and battered vessel to a watery grave. Yet even here, and in circumstances such as these the Apostle unashamedly and avowedly owns himself to be the Lord's.

In one instance at least in the history of the Church in Scotland in Covenanting times we do have an echo of the Apostle's words. The instance to which we refer to is Margaret Wilson, one of the Wigtown martyrs. Facing death through drowning by being fixed to a stake well below the high water mark she remained undaunted. When her persecutors urged her to recant her beliefs, she only cried out more firmly "I am one of Christ's children. Let me go."

How easy it may be to own the Lord when placed in congenial circumstances; yet even there how often do the Lord's followers fail and deny their Lord. The Apostle Peter himself, so ardent a follower of Christ as to aver — though all should deny thee, yet will not I, found himself in an atmosphere so hostile to Christ and His Cause, that the accusation of a servant maid and others was all that was required to make him say — and to say with an oath — "I know not the man." How little we know of the difficulty of owning Christ in Peter's circumstances — a time of which the Lord said to his enemies, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." Let us not raise an accusing finger at the servant of the Lord as though we would do better in similar circumstances but let us ever be conscious of our proneness to falter and fall. If Peter failed how much more would we!

To own that we are Christ's, and that we are for him and not for another is our duty in all circumstances. We must be like those who said, "Thine are we, David; and on thy side, thou son of Jesse." There must be no ambiguity here. If we have been redeemed with the precious blood of the Lamb of God, if we have been washed from our filthiness in that blood, must it not be a sin of the deepest dye to deny that we are Christ's. We are well aware of the difficulty of owning that we are the Lord's when the world is pointing out to us how little we resemble the Master, and the devil is bringing his lying accusations to bear upon us, and the corruption of our own hearts seems to confirm it all. But over against all these and in the most trying circumstances we are required to confess Christ.

At the beginning of another year, then, let this be our motto: Whose I am and whom I serve. Let us carry it with us as a banner throughout the

year; let us wave it aloft, not only in the times when for a season the conflict has subsided, but also in the very heat of battle and in the many encounters with the world, the flesh and the devil which await us during the year. May it please the Lord so to bestow His grace upon us that when we reach the end of this year — should the Lord in His providence spare us till then — we will still be holding this banner high. Above all, when we come to the last encounter and must march off the battlefield forever, may it be as victors with a shout of triumph and with banners flying — and this one among the rest, Whose I am and whom I serve — declaring to the praise of God's grace, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." 2 Tim 4: 7, 8.

Sermon

by Rev. Wm. MacLean, M.A.

(Sermon preached and recorded in Palmerston North, New Zealand, on Friday, 23rd June, 1967).

TEXT: 1 Peter 1, 3, 4 — *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you."*

We shall consider as the Lord will enable us: 1. Those who have this hope. 2. The nature of their hope — it is a lively or living hope. 3. That bound up with this hope is an interest in and a right to the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for all who have this hope. In other words, it is those who have this hope, as the words of our text make clear, who are heirs of Heaven.

And firstly — those who have this hope. There was a day when they did not have this hope. The Word of God declares that all by nature are without God and without hope in the world, that is without this lively hope, this good hope through grace. All have a hope of some kind, but only those who have been begotten again, or born again by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, have this lively hope.

Their portion is in this life only. Their hopes and prospects therefore are

worldly and materialistic. They have no hope for eternity. Their need of being born again, and of being prepared for death and eternity are matters which give them no concern. They are of the earth earthy. They are like the rich man in the parable who prospered in worldly things, and who said to his soul, "Soul, thou has much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." Luke 12 v. 20. How numerous they are in our day who live as this rich man, blinded by the god of this world, wise in their own estimation but fools in God's sight, careless and unconcerned as to their latter end! But the wrath of God will be the eternal portion of all who die as the rich man did, for "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm 9 v. 17). They shall then know, when it is forever too late, the answer to the solemn question, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" It would be our wisdom to face this question now, for "now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation," and to believe that nothing short of having Christ as our portion will profit or save our souls. "Godliness with contentment" the Word of God tells us, "is great gain." We can have neither, apart from faith in Christ. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," for "none perish that Him trust."

There are others, and they too form a numerous class, who profess to have a hope. They do not question but that they are God's children, and that they will be received into Heaven at last. If however they were examined as to the foundations of their hope, they would confess that they live honest and good lives, engage in social work, in helping the poor, the sick and the bereaved, they do much for the Church and serve the Lord. They are not irreligious like the first class. But all without exception, whose hope for eternity is based on what they themselves think they are and upon what they do and what they hope to do, have not "the lively hope" which our text speaks of, but a false hope. Those who have this "lively hope," their good hope through grace is not based on any works of their own. It is based on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. Christ is the centre and the foundation of their hope. The Truth declares that the hope of the hypocrite shall perish, but that the righteous has a hope in his death. A hypocrite, according to the common scriptural usage of the term, is a person who is deluded or self-deceived. All who are building their hopes for eternity on their own good works, their kindness

to their neighbours and so on, are building on a foundation of sand. They are self-deceived and their hope shall perish. They are not of the righteous who have a hope in their death. The foolish virgins were hypocrites, that is they were self-deceived. At death the lamp of their hope went out. Instead of being received into heaven as they expected, they were shut out and shut into the prison of eternal despair. We read that the door was shut. How solemn the words' "And the door was shut"! But the wise virgins who had this lively or living hope entered in.

2. Now in connection with the nature of this hope, it is said to be a lively hope or as it is elsewhere called, a good hope through grace that shall not be put to shame. We are told that those who have it, were begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Christ's resurrection from the dead implies the death which He died in order to make an atonement for sin. "He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." No sinner can be justified in God's sight, can be accounted righteous and have the pardon of his sins, but on the ground of Christ's atoning death. "It is the blood," we read, "that maketh an atonement for the soul." No blood could make an atonement for the soul but the precious blood of Christ. The blood of the sacrifices slain on Jewish altars pointed to the coming of Christ, to the one sacrifice which He in the fulness of time was to offer for sin. It is Christ's sacrifice on Calvary that made the atonement that God required for sin. It is the sacrifice which the Lord in His eternal love provided. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have eternal life." We therefore read, that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin. There is infinite efficacy and merit in Christ's blood to wash the foulest sinner clean. As proof that Christ by the offering of Himself met and satisfied the claims of divine justice and made the atonement for sin which justice in God required, God raised Him from the dead on the third day, and not only raised Him from the dead, but exalted and glorified Him in the human nature with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour for to give repentance and remission of sins unto Israel. It is in virtue of His death, resurrection, ascension and glorification, that He is set before us in the gospel as a Saviour mighty to save. There is no hope for any sinner apart from Christ, but in Christ there is hope for the greatest sinner out of hell. He is set before us in the gospel as a door of hope and as an open door. "I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved."

It is true of those who have a good hope through grace, that they died to

the false hope they once entertained. We have either a good hope or a false hope. If we have not been begotten again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, then our hope is false. It is a hope that will perish. The apostle Paul tells us, there was a time in his life that he was a godly young man in his own estimation. He fully believed he was in possession of a hope that gave him a right to the heavenly inheritance. In the mercy of God he died to that hope. He came to see it to be false and unfounded. It was based on the training and privileges he had as an orthodox Jew, which included the sacraments of the Old Testament Church, Circumcision and the Passover. Besides the thorough grounding he had in the law and the prophets at the feet of Gamaliel, and the zeal with which he did God service, he bore a character which was outwardly blameless and above reproach. If any could lay claim to credentials for heaven on the ground of church privileges and good works it was Saul of Tarsus. A day, however, came in his experience when he was brought to see that they were altogether irrelevant as a ground of salvation, that he was guilty of going about to establish his own righteousness and not submitting to the righteousness of God. "When the commandment came," he confesses, "sin revived and I died." The commandment which gave a death-blow to his mistaken hopes was the tenth commandment. "I had not known sin, but by the law, for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." The Holy Spirit opened up to his understanding and conscience the spirituality of God's law, that it requires perfect obedience in heart, walk and conversation. Such perfect obedience can only come from a nature that is holy, sinless and undefiled. Adam, as he came forth from the hand of God in a state of innocency, had such a nature. He was therefore, able to come up to the righteousness of the law, to give the law that perfect obedience which the law required. But since the Fall man has a nature that is sinful, defiled and depraved. On account of the sinfulness of our nature and the sinfulness of our actions we are under the curse and condemnation of God's holy law. As it is written, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The ruin of man's nature by the Fall, and his total inability to be saved by any obedience of his own to the law, is experimentally opened up in the understanding of all who have a good hope through grace. They are taught to know that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. That is an unerasable conviction that the Holy Spirit stamps on their hearts. But not only did those who have this good hope die to all hope of obtaining salvation, or of being justified in God's sight by any works of righteousness of their own, but

they also died to all ability on their part of believing in Christ. Persons may profess to believe in, and even defend and contend for, the doctrine of the total depravity of man's nature and hold to the doctrine of justification by faith, and yet only have a natural faith, or as divines term it, an historical faith. It is the faith of decisionism, the soul-deluding technique of popular evangelists who lead their converts to believe, that their decision for Christ is the fruit of the faith which is the gift of God. We can believe in the Fall of man, the divinity of Christ, His virgin birth, atoning death, His physical resurrection, ascension and glorification, and as we have already mentioned, the doctrine of justification by faith alone, and yet have only an historical or intellectual faith. The intellect of man apart from regenerating grace can attain to such a faith and to a sound and profound acquaintance with the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. Persons brought up in orthodox circles unquestionably hold to such doctrines. There are many, too, who undergo an intellectual conversion from Arminianism to Calvinism. They come to hold and to uphold the doctrines of free and sovereign grace. But alas! They unwarrantably conclude that because their creed is sound, that their hope is good. But all who have been convinced of their sinnership before God, whether they were orthodox or unorthodox, were convinced of their inability to believe in Christ. The Holy Spirit convinces all whom He savingly teaches, of the sin of unbelief, that their inability is their sin and proof of their guilt. They are brought in guilty before God, the judge of all, in their consciences and brought to see and to believe, that God would be just in their eternal condemnation. Only those who have been convinced of their total inability, believe experimentally, and therefore savingly, in the doctrine of the total depravity of man's nature, for no sooner has the sinner died to his own ability and to realise that in himself he is helpless and hopeless, than his mind is enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, so that he sees Christ by faith and receives and rests upon Him alone as He is freely offered in the gospel. All who are regenerated are dead to the law. No sinner who has passed from death unto life looks to the law for life.

All, without exception, who belong to the household of faith, whether sanctified from the womb as John the Baptist was, or like Timothy from childhood made wise unto salvation, whether their conversion corresponds with that of Lydia or of the Philippian jailer, all are dead to the law. And if dead to the law then married to Christ, as the Truth declares, in a covenant which ensures and makes over to them all the blessings which are in Christ. "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." They

are called effectually and justified freely. "It is one thing," as Dr Owen says, "to be in a state of grace, it is another to know that this is the case. All believers are in a state of grace. They have peace with God, being reconciled to Him by the blood of the cross, but as to what shall be the measure of their understanding of their interest in it, this is left to the sovereign grace and good pleasure of God. There are many believers who all their days never come to an abiding sense of peace with God, but are filled with troubles and exercised with fears and perplexities, so that they go sorrowing and heavy all their days." Persons with an intellectual or historical faith are not tried as to their faith or as to their hope. They are buoyed up with the delusion of an unquestioned assurance. The savour of spiritual death is in their writings no matter how sound, and in their exercises no matter how scriptural. They are strangers to the poverty of spirit of the living in Jerusalem (Matth. 5). Those who have a good hope through grace are said to be an afflicted and poor people whose trust is in the name of the Lord.

A "lively hope" is not apart, as we already observed, from faith in Christ. The confession and desire of those who have it is, "that I might be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Faith is the substance of things hoped for. Faith sees a substance, a reality, in the blessings of redemption freely offered to us as sinners in the gospel. We read of those in the parable of the marriage feast to whom the invitation, "All things are now ready, come ye to the feast," made no appeal. What was real and of substance to them was their land, their oxen, their merchandise and their family concerns. They are the seed of the serpent, whose god is their belly and who live in the dust. They have neither appetite nor relish for the manna from heaven. But the lively hope and the faith unfeigned of saving grace seeks to rise to the confession of the apostle — "the things that were gain to me, them I counted loss for Christ, yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." Faith sees a reality in the blessings of the gospel, and hope waits for them. Those therefore, who have this hope, are a waiting people. They wait upon the Lord and look to Him for the blessings their souls stand in need of.

My soul, wait thou with patience
upon thy God alone;
On Him dependeth all my hope
and expectation.

Ps. 62.5 (Metr. version).

Where this "lively hope" is there is an endeavour to keep the commandments of God. Those who are in Christ, are under the law to Christ. Although they are dead to the law as a ground of acceptance, they are under the law to Christ as their rule of life. "If ye love Me," Christ says, "keep my commandments." The prayer and desire of grace is, "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments: for therein do I delight." They love the law of God after the inner man. They are not under the law, but under grace. That is, they are delivered from the condemnation of the law, but not from the obedience due to the law. The grace of love in the soul manifests itself in obedience. "This is the love of God that we keep His commandments." There is false teaching abroad in connection with the believer's relation to the law. The verse, "ye are not under the law but under grace," is interpreted to mean that the law as a moral code and rule of life for the believer is dispensed with. Such an interpretation is not from grace but from nature, for the grace of God that bringeth salvation, as the apostle says in his epistle to Titus, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. Saving knowledge of Christ is all of grace. "And hereby we do know that we know Him," says the apostle John in his First Epistle, "if we keep His commandments. He that saith I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him." There are others who hold that the moral law is not the believer's rule of life, but the precepts of the gospel. But what are the precepts of the gospel, but an unfolding and an opening up of the spirituality of the law?

It is by the resurrection of Christ from the dead that His people are begotten again to a lively hope. The denial of the doctrine of Christ's resurrection from the dead, so widespread in our day, is the very negation of the Christian faith. All who deny Christ's physical resurrection from the dead have no lively hope. They are liars and hypocrites, and all such shall have their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death. All who have this lively hope believe in the resurrection of Christ, for their faith and hope is in a living Saviour, the One who was dead and is alive, and alive for evermore after the power of an endless life. They have, accordingly, a love to the Lord's day, the divine memorial to Christ's resurrection from the dead. A person who claims to love Christ and who has no love for His day is self-deceived. His love is spurious and his hope is false. The following question was put by the saintly Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne: "Did you ever meet with a lively believer in any country under heaven — one who loved Christ, and lived a

holy life — who did not delight in keeping holy to God the entire Lord's day?"

Those who have this "lively hope" are said in this chapter to purify their souls by obeying the truth through the Spirit. The Word of God has become precious to them.

"This word of thine my comfort is
In mine affliction:
For in my straits I am revived
by this thy word alone."

Ps. 119.50.

They are as new-born babes, as we read in chapter 2 of this epistle, desiring the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby. Nothing will sustain and nourish the life of grace in the soul, but the sincere milk of the Word, unadulterated by false and erroneous views. Those born again cannot feed on the husks of false doctrine. Those who wilfully do, prove that they are strangers to grace and to God. We find the apostle warning the saints in Corinth against complicity in or compromise with what is false and idolatrous in doctrine and worship, and he concludes his warning with the exhortation, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." What is contrary to the revealed will of God as set forth in His Word is "unclean" in His sight. And if "unclean" in God's sight, it cannot but have a defiling and deadening effect on those who countenance it. It will rob His people of their liberty, and prove a yoke of bondage to them. But in obeying the truth through the Spirit in pursuing the path of duty so clearly set before them in the above exhortation, the Lord will be restoring to them the joy of His salvation, and giving them tokens that they are His sons and daughters. However difficult and trying they may see their duty to be, how gracious the encouragement in the words, "And I will receive you." To the self-deceived, the approval and the applause of men is more to them than the honour of Christ and His Cause in the world.

They seek also to purify their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, as set forth in verses 14-16 of this chapter. "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance; but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy, as I am holy." "And every man," says the apostle John in his First Epistle, "that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." His people are kept conscious

of their need of being cleansed and kept. And to Christ, the Hope of Israel and the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble, they look for both. They plead the merit of His precious blood to cleanse them from secret faults and to keep them from all presumptuous sins. With the Psalmist they confess, "If in my heart I sin regard the Lord me will not hear." Balaam was a prophet whose profession was great and his words were good. "Let me die," he said, "the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." Although he desired the end of the righteous, for the righteous has a hope in his death, Balaam had no desire to live the life of the righteous. He loved the wages of unrighteousness despite his confessions to the contrary. The Lord exposed the enmity which he cherished to His Israel. His hope, like the hope of every hypocrite, perished at death. How solemn the words, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." They were workers of iniquity either in secret or in public. But those with a good hope are made honest. They greatly fear being deceived for eternity. "Search me, O God," is their cry "and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

It is true of His people that they have unfeigned love to the brethren. "We know," said the apostle, "that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."

They have a love for the Cause of Christ in the world. They seek and pray for the coming of His kingdom, the glorious days promised, when His will shall be done in the earth as it is done in heaven. It is through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit blessing the gospel, which will usher in the millennial glory of the Church, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." Their prayer and desire is that of the Psalmist, "The whole earth let His glory fill, Amen, so let it be." The Rev. Christopher Munro, a godly minister of the last century in Scotland, once remarked in the course of his preaching, "If you can say in truth, 'Thy kingdom come,' I tell you that you have what will stand you for eternity."

3. Those who have this lively hope have a right and a title to the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away. Their right to it has its source in their election in Christ before the foundation of the world. Christ redeemed them by the price He paid for

them, and by His perfect obedience obtained a right to the inheritance for them. "I go," He said to His disciples, "to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be also." He was then on His way to Gethsemane and Calvary. They have a right to the inheritance through the sprinkling of Christ's blood upon them, in their regeneration, in their being quickened out of the grave of spiritual death in which they were, and in their being put in possession of a good hope through grace.

It is through much tribulation that they are to enter the kingdom, but whatever storms they meet with on their voyage to the desired haven, it is said that the anchor of their hope is both sure and steadfast. It is the all-prevailing intercession of Jesus, their Saviour and Advocate within the veil, who is made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec, that keeps the anchor of their hope sure and steadfast. He ever liveth to make continual intercession for them. It is in virtue of Christ's intercession that they are kept in the world, sanctified through the truth and in His own appointed time, glorified. They are said in verse 3 to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. That is the salvation they will receive at death, when they enter into possession of their eternal inheritance. It is through faith in His power that they are kept. It is through faith in His blood that they are washed.

So they from strength unwearied go
still forward unto strength,
Until in Sion they appear
before the Lord at length.

Psalm 84.7.

Their desire is to give to Him the honour, and the glory and the praise which are His due. They feel they come far short of what they desire. When they would do good, they find evil to be present with them. But the Lord has promised to fulfil the desire of those that fear Him. Their desire shall be fully satisfied when throughout the endless ages their song of praise shall be "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

(The above sermon has been printed in pamphlet form and is available free on request from Westminster Standard, P.O. Box 740, Gisborne, New Zealand.)

If we be content with that which Christ gives us, we shall want nothing.

John Brown.

The Saints in Heaven

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thess. 4:18.

Here a question may arise, whether the saints, when they go to heaven, have any peculiar comfort in meeting with those who have been their pious friends on earth? I answer in the affirmative, and I think it is evident from 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Here it is evident:

1. That what the apostle mentions, as a matter of comfort to Christians respecting their departed Christian friends, is that they shall meet them, and see them again. It is not only that their departed friends, though dead, are happy, but they shall see them, and be with them again. This is here plainly asserted. Mourn not for them, says the apostle, as those that have no hope; for when Christ comes, God shall bring them again, and we which are alive shall be caught up with them; and so we shall be ever with the Lord together. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. The apostle therefore, must be understood to mean, that they should comfort one another when mourners, with the consideration that they should hereafter be with their departed friends again in a glorious and happy state, and never part any more.

2. That there will be something else that will give comfort in meeting them in a future state, than in seeing other saints; otherwise why did the apostle mention it for their comfort, that they should see them again rather than other saints whom they had not seen nor heard of? The apostle's speaking thus to the Thessalonians might give them just ground to expect, that the peculiar strong affection which they had cherished for their departed friends, which was crossed by their departure, would be again gratified by meeting them again; for this crossing of that affection was the ground of their mourning. If the Thessalonians knew, that to see their friends again in another world would be no gratification to the

affection which they had for them as their friends, and did no way think or conceive of it as such, then to think of seeing them would be no more comfort to them or remedy to their sorrow than to think that they should see any other saint that lived or died in another country, or in a past age; and that, because it would be no remedy to the ground and foundation of their mourning, namely, the crossing of their affection to them as their friends; and if it would be no remedy to their mourning, to think thus respecting it, it never would have been mentioned to them by the apostle as a ground of comfort, or reason why they need not mourn. That was what they mourned for, namely, that they should not have their affections towards them satisfied, by seeing them and conversing with them again. That for which the heathen here spoken of, that have no hope, mourned excessively, was that they should never any more have their affection gratified. Hence it follows that the special affection, which the saints have in this world to other saints who are their friends, will in some respects remain in another world.

There is no reason why we should suppose that saints that have dwelt together in this world, and have shown kindness to each other, have been affectionate towards each other's true happiness, should not love one another with a love of gratitude for it in another world. There is no reason why good ministers whom God hath made the instruments of salvation to others, should not have special joy in meeting their converts in heaven. 2 Corinthians 1:14, "As also ye have acknowledged us in part that we are your rejoicing, even as ye also are ours, in the day of the Lord Jesus." 1 Thessalonians 2:19, "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For ye are our glory and our joy."

I see no reason why those that love one another with a virtuous love, and from such a love have shown kindness one to another, should not love one another the better for it in another world. There is no reason to think, that the friendship contracted here on earth between saints will be rooted out in another world. All natural affections so far as founded in animal nature or the infirmity of the present state, will cease in another world; and with respect to any affection that the godly have had to the finally reprobate, the love of God will swallow it up, and cause it wholly to cease. But I see nothing that argues that one saint in glory may not have a special respect to another because God made use of that other as an instrument to bring him into being, and thus made him the remote occasion of his happiness; or that when pious parents lose pious children, they may not comfort themselves with the thought that they shall go to them, as probably David

did when he said concerning his child, 2 Samuel 12:23, "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me:" or that even a former acquaintance with persons and their virtues may not occasion a particular respect in another world. They may go to heaven with a desire to see them upon that very account. The impressions which they have of their amiable qualifications, in consequence of their acquaintance with them here, may yet remain in another world.

(Extract from a sermon by Rev. Jonathan Edwards on Romans 2:10.)

Arminianism

by Rev. Donald Beaton

Careful students of contemporary theological literature must be impressed by the extent to which it is permeated by the leaven of Arminianism. What that system failed to achieve in the arena of debate it has accomplished by peaceful penetration. It has saturated theological thinking to an extraordinary degree. The "revival" literature of today is full of it, as is also the religious press generally. Warnings from the pulpit and denunciation of the errors of Arminianism are not now heard as once they were. Even in pulpits where the truth is preached, it is to be feared that, in some cases, a faithful witness is not raised against Arminianism. The cause of this may be due in a measure to the fact that in defending the cause of truth new forms of error have to be exposed and assailed, with the result that the old enemy is left so far unmolested as if it were dead. Unfortunately this is not so; Arminianism is very much alive in the pulpit, in the theological and religious press, and in the modern evangelistic meeting. It is true, no doubt, that there has been a notable revival of Calvinistic teaching on the Continent, and an effort is being made to revive interest in it in this country, but there can be little doubt notwithstanding that Arminianism still enjoys great favour with the religious public. When we bear in mind the horror with which our forefathers regarded Arminianism, the modern attitude to it indicates how far the professing Church has drifted from the position of the theologians of those days. The symbolic books of the Church of England — the XXXIX. Articles — and the symbolic books of the Church of Scotland — the Confession of Faith — are undoubtedly Calvinistic, but can it be said that all who sign these symbols are Calvinists at heart?

The theological system called Arminianism received its name from the

Dutch theologian, Jakob Hermanss, the Latinised form of whose name was Arminius. He was born at Oudewater, about 18 miles from Rotterdam, in 1560, and died at Leyden in 1609. In 1588 he was appointed preacher of the Reformed congregation at Amsterdam. While here his views underwent a change, and his expositions of Romans vii and ix and his utterances on election and reprobation gave offence. His colleague, Plancius, opposed his views, and disputes arose in the consistory which for a time were put to a stop by the burgomasters. Arminius was called to fill the professor's chair at Leyden, and in his lectures on predestination he stirred up considerable opposition, his chief opponent being Gomarus. The dispute spread among the students and the ministers. The followers of Arminius refused to be called Arminians, preferring the name Remonstrants, from their *Remonstrantiae*, drawn up in 1610 after Arminius's death (1609), which formed an exposition and justification of their views. They held that they should not be hampered by subscription to the symbolical books, but that free investigation on the Bible should be allowed. Their Remonstrance was met by a Counter-Remonstrance. The controversy went on for years, causing considerable disturbance. When Prince Maurice countenanced the cause of the Counter-Remonstrants a change took place as to the State attitude to the controversy, and a national synod was called by the States-general at Dort (May 30, 1618).

The presentation of the case of the Arminians in Five Articles determined to a large extent the form in which the whole subject was afterwards discussed at the Synod of Dort under the Five Heads: (1) Predestination or election. (2) On the death of Christ, the nature and extent of His redemption. (3) On the cause of faith, that is, the power or agency by which it is produced. (4) The mode of conversion, or the agency by which it is effected, and the mode of its operation. (5) On perseverance. On these great doctrines the Synod of Dort gave decisions condemning the Arminian positions. It is mainly the doctrines of conditional predestination, man's ability to spiritual good and a universal atonement, which have made their way into the theological thinking of our time. No doubt some of these doctrines make a pleasing appeal to the natural man, but they are contrary to the clear statements of scripture and the plain facts of experience.

*Dr. W. Cunningham seems to us to have happily hit on the real inwardness of the Arminian error when he says: "It is not very difficult to

* Dr. Cunningham was a master theologian, and in the work quoted and in his "Reformers and Theologians of the Reformation" he has given an invaluable exposition of the Reformed theology.

point out what may fairly enough be described as the fundamental characteristic principle of Arminianism — that which Arminianism either is, or has a strong and constant tendency to become; and this is, that it is *a scheme for dividing or partitioning the salvation of sinners between God and sinners themselves*, instead of ascribing it wholly, as the Bible does, to the sovereign grace of God, the perfect and all-sufficient work of Christ, and the efficacious and omnipotent operation of the Spirit . . . The encroachment they make upon the grace of God in the salvation of sinners varies, of course, according to the extent to which they carry out their views, especially in regard to men's natural depravity, and the nature and necessity of the work of the Spirit in regeneration and conversion; but Arminianism in any form can be shown to involve the ascription to men themselves, more directly or more remotely, of a place and influence in effecting their own salvation, which the Bible denies to them and ascribes to God" (Historical Theology, ii. 377, 378).

This is a serious indictment against Arminianism, for it virtually means that it robs God of His glory in the salvation of the sinner and denies that this salvation is all of grace from beginning to end.

Prof. R. Watts, of Belfast, used to tell his students that Arminianism fought none of the battles of the Reformation, and that when it appeared on the stage it was as the sower of discord and disunion that it made its presence felt. Arminianism, in a word, is a direct challenge to the sovereignty of God. This is the rock against which it is spending its strength, and on which it will ultimately be broken to pieces. In this attack it has as its supports all those elements in our fallen nature, which are at war with the divine sovereignty. Arminianism has never had a glimpse of the majesty of the divine truth that God, as sovereign Lord, has a right to do with His creatures what seems to Him good, and it has failed to grasp the utter ruin of man and the awful depths to which he has fallen. It denies to God the high place that is due to Him, and exalts man to a position which is not his due. If it has ever candidly faced the Saviour's words: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight," it has never been awed and subdued by them.

He that loves not Christ more than his life, bids fair to lose both Christ and his life. John Brown.

They that know God will be humble; they that know themselves cannot be proud. Flavel.

Letter

by Mr. A. Docter, Holland

Delft, Oct. 1952

My dear friend,

I am ashamed for having left your most welcome letter of August unanswered. Don't think it is owing to indifference or unthankfulness.

The rest in England did me a lot of good but I should have liked to be at a communion. Stratherrick appealed to me strongly, especially when Miss McG. wrote to say that Rev. Macfarlane was expected to preach there. I am such a fool always expecting to find it from man. I remember having read about a lady who got a blessing at a communion when Ebenezer Erskine was preaching. She did not know him and enquired who this messenger of God was. The next week she travelled to his place to hear him preach again, but she did not feel what she experienced before. When calling at the manse, she asked Mr. Erskine to explain this, and his answer was "Last week you came to hear Jesus, but now you have come to hear poor Ebenezer Erskine." I had a desire to meet Mr. S. again and by Providence he was in the south when I was in London and I heard him preach from Gen. 28 v. 19 "And he called the name of that place Bethel." It was a real feast to me. "I am with thee," seemed to open an ocean of love for him.

I wonder if you have ever heard of Mr. J. Hunter, minister of an associate congregation. He was a contemporary of the Erskines and wrote beautiful sermons on "The bush burning yet not consumed." Most wonderful! He wrote "How safe is the Church of Christ, blocked up, as it were, in the attributes of God, as in a safe enclosure." How blind we are as compared with those godly ministers. I wish the scales of ignorance fell from my eyes. It always touched me when at the close of your communion seasons these words from Ps. 72 were sung:

And blessed be His glorious name,
To all eternity
The whole earth let His glory fill,
Amen, so let it be.

Rev. Beaton, Gairloch, is a humble man and I did enjoy his company last year.

I must stop now. Remember me to the friends. Mrs. Docter sends her kindest regards.

Your friend,
A. Docter.

Devout and Honourable Women Not a Few

2. Liliās Dunbar (Mrs. Campbell)

Liliās Dunbar was born about 1657, the only daughter of Dunbar of Boggs and his wife Christian, daughter of Sir John Campbell of Calder. Being orphaned while still very young, she was cared for during her childhood by two cousins, first Sir Hugh Campbell of Calder, and then Lady Duffus of Elgin. Though restrained from gross outward sins by the Christian teaching she received in their homes, Liliās felt no serious impressions of the Truth until her 16th year, when she became dangerously ill with smallpox. Under this sickness, she vowed that, if spared, she would strive to become a true servant of God, and attend the ministry of the Presbyterian preachers, who far surpassed the episcopal clergy both in spirituality and usefulness in turning sinners to Christ and building up the people of God. At that time, however, she did not perceive how much popery and will-worship there was in Episcopacy, nor did she understand that the sufferings of the Presbyterians was for such a weighty matter as the Kingly office of Christ.

On recovering from this illness, she returned from Elgin to Calder, where several godly ministers, notably Thomas Ross, Thomas Hog, and James Urquhart were preaching; but while she prized their ministry, she also confessed that "the getting of Christ and a new heart" was not her first desire, but "to get something in herself to answer God's goodness with."

In 1677, Liliās suffered a heavy affliction in the death of Lady Duffus, her kind cousin and benefactor, whereupon she left Elgin, without having any prospect of a new home. That this providence was blessed to her is evident from a diary entry of May 1st of that year: "Now I cannot pass by without observing the wisdom and goodness of God to me. It was the time I was most desolate. Then it was that the gracious God, who delights in showing mercy, did enlarge my heart, and made me to take hold of Him who is the pearl of great price, in whom all fulness dwells . . . The Lord, who is the Almighty, by His power, made my soul to close with the Lord Jesus, wholly on the terms that the Gospel holdeth forth; and the Lord Himself gave me faith to believe in Jesus Christ, that He was my Saviour, which I could never attain before that time on good grounds. On that blessed morning to me, I got the Rock of Ages to be my support, and I got Jesus Christ to be to me the end of the Law for righteousness, to

comfort me." Shortly afterwards she adds: "Truly, I think, nothing less than deliverance out of soul troubles, and the love of Christ, could make me overcome the loss of her who was my all in the world; my pleasure, honour and riches were all in her, but how soon was all this laid in the dust to me. Yet praises for ever be to Him who did it, so that we both were gainers. She hath passed from the valley of misery, and, as she herself said at her death, hath gotten the palm tree in her hand, and now she walks with the Lamb in white. As for my part, for brass I have gotten gold, for a fading flower I have gotten the noble Plant of Renown, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person." In recalling this 'time of love,' Miss Dunbar does not fail to mention the great help she received through the words of Thomas Hog, whom she calls 'the Bridegroom's Friend.' Visiting him in Forres earlier that year, she found his description of her spiritual case so accurate, though she had told him nothing of it, and his parting words: "Fear not, ye seek Jesus" so penetrating and encouraging, that she was given no rest until Christ revealed Himself to her soul.

A noteworthy event of the same year was Miss Dunbar's visit, accompanied by a friend, Mrs. Jean Taylor, to the godly Thomas Ross, then a prisoner in Tain. "We found much of the presence of God in his company," she writes, "and our hearts opened to one another to tell of the goodness of God to our souls. Being alone with him next morning, I told him all the particular steps I could remember of my soul exercises since . . . being his hearer two years before . . . Mr. Thomas wept for joy, and I was so filled with a sense of the wonderful power of God, and His love to my soul in Christ Jesus, that I was put to silence for a while, and could not get expressions to vent the ocean of His love."

In 1679, Miss Dunbar was married to Alexander Campbell of Torrach, a man of genuine and intelligent piety, whose character, habits and tastes were very congenial to her own. Their domestic happiness was interrupted, however, after six years, when, at the height of the 'killing time,' her husband was forced to flee to Ireland, having been summoned before the Privy Council for supporting the Presbyterian cause. Mrs. Campbell herself, remaining behind to nurse her ailing mother, was sentenced to be banished from the country, but the death of Charles Stuart and the accession of his brother James led to her being overlooked, a fact which she afterwards remembered with gratitude.

It was during the persecution period that Mrs. Campbell was also deprived of the minister who had been most instrumental in her spiritual growth, Rev. Thomas Hog. His banishment from Morayshire caused her

deep sorrow, and on his restoration after the Revolution of 1688, she and her husband paid him a memorable visit at Muirtown. The outcome was very salutary for her. On wishing to know his thoughts concerning her spiritual state, she received nothing but a refusal to comment; on mentioning several inward troubles, to which she could not submit, she was reproved for pride and stubbornness of spirit; and the next day on expressing her fears that some sharp trial was awaiting her to test the reality of the submissiveness she had now been given, she was firmly but lovingly told to beware of anxious thoughts about the future, and to trust confidently in God, this faithful servant adding pointedly the words of Job: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." "Thus," she wrote, "did the blessed man press me to live the life of faith, and took leave of me, embracing me as a father does his child, saying: 'You and I shall be together with the Lord forever'."

Shortly afterwards (Jan. 4th, 1692) she was called to mourn his death. "It was not a surprise to me," she wrote, "though great matter of lamentation. My husband and I had seen him in August. We then saw that he was near the end of his journey, by his spirit being transported with the hopes of glory, and his bodily health and strength failed." Among the many observations she made of his Christian character and life, the following may serve as a sample: "He had a large measure of the Spirit of God, by which he knew the deep things of God . . . He had a divine experimental understanding of the Scriptures, of the work of conversion, and cases of conscience . . . He was a Caleb indeed, who followed the Lord fully in his ministry, in prison, in banishment, in strange lands and unto death. Even the haters of godliness were forced to own that God was in him of a truth, and that he kept his integrity." Despite the great sense of loss she felt at his death, Mrs. Campbell was singularly blessed in that providence. "His removal," she wrote, "made the world desolate in my esteem, and raised my affections from things below to things above, where Christ and the spirits of just men made perfect are. In my mourning I was made to bless the Lord, who had put an end to the sufferings of his faithful servant, and to submit to His will who had said: "He that will be my servant, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall my servant be." While noting that he suffered much bodily pain previous to his death, she concludes with the remark that he "went out of the world praising and rejoicing."

Between the Revolution and her own death, Mrs. Campbell became increasingly exercised in secret prayer, in spite of the demands of a large household (she had twelve children). Her habit of rising very early

prompted friends to wonder why her sleeping hours were so consistently curtailed, especially as she was not obliged to work herself, to which she replied that she did not wish to give the enemies of religion opportunity to accuse her of neglecting her worldly business through attention to her devotions.

Towards the close of her life, Mrs. Campbell's ill-health brought in its train a great deal of spiritual depression, so that she was often "tempest-tossed, and not comforted" concerning her own interest in Christ. But the following Scriptures became exceedingly precious to her under this trial: "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," "Look unto Me, all the ends of the earth, and be ye saved," "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Yet even afterwards, when new darkness descended over her soul, she noticed that even these truths gave her no comfort, unless they were conveyed to her with new power. Mrs. Jean Taylor, however, who remained her constant companion throughout her declining years, informed Rev. James Calder of Croy (Mrs. Campbell's grandson and an esteemed minister of the Gospel), that she attained great stability and enjoyed much Gospel comfort for some years before her death.

When the last enemy finally approached, Mrs. Campbell was not only calm and resigned, but also expressed a holy exultation of spirit. Calling her friends to sing with her once more on earth the praises of her best-Beloved, she joined in with particular ardour, the sweetness and elevation of her spirit and voice being observed by all present. After a few words of triumphant faith, she raised her eyes towards heaven, and her soul sprang forward to meet her heavenly Bridegroom, who had come to receive and embrace her with His everlasting love.

After her death, many of Mrs. Campbell's relatives and descendants were greatly used by God in preaching the Gospel for which she had suffered, perhaps the most eminent being the Calders, father and son, and Dr. Charles C. Mackintosh of Tain.

To rely upon Christ and not be weary of sin is presumption, not faith.
Rutherford.

Faith is ever neighbour to a contrite spirit, and it is impossible that faith can be where there is not a cast down and contrite heart in some measure for sin.

Rutherford

Gathan Gloir na Diadhachd

Leis an Urr. Eideard Pearce

(Air a leanntuinn bho t.d. 372)

B'urrair Pol, tha mi cinnteach, e fein a choimeas riut a thaobh moraltachd agus ùmhlachd bho'n leth a muigh do'n lagh, 'n uair a bha e fathasd ann an staid chailte, agus an deigh sin an deigh dha tighinn gu credimh ann an Criosd, the e faicinn aobhar air son a bhi meas na h-uile nì na'n call agus na'n aolach, Phil. 111. Agus esan a thainig gu Criosd mu'm bheil sinn a leughadh ann a Mata xix. 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, r'thàinig e air tomhas mòr do mhoraltachd, cumadh ris an lagh bho'n leth a muigh, gidheadh bha e easbhuidheach, agus cho fad easbhuidheach agus, air son nì air bith a gheibh sinn, thuit e gu siorruidh goirid air neamh agus air tearnadh. Oh! feumaidh atharrachadh, atharrachadh staid, agus atharrachadh iomhaigh tighinn thairis oirne, ar neo fàgaidh ar moraltachd sinn mu dheireadh gu bhi cailte. Cumadhmid, uime sin, air chuimhne an t-atharrachadh so; am bheil mì air m' atharrachadh na nach eil? Air m'atharrachadh feumaidh mì bhì, agus sin le atharrachadh mòr, le atharrachadh staid, agus atharrachadh pearsa, ar neo cha'n urrain mì bhì air mo thearnadh. Am bheil, uime sin, eolas againn air a leithid sin de dh'atharrachadh? Oh! luchd mo ghràidh, deanadh neo-chaochlaidheachd ann an Dia ar toirt gu bhi'g amharc a mach air son atharrachdadh annian-ne. Cha'n atharraich Dia a chùm a bhi tearnadh aon againn; tha E toileach a bhì dh'ar n'atharrachadh-ne a chùm agus gu'm biodh-mid air ar tearnadh, ach cha'n atharraich E Fein gu bhì tearnadh aon againn.

5. A ris, bho na chaidh a ràdh a thaobh neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé, tha sinn a co-dhùnadh, agus a tarraig bh'uaihte millseachd neo-chrìochnachd a ghràidh agus searbhadas neo-chrìochnach fheirg, agus mar sin sonas neo-chrìochnach na muinntir aig am bheil còir anns an aon, agus truaigh na muinntir a thuiteas fodh'n aon eile. Nì peacaich tair air gràdh Dhé, a roghnachadh gràdh a chreutair air thoiseach air; agus cuiridh siad a neo-shuim fhearg, gu toileach dha bhrosnuchadh n'an aghaidh féin, ach na'n amhairceadh iad orra féin faraon ann an sgàthan a neo-chaochlaidheachd gheibheadh iad a mach gu'm bheil barrachd millseachd anns an aon, na gu'm biodh e air a chur an suarachas, agus barrachd uamhas anns an aon eile na gu'm biodh e air a chur air cùl.

1. Bho neo-chaochlaidheachd Dhé, tha sinn a co-dhùnadh, agus a tarraig a mach millseachd neo-chrìochnach a ghràidh, agus mar sin sonas na muinntir aig am bheil còir ann. Tha aig Dia sluagh a tha E

gràdhachadh, agus tha ghràdh dhoibh na ghràdh saor, na ghràdh saobhir, na ghràdh sonraichte, na ghràdh ro-àrd agus iomlan anns na h-uile seadh. Ach a nì a thà gu dearbh a crùnadh na h-uile nì, agus a cur millseachd neo-chrìochnach ann, 's e so e, gu'r e gràdh neo-chaochlaidheach a th'ann, gràdh nach searg as, nach atharraich. Is fìor e, faodaidh a ghràdh, agus thà e air uairibh, fodh sgàil agus fodh neul, ach ged a tha e fodh sgàile, gidheadh cha'n atharraich e, ged a tha e air uairibh fodh neul, gidheadh, cha'n atharraich e gu bràth. Gràdh fodh sgàil na fodh neul, is e gràdh a th'ann fathasd. Faodaidh a ghrian a bhi fodh neul, seadh, faodaidh dubhar tighinn oirre air son am, a chumas a mach as 'ur sealladh i, agus a chumas bhuain a feartan comhfhurtail agus a dealradh air son ùine, ach tha ghrian ann am bith, agus na deigh ùine dealraidh l a ris, agus sin cho milis, soilleir, agus comhfhurtail 's rinn i riamh. Mar sin faodaidh sgàile, neul, dubhar, mar gu'm b-eadh, tighinn air gràdh Dhé, air a leithid de dhòigh agus gu'n toir e bh'uainn air son uine na seallaidhean comhfhurtail, na dealraidhean, na feartan a tha Ann, ach gidheadh, 's e gràdh a tha ann, agus gràdh milis mar an ceudna, agus an deigh uine, nochdaidh agus dealraidh e a ris. 'S e focal milis a tha agaibh ann an Salm xxx.5, "Oir cha'n eil ach tiota na fheirg; tha beatha 'n a dheagh-ghean." Tha beatha ann an so (mar a tha fear-mineachaidh breithneachail a toirt fa'n ear) air a chur an agaidh na mionaid a tha air ainmeachadh an toiseach an roinn, agus mar sin 's e 'n ciall a tha aige, gu'm bheil an gràdh leis am bheil Dia a gràdhachadh a mairsinn tre'm beatha uile, tha E beo agus mairidh E gu Bràth; 's gràdh buan agus a fantuinn a th'ann. Mar sin tha e ann an Isaiah 1 iv. 8. "Mar so deir an Tighearna, Amhuil a gheibhear am fion nuadh anns a bhagaide, agus a their neach, Na mill e, oir tha beannachadh ann; mar sin their mise air sgàth mo sheirbhiseach; cha sgrios mi an t-iomlan." (Tha Dia ag ràdh so r' a eaglais) Mar sin thà mi ag ràdh, ged a dh'faodadh gràdh Dhé dha shluagh a bhi fodh sgàile, gidheadh cha'n atharraich e; 's e gràdh cunbhallach a th'ann; agus oh cia cho millis 's a thà so a deanamh a ghràidh, agus cia cho sona 's thà iad aig am bheil còir ann? Oh, neach a bhi air a ghràdhachadh le Dia neo-chaochlaidheach, le gràdh neo-chaochlaidheach, thà so milis da-rìreabh. Is beag luach na millseachd a th'ann an gràdh a chreutair, agus sin do-bhrìgh a laigse agus fhalamhachd, agus mar an ceudna do bhrìgh cho caochlaidheach 's a thà e. Mo thruaigh! gràdhaichidh an creutair an diugh, agus fuathaichidh e a màireach. Oh! a nis tha gràdh Dhé de dh'eadar-dhealachadh gné, gràdh anns am bheil lànachd agus taisealachd, thà gu leoir agus neo-chaochlaidheachd ann, agus mar sin a dh'fheumas a bhi neo-chrìochnach milis agus ion-

mhiannaichte. Mar sin, uime sin, dh'fhaodadh Daibhidh eigheach a mach le ioghnadh mar a rinn e ann Salm xxxvi.7, "Cia luachmhor do choibhneas gràdhach a Dhé! uime sin earbaidh clann nan daoine a sgàile sgiathan." Agus mar ann an Salm 1 xiii, 3, "Do bhrìgh gur fearr do choibhneas gràidh na beatha, bheir mo bhilean clui dhuit." Tha e roimh na h-uile beatha. Thà aon tomhas dheth ro bhi air a roghnachadh roimh iomadh saoghal de chomhfhurtachdan a chreutair. Tha gràdh Dhé uile mhaith, uile chomhfhurtail, uile aoibhnis, na thobar lànachd agus fìor-ghlan. 'S e th' ann ach tobar bithbhuan air nach tig traoghadh, de mhillseachd, fuaran neo-atharraichte de thlachd; ann tha gràs, uile ghràs, sìth, uile shìth, aoibhneas, uile aoibhneas, sàsachadh, uile shàsachadh, fois, uile fhois agus comhfhurtachd. Oh anam! amhairc air gràdh do Dhia dhuit, amhairc air, agus ch'ì thù saoibhreas do-rannsaichte, lànachd nach gabh a bhi air a thomhas, doimhneachd nach gabh a bhi air a sgrùdadh, agus (nì a tha crùnadh na uile) neo-chaochlaidhd shiorruidh; agus Oh! cia cho sona 's ch'ì thù thù fein ann! Cia an lànachd de chomhfhurtachd an Spioraid leis am faod thù suidh sìos agus a ràdh, tha gràdh aig Dia dhomh, agus tha ghràdh dhomh neo-chaochlaidheach. Atharraichidh càirdean, atharraichidh comhfhurtachan bho'n leith a muigh, atharraichidh mì féin, ach cha'n atharraich gràdh Dhé dhomh, tha mì gu bràth air a chridhe, agus cha'n urrain daoine na diabhuill, peacaidhean na bròin mo thilgeadh a mach as. Is fìor thà E aig amaibh a toirt àmhghair dhomh, agus gidheadh tha gràdh Aige dhomh; foluichidh E aig amaibh a ghnùis orm, ach gidheadh tha gràdh Aige dhomh; Tha E aig amaibh coltach ri bhi dha mo mharbhadh, tha E dha mo bhruthadh le briseadh an deigh briseadh, ach gidheadh tha E dha mo ghràdhachadh; dùinidh E suas mì ann an seomar tinneis, cuiridh E mì air leabaidh tinneis, tha e coltach ri bhi sonrachadh mo chur na'm luidh anns an duslach, ach gidheadh tha gràdh aige dhomh; brisidh mì bh'uaihte agus imichidh mì bh'uaihte, thà mì peacachadh na aghaidh gach latha agus gach uair, agus gidheadh tha gràdh Aige dhomh, thà E dha mo ghràdhachadh a dh'aindeoin na h-uile, cha'n urrain a ghràdh a bhi air a bhriseadh air falbh bh'uam, agus an deigh ùine ghoirid snàmhaidh mì ann am fuaran a ghràidh gu bràth. Oh cia milis! cò air nach biodh fadachd air son a ghràidh so? Tha gràdh neo-chaochlaidheach Aige dhomh, agus mar sin glanaidh E mì, ionnlaid E mì, bheir E maitheanas dhomh, nì E iomlan naomh mì, tha gràdh Aige dhomh, agus gràdhaichidh E mì, gus an cuir E mì na làthaireachd agus na bhroilleach shuas, agus an sin gràdhaichidh E mì gu bràth.

(R'a leantuinn.)

Notes and Comments

Euthanasia

The campaign to have euthanasia legalised is well under way. Articles are constantly being written with arguments for and against this practice, and as the prevailing tone of many of these articles is in favour of euthanasia it is clear that public opinion is being gradually acclimatised to the acceptance without demur of this horrific practice. A book published recently by a retired surgeon has given added momentum to the campaign.

As abortion has already been legalised in this country the legalising of euthanasia should come as a surprise to no one. A society which has so abandoned compassion for the fruit of the womb as to secure that it does not come to the birth can have little compunction in terminating the life of the elderly or infirm when that life appears to them to be serving no manifestly useful purpose.

The depths of degradation to which we have sunk as a nation stand out in the proposals now afoot. May the Lord in infinite mercy look upon our land and turn us as a people from our abominations.

Roman Catholic at Anglican Synod

In November, the Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop of Northampton addressed the General Synod of the Church of England. Dr Ramsey, Archbishop of Canterbury presided over the synod for the last time. Bishop Clark was given a standing ovation by the delegates. In his address he indicated his view of the present ecumenical climate between the two churches by saying that the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches were now "committed to the pursuit of one communion, organically united in legitimate diversity." This was the first time in its history that the Anglican Synod was addressed by a Roman Catholic bishop. It bodes ill for the Church of England that at a time such as this — when it is pandering to the Roman Catholic Church — Parliament has seen fit to give the Church of England for the first time since the Reformation full authority to determine its doctrine and order its worship. It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that any movement in doctrine and worship will be towards Romanist belief and practice.

Vatican and the Freemasons

The Vatican has modified its attitude towards Freemasonry and is now to allow Roman Catholics to become members of the Lodge provided

they have their bishop's permission. Hitherto Roman Catholics have been banned from entering the craft, the Roman Catholic authorities holding that membership of the lodge was incompatible with membership of their Church. No doubt the secrecy in which Masonry tried to veil some of its mystic ritual did not appeal an organisation which has its own secrets and mystic ritual. One thing is certain. Both Popery and Free Masonry are anti-Christian. In this, if in nothing else, perhaps they can find some harmony.

New Archbishop of Canterbury

The retirement of Dr Ramsay as Archbishop of Canterbury will be attended by no regrets of any who love Christ's Cause in England. During his tenure of the Archbishopric, Dr Ramsay promoted rapprochement with the Church of Rome and by ecumenical ventures furthered the Rome-ward trend in the Church of England. The new Archbishop, Dr Coggan, the former Archbishop of York, will have a hard task ahead of him if he is to reverse any of the programme which Dr Ramsay set in motion. Evangelicals will be glad, at least, that in this new appointment the long reign of out-and-out Romanisers in the See of Canterbury has been brought to an end.

Teachers' Strikes

The use of industrial action to secure higher wage packets has spread now to the schools. Teachers in pursuit of what they regard as justifiable claims for higher pay are engaging in strike action thereby closing many of the schools in the country and interrupting the education of millions of children.

We do not intend to pronounce upon the justice or otherwise of the teachers' claims. It may well be that in comparison with certain other professions they have a strong case for improvements in their pay. The Scripture is very clear on the duty of masters as well as servants: "Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal." We do feel however, that in the present economic plight of this country restraint is called for from every section of the community in pursuing wage claims.

What appears to us saddest of all in the whole affair is that teachers, by resorting to strike action, have undone at one stroke the labour of many years. It is not with the educational loss which the children have

suffered we are concerned — though even here children at a crucial stage in their education may be seriously affected — but rather with the disciplinary loss which must inevitably follow in the train of the indiscipline of strike action.

What the Communists, the enemies of this country, most heartily desire, the indoctrination of the youth in the art of industrial disruption through strike action, has been done for them by such a responsible body as the teachers of the land. Every child will have learned this lesson well — for lessons in wrong doing are never forgotten — and will be ready when opportunity offers, to follow the example which their former instructors and instructresses have given them.

We deeply sympathise with the many teachers throughout the Church who on moral grounds have refused to support the strike action and have had to suffer as a consequence the obloquy which such steadfastness to principle always entails.

Church Notes

Student Received

At its meeting on 12th November, 1974, the Southern Presbytery received Mr Angus Morrison, a communicant in the Oban Congregation, as a student studying for the ministry of the Church. Mr Morrison is at present a third year honours student in the Arts Faculty of the Glasgow University.

(Rev.) Donald MacLean,
Clerk of Presbytery.

Death of Inverness Elder and Deacon

Mr Finlay Beaton, an elder in the Inverness congregation and a lay missionary, passed away on 5th December 1974 at the advanced age of 91 years. The Inverness congregation suffered another loss in November when Mr Wm MacKenzie, a deacon and the congregational treasurer, passed away after a few months illness. We extend sympathy to those who have been bereaved and pray that the Lord will raise up others in the place of those whom He has taken. We expect that fuller notices will appear in due course.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Northern — At Dingwall on 7th January at 2.30 p.m. and again at 7 p.m. to moderate in call.

Outer Isles — At Stornoway on 21st January at 3.30 p.m.

Australia and New Zealand — At Auckland on 24th January at 2.30 p.m.

Skye — At Portree on 28th January at 11 a.m.

Southern — At Glasgow on 18th February at 6 p.m.

Price of Magazines

We regret that it has been necessary to increase the price of the Magazines again this year due to increased cost of printing, etc. For a single copy the Free Presbyterian Magazine will cost 13p and the Young People's Magazine 9p.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm D. Fraser, F.C.M.A., 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow G12 0HE, acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Sustentation Fund: J. MacL., Kylesku, £15.

Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund: J. MacL., Kylesku, £5.

China Mission Fund: M.G., £2.50; Anon., Clachtoll, per Rev. A.M., £5.

Home of Rest Fund: M.G., £2.50; Two Residents, £10; Daviot Congregation, £47; Donation received in loving memory of the late Mary Gillanders, Plockton; Anon, Gift of a new Commer Minibus.

Publications Fund: Anon., per W.D.F., £10.

Trinitarian Bible Society: Portree Congregation, £113.10.

The Treasurers of the following congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Aberdeen: Anon, Oban, per Rev. E.A. Rayner, £5; Anon, Inverness, per Gen. Treasurer, £50; B.G., Portree, £2, in Collection Plate, all for Manse Fund; Two Friends, £5.

Applecross: Anon., Friend, Gairloch, £2, for Communion Expenses.

Beauly: Two Friends, Inverness, £5; Friend, £4; "In loving memory of my parents," £10; Two Friends, P.O., £3, all for new Church Building Fund.

Glasgow: Anon, £1; Anon, £10, per Rev. D.M., both for Bus Fund; Anon, £10; Friend, Harris, £2, per A.J.M.; Friend, Harris, £3, per A.J.M., last three for St Jude's Development Fund; Anon., £10; Anon., £1; Anon., £10; Anon., £1.05; P.W., £5, last five for Sustentation Fund; Anon., £7.15, for China Mission Fund; Anon., £10, for Dominions and Overseas Fund; Anon., £100, per J.A.M., for Home Mission Fund.

Laide: Friend, Ullapool, £2; Friend, Inverness, per Gen. Treasurer, £50; Friend, Raasay, £20; Friend, Skye, £7; Friend, England, £15; Anon., £20; Friend, Kames, £5; Friend of the Cause, Stornoway, £5; Friend of the Cause, Gairloch, £5; Friend of the Cause, Applecross, £6, all for Laide Manse Building Fund.

Lairg: Friend, Portree, £5, for Congregational Funds.

North Harris: Misses K. & J. MacK., West Tarbert, £3, for Sustentation Fund, £2 for Home Mission and £2 for Foreign Mission; Mr E. MacD., Cluer, Harris, £1 for Home Mission.

Oban: Visitor, £10, for Sustentation Fund.

Plockton/Kyle: Anon., Kyle, £7, for Manse Building Fund.

Portree: Anon, £5; Anon, £2, both in Church Plate, and both for Property Maintenance Fund; Anon., Braes, £3, for Church Bus, per F.M.; Friend, £5; Mr & Mrs F. Kensalyre, £5 both for Church Renovation, and both per F.M.

Stornoway: Friend, £50, for Sustentation Fund; Friend, Coulegrein, £15, for Sustentation Fund, £8 for China Mission Fund; £5 for Congregational Fund, all per Rev. J. Macleod.

Stratherrick: Anon, £2, for Sustentation Fund.

Tain and Fearn: In memory of late Archie Robertson, £20; In memory of late Willie MacKenzie, £20; Anon., £56; Anon, £1; Anon, £5; Anon, £5, last four for Manse Fund; In memory of the late R. MacLeod, £1, for Trinitarian Bible Society.

An hour of sanctified sorrow is better than a thousand years of sinful mirth.

Plumber.