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The Gates of Hell shall not Prevail

The existence of the Church of God in the world is a standing miracle. The forces opposed to her are so numerous and so strong that there is no accounting for her continued survival but by recognising God's hand in it. Her strength is not in herself. If she were to trust in her own strength or in her own self-preserving power, then long ago she would have perished to rise no more. Her strength and preservation is not in herself but in the Mighty God of Jacob. Her foundation is the imperishable Rock of Ages.

As it is with the Church of God as a whole, so is it with each individual member. The daily preservation of each member of the true Church of God in the world must be deemed a miracle too. The forces which are allied together in opposition to the believing soul are too great and too numerous for it. There are enemies within and enemies without. There is an old nature within and the world and the powers of darkness without, all engaged in the same work of attempting to stifle the witness of that soul. Each believing soul is a witness to the reality of Christ's power to save. Were it by some inherent power of his own strength or goodness that the believer was to stand against the assaults of these powerful and determined forces, then there is no doubt that long before now he would have been overthrown. How good it is then that the people of God are not required to rely upon their own strength in their daily struggle with the forces of sin and evil, but upon One who is Almighty and who is able to save to the uttermost.

"The gates of hell" is the name given to the combined forces of darkness which seek the overthrow of the Church of God in the world. The apostle warned in His Epistle to the Ephesians: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." These forces appear in many forms. Sometimes it is

as openly Satanic powers they appear, at other times less manifestly so, while at other times Satan appears in these enemies as an angel of light. The enemies of the true Church of God sometimes come on the scene as professed Churches of Christ — as, for example, the anti-Christian Church of Rome. At other times it is as avowedly atheistical systems, such as Communism and humanism. Sometimes they appear as political powers, sometimes as economic alliances. Whatever appearance they may have at first, ultimately they cannot hide what they indeed are, that is, enemies of the Church of God and enemies of the Cross of Christ. Like Herod and Pontius Pilate the forces of darkness find unity and friendship in their opposition to Jesus Christ. When the enemies of the Church of God get a place within the Church what havoc they then create. It may be as professed ministers of the Gospel casting doubt on the veracity of the doctrines of God's Word or as erstwhile friends who, through persecution or trouble for the Kingdom of God's sake, are offended and go back, to walk no more with the Saviour, so proving a discouragement and stumbling block to others. In either case they show themselves to be in reality servants of Satan and sworn enemies of the true Church of God.

In our day the Church of God appears to be extremely weak and very exposed to the assaults of her enemies. Numerically she is small, while her witness also is weak. How then can she face the forces which surround her and which appear to be increasing as day succeeds day? Can she hope to stand in the face of the increasing secularism and materialism of the age in which her lot is presently cast? There is no doubt that in her own strength these forces must prevail against her. In Christ's strength, however, they may and shall be overcome. "On this rock" says Christ, "have I built my Church." Let her look well to the foundation of her hope. It is not in herself. It is in Christ who not only laid the foundation of her salvation, but also of her preservation, in the sufferings and death He endured and in the victory He obtained over sin and death and hell. Her trust is in a Saviour who is no longer dead but is alive. He is the Risen One and the Exalted One at God's right hand. All power in heaven and in earth is given to Him. And shall He who has obtained the victory in His own Person on Calvary, not get the victory also in His own people and Church over the same foes and leave these foes vanquished on the field of battle?

Here then is their encouragement and strength. In Christ they shall prevail. Each of them individually shall prevail, and collectively as the Church of God they shall prevail. By His grace they shall overcome all

their enemies. The Word of God shall stand. What Christ has said concerning His Church shall be fulfilled in every age of time — “the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.”

A Prayer for Deliverance and Quickening

“Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way.” (Psalm 119 v. 37).

Throughout this precious portion of the Word of God the Psalmist is found pleading with the Lord, the God of his salvation. He desires things which are agreeable to the mind and will of God. He glories in God and makes mention of His goodness to him and thus makes thankful acknowledgement of the mercies of God. The Psalmist was a man after God’s own heart, who loved God’s blessed Name and who hungered and thirsted after righteousness. Christ pronounced such blessed. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.” (Matthew 5:6). He meditated upon God’s statutes. He thus showed that he was a “new creature” — that a principle of holiness had been planted in his soul. It is true of all God’s people that when they are regenerated or born again, a principle of holiness is implanted in their souls by the Holy Spirit. It is written, “Therefore if any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are made new”.

The Psalmist also shows that he had been afflicted for his spiritual good. “It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn Thy statutes” (verse 71). “Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now I have kept Thy Word” (verse 67).

In the words of the text the Psalmist prayed to the Lord to be delivered from beholding vanity and he craved of the Lord that God would quicken him in His way. There were dangers in his way to Glory and he resorted to the Throne of Grace to obtain mercy and find grace in time of need.

We may notice, as enabled:

- (1) His desire to be delivered from beholding vanity.
- (2) His desire to be quickened in the way of God.

- (1) His desire to be delivered from beholding vanity.

The Psalmist was evidently under the gracious influence of God the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Grace and of supplications when he prayed in this way. To him the throne of grace was precious. He was enabled by

grace to pour out his heart before the Lord and he, therefore, shows his love for the name of God in seeking what was glorifying to God as well as what was profitable for himself. He is obviously afraid of sinning against God — of offending the Most High. He realises his own weakness and his inability to keep himself from sin, so he appeals to the Lord who alone could do this for him.

David shows that having come to love the Lord in truth, he loved what was real, what was substantial, what was true, what was of good report and he, therefore, abhorred lying vanities and he abhorred that which was vain, empty, foolish and unreal. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." (Philippians 4:8). The Psalmist cried to the Lord that He would graciously, "Turn away his eyes from beholding vanity". Well did he know how prone he was, by nature, to view vanity and to take pleasure in what was contrary to God's revealed will in His Word, and how great was his need of being preserved by the Lord from desiring what was dishonouring to God and what was provoking to the eyes of His glory.

How true it is with regard to ourselves if we are left in any measure to ourselves, that we do seek what is unprofitable and vain and we desire to walk in a vain show. We thereby desire to walk according to the course and principles of this ungodly world. Man by nature loves what is sinful. He is in his element in a sinful way. The Apostle John, writing under the inspiration of God the Holy Spirit, mentions the love of the world and how those who profess to love God are not to love the world or the things which are in the world. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17). The Psalmist by his prayer was thus making it abundantly plain that while he was in the world he was not of it, but that he was chosen by the Lord out of the world to serve Him. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." (John 15 v. 19). The Lord's servant then found that the things of the world, the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life, were a great burden to him. Because he loved God he was

afraid of sinning against Him and he was therefore afraid of this present evil world. He realised the power of the temptations which beset him and which beset poor sinners in the world. He knew the power of Satan, the god of this world, who seeks to ensnare and entangle sinners to their eternal destruction. The Psalmist therefore cried to the Lord as one who was in great need and who realised, through the teaching of the Holy Spirit, his need of praying, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity". Surely we see in this his genuine desire to be preserved by the Lord from the way in which destroyers go — the way of sin and death. It was not a case of drawing near to God with his lips while his heart was far from Him, but as one who was exercised in the Truth and whose heart was in what he desired, he made his request known to the Lord. He pleads with the Lord to do these things graciously for him. He could not do them for himself nor could others do them for him. The Lord alone was able to deliver him.

The Psalmist was not left to despair nor was he given over to a reprobate mind. He would not perish in his sins. When he appealed to the Lord to turn away his eyes from beholding vanity he was in effect praying that his affections would be set upon things above where Christ is and that he would not be left a slave to vile affections and to the lusts which war against the soul. He earnestly prayed to be kept by the power of God from beholding vanity or delighting in it, and by grace he did not desire to be given any liberty or license whatsoever to indulge in sin. He did not seek for an excuse to do what was contrary to the mind of God. His heart was sincere. Job made a covenant with his eyes (Job 31:1), and David is exercised in a similar way. His fervent prayer is that his eyes would not be avenues to allow sin to enter his soul, nor occasions of temptation to him and that he would be preserved from the lustful look. The Psalmist, as one who loved the Lord in sincerity, sought to keep the garments of his profession clean and unspotted from the world. He would not bring reproach upon the Cause of God in the world. His attitude was not that of those who said, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou" (Isaiah 65:5), but rather was he afraid of taking fire into his bosom and so be burned.

"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity": let me have no inclination towards those things which my soul ought to abhor. David was well aware of how those things were fitted to distract him and alienate his mind from the Truth and from the doctrines which are according to godliness. We notice in this respect his petition in verse 36, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies and not to covetousness". He was

living in perilous times as far as the things of God were concerned, as we are, and if he needed this prayer, so do we. We need to be kept from that which dishonours God and that which takes our minds away from what pertains to the glory of God and belongs to our everlasting peace. How ready we are to be engrossed in the things of time and of sense and to forget the chief end of our creation which is to glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever: to "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness". Do we not reverse the order and put our own things before the things of God? The Psalmist, as one who was taught by the Lord, was of another spirit as the desire of **his** heart was, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity". Observe the holy fear **he** had, of being entangled or ensnared and his affections thereby drawn away from the Lord, from His Truth and from His testimonies and His statutes — which he found to be wonderful. "Thy testimonies are wonderful: thenceforth doth my soul keep them." (verse 129). David had been ensnared, as many of the Lord's people have, through the corruption of the flesh. He desired deliverance from what would cause him to err and in effect he is expressing the petition which Christ taught His disciples, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil". One can be placed, in the providence of God, in circumstances which are dangerous to one's soul and can prove injurious. If one is in such a situation not because one chooses to court temptation nor to tempt God but in the course of one's duties, in the Lord's providence, how necessary it is for such a person to pray earnestly, "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil". Turn away mine mine eyes from beholding vanity".

In this age there are great dangers. Film shows, theatrical performances, lewd inventions of carnal men, serving the flesh and the devil incite others to evil. Television too can be a great evil in this respect. Picture houses, theatres, dance halls and public houses are places which should be shunned as places of temptation. If we go into such places wilfully, are we not tempting God to give us over to the lusts of the flesh? How necessary then is the prayer, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity". That which is vain has this native tendency to lead one astray, to put one in a wrong way and to put one among those who are on that slippery path that leads to eternal destruction. How solemn it is to consider that this is the way that **we** naturally love, that we naturally choose and that is the way in which sinners are by nature, as Christ said, "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life,

and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7:13, 14). Is it true concerning **you** that you are not concerned about your soul's salvation? Is it true of **you** that you have no desire to be preserved from the way in which destroyers go? If so, how unspeakably solemn is your condition on your way to the great eternity!

Thinking of what is brought before us in this Psalm alone, is there any petition here that corresponds with the desire of **your** heart? Could you put your Amen to any petition in this Psalm — even the portion we read? Observe how the Psalmist was praying "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law" (verse 18). The solemn truth is, that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:6, 7). No petition ever rose from the carnal mind which was in accordance with the mind and will of God. There is no desire towards God in the natural heart. By nature we are, as the Truth declares, "without God and without hope in the world" and we are "alienated from the life of God" through the evil that is in us. Therefore it is, and must be entirely of grace that any man or woman, boy or girl, should in truth desire what the Psalmist expresses here as his own desire. We naturally love sin. We naturally pursue what is evil both outwardly, if circumstances permit, and secretly in our imaginations. How much sin is committed through the thoughts and intents of our hearts — our vain imaginations. We ought therefore, to desire to be delivered from vanity. Bunyan's Pilgrims, when passing through Vanity Fair, stopped their ears and closed their eyes and their cry went up, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity". "Eye gate" as well as "ear gate" constitutes a great danger to sinners on their way to eternity.

(2) His desire to be quickened.

The Psalmist goes on to say, "and quicken Thou me in Thy way". He knew very well that this was the way of God's commandments and the way by which he would shun evil and cleave to what was good. He desired the Lord to enliven him and that he would be revived in his soul. Only the Lord could quicken him and David knew it. This was pleasing to the Lord because he looked to the Lord in faith and without faith it is impossible to please God. His heart, as it were, was beating in sympathy with the Word of God. His mind was in agreement with the mind of God and his affections were set on things that are above. In this he proved

that his treasure was in heaven for "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:34). The Lord was the object of his desire, as He was the object of his faith.

There are times when true believers feel very dead and barren — as if the things of God are tasteless and do not have the savour they once had. At such seasons it is as if the things of God are far removed from the believer as he struggles with spiritual darkness and a feeling of spiritual death. How appropriate then is this prayer. "Quicken Thou me in Thy way". "While I feel", the believer may say, "so dark, so brutish, so sensual and devilish, so hard hearted and so clouded in my understanding, yet 'quicken Thou me in Thy way'". It is **the way** of God, **the way** of His Truth as we read repeatedly. "I will delight myself in Thy statutes". "I will meditate in Thy precepts and have respect unto Thy ways". "I have rejoiced in the way of Thy testimonies, as much as in all riches". "I will run the way of Thy commandments, when Thou shalt enlarge my heart". He believes that if the Lord would quicken him, if He would revive the graces of His Spirit in his soul and if the Lord would lift upon him the light of His reconciled countenance, then the things of God would again be most precious in his soul's experience. "Quicken Thou me in Thy way". The way of God is the Way of Life. It is the "path of the redeemed" — that narrow way that leads to everlasting life. It is the way of holiness of which the Prophet Isaiah speaks "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away" (Isaiah 35:8-10). While the way of God is the way of life, the way of holiness, the way of blessedness and peace for all Wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace", the way that we choose by nature is a slippery way that ends in eternal death for "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 14 v. 12). The gracious soul knows that those have great peace who love God's Law and the Psalmist also knew that if he were kept looking unto his Saviour then he would not desire to turn aside to vanity and lies. It is only through being quickened that his soul would love the Lord more fervently, serve Him more ardently and follow Him more fully. Truly thus would his soul prosper and be in health. One is in a

backsliding condition if one is hankering after evil of any kind.

It is clear in the Psalmist's case that his was a healthy state of soul and a wholesome frame of mind. When he prays, "Quicken Thou me in Thy way" he fervently desires to delight himself in God and to delight in the Word of God, and in those precious promises which he did "gladly hear". "Remember Thy Word unto Thy servant upon which Thou hast caused me to hope". There is in verse 65 a precious portion, "Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy Word". What glory to God is in that confession of faith on the part of the Psalmist. He displays this banner because of the Truth in the midst of a perishing world, full of hypocrisy, vanity and lies and of God-dishonouring practices and principles. By grace he sought to adhere closely to the Word of God and to abide in the Truth as it is in Jesus. "Abide in me and I in you" said the blessed Saviour, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me" (John 15:4).

The Psalmist was manifestly under the influence of grace and abiding in the Truth when he gave expression to these desires. We, too, should examine ourselves on this Lord's Day whether we are in the faith, whether we have these gracious desires planted in our souls by the Holy Spirit of God. Do we know anything of the breathing of God's Holy Spirit upon our souls? If so, we have breathings of soul after holiness. We have longings of soul which God alone can satisfy. "For He the soul that longing is doth fully satisfy". The Psalmist in seeking to be quickened in the ways of God was setting to his seal that God was true and that by divine grace he had made choice of God's testimonies. The Holy Spirit was making intercession within David's soul and it was He who granted him those gracious desires, for, as it is true in regeneration that the Spirit of God works as He listeth so with respect to any spiritual appreciation of the Word of God or any true understanding of the things of God, these are from the same blessed Person. We, therefore, can safely conclude that all who truly fear the Lord have this prayer, "Turn away my eyes from beholding vanity and quicken Thou me in Thy way". What was true then, is true now, that however great his needs were, the Lord was able to supply these according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

We should consider how solemn it is to hear the Gospel and to have the Word of God in our hands and in our homes and yet be completely destitute of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are destined for the great eternity and none can afford to trifle with the Gospel of the grace of God. "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews

2:3). It is common to call sin by some other name and thereby imagine that because sin is not admitted sinners can be excused in wrong-doing. Some may admit, while others deny, that there is **right** and **wrong** but it remains true that apart from divine grace sinners do not have a true conception of the real nature of sin. They do not understand that it is against God and is that abominable thing which He hates and which cannot be forgiven apart from the blood of the eternal Son of God in human nature. Nothing but the infinitely meritorious sacrificial death of the divine Redeemer could be a sufficient atonement for sin. "He gave His life a ransom for many". Only thus could any sinner escape the damnation of hell. Yet if left to ourselves we will despise the blessed Saviour.

Those who are "the ransomed of the Lord" do desire to be quickened in God's good and holy way, and earnestly pray to have a greater appreciation of God's everlasting love as it is revealed in the Person and redemptive work of His well beloved Son and thus increasingly experience the communion of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle John writes, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ". (1 John 1:3). Only by being quickened by the Spirit of God in the ways of God can one serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear, and this the Psalmist knew as do all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. The living soul in harmony with the mind of God desires to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. For this the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Great High Priest over the house of God, prayed in his great intercessory prayer as recorded in John chapter 17. "I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God and being led by Him to the land of uprightness, even to heaven itself, value such desires as are here expressed in the words of our text, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken Thou me in Thy way". May the Lord graciously grant that this prayer arise from our hearts. May He bless His Word.

D.M.M.

The Decline of the Disruption Free Church

by Rev. Donald MacLean, Glasgow

Although there had been other separations from the Church of Scotland before 1843, the Disruption of that year was the most serious of all. It is not the intention of this article to examine the causes of that event. It will be sufficient to say that the Church of the Reformation in Scotland was now divided into the Church of Scotland **Established** and the Church of Scotland **Free**. There can be little doubt in the minds of those who love Divine Truth that the true heir to the Church of Knox, Melville, Henderson and Rutherford was to be found in the Church of Scotland **Free**. It should be remembered, in this connection, that the Free Church of Scotland held to the principle of the duty of nations to support the Cause of Christ and to acknowledge the Saviour as King of Nations as well as King of Saints. This "establishment principle", as it is called, is part of the testimony of the Church of the Reformation in Scotland and was part of the Constitution of the Free Church of Scotland, a fact recognised by the well-known phrase of Dr. Chalmers, "We have left today a vitiated establishment; we would return tomorrow to a purified one; and we are not Voluntaries."

The Free Church of Scotland in 1843 gave every appearance of being a worthy heir of the Church of the Reformation. Her ministers had been willing to suffer deprivation in many ways in order to maintain their principles. These principles were well worthy suffering for. In doctrine, she was reformed or Calvinistic; in worship, scriptural simplicity was observed; while her Presbyterian government and discipline, which acknowledged Christ's right to rule in His own House, had been splendidly vindicated by her refusal to bow to the Civil Authorities when they attempted to obtrude ministers on congregations contrary to Presbyterian principles. Her Professors were men of ability and piety, sound in the faith, and concerned that the people to whom the gospel came would hear the pure doctrine of the Word of God.

It is true that there were some who voiced doubts. Speaking on the subject of *The State of Religion* in the Free Church Assembly of 1844, Dr Duncan said, "the question was not only should there be *more* preaching but should there be *better* preaching." Here he meant to refer to the earnest admonition given by Dr. Malan at the Assembly in Glasgow to beware of Arminianism. He (Dr. Duncan) did not believe that Arminianism existed in their own Church, but he could not disguise from his own mind that of late years, at least previous to the Disruption — he knew

not how it may have been since, for they could not expect to get rid of all these evils in a day — since evangelism had become more fashionable, it had become more indefinite and diluted; and if this did not amount to Arminianism, it had become a rubbing off of the rough corners for the sake of refining of that which was called Calvinism, but which he believed to be a system of doctrine contained in the Word of God; it was a rubbing off and smoothing down of the salient points of Calvinistic doctrine into something which, if it was not Arminianism, was a kind of doctrine with which all who are called Calvinistic evangelicals and Arminian evangelicals could agree. Now this was just the beginning of the evil — it was a letting in of water — the dilution of the gospel; the *dilution* of the gospel would very soon slide into the *perversion* of the gospel.” Rev. J. R. Anderson, a friend of Dr. Duncan’s raised a very clear testimony against the inroads that an ill-balanced gospel was making in the Free Church. Many of his predictions with regard to this body were strikingly fulfilled, especially after his death in 1859. Among the godly laymen, there were some who were not very satisfied. One instance of this can be seen in the case of the eminently pious Captain Robert Ross of Wick. In his obituary in the Free Presbyterian Magazine we read, “As already related our friend was somewhat of a religious dissenter in his youth. This, we have to add, he continued to be more or less through life. Although an admirer of the fathers of the Disruption in 1843, and a staunch upholder of the principles for which they contended, he was never quite satisfied with the Free Church. He was a strong believer in the Establishment principle, and he could not brook any tendency to weaken the Church’s hold of that principle. He also abhorred every form of Arminianism, and any leaven of this kind was obnoxious to him. Elements of the character described existing in a religious body which professed the sound doctrines of the Confession, were fitted to alienate him from her. However, he never hesitated to countenance and support those in the Church who were distinctly loyal to her principles and preached the gospel in its purity and fulness. For such men as Drs. Kennedy and Begg he entertained a very high regard. It need hardly be said, further, that when Rev. Messrs MacFarlane and MacDonald raised a testimony for the Truth in 1893, he cordially supported them and rejoiced at the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church. We have heard him say, ‘I was never so well satisfied with any Church as with this.’ It may be thought a rather remarkable circumstance that this worthy man did not communicate at the Lord’s Table until he was about 88 years of age. The fact that he was not satisfied with the

ecclesiastical course of the Free Church no doubt contributed to prevent him from entering into fellowship with her . . . He went forward on a sacramental occasion at Wick. The sight of the aged and beloved Christian proceeding for the first time to the Lord's Table moved many in the congregation to tears."

While some doubts were felt by the more pious and discerning of the Free Church, yet it was to be expected that a church which made such a promising beginning would continue faithful to the Lord, Whom she professed to serve. Yet the extraordinary fact remains that history discloses that, within 50 years, this Church had fallen so low as to forsake her principles to such an extent that she could not be recognised as the Free Church of the Disruption. The passing of the Declaratory Act in 1892 was the culmination of a course of almost incredible backsliding — so much so that one of her prominent ministers said, "And if the Declaratory Act becomes part of our constitution, what remains of our former principles is wholly obliterated and anyone who pleases may pronounce the funeral oration of the once noble Free Church of Scotland . . . She is no longer the Free Church of our early love and loyal adhesion, but a false claimant to honours and dignities which she wilfully and shamefully forfeited. Her pristine glory is gone; the finger is already out upon the wall writing her doom; and her kingdom is given to the motley Medes of religious equality and the fierce Persians of political voluntarism." (Rev. M. Macaskill, Glasgow 1892).

How are we to account for this extraordinary collapse? Some attempts have been made. Our own Church History says, "It is one of the ironies of our ecclesiastical history that in one of the most evangelical churches in Christendom as far as Scotland is concerned, the Higher Criticism which has done so much to throttle the spiritual life of Scotland showed itself first of all."

But this is rather a statement of fact than an explanation of underlying causes. Principal MacLeod in his book, *Scottish Theology*, offers the following explanation, "But it was reserved for the younger ministers of the Free Church to take the lead in the abandonment of the Faith of their fathers. They were the party of movement. Behind them there was in their Church a tradition of having things done. And, with the conceit of leadership they were bent of showing how things could be done. Their country had become with improved means of communication in the 19th century, much less isolated and self-contained than it was before. So the teaching of the German Theological Schools began to tell upon its younger ministers. Without well knowing at first what they were doing

they borrowed to begin with from the Liberal Evangelicals, and then from the Rationalistic Schools of Germany the kind of theological ideas that found favour among them. These being, on the whole, so far Lutheran, as distinct from Calvinistic, and unbelieving as distinct from Christian, were at war with the underlying principles upon which the orthodox faith of the Reformed Churches builds. The hospitality which was given to such ideas led by degrees to the forsaking of the ground which, from the Reformation onwards, had been held by the evangelical teachers of Scotland's Reformed Church. The freedom of thought, and of utterance for it, that was common in Protestant Germany came to be envied, to be copied, and at last to be freely practised. In one of his essays, William Cunningham had passed a disparaging judgment on the theological insight of even his own day. The really distinctive features of various systems were not clearly enough recognised, in his opinion. The next generation was to show what a measure of reason he had for cherishing such a low estimate of the theological competence of the men about him. They were too much at sea in judging the true differentia of systematic schemes of thought." But the rising of ministerial upstarts is a plague with which most churches are affected at one time or another. So this does not really come near to the solution of this problem. Principal MacLeod does come nearer the core of the matter when he wrote a chapter on "A Type of Union Policy at Work."

At the first General Assembly of the Free Church in 1843, a large number of evangelical churches sent representatives. Speeches, which were very appreciative of the Free Church position and stand, were made, and an unusual degree of commendation voiced. This accorded very well with the spirit of the Assembly, itself, and a Report was submitted on Correspondence with other bodies of Evangelical Christians. This Report was submitted by Dr. Buchanan and supported by Dr. Smyth and Dr. R. S. Candlish, who said, "He rejoiced in the latter recommendation in the Report for the appointment of a Committee to co-operate with and to meet deputations from other Churches for the interchange of information and for consultation as to what ought to be done for the cause of God and His Anointed." Rev. C. J. Brown, while welcoming the Report as involving a question of the most vital importance, added a cautionary note in saying, "The Committee very properly recommends *co-operation*; but the Church ought to avoid any rash attempt at *incorporation*." The following year, Dr. Candlish again spoke on the same subject and stressed the need for a conference with other Churches. As, however, other Churches had not shown the same disposi-

tion to move in the matter, he suggested that his overture should be recommended to the Commission (of Assembly) rather than appoint a Committee for this particular purpose.

It is very evident that both Dr. Candlish and Dr. Buchanan, as well as others, were full of the notion of Church co-operation, while professing to continue separation and independence in their ecclesiastical arrangements. None of the Free Church ministers were so full of this notion as was Dr. Chalmers. He threw the immense weight of his prestige behind this movement, and some of his statements would do credit to our modern ecumenists. At a meeting held in Edinburgh on 13th July, 1843 to celebrate the Bi-centennary of the Westminster Assembly, he referred to the "oft repeated aphorism" of "co-operation without incorporation." "I would substitute for these words," says Dr. Chalmers, "co-operation now and this with the view, as soon as may be, to incorporation afterwards." Small wonder that he was referred to afterwards by a later speaker as the great Apostle of Union! His biographer, who was also his son in law, Dr. Hanna states, that Dr. Chalmers, "did not believe that any form of Church Government had been authoritatively enjoined, so that its adoption was a matter of imperative and universal obligation. Let there be an essential unity of faith, and he would have merged his own Presbyterianism, much as he valued it, either in Episcopacy on the one hand, or in Independency on the other, had it appeared that the great object of a visible unity in the Church of Christ could thereby have been attained." How any man who professed to stand in May 1843 for the whole position of the Church of the Reformation in Scotland could hold such sentiments is quite beyond the comprehension of those who hold that such a stand involves not only doctrine and worship, but also government. Such, however, is the subtle influence of false conceptions of Church unity that it almost inevitably brings men, however distinguished, to lose sight of the value of Divine Truth in all its component parts.

THE HOUR OF TEMPTATION: I find my Lord going and coming seven times in a day. His visits are short; but they are both frequent and sweet . . . I hear ill tales, and hard reports of Christ, from the Tempter, and my flesh; but love believeth no evil. I may swear that they are liars, and that apprehensions make lies of Christ's honest and unalterable love to me . . . Temptations, that I supposed to be stricken and to be laid upon their backs rise again and revive upon me; yea, I see that while I live, temptations will not die".

Samuel Rutherford

Baptism: Its Subjects and Mode

by Rev. E. A. Rayner B.A.

All Christians would agree that baptism is a sacrament given by Christ to the visible Church and that this ordinance rests squarely on Scripture. Christ's command to His disciples, following the resurrection, was, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28:17). But following this there is disagreement among Christians, both with respect to the subjects and mode of baptism. Before discussing these differences it is to be noticed in passing that all Christians agree that adults are fit subjects for baptism. The area of dispute concerns the baptism of infants. The question concerning us is, are infants fit subjects of baptism? And if this is Scriptural whose children are to be baptised?

The objection to infant baptism by Baptists may be summed up as follows:—

1. A person who has a right to an ordinance must be expressly directed in Scripture as having that right, but since infants are not mentioned, therefore they have no right.
2. The Scriptures require faith and repentance as prerequisites to baptism. Infants cannot have these, therefore they should not be baptised.

These are the two basic objections against infant baptism and all other arguments against it come within the scope of these.

While it is admitted that there is no direct and express command to baptise infants yet this does not invalidate infant baptism. Women do not have any direct precept to partake of the Lord's Supper, but who would deny their right to this ordinance? To prove the right of women to participate in the Lord's Supper requires argument by way of implication, analogy and inference. Thus should Baptists deny infant baptism on the first point they also by logical implication should deny women the right to sit at the Lord's Supper. It has been argued by T. E. Watson in *Baptism not for Infants* (p.47), that the term disciples includes both men and women; so that when "Jesus took break and blessed it and brake it and gave to the disciples," we have there a sufficient warrant for including women as communicants. But the point is that this is not an express warrant. Resort must be made to reasoned deduction. This shows how unreasonable the demand is by Baptists respecting the first point and that their argument therefore is a bad one.

Their second main point against infant baptism is also a fallacious

one. The fallibility of this premise may be seen when the rite of circumcision is compared with that of baptism. Circumcision, like baptism, was an outward sign representing an inward grace. (Rom. 2. 28,29 and Deut 30:6). Now the faith of Old Testament saints was of the same sort as for New Testament saints, if they were to be saved. "Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." (Rom. 4:3). Circumcision was given as a sign and seal of this, not only for himself, but for his seed. Yet circumcised infants could not exercise faith and repentance any more than baptised infants. Furthermore, that infants are subjects of salvation, is admitted even by Baptists. Yet here is something said concerning salvation which will be no means apply to infants, "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." This being so it may be reasoned by the same token that infants must not be saved because something is said about salvation which does not apply to infants. This parallel argument shows clearly how Baptist arguments against infant baptism are unfounded.

In the next place we may ask what the arguments are for infant baptism, seeing the main objections against it are fallacious. To put matters in perspective let there firstly be a scriptural view of the church. The church consists not only of New Testament saints but also those of the Old Testament. The eleventh chapter of Romans speaks of the church as an olive tree from which the Jewish branches have been cut off and the Gentile branches grafted in. We may therefore conclude that there is a unity and continuity of the visible church in Old and New Testament days.

Following this it may be asked what constituted the membership of this church or rather how were members admitted? Under the Old Testament dispensation membership was dependent upon the covenant made with Abraham. This covenant included children. (Gen. 17:7). "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee . . . for an everlasting covenant." John Murray in *Christian Baptism* (p.49), points out concerning this covenant, "that it was the sign and seal of the highest and richest spiritual blessings . . . (and) any significance which circumcision possessed along the line of national identity and privilege was secondarily derived." But has this covenant been terminated? Is not the gospel dispensation the blossoming of Abraham's covenant and the expansion and enlargement of covenant blessings? In the sermon preached at Pentecost, men were exhorted to believe and repent, "because the promise (covenant) is unto you and your children." (Acts 2:39). In other words children are still included in this covenant,

which far from having been revoked is given direct, Scriptural warrant for its continuance. What Acts 2:38-39 indicates is that children along with their parents are possessors of God's covenant promise in the New Testament as well as in the Old. Nor does this text restrict the interpretation of the word children to those who are of age. This would be entirely contrary to Peter's background, or heritage.

The sign and seal of this covenant, which indicates affiliation with the visible Church, was circumcision in Old Testament times, and baptism in the New Testament dispensation. Also circumcision and baptism were signs and seals of the one covenant. This is plainly indicated in Col. 2:11-12, "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God." Here then is the identity of circumcision with baptism. T. E. Watson (p.41) tries to brush aside this argument by saying that the Apostle Paul does not mention the ordinance of circumcision as such and that the circumcision he refers to is "made without hands." Nevertheless what circumcision as an ordinance represents and what baptism represents are one and the same thing — that is the inward purification by the washing of regeneration. Watson (p.42) even admits that "What Paul is saying is that circumcision and baptism are different symbols of the same truth." There is no dispute here, but what Watson tries to argue is that baptism never replaced circumcision. It would seem strangely superfluous to have two different symbols representing the same truth. He points out that the *Jewish* Christians at Jerusalem still continued circumcising their children; yet he admits in quoting Albert Barnes that "The Apostles conformed to them while they remained at Jerusalem and did not deem it best to set themselves violently against them." (p.42). It is surprising that Watson continues to argue his position by remarking that "we never find the Apostles teaching circumcision is out of date. Baptism has come in its place." If Watson were logical he would still expect *Jewish* converts not only to be circumcised but presumably to keep the seventh day of the week holy instead of the Lord's Day, since no direct command was given to change it. Surely it seems obvious to common sense that those Old Testament ordinances were judiciously phased out so that unnecessary offences would not arise. Maybe Mr Watson conveniently forgot that the Apostle teaches, "For he is our peace who hath made both one and hath broken down the middle wall of partition," (Eph. 2:14) or that "there is neither Jew nor Greek . . . for we are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28.

It would indeed seem contrary to expectation to find that infants had less privileges in the New Testament than in the Old Testament era. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that this change would imply a complete reversal of the earlier divinely instituted practice of including infants in the covenant. We do not find a particle of evidence or any intimation of such a reversal in the whole Bible. Perhaps we may demand as the Baptists do for their arguments, an express warrant not to include children in the covenant. Nor is there evidence that can be deduced by analogy or inference from Scripture that this is the case. So in the absence of repeal it must be concluded that the command to administer the sign of this covenant to infants has not been revoked and is still in force. An express command authorising the baptism of infants would therefore be superfluous.

That covenant blessings for infants were to be continued into the New Testament dispensation is given the strongest support by Christ who says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of God." (Matt. 9:14). The kingdom here mentioned is the visible church and this kingdom was to be taken from the Jews and given to the Gentiles according to Christ's prophecy, "The Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The children mentioned in Matt. 9:14 include infants as Luke 18:15, a parallel passage, informs us that the children were babes i.e. little infants. Nor is Christ simply illustrating that the Kingdom of God is made up of those who have a childlike spirit of simplicity and humility. In these words, "of such is the Kingdom of God", Jesus is asserting clearly that little children are members of His kingdom. This Old Testament precept is therefore expressly affirmed in the New Testament. Now while it is not claimed that Jesus baptised these infants He is affirming that they do belong to His Kingdom and are therefore fit subjects to receive the sign to such as belong to that Kingdom i.e. baptism in the New Testament dispensation, as it was circumcision in the Old Testament.

In the light of baptism continuing to be the sign of covenant blessings, household baptism mentioned three times would have included infants if there were any in these households. However, no conclusive proof can be brought as evidence as far as household baptism is concerned. All that can be said is that it would be unusual if none of these households had infants. T. E. Watson endeavours to abolish this evidence by directing attention to the words that say they rejoiced and/or believed and were baptised. (Acts 16:33 and 18:8). Therefore infants were excluded because

they could not believe or rejoice. But this argument has already been shown to be false.

The next question that arises is, who are they who have a right to baptism? Adults outside the visible church are not to be baptised until they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible church are to be baptised. Applicants for baptism should be persons who profess a competent knowledge of the fundamental truths of Christianity and of the fact that he makes a consistent profession of faith and promise of obedience to the Lord, being subject to church authority. Thus the applicant's outward life must not contradict this profession. (A. A. Hodge, *The Confession of Faith*, p.334). In making such matters clear the church officers it seems, do not enquire into the personal experimental nature of the applicant's profession as would be necessary for his admission to the Lord's Supper.

Obituary

Charles MacLeod, Edinburgh

Charles MacLeod, a native of the island of Raasay, was born on 25th May, 1900. His parents, John and Katherine MacLeod, taught him to know the Scriptures from his youth — a fact very manifest in his exceptionally high standard of Scriptural knowledge. His ability to quote Scripture with unusual accuracy as well as his understanding of divine doctrines clearly showed that he had the privilege of having a Christian upbringing which in its thoroughness surpassed that of many. Charles was a credit to his upbringing.

He was fifth in a family of nine. He left home at the age of twenty and spent a few years seafaring. In 1929 Mr MacLeod married Ann MacLennan also a native of Raasay. They had one daughter, Katherine, who with her mother is alive to mourn the loss of a devoted husband and father. After his short seafaring career Charles MacLeod joined the Edinburgh City Police which he faithfully served for thirty years. As one might expect, during that time he saw human behaviour in different situations, some sad, some frustrating. His relentless pursuit of evil doers sometimes ended in frustration when as a result of some freakish technical irregularity, he saw his efforts gone for nothing. However, his high regard for our legal system as the means of preserving law and order continued undiminished and in legal circles, where he was well known for his integrity as a police officer and latterly as an officer in the Court of Session, he was highly respected. A very handsome man, he

made an impressive figure in his police uniform directing traffic on Princes Street when automation was less in vogue.

Although it was late in life before he made a public profession of his faith in Christ his whole demeanour for many years left his friends in no doubt about the certainty of a saving change having been wrought in Charles MacLeod. We understand that he got the liberty of the Gospel in 1943. The precipitating event was the tragic death of a young man, Dougal MacIver of the Edinburgh congregation. This young man was a member of the R.A.F. and was killed in the course of training. It was an event which profoundly affected Charles. The portion of God's Word which brought peace into his soul was Romans 11:17, "And if some of the branches be broken off . . . take heed lest he also spare not thee."

The Lord's people who knew him received him as a brother in the Lord long before he submitted himself to the Kirk Session for examination having in view commemorating the death of Christ. When he did submit himself the court was only confirmed in what had already been the general consensus of opinion among the members. Mr MacLeod in giving a clear and convincing testimony of his interest in Jesus Christ showed that his was a saving one. For years after being received as a member in full communion he seemed to be enjoying a measure of that assurance he indicated to the Kirk Session. What ever were Mr MacLeod's reasons for the delay in making in public profession of his faith in Christ, we feel his example in this respect should not be emulated. Gradually owing to an illness which eventually proved fatal, his hope of salvation came under a vicious attack by the tempter who came to "steal and destroy." Charles in his own felt experience was robbed temporarily of that assurance which is essential to the full comfort and confidence of believers. It must be confessed that his illness had a profoundly warping effect on this good man's very constitution. The Lord, in the exercise of his own sovereignty, permitted Satan to tempt and try our friend beyond what we would think he was able to endure. However, the One who permitted the temptation did not resign His office as Overseer of His people's souls. Consequently Charles while passing through the depths, unaccompanied by man, continued his pilgrimage under the tender and watchful eye of Him who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." The trial of his faith was extremely severe but undoubtedly was ultimately to the praise and honour of God. As his physical strength ebbed under the ruthless strain of illness, his soul would seem to be gradually emerging from the depths until during his last days on earth a calmness and serenity, which we could only

describe as heavenly, pervaded his very countenance. His response to the word quoted was very different from what happened months earlier when his hope was sick and forlorn. Now, little by little, Charles was sharing the gladness and rest of the haven, to which the Lord brings His wave tossed people. We have no doubt that the latter end of this good man was peace. Having regard to contacts with him during his trying illness, we felt reconciled to the loss of one on whose help we counted in the Lord's work.

As a man Mr MacLeod was courteous and in trouble sympathetic. In his occupation as a police officer he made contact with all kinds and discharged his duties efficiently, but with compassion. He could not condone evil and was for that reason a terror to evil doers.

Charles MacLeod was by birth and conviction a Free Presbyterian and his adoration for its founders was deeply seated. In all the crises through which the Church passed during its history, Charles never wavered in his loyalty to its testimony. While he never considered the church perfect, he saw in it a blessing, for which reason it should be preserved. When circumstances premitted, his place in Gilmore Place Church, where he worshipped, was never empty.

The cause of Christ is much the poorer by the removal of this godly man, whose uncompromising allegiance to Christ never wavered.

To his sorrowing widow, daughter with her husband and children, we offer sincere sympathy in their great loss. May they also be found in the way which leads to everlasting life. Sympathy is also extended to his brothers and sisters in the loss of a devoted brother. "... Ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Gal. 3:28.

D.C.

Dearbhaidhean an Aghaidh Teagasgan nam Baisteach

Tha e air a ràdh gu soilleir gur ann trid creidimh a tha peachaich air an slànuchadh, agus as eugmhais creidimh nach bi iad air an sàbhaladh. Nis is peacaich sinn gu h-ìomlan o bhroinn ar mathar do bhrìgh gu-n d' rugadh sinn am peacadh. Is peacaich naoidheanan ma ta. A reir mìneachaidh nam Baisteach, do bhrìgh nach urra' creidimh a bhi aig naoidheanaibh cha' n urr' iad a bhi air an sabhaladh. Ann an briathraibh eile, ma ghabhas sinn mìneachadh an t-seors aidmheil so, cha'neil leanabh a fhuair bàs o thoiseach an t-saoghail nach deach a dhì, agus nach eil a nis ann an ifrinn!!

O! an ruig mi leas a dhearbhadh mar a tha so an aghaidh nan Sgriobtuir!

Cha'n ril mi 'g radh gu bheil na Baistich a' teagasg so; ach tha mi 'g radh do bhrìgh nach eil iad 'g a theagasg, gu bheil iad a' toirt breith air teagasg fein mu-n Bhaisteadh, agus ' ag'n dìteadh fein.

Ma tha naoidheana air an cumail o'n Bhaisteadh a chionn gu bheil e air radh, "ge b'e chreideas, agus a bhaistear saorar e' tha e'a leanntuinn o'n t-seors mhìneachaidh so, gu-n d'theid naoidheana uile a dhì, ma gheibh iad bàs, agus iad 'nan naoidheanaibh, do bhrìgh 's gu bheil e air radh, "trid creidimh tha sibh air bhrìgh sabhaladh."

Ma tha dì creidimh a' bacadh Baisteadh dhoibh, — 's eigin do'n nì cheudna slainte a bhacadh dhoibh oir tha cainnt an Sgriobruir mu-n dà nì a' co-fhreagradh ri cheile.

Ach is anaoibhinn do'n duine sin a ta meas gu-n do labhair Crìosd focal anns an robh so air fhilleadh ann; na gu-n do theagasg e nì air bith a bha cur an aghaidh àitean eile do'n Sgriobtuir.

Ach tha an t-am ann anis gu-n gabhainn air m'aghaidh a nochdadh cuid do no dearbhaidhean o'n Tiomnadh Nuadh a ta a' daigheachadh teagaisg so an t-Sean Tiomnaidh — gu'm buin comhara a cho'cheangail do naoidheanaibh. —

I. Bheirinn fainear air tùs, ma seadh, briathra ar Slanuighfhear.

1. Tha an soisgeulach Marcus ma ta ag innse dhuinn mu Chrìosd, "Gu-n do ghabh e leanabh, agus chuir e 'nam meadhon e: agus an uair a thog a suas na uchd e gu-n dubhairt e riu, ge b'e neach a ghabhas' h-aon d'an leithidibh so do leanabanaibh a' m' ainmse a ta e a gabhail riumsa; agus ge b'e neach a ghabhas riumsa, cha mhìse ris am bheil e gabhail, ach an Ti a chuir uaith me." (Caib. ix. 36).

Tha e gu soilleir air a chuir sìos againn ann an so gu'r coir gabhail ri leanabanaibh an ainm' Chrìosd. Nis tha fios gur e an Sgriobtur e fein is fearr a mhìnicheas an Sgriobtur; uime sin gu dheanamh a mach cìod a ta na briathra so a' ciallachadh, thogainn mo chuis chum nan Sgriobtur iad fein.

Beagan na dheigh do Chrìosd na briathra ud a labhairt thuirt "ge b'e neach a bheir cupan uisge dhuibhse r'a òl a m'ainmse 'se sin chionn gur le Crìosd sibh, gu deimhin a deirim ribh, nach caill e a dhuais." (Marc ix. 41).

Tha so gu soilleir a' teagasg — nì air bith a dheanamh do neach eile ann an ainm Chrìosd — gur e sin, a dheanamh a chionn gur le Crìosd e; uime sin — àithn gu gabhail ri leanabanaibh an ainm Chrìosd, — cìod e sin ach àithn gabhail riu a chionn gur leisan iad — se sin a chionn gu

bheil còir aca gu bhi air an alreamh 'am measg a dheisciobluibh fhaicsinniech.

Dh'fheoruichinn anis ciod an doigh air am feudar umhlachd a thoirt do'n aithn so? Cia mar a tha sinne gu bhi gabhail r'an leithide sud do leanabanaibh an ainm Cheiosd? — 'se sin mar mhuinntir a ta ann an dalmh co dlù dha is gu bheil e fein ag ràdh gur leis-san iad? Seadh mar mhuinntir a dh-fheudas a bhi nan deisciobuil dhasan? 'Se an Scriobtur a rìs is fearr a fhreagras so. "Uime sin," deir an Slanuighfhear ann an àit eile, "imichbhse, agus deanaibh deisciobuil do gach uile chinneach, 'gam baisteadh ann an ainm an Athar, agus a Mhic, agus an Spioraid Naoimh.'" (Matt. xxviii. 19). Mar a bha Timchioll-ghearradh na chomharadh, gum bu le Dia cloinn Israel ann an dalmh araid; air an doigh cheudna tha am baisteadh na chomharadh gur leis-san ann an daimh araid', andrean sin uile d'am bheil an t-ordugh so air a fhrithealadh. Agus 'si mo gheachd gu bheil barrantas againn cho-dhunadh gu-n robh suil aig Criosd ri sochairean leanabana fuidh'n t-Seann Tiomnadh 'nuair a labhair e umpa, mar a ta sinn a' leughadh ann an so.

'S ann ma ta le bhi baisteadh leanabana a bhitheas sinn a' gabhail riu mar dhream is le Criosd; oir, gun teagamh, tha leanabana a' deanamh suas cuibhrionn "do gach uile chinneach," agus le so tha iadsan air am filleadh a steach 's an àithne a thug Criosd seachad an an so.

Ri Leantuinn.

Church Notes

Annual Synod

The Synod meets, the Lord willing, during the month of May. During the days appointed for this meeting, ministers and elders from our congregations at home and abroad will meet together to consider matters affecting the interests of Christ's Cause among us. Often the brethren have to deal with difficult matters and have to try to resolve them. In view of this, what need there is that they might receive light and guidance from on High so that they might do all things according to God's mind and will. We would ask the praying people of the Church to plead with the Lord that the brethren might be so guided and that the Lord may grant a gracious spirit of love and unity among them as they meet together. Wherever the Lord's servants meet together to seek to advance the interests of Christ's Cause in the world, there we can expect Satan to be active in trying to overthrow that work and in seeking to create trouble and discord. We would ask, therefore, that prayer would be offered that Satan might be kept at bay and his schemes frustrated.