

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and Monthly Record

Volume 84

October 1979

Number 10

The Ministry of the Gospel

Those of us who are ministers of the Gospel have great responsibilities laid upon us. We are called to watch for souls as those that must give account. In view of this we have need of divine grace and help in order that we may be faithful in the discharge of these responsibilities. While it would be profitable to consider what duties belong to the ministerial calling, we thought that for the present it might not be out of place to remind ourselves of some of our needs as ministers of the Gospel and also of some of the dangers which we are to avoid.

First of all we need wisdom. It was for wisdom that Solomon asked when the Lord allowed him to choose whatever he would desire. "Give therefore Thy servant," he said, "an understanding heart to judge Thy people, that I may discern between good and bad." Solomon's choice pleased the Lord. We, on our part, have need of wisdom, for wisdom is profitable to direct. We need the wisdom that is from above which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." If we are to communicate the knowledge of divine things to others we need enlightenment in the knowledge of the truth.

We are to avoid, on the other hand, reliance on our own carnal wisdom. There is nothing more fitted to help us in this than learning that our own wisdom is foolishness. We should be learning this by precept and we will be learning it by experience also. The more we are made aware of our own ignorance the more we will realise our need of being made wise through the wisdom that is from above.

Second, we need grace and strength daily for the tasks and burdens that fall on us — and these are not few or light and are not likely to become fewer but more, nor lighter but heavier. The danger to be avoided here is doing the work of the Lord in our own strength. We are ready to be self-sufficient, relying upon our own strength to do tasks and bear burdens for which our own strength is insufficient.

The answer to this is dependence upon divine grace and strength and help. But what will make us dependent? It is this — a realisation such as the apostle had when he said, Who is sufficient for these things? What encouragement have we to be dependent? We have the invitation in God's Word to come boldly to the throne of grace in order that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Again we are invited to cast our burden on the Lord and he shall sustain us. We cannot be too dependent on the Lord. The Apostle had to say, When I am weak, then am I strong. We are to learn more and more that our sufficiency is of God — that it is “not by might nor by power but by My Spirit, saith the Lord.”

Third, we need to grow in all the graces of the Spirit. The danger we are to avoid here is that of forgetting the needs of our own soul — “They made me the keeper of the vineyards but my own vineyard have I not kept.” This is a real danger — being so occupied looking after the souls of others that we neglect our own soul. Love to souls is a mark of the true pastor but we need to love our own soul first if we are to be of use to others. It is when we love our own soul that we will have real love to souls and be of use to others. Our own soul must be precious to us if the souls of others are to be precious to us. All the graces of the Spirit are to be cultivated. For this we need and must seek the blessing of the Holy Spirit so that these graces may be stirred up in us. Nothing will so tend to the cultivation of these graces as living fellowship and communion with God through the Lord Jesus Christ by the blessing of His Spirit. Through that communion we will put on the Lord Jesus Christ more and more and be changed into His likeness.

We would mention particularly our need of faith and hope and love. Faith leads us immediately to Christ who is the object of faith. Faith enables us to see the things that are unseen and eternal. Faith leads on to hope. For if we believe then all our expectation is in Christ. Through Christ we have hope of eternal life and are made heirs of everlasting glory. Faith and hope lead on to love. “Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

I would mention also meekness and humility. These are to be largely cultivated in order to greater usefulness. Meekness is a wonderful grace. To be delivered from our own spirit is a great thing. Ye know not what spirit ye are off, said the Saviour to His disciples. While we are to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, we are not to be contentious. So we need to put on meekness. “The servant of the

Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing them that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." (2 Tim. 2:24, 25). And we are to put on humility, that is, lowliness of heart and mind. We are by nature proud and self-seeking. We are ready to seek great things for ourselves. Baruch was told: "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." (Jer. 45:5). Even the disciples were found disputing which of them should be the greatest. But you may say, surely it is right to seek that the Lord would abundantly bless our labours and make us eminent in His service. It is true that it is right to seek the Lord's abundant blessing on our labours — but not for our own glory. Whom the Lord is to use mightily in His service, He will first make them very low in their own eyes. And the more He will truly use us, the lower we will become in our own eyes and say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake." (Psalm 115:1).

We are not to dictate to the Lord how He is to use us in His service. We have our own ideas of what usefulness is in His service. But our thoughts in this may be very far from His thoughts. Those who had served Christ most in this world had to say at last, "Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or thirsty, and gave Thee drink? When saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? Or when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee?" (Matt. 25:37-39). They thought that they had done nothing for Him, nor rendered any service worthy of reward, yet it was these who were rewarded. We are to be like the angels who rejoice in doing God's will whatever the task which is allotted to them. Think, for instance, of an angel sent to earth to bring a teardrop from the eye of a penitent sinner to heaven beginning to complain that it was too small a task for him. How rebuked he would be on his entry to heaven when, on sight of the tear, all the sons of God sang for joy — "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" — and when he discovered that the tear was to be preserved in God's bottle forever. But no, the angels do not complain, but delight in the very least service. What we are ready to count as little tasks will have great rewards in heaven.

Another outstanding grace is holiness. "As He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15, 16). "Follow peace with all men, and *holiness*, without which no man shall see the Lord," the

Apostle exhorts the Hebrews. If these exhortations are applicable to the ordinary Christian, how much more to ministers of the Gospel. As Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne has said: "A holy minister is an awful weapon in the hand of God."

Last of all I would mention our great need of devotedness to Christ and to His service. We are not to be Sabbath day ministers but ministers every day of the week. We must endeavour to fulfil our ministry in such a way that at the end of the day we will receive our Master's "Well done, good and faithful servant." If it is said to believers, Ye are not your own, how much more so is it true of those called to the ministry of the Gospel. We must expect to meet with opposition from men and from devils in fulfilling our calling. We are to remember that "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," as Paul tells the Ephesians. At the same time we are to remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds," as he told the Corinthians. We must therefore take unto us the whole armour of God. Prayer is a powerful weapon against the kingdom of darkness and so is the sword of the Spirit. We are not to return reviling for reviling — and if we are true ministers of Christ we will not escape reviling (see Matthew 10:25) — but we are to follow the example of Christ "who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." (1 Peter 2:23). Though we were assured that bonds and afflictions awaited us in the service of Christ, may we be so devoted to that service as to say with the Apostle Paul: "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24).

Table Address

by Rev. John Duncan, LL.D.

(Address before Distribution of Elements)

It is the death that Jesus accomplished at Jerusalem which we this day commemorate. And in the commemoration thereof we eat of that Bread which came down from heaven, that a man might eat thereof and live for ever. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." There

have been many deaths on this earth — all the men who died have died on it, because all were sinners. But this is a peculiar death, a wondrous death, for He who died was "Jesus Christ the righteous." Death passed upon all, for that all have sinned, but Christ died, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. This, then, is no ordinary death. Every other death is a sinner's death. But what is this peculiar death? It demands a peculiar attention; it is a peculiar fact in the administration of a holy and a righteous God, bearing on the case of all mortal, because sinful, men.

Now about this death, on which we are to meditate for a few minutes, I would suggest a few thoughts, and but a few examples of that which is so rich in thought, fitted to furnish an occupation for our mind, with all its powers and faculties, both in time and eternity. Of the many thoughts, therefore, which it suggests, let us for a few minutes take these two, viz., Love and Life. We commemorate this day a death which is the exhibition of love, and which is both the exhibition and price of life.

Believing communicants, ye know what ye were. Among other things, ere ye were quickened, ye were in death. "We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, hateful and hating one another." This is a sad account of fallen humanity. Nor is this the worst brand on us, that we are a misanthropical race (hating mankind). Not only are we misanthropical, but we are misotheistical also, that is, haters of God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be." And it forms the chief element of our hatefulness, that we hate God: and it is the chief source of our misanthropy, of our hating one another. Well, "Such were some of you"; such in your primeval estate ye all were. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." And ye are now come as a living and loving people to meditate on love, and to warm your poor sparks at the flame of divine love.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us." Had we loved God, that had not been worth talking about, because He is so amicable, but herein is love, that God loved us who did not love Him. Now, who can tell the hatefulness of not loving God? And yet here is the wondrous display of love, surpassing surely the Law's display of it (which is a display of it), that God loved us, and so loved us as "to send His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." For God could not put aside the law of love, because God is love. God is justice, and justice maintains law. But what is law? The demand of love. He could not in love put love aside. He could not put aside the law of love. Justice it is that maintains

law, and the summary of law is, "Thou shalt love." He could not in love put love aside, because of His great love to the breakers of the law, and in breaking the law, the violators of love. He could not put love aside: it could not be that the loving God could put the claims of love or the interests of love aside. But He so loved as to give His Son to maintain the law of love, when He loved His enemies, giving His Son to be a propitiation. Love is a wondrous thing. High is the praise which Paul gives of it to the Corinthians, and still higher the praise which John gives of it in the words "God is love, and He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him." Now, it is the exhibition of this love — God giving His Son to be the propitiation for the sins of enemies — that lays the foundation for the outpouring of love to the fulfilment of that promise which we have in the covenant of grace established in Christ. "The Lord thy God shall circumcise thine heart to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." "I will put My law in their heart and write it in their inward parts," that law of which the summary is, "Thou shalt love." God's love, as being holy love, could not compromise law, because that would be compromising love; it could not compromise justice, for justice requires only the law, which says, "thou shalt love."

Well, let us meditate for a little on the love. The whole exhibition which God has made of Himself to man as a spiritual being, though His natural perfections are revealed in the works of creation, is in His law and in His gospel. And what is the summary of the law? Shortened into ten precepts, in compassion to our poor faculties, and shortened again for our poor faculties into two great commandments, it is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." And what is the uniting principle of this, the summary in the two great commandments? It is, "Thou shalt love." God is love, and the whole summary of His law is, "Thou shalt love." And what is the summary of the Gospel? It is, "God so loved." The sort of death which Christ died, expresses the "so." "God so loved the world." God in the law, the loving God, requires only love, and God in the Gospel, the loving God, so loved those who loved Him not as to give His only-begotten Son. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love." "Herein is love, not that we loved God." If we had done so, poor thanks to us, for God is infinitely amiable. His command rests most truly on a Creator's right and property, that gives Him a right; but as a moral law it is shown that it is equitable, because He who demands it, is not only our Creator, having a right to all our being, but amiable, and having this

a right to demand love. It is a moral obligation because of the divine amiability. God is a lovely Being. Well, "Herein is love, not that we loved God." We were hateful and hating one another, and our carnal mind was enmity against God, and not subject to His law. We were not subject to His law which told us only to love, and we were such haters that we hated God who only bade us love. "Not that we loved God," the amiable demander of love; we hated love; we hated the amiable demander of love; we hated God. And God could not compromise justice, which, being holy, requires holy and just love; but "Herein is love" that "God loved his enemies and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins"; that, justice being satisfied, He might come and write the law of love in our hearts, and put it in our inward parts. We commemorate love, the just love, the wondrous love, the Lovely and the Loving, dying for the hateful and hating, dying for them to make them lovers.

(Address after Distribution of Elements)

Love and Life. Love and Life are bound up together, not by an arbitrary tie, but by a oneness. "He that hateth his brother abideth in death." Love and Life; hatred and death. A life of hatred is a life in sin. That is the death which we fell into. There was death as a sentence, no doubt, because we had broken the law of justice, which is the law of love; we had broken that, and in breaking that, had incurred death as a penalty, but we fell also into death as a state. For hatred is death. God is love, and God lives; and he who hates is dead, dead in trespasses and sins. For sin is the transgression of the law, and the summary of the law is, "Thou shalt love."

Well, we commemorate a death which brings life; that death which is the life of the faith which works by love, and the love of the faith with respect to God's love and which works in the production of love. For, as I said, this is a peculiar death. "I am the Living One, and I became dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of the unseen state and death." Now, "I am the Living One," lies at the bottom of His bestowal of the life by becoming dead. How did He by becoming dead become life? Because He was the Living One, and had thus to bestow on us an infinite fountain of life. "Because of life the fountain pure remains alone with Thee." The character of Jehovah is that He is the Living One.

Now, the Son, being in the form of God and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, that is, having the divine nature and in it divine independence, being servant of none, took upon Him the form of a servant. He is the eternal life which was with the Father, Jehovah the

living God, full of all being, of infinite being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth unchangeably. And He is the eternal life by the external generation. "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in Himself." Being the Son as contradistinguished from all other creatures He hath life in Himself, this holy, blessed life. But that this life might be communicated to dead sinners, He who was the life took on Him humanity, the form of a servant, for dead me, for guilty me, for unholy me. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

"I am the life." "The fountain of life remains with Thee." "I am the life." "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, even so He that eateth Me shall live by Me." That we should eat Him and live, He took flesh, and gave that flesh that we might have life through the mystical union with the only-begotten Son of God who lives by the Father.

Thus our life reverts into the three-fold union; first, that by which the three Persons are one God; secondly, that by which the two natures are one Christ, one God-man; and thirdly, that by which we are members quickened together by His Spirit and accepted through His atoning death. Thus we, by virtue of our mystical union to the Son of God, who is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, live with a divine life from and in the living One, who is the eternal life which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us.

Now this death is that through which the divine life that is in Christ outflows. It is thus:—That life could not flow out, because the sentence of death had passed on us, being lawbreakers. We were not lovers, because we were haters. But love could overcome that. God cannot let go His demand of obedience to the law, but divine justice being satisfied, out flows His Spirit to bring us into connection with Him who is the giver of life; not simply because He died for us, but because He who died for us is Himself the eternal life in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. According to the Father's and His own agreement, with the consent of the Holy Spirit, the applier, He comes and dwells in us, that we may live by union to Him who is the life.

In all this, I think it is somewhat apparent that love and life are so united, not arbitrarily, but in the very nature of things as that they are inseparable. And what does all teach us? Surely this, "Walk in love, as Christ also loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a

sacrifice to God." So the gospel brings us back to the law. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind: and thy neighbour as thyself," and law and gospel unite in one covenant testimony. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Now, love to God will make us very careful of offending the good God; and love to our neighbour — "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour" — will make us do all the good we can. For "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

And so I stop with the prayer, "The Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." "And the Lord make us to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God."

Are You Happy

By Bishop J.C. Ryle

(continued from page 275)

III. Let me now, in the last place, *point out the way to be really happy.*

There is a sure path which leads to happiness, if men will only take it. There never lived the person who travelled in that path and missed the object that he sought to attain.

It is a path open to all. It needs neither wealth, nor rank, nor learning in order to walk in it. It is for the servant as well as for the master: it is for the poor as well as for the rich. None are excluded but those who exclude themselves.

It is the one only path. All that have ever been happy since the days of Adam have journeyed on it. There is no royal road to happiness. Kings must be content to go side by side with their humblest subjects, if they would be happy.

Reader, where is this path? Where is this road? Listen, and you shall hear.

The way to be happy is *to be a real, thorough-going, true-hearted Christian*. Scripture declares it: experience proves it. The converted man, the believer in Christ, the child of God — he, and he alone, is the happy man.

It sounds too simple to be true: it seems at first sight so plain a receipt that it is not believed. But the greatest truths are often the simplest. The secret which many of the wisest on earth have utterly failed to discover,

is revealed to the humblest believer in Christ. I repeat it deliberately, and defy the world to disprove it: the true Christian is the only happy man.

What do I mean when I speak of a true Christian? Do I mean everybody who goes to church or chapel? Do I mean everybody who professes an orthodox creed, and bows his head at the belief? Do I mean everybody who professes to love the Gospel? No: indeed! I mean something very different. All are not Christians, who are called Christians. The man I have in view is *the Christian in heart and life*. He who has been taught by the Spirit really to feel his sins — he who really rests all his hopes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and His atonement — he who has been born again and really lives a spiritual holy life — he whose religion is not a mere 'Sunday' coat, but a mighty constraining principle governing every day of his life — he is the man I mean, when I speak of a true Christian.

What do I mean when I say the true Christian is happy? Has he no doubts and no fears? Has he no anxieties and no troubles? Has he no sorrows and no cares? Does he never feel pain, and shed no tears? Far be it from me to say anything of the kind. He has a body weak and frail like other men; he has affections and passions like every one born of woman: he lives in a changeful world. But deep down in his heart he has a mine of solid peace and substantial joy which is never exhausted. This is true happiness.

Do I say that all true Christians are equally happy? No: not for a moment! There are babes in Christ's family as well as old men; there are weak members of the mystical body as well as strong ones; there are tender lambs as well as sheep. There are not only the cedars of Lebanon but the hyssop that grows on the wall. There are degrees of grace and degrees of faith. Those who have most faith and grace, will have most happiness. But all, more or less, compared to the children of the world, are happy men.

Do I say that real true Christians are equally happy at all times? No: not for a moment! All have their ebbs and flows of comfort: some, like the Mediterranean sea, almost insensibly; some, like the tide at Chepstow, fifty or sixty feet at a time. Their bodily health is not always the same; their earthly circumstances are not always the same; the souls of those they love fill them, at seasons, with special anxiety: they themselves are sometimes overtaken by a fault and walk in darkness. They sometimes give way to inconsistencies and besetting sins, and lose their sense of pardon. But as a general rule, the true Christian has a

deep pool of peace within him, which even at the lowest is never entirely dry.*

The true Christian is the only happy man, because *his conscience is at peace*. That mysterious witness for God, which is so mercifully placed within us, is fully satisfied and at rest. It sees in the blood of Christ a complete cleansing away of all its guilt; it sees in the priesthood and mediation of Christ a complete answer to all its fears; it sees that through the sacrifice and death of Christ, God can now be just, and yet be the justifier of the ungodly. It no longer bites and stings, and makes its possessor afraid of himself. The Lord Jesus Christ has amply met all its requirements. Conscience is no longer the enemy of the true Christian, but his friend and adviser. Therefore he is happy.

The true Christian is the only happy man, because he can *sit down quietly and think about his soul*. He can look behind him and before him, he can look within him and around him, and feel, "All is well." — He can think calmly on his past life, and however many and great his sins, take comfort in the thought that they are all forgiven: the righteousness of Christ covers all, as Noah's flood overtopped the highest hills. — He can think calmly about things to come, and yet not be afraid. Sickness is painful; death is solemn; the judgment day is an awful thing: but having Christ for him, he has nothing to fear. — He can think calmly about the Holy God, whose eyes are on all his ways, and feel, "He is my Father in Christ Jesus. I am weak; I am unprofitable: yet in Christ He regards me as His dear child, and is well-pleased." Oh, what a blessed privilege it is to be able to *think*, and not be afraid! I can well understand the mournful complaint of the prisoner in solitary confinement. He had warmth, and food, and clothing, and work, but he was not happy. And why? He said, "He was obliged to think."

The true Christian is the only happy man, because *he has sources of happiness entirely independent of this world*. He has something which cannot be affected by sickness and by deaths, by private losses and by public calamities: the peace of God, which passeth all understanding. He has a hope laid up for him in heaven; he has a treasure which moth and rust cannot corrupt; he has a house which can never be taken down; his loving wife may die, and his heart feel rent in twain; his darling children may be taken from him, and he may be left alone in this cold

*I use the words, "as a general rule," advisedly. When a believer falls into such a horrible sin as that of David, it would be monstrous to talk of his feeling inward peace. If a man professing to be a true Christian talked to me of being happy in such a case — before giving any evidence of the deepest, most heart-abasing repentance — I should feel great doubts whether he ever had any grace at all.



world; his earthly plans may be crossed; his health may fail: but all this time he has a portion which nothing can hurt. He has one Friend who never dies; he has possessions beyond the grave, of which nothing can deprive him; his nether springs may fail, but his upper springs are never dry. This is real happiness.

The true Christian is happy, because he is *in his right position*. All the powers of his being are directed to right ends. His affections are not set on things below, but on things above; his will is not bent on self-indulgence, but is submissive to the will of God; his mind is not absorbed in wretched perishable trifles. It desires useful employment: it enjoys the luxury of doing good. Who does not know the misery of disorder? Who has not tasted the discomfort of a house where everything and everybody are in their wrong places — the last things first and the first things last? The heart of an unconverted man is just such a house. Grace puts everything in that heart in its right position. The things of the soul come first, and the things of the world come second. Anarchy and confusion cease: unruly passions no longer do each one what is right in his eyes. Christ reigns over the whole man, and each part of him does his proper work. The new heart is the only really light heart, for it is the only heart that is in order. The true Christian has found out his place. He has laid aside his pride and self-will; he sits at the feet of Jesus, and is in his right mind: he loves God and loves man, and so he is happy. In heaven all are happy because all do God's will perfectly. The nearer a man gets to this standard the happier he will be.

Ah, reader, the plain truth is, that without Christ there is no happiness in this world. He alone can give the Comforter who abideth for ever. He is the sun; without Him men never feel warm. He is the light; without Him men are always in the dark. He is the bread; without Him men are always starving. He is the living water; without Him men are always athirst. Give them what you like,—place them where you please,—surround them with all the comforts you can imagine,—it makes no difference. Separate from Christ, the Prince of Peace, a man cannot be happy.

Give a man a sensible interest in Christ, and he will be happy *in spite of poverty*. He will tell you that he wants nothing that is really good. He is provided for: he has riches in possession, and riches in reversion; he has meat to eat that the world knows not of; he has friends who never leave him nor forsake him. The Father and the Son come to him, and make their abode with him: the Lord Christ sups with him, and he with Christ. (Rev. iii. 20.)

Give a man a sensible interest in Christ, and he will be happy *in spite of sickness*. His flesh may groan, and his body be worn out with pain, but his heart will rest and be at peace. One of the happiest people I ever saw was a young woman, who had been hopelessly ill for many years with disease of the spine. She lay in a garret without a fire; the straw thatch was not two feet above her face. She had not the slightest hope of recovery; but she was always rejoicing in the Lord Jesus. The spirit triumphed mightily over the flesh. She was happy, because Christ was with her.*

Give a man a sensible interest in Christ, and he will be happy *in spite of abounding public calamities*. The government of his country may be thrown into confusion; rebellion and disorder may turn everything upside down; laws may be trampled under foot; justice and equity may be outraged; liberty may be cast down to the ground; might may prevail over right; but still his heart will not fail. He will remember that the kingdom of Christ will one day be set up. He will say, like the old Scotch minister who lived unmoved throughout the turmoil of the first French Revolution: "It is all right: it shall be well with the righteous."

Reader, I know well that Satan hates the doctrine which I am endeavouring to press upon you. I have no doubt he is filling your mind with objections and reasonings, and persuading you that I am wrong. I am not afraid to meet these objections face to face. Let us bring them forward and see what they are.

You may tell me that "*you know many very religious people who are not happy at all.*" You see them diligent in attending public worship. You know that they are never missing at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But you see in them no marks of the peace which I have been describing.

But are you sure that these people you speak of are true believers in Christ? Are you sure that, with all their appearance of religion, they are born again and converted to God? Is it not very likely that they have nothing but the name of Christianity, without the reality; and a form of godliness, without the power? Alas, reader, you have yet to learn that people may do many religious acts, and yet possess no saving religion! It is not a mere formal, ceremonial Christianity that will ever make people happy. We want something more than going to church, and going to sacraments, to give us peace. There must be real, vital union with

*John Howard, the famous Christian philanthropist, in his last journey said, "I hope I have sources of enjoyment that depend not on the particular spot I inhabit. A rightly cultivated mind, under the power of religion and the exercises of beneficent dispositions, affords a ground of satisfaction little affected by *heres and theres*."



Christ. It is not the formal Christian, but the true Christian, that is the happy man.

You may tell me that "*you know really spiritually-minded and converted people who do not seem happy.*" You have heard them frequently complaining of their own hearts, and groaning over their own corruption. They seem to you all doubts, and anxieties, and fears; and you want to know where is the happiness in these people of which I have been saying so much.

I do not deny that there are many saints of God such as these whom you describe, and I am sorry for it. I allow that there are many believers who live far below their privileges, and seem to know nothing of joy and peace in believing. But did you ever ask any of these people, whether they would give up the position in religion they have reached, and go back to the world? Did you ever ask them, after all their groanings, and doubtings, and fearings, whether they think they would be happier, if they ceased to follow hard after Christ? *Did you ever ask those questions?* I am certain if you did, that the weakest and lowest believers would all give you one answer. I am certain they would tell you that they would rather cling to their little scrap of hope in Christ, than possess the world. I am sure they would all answer, "Our faith is weak, if we have any; our grace is small, if we have any; our joy in Christ is next to nothing at all: but we cannot give up what we have got. Though the Lord slay us, we must cling to Him." Ah, reader, the root of happiness lies deep in many a poor weak believer's heart, when neither leaves nor blossoms are to be seen!

But you will tell me, in the last place, that "*you cannot think most believers are happy, because they are so grave and serious.*" You think that they do not really possess this happiness I have been describing, because their countenances do not show it. You doubt the reality of their joy, because it is so little seen.

I might easily repeat what I told you at the beginning of this tract,—that a merry face is no sure proof of a happy heart. But I will not do so. I will rather ask you, whether you yourself may not be the cause why believers look grave and serious when you meet them? If you are not converted yourself, you surely cannot expect them to look at you without sorrow. They see you on the high road to destruction, and that alone is enough to give them pain; they see thousands like you, hurrying on to weeping and wailing and endless woe. Now, is it possible that such a daily sight should not give them grief? Your company, very likely, is one cause why they are grave. Wait till you are a converted man

yourself, before you pass judgment on the gravity of converted people. See them in companies where all are of one heart and all love Christ, and so far as my own experience goes, you will find no people so truly happy as true Christians.*

Reader, I repeat my assertion in this part of my subject. I repeat it boldly, confidently, deliberately. I say that there is no happiness among men that will at all compare with that of the true Christian. All other happiness by the side of his is moonlight compared to sunshine, and brass by the side of gold. Boast, if you will, of the laughter and merriment of irreligious men; sneer, if you will, at the gravity and seriousness, which appear in the demeanour of many Christians: I have looked the whole subject in the face, and am not moved. I say that the true Christian alone is the truly happy man, and the way to be happy is to be a true Christian.

*When the infidel Hume asked Bishop Horne why religious people always looked melancholy, the learned prelate replied, "The sight of you, Mr Hume, would make any Christian melancholy."—*Sinclair's Aphorisms*. Page 13.

Capital Punishment

By Rev. Hugh Martin D.D.

God has imbued responsible man with a natural and profound horror of shedding his brother's blood. Nor is this confined to those who are in possession of the Scriptures, those holy writings in which God has said — at the very constitution of the world and of society, on re-arranging that constitution after it had been obliterated by the flood — "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." It is a feeling that has gone down all time, with all the families of Noah; and that, whether the covenant with Noah — whether the Scripture or that special command in it — has gone down to them or not. However much extreme hardening, through indulgence in sin, may sear the conscience, and go far, apparently, to obliterate this horror at the guilt of murder, it is more proper to say that such searing and hardening rather overpowers than obliterates it. For it abideth still; and it affords one of a multitude of harmonies between the religion of the natural conscience of man and the religion of the revealed will of God. For, — whatever may be said by some who would seem to seek a character for good feeling higher than God Himself — as it is apart from and prior to the Bible, or any precept there, that man instinctively abhors the sin of murder; so, it was prior to any particular dispensation — any Mosaic economy, for instance, or



Jewish theocracy — and as applied to all lands and all times, that God, in starting the world anew in the ark-saved family of the patriarch, gave forth the unrepealed command, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Nor should it be forgotten, as sufficient for ever to silence the advocates for the abolition of capital punishment, that God has not only given an unrepealed command which He might have been pleased to rest on His own authority and will alone, but He has condescended to give the ground and reason of it; and so long as both the command remains unrepealed and the reason remains a fact, so long is the proposed abolition of capital punishment a daring insult against the Most High. God hath given us a reason why the shedding of man's blood must be avenged by the murderer's death — "for in the image of God made He man." And until this truth becomes untrue, that is, until man ceases to be a free, intelligent, responsible being — fallen, indeed, and in a vast multitude of cases, alas! unrenowned, yet still responsible, intelligent and free — capital punishment, both by God's commanding will and by God's assigned reason, is the murderer's doom. And nature and reason sanction the sentence.

Breaking Down the Carved Work

By Rev. John Colquhoun, Glendale, Skye.

(continued from p. 281)

This leads us to consider another matter in which the Free Church is notoriously guilty. In the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland there is still the exercise of a discipline which is based on the pattern found in the New Testament. This has caused many to leave her communion, and they found a ready asylum in the present Free Church. Many instances could be quoted where persons were refused the Sacrament of Baptism because of their shameful ignorance of the letter of God's Word, or because of a life that was not in accordance with the profession which they were ready to make, who were received with open arms by the Free Church, and the privilege granted to them within a matter of weeks, after it was refused in the Free Presbyterian Church. This was done without even the courtesy of asking the Kirk-sessions who refused the privilege why these persons had been rejected. Thus a serious attempt has often been made to break down the carved work in a Church which holds it dear. It may be looked upon as fantastic, by those who do not know, but, nevertheless, it is a sober fact that some of these fugitives

from discipline became members, office-bearers, and even ministers, in the Church which received them, and there are many still living who can testify to these facts.

In the face of all this, on several occasions, the Free Church has approached the Free Presbyterian Church with overtures for union. To support these overtures, the Free Presbyterian Church has been praised for its faithfulness, and the different ways in which the Free Presbyterian Church and the minority who remained under the Declaratory Act in 1893, acted, has been glossed over as "due to a difference of judgment." (See Professor Kennedy Cameron's booklet, *Further Ecclesiastical Union in Scotland*, p.63). In other publications our Church is spoken of as identical with the Free Church. Verily, we should not consider ourselves flattered in this when we remember the many things which appear from time to time in the public Press, showing a lack of discrimination and discernment on the part of some of their ministers as to who they will admit into their pulpits, and the little regard these ministers have for purity of worship when they conduct public worship in Church of Scotland congregations, apparently to the accompaniment of instrumental music and uninspired hymns. These overtures on the part of the Free Church, when all is said and done, do not seem so much to have union in view as to converting the Free Presbyterian Church to the Free Church way of thinking. When the Free Presbyterian Synod manifested that it was not prepared to fall into the trap we were spoken of as schismatics who delighted in rending the body of Christ. However, in face of this, those who are seeking after the carved work of the Reformation will find in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in spite of all its imperfections, that carved work as it can be found in no other denomination in Scotland today.

From this it can be seen in the matter of union between the Free Church and the Free Presbyterian Church, the Free Church is speaking with two voices. On the point of approaching us with a view to Union the Free Presbyterian Church is praised for its faithfulness, and sympathy is expressed for those who made a stand in 1893, on account of the privations which they suffered, but always without any confession or expression of regret on the part of those who appeared as the minority in 1900, for having helped to bring about these privations. When the Free Presbyterian Church, for very good reasons, as it did more than once, rejected these overtures, it was branded as guilty of the sin of schism, and much is done in our own day, covertly, to give a distorted view of its character and witness to inquiring strangers. This



shows the real spirit with which the Free Church is animated towards the Free Presbyterian Church, but, lest it be said that this is only a surmise, the history of our Church can furnish plenty of proof of it. It has been our experience to have painful troubles in various congregation throughout the Church at different times, and Free Church ministers, with a view to adding to their own flocks, have not been above fishing in these troubled waters. This is but one way in which they show their hostility to a Church which they praise when the occasion requires it. What, it may be asked, was the particular brand of Christian charity manifested in Edinburgh when a Free Presbyterian minister joined the Free Church with a section of his congregation, and through a defect in the title-deeds, took the church building with him, for which loyal Free Presbyterians contributed a very substantial sum. When that building was no longer needed by him it was sold for use as a motor garage and the Free Church never offered a farthing of the proceeds to those who contributed so handsomely to its purchase, nor offered it, at any price, to the congregation which had been deprived of it. The assertion was that there was no congregation; that the only objectors to going over to the Free Church were "five silly girls." This assertion manifests a characteristic trait of fallen human nature, when one aspires to a certain object and is disappointed, he immediately resorts to branding as insignificant those who reject him and the object to which he aspired.

From this survey of attempts to break down the carved work of the Reformation we find that there is no love or regard for the attainments of the First and Second Reformations. This priceless heritage is despised and esteemed as of no value. Yea, the movements which, under God, procured for us this heritage are looked upon as mistakes, and the work of fanatics. The Covenanters are derided by such, as ignorant men, and that, in too many cases, by men who are far behind them in secular learning, and who have never tasted of that grace which made our forefathers famous. In quarters where one would least expect it, they are found fault with for taking up arms in defence of their lives, their liberties, and their religion. The Rev. Hugh Martin, D.D., to our mind, furnishes an unanswerable reply to these critics of our Covenanting forefathers when he says, in referring to the words of the Saviour to Peter, "Put up thy sword into his place: for they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." "It is ridiculous to profess to find in this a decision of Christ on the subject of war; far more so to find in it a decision against even defensive war as sinful, or against the profession of a soldier as in itself unlawful. It is equally absurd to plead this text in

support of what used to be called the divine right of kings, in virtue of which it was held that they might be guilty of extortion and oppression towards their subjects to any extent, while their victims were forbidden by Scripture to rise and resent the tyranny, or rise and throw off the tyrant. The words of Jesus give no countenance to the notion that all war is sinful; and as little to the equally unfounded idea that all revolutions must be rebellious. We live, as Britons, under a constitution guaranteed to us by a revolution settlement, which was righteous and good, and which banished from the throne a dynasty whom the nation declared, most justly, had forfeited its love and its submission, and whom the judgment of God upon their wickedness has since pursued into extinction. And as we live in internal tranquility under God, in virtue of a settlement secured by a just revolution; we ought to be prepared in like manner to guard our external relations by readiness, when necessary, for defensive war. The righteousness, in certain cases, of revolution within; and the righteousness, in certain cases also, of war without; are principles indeed absolutely necessary to the maintenance of peace within the nation itself, and of peace with those around us. And these are principles sanctioned in many passages of Scripture, and certainly not condemned by the words before us." *Shadow of Calvary*, 1875 ed. p.175.

There is, in the breaking down of the carved work, a manifest unfaithfulness to solemn ordination vows. In the presence of God and men, an office-bearer vows, in the Presbyterian Church, to assert, maintain, and defend, the doctrines of God's Word, which also includes the government, discipline, worship. Even the vague forms in which questions and formulas are framed, or understood, will not excuse a minister or elder from faithfulness to these vows, yet we find men professing to abide by these doctrines, breaking their vows almost as soon as they are taken, forgetting that these vows are equally as binding as an oath. These seem to forget that the Lord declares that He will be a "swift witness" against "false swearers" when He will come near to judgment. Malachi 3:5.

In the light of these solemn matters the question may well be asked, how could the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland unite with any branch of the professing Church in Scotland today? Our separation is not on account of a spirit of aloofness as has often been alleged, neither are we schismatics as the Free Church maintains. Those who formed the Free Presbyterian Church in 1893 did not separate hastily. The history of the Free Church is ample proof of this. Uninspired hymns and

instrumental music were introduced, but, though they were in direct violation of the constitution, yet these innovations were not a part of it. It was different in the case of the Declaratory Act of 1892. It became "a binding law and constitution" of the Free Church, and thus the Free Church departed from her moorings, and changed her relationship to the time-honoured constitution of the Church of the Reformation in Scotland. No amount of sophistry about the questions and formula not being changed can alter that fact, for these questions and formula were now answered and subscribed in the light of the relief afforded to the "tender" consciences of those who had "difficulties and scruples" about accepting the Confession of Faith in the sense in which it was formerly accepted, and the argument that the Relieving Act of 1894 relieved the *tender consciences* of those who objected to the Declaratory Act is not worth the breath or the ink spent in advancing it. It served those who advanced that argument to put the best construction they could on their conduct in remaining under it, when their people often heard them denouncing that Act as something they were determined to resist at all costs. One wonders if the Rainyite party chuckled at their success in befooling those of whom they felt they had reason to be afraid. That Relieving Act kept many ministers under the Declaratory Act, and some of them entered into the Union in 1900, with the sad result that their congregations today are, not only without a full-orbed gospel, but they are among the most advanced in bringing the vanities of the world into the Church.

Of those who did not enter the Union in 1900 there are many of their congregations which are sad examples of the havoc done by axes and hammers, in bringing down the carved work. Discipline, as has already been noticed, is largely gone; their pulpits are open to ministers whose orthodoxy can be seriously questioned; and their form of worship is not, in all respects, according to the pattern of the New Testament, for in some of these congregations, there is not an exclusive use of the psalms as the medium of praise, and the people sit during prayer, a posture for which they find no authority in the New Testament. In view of these matters and much more, the Free Presbyterian Church could not unite with the present Free Church without abandoning her distinctive testimony on behalf of God's Word and worship. By the Declaratory Act, the Church which adopted it ceased to be the Free Church which was once glorious in Scotland, and those who truly loved that Church had a solemn duty to plead with her to return to that which she had forsaken. "Plead with your mother, plead: for she is not my wife,

neither am I her husband: let her therefore put away her whoredoms out of her sight, and her adulteries from between her breasts." This pleading was done until all hope of redress was gone, and then the obvious duty was to separate from her. Those who separated had to part with some with whom they used to have close fellowship, but the Cause of Christ was dearer to them than all earthly ties. Those who remained under the Declaratory Act manifested that they had something else than the honour of Christ before their eye, and that "something else" they left as a sad legacy to those who followed them, and it has now become so augmented by fresh departures from the position held before 1892 that there is less prospect of a Union between the Free Presbyterian Church and the Free Church than ever there was. Any unbiased onlooker can see that the fault is with the latter Church. The truth already quoted, "Plead with your mother," lays a solemn duty on any of the Lord's people who may be in the Free Church, for if they were rightly exercised in that duty, they would soon see how little of the carved work remains with them.

With reference to the charge of schism so often levelled against the Free Presbyterian Church by protagonists of the Free Church, one wonders if these realise the meaning of the charge. Schism implies separation from a Church with well-defined principles, and especially when these principles are based four-square on the Holy Scriptures. No one can deny but that the Free Church of the Disruption had its principles based on the Word of God, but none can truthfully assert that the Declaratory Act Free Church had such high authority for its principles. It is not schism to adhere wholly to principles which are based on the Bible, but it is schism of the grossest nature to depart from them. This was the position in 1893. The Free Presbyterian Church adhered wholly to the doctrines of the Bible, and, in order to preserve these principles, they had to separate. Those who brought in unscriptural doctrines are the real schismatics, and to continue in them is to continue in schism. Those who formed the present Free Church continued, officially, to support that schism, and when they separated in 1900, that did not pass an act of oblivion on their schism. It might have done so if their separation meant a return to the Scripture principles which had been abandoned in 1892, and their setting up a Church on these principles might have much to commend it if there was no other Church in Scotland, holding these principles. There was, however, such a Church in Scotland, built on that foundation, and the obvious duty of those who separated in 1900 was to enter into it. If they had done so

they could have said: this is the Church of our fathers and mothers, and from henceforth this shall be our ecclesiastical home. Instead of that they set up a Church of their own which certainly, in its practice, does not emphasise the witness of the Church of the Disruption, whatever high profession is made in that respect. Today it is more like playing the part of an ante-room for the Church of Scotland, where ministers of both Churches may find a great deal of what they might look on as "common ground." In view of all this the truth still speaks clearly to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, "Let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them."

(To be continued)

Book Reviews

The Prophet Jonah by Hugh Martin. Banner of Truth Trust. Price £3.00.

Hugh Martin was one of the godly, gifted, learned ministers who adorned the Church of Christ in Scotland. He was born in 1822 and departed this life in 1885. He received the degree of Master of Arts with the highest honours in Mathematics from St Andrews University. Having held pastorates at Panbride and Edinburgh he retired because of ill-health in the 43rd year of his age, but preached the Gospel in Scotland and abroad till near the end of his life.

His writings manifest that he was a humble child of God and a "valiant for the truth" whose greatest desire was to exalt the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Some may think that Hugh Martin is too lenient with Jonah. However it is evident that, while he does not excuse the sins of the prophet of God, he is careful to do Jonah no injustice. "The Prophet Jonah" by Hugh Martin throws a flood of light on every chapter of the Book of Jonah. After reading this valuable book, the Book of Jonah seems to be a new book. His brilliant expositions of the truth are instructive, comforting, refreshing, while at the same time, they are beacons of warning to believers against backsliding and grieving the Holy Spirit of God. In expounding Jonah as a type of Christ he ascends heights which were unknown to us, and while he holds our hand and leads us on, with gracious awe upon our spirit we seek to say, "this is none other but the house of God and this is the gate of heaven."

Any Christian desiring to steer the good and safe course up the channel between the two sand-banks of hyper calvinism on the one hand and arminianism on the other, let him read from page 328 to page 343 of this book. This commentary on the book of Jonah is one of the ablest on

this prophet. Dr Martin's style of writing is lucid, pungent, dignified and pleasant. Christians who have read prayerfully and studied "The Shadow of Calvary", "Christ's Presence in the Gospel History" and "The Atonement" by Hugh Martin will certainly relish "The Prophet Jonah."

It is customary for reviewers in commending books to make necessary charitable criticisms. We have no criticisms to offer — none.

This book, written in clear, deep print is published by the Banner of Truth Trust to whom we are much indebted. It is beautifully bound in hard covers. It is truly a great book.

A. McK.

Commentary on Luke by William Hendriksen. Banner of Truth Trust, pp1121. Price £8.50.

As far as we can judge, this rather bulky Commentary on Luke's Gospel by Dr William Hendriksen merits a wide circulation and close perusal. Scriptural and orthodox in doctrine, in tone contemporary (possibly too much so), yet, it is evidently the product of a scribe well instructed in the Truth, and in other spheres of knowledge. Behind it lies much prayerful and exacting study, the fruits of which, the author now presents to the public. It contains an essential and informative Introduction, which covers the normal questions posed and answered in this section of any good commentary, and facilitates the elucidation of the content of the Gospel itself. This part of the work concludes with the apposite question, "What light does this Gospel shed on today's problems?". The fourfold answer is succinctly summarised thus:—"This Gospel is a book of doctrine showing us what to believe, of ethics telling us how to live, of comfort teaching us why to rejoice, and of prophecy, informing us what to expect." It is the author's conviction regarding the true purpose of a Commentary that explains and justifies the intellectual level of this volume. While not written for the academic or the specialist, it is certainly not devoid of definite academic and specialistic features, which indicate potential well beyond the level of this present volume. There are, for example, excellent and most useful notes on Greek words, phrases and constructions which should prove of great assistance to those who possess but a rudimentary knowledge of the original. Add to these the writer's "practical lessons to be derived from each passage", and you already have two salient characteristics which enhance the production. It is the first of these that extends the size of the book to 1122 pages, but it is space well used. Further, the format is

such, that one can read the commentary itself, with profit, without referring to the wealth of linguistic and grammatical material below. The continuity of the one is not impeded by the presence of the other.

With the sharp well disciplined perceptive mind of a good exegete, the author succeeds in giving a thorough and lucid explanation of the meaning of Scripture. We may disagree or hesitate to accept ALL that is written, especially in the eschatological part of the Gospel, but, in the main, we think that the most conservative would agree with Dr Hendriksen's explanation of this portion of Holy Writ. To purchase a copy of this Commentary is to get real value for the cost.

F.M.

Commentary on Daniel, by E. J. Young (B. of T.).

The late E. J. Young was, after R. D. Wilson, the most erudite and devoted student of the Old Testament this century has yet produced. Possessing a working knowledge of at least 26 languages (including all the Semitic and a variety of modern ones), besides a deep reverence for the Word of God, and a humility evident to all who knew him, he was unquestionably the best-equipped modern scholar to undertake an analytical commentary on the prophecies of Daniel. The present work, both in the author's own translation of the Hebrew and Aramaic, and in the painstaking attention to detail and problems raised by the text, is sufficient witness to Dr Young's meticulous scholarship and sanctified industry.

Contrary to the view of many modern scholars, Dr Young, while admitting the difficulties in holding that the book was written by Daniel in the 6th century B.C., firmly maintained this view, and accordingly treats the inspired text with profound reverence. His carefully-weighted conclusions on the smallest phrases and apparently most insignificant words, remind us of the commentaries of the Jewish rabbis in their high regard for the text.

Among several notable features of the commentary, we might single out Dr Young's constant acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God over the smallest human actions, and his appreciation of the transcendent riches of His grace in His dealings with Daniel and the people of God. Likewise, his remarks on the wondrous efficacy of the Redeemer's death are conspicuously fine. His employment of oriental languages (notably Persian) to shed light on the text is very impressive, as is his description of Nebuchadnezzar's dream-image in symbolising the "progressive inferiority" of the pagan empires. The commentary,

however, is sadly marred for the unscholarly reader by its ponderous consideration and tedious refutation of critical views, and its detailed discussion of certain passages (e.g. the "sevens" of 9:24-27 and the 'days' of 12:11). Certainly, this is a commentary for scholars, for it does little to engage the affections and captivate the will to the service of Daniel's God. In this respect, despite its superior scholarship, the commentary is far inferior to Calvin's on the same book.

J.M.B.

Notes and Comments

Death of Lord Mountbatten

The murder of Lord Mountbatten while on holiday in Southern Ireland is a grim reminder of what the provisional I.R.A. are prepared to do in order to achieve their aim of a united Ireland. As their aim cannot be achieved by peaceful means it must be obtained by fire and sword. Schooled as they have been in Southern Irish and Roman Catholic fanatical hatred of Britain, these men of violence will continue on their present course till either God will in mercy open their eyes to see the diabolical nature of their conduct or until they go to everlasting perdition.

The tragic loss of so many lives in Ireland, and recently that of 18 soldiers, is to be deplored, yet it is the cost that has to be paid in that land in maintaining Protestant freedom for the people of the North. For all we know the time may not be far off when the Lord will be pleased to pour out His Spirit upon the North and South and break forever the centuries-old hold that Romanism has had on the people of the South. In that day it will be Christ alone who will be exalted in the land and not the Anti-Christ, the Pope of Rome. May that day speedily come.

It is sad to think that Lord Mountbatten, in an interview given not long before he was murdered, jokingly referred to his funeral saying it would be a great affair and invited the interviewer to be present. He said that he was not afraid of death. How little he knew then that in a very short time he would be ushered into the great eternity.

Pope's Message of Condolence

The Pope sent a message of condolence to the Queen over the murder of Lord Mountbatten. He condemned the murder as an insult to human dignity and went on to pray for the dead, asking God to be merciful to

those who had died and to touch the hearts of violent men with His healing grace.

Smooth talk is all very fine but more than messages of condolence are required from the Pope. Let him speak authoritatively to his followers in Eire and in Northern Ireland, requiring them to desist from their murderous practices or be cut off from the rites of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the Roman Catholic Church that has spawned the men of violence. Let her then take responsibility for them and for their evil deeds.

Women's Dress

"The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God." Deuteronomy 22:5.

These words show that in the time of Moses a clear difference existed between the dress of male and female. There can be little doubt that this difference originated in the garden of Eden when God clothed our first parents. As to the law here stated in Deuteronomy 22 verse 5, it is part of that law by which Moses, in the wisdom of God, governed the people. In as far as it embraced the principles of God's moral law it has permanent authority. Indeed, in all the laws of the Old Testament, civil, ceremonial and moral, there are unchangeable underlying principles. The underlying principle in Deuteronomy 22 verse 5 is the distinction which God requires in the clothing of male and female. Anything that tends to obliterate or even weaken that distinction is abomination to God.

Trousers have for long been regarded as the male dress. Consequently the wearing of trousers (whatever name may be given) by females is clearly contrary to Deuteronomy 22 verse 5.

Poole, a worthy commentator, has this to say on the verse: "Now this is forbidden, partly for decency sake, that men might not confound, nor seem to confound, those sexes which God hath distinguished, that all appearance of evil might be avoided, such change of garments carrying a manifest umbrage or sign of softness and effeminacy in the man, of arrogance and impudence in the woman, of lightness and petulance in both and partly to cut off all suspicions and occasions of evil, which this practice opens a wide door unto."

In the light of the clear teaching of Scripture it is a sad reflection on the last General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland that, given the opportunity to express condemnation of this common but evil

practice, the members of Assembly failed to respond. We would urge the young women of our own Church not to follow the world in this practice but show respect for the Word of God. We trust that it is unnecessary to ask professing women in the Church to abstain from a practice which even nature, far less grace, would teach them is abhorrent, and which is not according to the practice that is after godliness.

Irish Moderator and the Pope

The Moderator of the Irish Presbyterian Church refused to meet the Pope while he was in Ireland. It was particularly on the grounds of the institution of the Papacy and because of the mariolatry of the Roman Catholic Church that Rev. Dr William Craig decided to take this stand. He is to be commended for it. When a former Pope visited Australia a few years ago the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney also declined to meet him. On account of his stand he was much vilified. It would be good if other Church leaders would follow suit.

Church Notes

Letter of Sympathy to Her Majesty the Queen

May it please Your Majesty,

We, the Moderator and Clerk of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, extend to Your Majesty, on behalf of our Church, our sincere condolences on the death, in such tragic circumstances, of Lord Mountbatten.

The assassination, by unprincipled murderers, of one who was so closely related to Your Majesty and the Royal Family and who was a highly respected and honoured public figure, has filled the hearts of our people with sorrow.

Our earnest prayer is that the God of all comfort and the Father of mercies would, through His beloved Son, who wept at the grave of Lazarus, grant to Your Majesty and the other members of the Royal Family the healing and the comfort which He, alone, is able to give and which, alone, can effectively heal the wound made by this sad event.

With sympathetic regard on behalf of the Church.

(Sgd.) (Rev.) Donald M. Campbell, Moderator.

(Sgd.) (Rev.) Donald MacLean, Clerk.

Letter of Sympathy sent to Secretary of Defence

Dear Sir,

We, the Moderator and Clerk of the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, wish to express to you, on behalf of the people of our Church, our deep sorrow and sense of shock at the death of 18 of our British soldiers in the course of duty near Warrenpoint, Co. Down, on 27th August.

We wish, through you, to extend our sincere sympathy to the bereaved families and we pray that, in the hour of their grief, they may turn for strength and consolation to the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who is able to bind up their painful wounds.

We would take the opportunity of assuring you of our prayers for Northern Ireland and the eventual deliverance of the people of that land from the aggression of the terrorists.

On behalf of the Church.

(Sgd.) (Rev.) Donald M. Campbell, Moderator.

(Sgd.) (Rev.) Donald MacLean, Clerk.

Mission Teachers

Miss Katie MacAulay, who had been on furlough since early in the year, and Miss Margaret MacKenzie, who had been on a short leave to this country, returned to the Mission in September. It is encouraging to know that the teachers and other staff on the Mission have a mind to continue their work there in these difficult times. It is our prayer that they may be upheld by the Lord and preserved from the many dangers that surround them. We trust that the Lord may be pleased to bring peace to that strife-torn land so that the task of spreading of the Gospel may be carried on even on a wider scale than ever before.

Appeal for Information

Although we are sending a letter to ministers directly, we would like to appeal here to people throughout the Church who may have relatives or friends coming to the Aberdeen city or district. As will be known, a new ministry began in Aberdeen in July, and we would wish help in establishing contact with all those in this area who have any connection with the Church.

It is not necessary to emphasise the importance of maintaining church contact with young people who leave home at a crucial stage in their lives. If readers know of friends or relatives who are coming here, would

they please be good enough to ensure that the minister in Aberdeen is informed? It does not matter if duplication occurs; the important thing is to make sure that the information reaches here. If you can be of any assistance, please write or phone to: Rev. John Tallach, Free Presbyterian Manse, 18 Carlton Place, Aberdeen, *Phone* (0224) 25250.

On behalf of the Kirk session of the Aberdeen Congregation

John Tallach, *Moderator.*

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Skye: At Portree on 23rd October at 11 a.m.

Western: At Laide on 23rd October at 7 p.m.

Outer Isles: At Finsbay on 24th October at 6 p.m. for the Induction of the Rev. Duncan MacLean.

Southern: At Oban on 26th October at 7 p.m. for the Induction of Rev. Angus Morrison M.A.

Northern: At Dingwall on 27th November at 2.15 p.m.

Mackerel Fishing on Sabbath Protest

Many people have been enquiring if any steps have been taken to prevent fishing for mackerel on the Lord's Day, which has been permitted recently by the Government. We are pleased to report that a number of bodies, religious and secular, have protested vigorously. The Sabbath Observance Committee of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland sent the following letter to the Secretary of State for Scotland on 3rd August 1979:

Right Honourable Sir,

**Pelagic Fishing Licence, West Coast of Scotland,
Mackerel Fishing Season, 1979.**

We understand from news reports that the above licence allows mackerel fishing and landing of catches on the Lord's Day during the season. We wish to add to our telegram of yesterday by hereby registering our strongest protest against your permitting such a blatant encroachment on the sanctity of Christian Sabbath.

We earnestly request you to take immediate steps to revise the present licence to prevent fishing and landing of catches on Sabbaths and shall be glad to hear from you that this will be done.

We also urge you to ensure that future licences do not permit Sabbath fishing and landings. Considering that God's commands cannot be disobeyed with impunity, it would be decidedly detrimental to both the

religious and economic life of the country if the Government were to sanction disobedience to His constantly binding commandment, "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work." (Exodus 20:8, 9).

Yours faithfully,

Neil M. Ross,

Clerk to the Committee.

Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr W. D. Fraser, 20 Daleview Avenue, Glasgow, G12, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:—

Sustentation Fund: Mrs MacKellar, Tarbert, Lochfyne, £100 in memory of her father, John Weir.

Home Mission Fund: A Friend, Northton, per A.M., £50.

Jewish & Foreign Mission Fund: Bethel Strict Baptist Chapel, Luton, £40; J. Bos, Holland, 1000 guilders for Jewish Mission.

Home of Rest Fund: Friend, Northton, £2; Visitor, Ross-shire, £2; Friend, Glasgow, £5; Friend, Applecross, £1; Friend, London, £5 (last two per Rev. A.F.M.); Miss Stewart, £10; In memory of late Mrs Beaton, Kenneth Street, from D. Beaton, Inverness, £50.

Underground Evangelism: £10 in St Jude's plate for Bibles to Russia.

Free Distribution Fund: Inverness Friends, £7.

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

Applecross: Miss K. MacK., Ballifeary Home, £5; In loving memory, £10; Anon. (in church plate), £10; Friends, Alness per Rev. A. Murray, £6; Anon. (in church plate), £6; In loving memory (further donation), £10; A Friend per Rev. A. Murray, £6 (all for Sustentation Fund); Anon., £3 for Magazine Free Distribution; Anon., £10 for Publications Committee Appeal; For Cuaig Church Renovation Fund, C.A.M., £10; Mrs MacK., Camustiel, £10; Friends, Alness, £6; Miss C. MacK., Ballifeary Home, £2 (last four per Rev. A. Murray and all for Congregational Purposes).

Barnoldswick: Dutch Friends, £30; Anon. (Tax Refund), £100 per W.D.F.; Anon., England, £20; Glasgow-Raasay Friend, £5 (all for Building Fund).

Broadford: Stornoway Friend, £60.

Dumbarton: Inverness Friend, £10; Fr. Gress, Lewis, £10 (both for T.M. for Dumbarton Extension); In memory of those who kept the Wee Hall in Wallace St., £20 for Dumbarton Extension and £5 for Manse per Rev. J.M.B.

Glendale: Two Glendale Friends, £10 for Congregational Purposes per Rev. D. Nicolson; Two Friends of the Cause £10 for Communion Expenses.

Greenock: R.H.C., Bangor, N.I., £10; From the Estate of the late Miss Mary M. Nicolson, £300 per Fyfe & Murray, Solicitors, Greenock, both for Congregational Purposes.

Oban: Mrs T., £10 for Church Funds per J. Morrison.

Plockton/Kyle: Envelope in Plockton plate, £10; Friend, £5 per Mr I. MacCuaig; Mr V.W., £10 (all for Manse Fund); Envelope in Kyle plate, £10; Mr V.W., £5 for Sustentation Fund; Mr & Mrs A. MacB., Camusbuinis, £2 for Jewish and Foreign Missions.

Portree: Friend, £5 per F.M.; Anon., £10 (in Church plate) both for Manse Expenses; M.N., £5 for Communion Expenses per F.M.

Raasay: Friend, late of Raasay, £5 for Sustentation Fund, £8 for Property Fund, £2 for Church Door Collection, £5 for Sustentaion Fund (all per J.M. MacLeod; Friend, Raasay, £5; Friend, Inverness, £1 (both for Communion expenses and per M.D. MacKay); Envelope in Plate, £5; MacLeod's, 37, £6; Glasgow Friends, £5; D. MacS., Glasgow, £5;

Friend, Raasay, £5; Friend of the Cause, Inverness, £15 (all for Property Fund, last one per M.D. MacKay); Friend, Raasay, £58 for Home Mission, £20 for Aged and Infirm Ministers, etc. Fund, £20 for Trinitarian Bible Society.

South Harris: Friend, £100 for Congregational Fund per N. MacKay, Geocrab.

Stornoway: An Old Friend, Stornoway, £5 for Congregational Fund; Friend, £7 for Car Fund per Rev. J. MacLeod.

POST OF ADMINISTRATOR/TREASURER IN ZIMBABWE RHODESIA

Jewish & Foreign Missions' Committee

In view of the retirement on 31st December 1979 of Miss Jean Nicolson, M.A., the Committee wish to hear from suitably qualified persons who may wish to apply for appointment to this important and rewarding position in the Church's Mission. Next meeting of Committee is on 2nd October at Inverness (DV). Applications to the undersigned from whom further details of this appointment may be had.

"The British Government warns UK nationals who take up employment in Rhodesia that:

- a) the regime in Rhodesia is an illegal one in rebellion against the Crown;*
- b) consular protection is not available in Rhodesia; and*
- c) the illegal regime has declared a state of emergency and all adult European men resident in Rhodesia are subject to indefinite periods of call-up for compulsory service in the armed forces."*

*Free Presbyterian Manse,
Applecross,
Strathcarron,
Ross-shire.
Tel: Applecross (052-04) 207.*

**ALEXANDER MURRAY,
Clerk to the Committee.**