

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
and Monthly Record

Vol. 85

August 1980

No. 8

The Lord's Presence and Keeping

Soon after Jacob obtained the blessing through deceiving his father Isaac, he had to flee away to Padan-aran from the wrath of his brother Esau. On his way there the Lord met with him at a place he afterwards called Bethel. Jacob so named it because of his experience of God's Presence there. When he awaked out of his sleep he said, "Surely the Lord is in the place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God (i.e. Bethel), and this is the gate of heaven."

It was at Bethel that Jacob saw the vision in a dream of a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reaching to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon it. What a glorious representation this was to him of the way of access to God through the mediation of Christ. There, too, at Bethel God was pleased to confirm to Jacob the promises earlier given to Abraham and Isaac, including that most notable one of all — "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." That this promised seed was Christ is confirmed by the Apostle in Galatians 3: 16.

Besides these promises the Lord had a personal word of encouragement for Jacob as he set out on his journey to that distant country. The Lord was pleased to seal this promise on his heart: "And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." What better passport could Jacob have received, had he needed one in those days for travel from one land to another, than the promise which the Lord gave him.

The Lord was promising to be with him: he was not therefore to be alone. The Lord was to keep him wherever he went and was to bring him

back again at length into his own land. He was to have fulfilled in his experience what Moses as the inspired penman of God was to put on record: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Deut. 33: 27. He was to experience also what David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel afterwards, under divine inspiration put on record:

The Lord thee keeps, the Lord thy shade
on thy right hand doth stay:
The moon by night thee shall not smite,
nor yet the sun by day.

The Lord shall keep thy soul; he shall
preserve thee from all ill,
Henceforth thy going out and in
God keep for ever will.

Psalm 121: 5-8

No doubt Jacob little thought of the long time that would elapse before he would return to his own land. Nor could he foresee the vicissitudes through which he would pass in the long intervening years when he would suffer much hardship at the hand of his father-in-law Laban. Of that time he had afterwards to say that the drought consumed him by day, and the frost by night; and his sleep departed from his eye. But as he set out on his journey all these experiences were still in the womb of time. Yet they were not unknown to Him who knows all things from the beginning and who takes in eternity at a glance, and it was this God, the Lord God of his father Abraham and the God of Isaac, who was promising to be with him, and to keep him in all places whither he was going, and He would be faithful to His promise.

How fully the Lord did fulfil His promise is confirmed by the Lord's blessing of Jacob in Padan-aran notwithstanding Laban's duplicity, and also by the Lord's refusal to allow Laban to harm Jacob when eventually he fled from him. It is acknowledged also by Jacob in blessing the sons of Joseph at the end of his life. We read: "And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from death, bless the lads." Gen. 48: 15, 16.

God, the God of Israel who had promised to be with Jacob and to keep him was faithful to His Word, and so He will be still to all who put their trust in Him. He is still the Covenant-keeping God of Jacob. He will

never leave nor forsake His people. To Moses He said, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest." He is the same God still — a present help in trouble, a stay and a strength to His people in every time of need. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my Helper, and I will not fear what man shall do to me. Seeing that this is so, what encouragement His people have to lean upon Him and to put their trust in Him. When assailed by trials and temptations, when called to pass through dark valleys in their spiritual experiences, they have the assurance that the Lord will be with them to sustain and help them. And what greater trial can meet them in this world than to pass through the dark valley of the shadow of death. Even there they can say:

"Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,

yet will I fear none ill:

For thou art with me; and thy rod

and staff me comfort still."

Ps. 23: 4.

So, too, while journeying through this world to the celestial city, at each stage of the journey they can not only set up their Ebenezer saying, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us", but have every reason as well to say with the Psalmist:

"Goodness and mercy all my life

shall surely follow me:

And in God's house for evermore

my dwelling place shall be".

Ps. 23:6.

Synod Sermon

by Rev. Donald M. Campbell, Shildaig

". . . Stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths where is the good way and walk therein . . ." — Jer. 6: 16.

Jeremiah like other prophets had to speak on God's behalf. None who had to do so found it easy. Who is sufficient for these things? Only a person who is holy can be a fit ambassador for the Lord of hosts. Though he had been reconciled to God, this prophet would have been sensible, from experience, of his own inadequacy for this task and would have felt many needs — foremost being his need of cleansing and forgiveness.

He is addressing a people who at this time in history, under the Old Testament dispensation, were God's visible church on earth. The work of preaching is greatly helped where there is a reception given it. His

audience had no heart for the word of God (vv 10, 17). They had had the word of God for many years, but "the word preached did not profit them".

The words of our text are an earnest admonition in homely language, figurative language. Israel had come to a cross-roads, a critical time in their history, and they were called upon to stop and ponder, "stand ye in the ways and see", etc. There are four things that I would like to speak of from these words and I would like to make use of these in a way befitting the occasion of our meeting in these serious times.

"Stand ye in the ways and see".

First, What they had been delivered from, i.e. the bondage of Egypt — a spiritual and literal bondage. They were delivered from much worldliness and earthiness, much darkness and ignorance, much impurity and immorality. They were, moreover, brought out of a state in which true religion was, by Pharaoh, forbidden and proscribed, where there was no freedom to worship God according to His will. They could, after the deliverance say

"He to a place where liberty
And room was hath me brought
Because He took delight in me
He my deliverance wrought".

This historic event typified the salvation of His people by the church's glorious Head, the Eternal Son of God in our nature, and the alone Mediator.

But now let us consider what the people of our land were delivered from. They were freed from Popery. The Roman Catholic church is spoken of in the New Testament Scriptures. So clearly is it set forth it seems hardly possible to mistake it. It is described by Paul in I Timothy 4: 1-3 and II Thessalonians verses 3 to 12. It is characterised as "the mystery of iniquity" and is ascribed to the direct working of Satan. There is an individual at the head of this system, "the man of Sin, the Son of Perdition" — "that Wicked" whom the Lord shall reveal. To whom on this earth can such a description be applied except the Pope of Rome? The people of *our* land were also delivered from much worldliness, ignorance and immorality and a situation in which the practice of Christianity was forbidden and freedom to worship God was proscribed by Rome.

"Stand ye in the ways and see".

Secondly, what Israel had attained to. In the days of the Patriarchs true religion had been reduced to gross idolatry, by the subtilty of Satan, the enemy of the glorious Redeemer, the enemy of souls. If we look at

Romans chapter one, we will find a picture of how low man was brought then. The Lord following upon Israel's deliverance gave statutes and ordinances for their better preservation from Satan's wonder-working strategy by men and devils. Moses was raised up to record by divine inspiration all that we have in the Pentateuch. What a solid foundation the church then had, e.g. Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 and Genesis 3. In these writings of Moses there is enshrined the moral law, the transcript of the mind of God. The ceremonial law revealed to them once more God's provision for sinners, a salvation altogether free, without money and without price; a method of justification by a Redeemer that required only their hearty and willing agreement, ensuring their being in the world a holy nation, a peculiar people. The Mosaic Scriptures made the nation independent of mere human opinion, human traditions and heresay. "He wrote of *Me*", Jesus says of Moses.

Now again, we ought to ponder, that at the Reformation also the Lord did great things for us which brought joy to our land.

(1) We were put in possession of the New Testament as well as the Old and God raised up men endued with power from on high, who directed their fellow-countrymen to the newly available Scriptures as an infallible rule for what was to be believed and practised. The preaching of the Gospel was revived. Men could now proclaim it with freedom from molestation and torture or imprisonment or banishment. The church was purged from hundreds of superstitious, pagan practices, such as the worship of dead men as Dr. Cunningham interprets "doctrines of devils". New Testament worship was restored in its maturity, simplicity and spirituality.

(2) We were given reforming statesmen and reforming legislatures. John Knox early recognised that the keystone of the Papacy was its claim to absolute power, but it was not till much later that Papal Supremacy was finally abolished in Britain. On the forefront of the Bill of Rights was written "It hath been found by experience inconsistent with the welfare and safety of this kingdom to be governed by a Popish prince". Our blood-bought civil and religious liberties were secured by law, establishing a Protestant Monarchy, a Protestant legislature and a Protestant kingdom.

Never in history, anywhere, did the Church of Rome get such a reversal as she got by the instrumentality of Britain. John Willison of Dundee writing in 1745* said "the preservation of true religion throughout the world depends very much on the safety of Britain . . . Blessed be God

*the year of the Jacobite rebellion.

that hath so eminently honoured Britain at many times past to stop her career (i.e. Rome's).

"Stand ye in the ways and see".

Thirdly — how the mighty nation was wasted and how their weapons of war had perished. They had, notwithstanding the measures taken to preserve them from it, become idolators again. Jeremiah was not only aware of, but afraid of the relapse into that idolatry from which Israel had been delivered. He felt the breach of the purity of the divine law "thou shalt have no other gods before me" and "thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" and one could go on to the 10th commandment. He felt, as Lot did, vexed in his righteous soul regarding the filth and degradation following upon the revival of idolatrous religion among his people. The decline in national morality, their weakness in matters of principle, their loss of national independence — all these things are revealed in the scriptures and could only be attributed to the people's idolatry. Other godly prophets, besides Jeremiah were staring captivity in the face, so to speak, long before Babylon took them over.

Now, I dare say, that we should ponder that we are on the verge of a take-over unless there is on the part of our country a speedy repentance. The Holy Spirit has been grieved. This perilous situation has been brought about partly by —

(1) avowed Romanists. Cardinal Manning, 9 years after the restoration of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England, in 1859 addressing his priests at Westminster said "It is yours to subjugate and subdue the will of an imperial race. England is the head of Protestantism" — you would think he had read John Willison's "Fair and Impartial Testimony" — "weakened in England, it is paralysed everywhere, it is conquered throughout the world".

(2) By men like Newman, who infiltrated our National and Free churches, at first in the guise of Protestants. This apostacy, the departure from the faith that the Scriptures tell us about, is to be brought to success, according to the words of the apostle Paul, by treachery, deceit, fraud and falsehood. We are to expect in the conduct of those who promote Popery, every kind and degree of iniquity. Our present situation has been brought about —

(3) by careless Evangelicals. The Methodist Times of December 1914, dealing with the British and Americal revival of the mid-18th century states that "Wesley linked it (i.e. the revival) to Laud, for Laud was one of the founders of the Arminian movement". "Ritualism is the natural product of Arminian doctrine" said Dr. Kennedy. When he was

in Italy for his health's sake, he was in Rome and visited a church there. He wrote to a ministerial colleague describing "the ridiculous service. A great concert in which there was *nothing serious*". What pained him most was, he said that "there before me was the ripe fruit of what is, in the innovation movement, now being sown in our own church at home". Long before he went to Italy he stated that "the members of a dissenting church can only be held by their consciences or by their carnal tastes. We are fast losing our hold of the one, and only in the Church of Rome can the second be pampered to the full". Arminianism propagated in a Protestant land is the most suitable method conceivable for the undermining of Biblical Christianity — the best conceivable foundation for the re-erection of Popery in such a land.

Now, fourthly, The admonition "Ask for the old paths, where is the good way and walk therein". Israel had come to the cross-roads so to speak, but it does not appear that, to them, the ways were clearly sign-posted. What would you do if, on a journey, you came to a junction in unknown country which was not sign-posted? If you were wise, ask for directions. This was what Jeremiah advised a back-slidden people "Ask for the old paths where is the good way". This is what the true church has in all ages been enabled to do, "Tell me", she says, "O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to lie down at noon, for why should I be as one that turneth aside . . ." "If thou knowest not", replies her glorious Head "go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock and feed thy kids beside the sheperd's tents" (Song).

The old paths are revealed in God's Word, those Biblical paths in which the faithful in all ages have walked; the apostolic Christians, the Reformers and the godly in our land since their day. And these are the same paths in which God would have men walk today for in effect as we have seen they are paths of liberty and greatness in every sense. Often was Israel reminded that:

"The whole paths of the Lord
are truth and mercy sure,
To such as keep his covenant
and testimonies pure".

I have come to a point in the sermon where one might more fully define our Reformed heritage, the old paths or "the good way". We consider this to be more than just "the five points of Calvinism". But however interesting that might be, I do not wish to do it because there are some matters involved in *walking* in the old paths and the good way that I would

like to mention. They are not new but reminding one another may be to edification. This is a ministerial duty — “if thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things”.

(1) One of these matters is the duty of being “set for the defence of the gospel”. You cannot defend or fight the good fight of faith unless you know what or where the enemy is attacking. I can only, for lack of time, try to give one or two examples of what I mean. There is this to consider: Textual criticism. The Church of Rome must destroy the evidence against her. The apostacy cannot triumph unless the witness of God’s word is destroyed. She has always been embarrassed by it. It would not suit her purpose as in the past to make bonfires of Bibles in George Square, Glasgow or anywhere else. Her alternative is to distort the evidence, the testimony. This, today, will better serve her ends. The Roman Catholic Church’s interests have been well served by a multiplicity of modern translations of the Bible. She has published her own Revised Standard Version which contains errors regarding the deity and Eternal Sonship of the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as errors regarding His miraculous birth. The text has in many places been altered and notes added, *they say*, to make it suitable for Roman Catholic readers. Both it and the Jerusalem Bible further Mariolatry. These versions have been favourably reviewed in Evangelical magazines and those readers who consider themselves Evangelical may consider that it is good and proper for them also to make use of them.

The Free Church may go to great lengths to justify the use of the New English Bible or other versions in the congregations of that denomination; the regular diets of antiquated material on Textual Criticism in the Monthly Record of the Free Church will no doubt please some hoary heads in the Established Church as well as Romanists, but that activity does not please those who love the Lord in her midst, or the godly anywhere for that matter. It is significant we think that one of those who promoted the text that underlies some of the more unreliable versions — Westcott, was interested in Romanism. One might pose a question at this stage. Did the Constitutionlists before the turn of this century support a Radical School of Textual Criticism which had its roots in German Rationalism? The accommodation of radical views should not surprise us in a church that could after 1900 accommodate Professor Alexander. Our Church has never altered her views on this subject and we must continue to preserve and defend the gospel as well as contend against everything that would pave the way for Romanism.

(2) Further, the Union movement has weakened the church. Where

have "advances in Textual Criticism" and "progress in Modern Scholarship" taken our churches? Where has the teaching of the Universal Fatherhood of God and a Universal Atonement taken them? It is claimed that the Church of Scotland Joint Committee on Christian Marriage has created a new spirit of trust between the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church and also that the Inter-Church Relations Committee consider it unthinkable that the development of ecumenical parishes should be restricted. Does not this sound like popery? For these "ecumenical parishes" we believe one could substitute "Roman Catholic parishes". This is where the propaganda for Christian unity over the past ten decades has brought us. The Church of Scotland at present has a Roman Catholic representative as observer in her General Assembly and a Roman Catholic Professor teaching her students for the ministry. Rome has thus secured her post-Reformation bid to be recognised as another branch of the Christian church in a Protestant land; this is something the Reformers could not believe possible. Rome today is not satisfied with union such as would please the ecumenicals — she demands supremacy. It would be well for us as a church to consider anew these dangers in order that we would not be affected by the prevailing ecumenical spirit of the age. All this indicates that our duty is to preserve the pure Word of God and the only way. "the good way" for us as a church is complete separation. Some may accuse us because of this duty of separation of not seeking the good of the Cause of Christ. The distinctive views in our church's Confession can only be maintained by way of preserving the Protest raised by our godly fathers in 1893 on this matter. I am reminded of a conversation which I had comparatively recently with the late Rev. D.A. MacFarlane. I was speaking to him about Protest and he said in his own inimitable way, "remember in connection with this word PRO means FOR". A Protest is not merely against, it is undoubtedly a witness, not only a witness against error in doctrine or practice but a witness FOR. It is evident that the Rev. D. MacFarlane, when he made his Protest in the Free Church Assembly in 1893, "raised a testimony for the truth". This is the witness that our generation needs. "Ask for the old paths, what is the good way and walk therein".

You may say that we have been speaking only about what WE should do as if what WE do would be of itself any avail for the good of our generation, but if we are enabled to keep to the Word of God we are persuaded then that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds". We have in opposition to us a mighty system of satanic power. "We wrestle not

against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers . . .” and therefore we ought to call upon God that he would enable us to preserve the old paths and in a dark day to discern where is the good way and walk therein so that we might enjoy His blessing and possess His favour. There is life in His favour.

The Dangers of Self-Deception

by Rev. John Angell James

The professors of Christianity may be divided into three classes — the sincere, the hypocritical, and the self-deceived. Of the second class there are very few. I have rarely met with them. It is not often that any one attains to such a pitch of audacious and disgusting wickedness, as to make, for some sinister purpose, a profession, which at the time he knows to be false. But while there are few that are intentionally deceiving others, there are very many who are unconsciously deceiving themselves. Alarming consideration! To be self-deceived in a matter of such tremendous importance as the salvation of the immortal soul! To suppose that we are justified before God, while we are under the condemnation of His righteous law: that we are truly regenerated, while we are still in an unconverted state; that we are the children of God, while we are the children of the devil; and that we are travelling to heaven, while each day, as it passes, leaves us nearer to the bottomless pit! The very possibility of such a case should rouse our lukewarm souls, excite all our fears, and put us upon the most cautious and diligent examination.

PROFESSION IS NOT POSSESSION

This common, yea hackneyed, yet true and impressive sentiment, is thus put out by itself in bold and prominent relief, that it may attract the reader's attention, and come upon his heart and conscience with all possible emphasis. A church member is not necessarily a real Christian: and outward communion with the members is no certain proof of vital union with the Divine Head. It is to be feared that fatal mistakes are made by many on this momentous subject. Among those who pay little or no attention to religion, it is very commonly supposed, that dying is somehow or other to fit them for heaven; that some mysterious change is

to pass upon them then, by which they shall be meetened for the kingdom of glory: as if death were a converting ordinance, instead of a mere physical change; a sacrament of grace, instead of a mere dissolution of our compound nature. Others attach the same mistaken notion to the act of uniting with a Christian church, making a profession of religion, and receiving the Lord's Supper, as if it were in some way or other to effect a change in them, and by a process of which they can form no definitive idea, to make them true Christians. But there are others who, better taught, attach no such incorrect opinions to church fellowship; who admit the necessity of faith and regeneration, as pre-requisites to communion, but who after all, deceive themselves in the supposition that they possess those qualifications.

First, I shall prove that self-deception is not only possible, but frequent.

This is evident from the many warnings against it, contained in the apostolic writings. "Be not deceived", is an admonition thrice repeated by Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians — Chaps. 3:16; 6:9; 15:33. How impressive is his language to the Galatians, "If any man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." Gal. 6:3. The Apostle James follows up the same subject; "Do not err my beloved brethren — be ye doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James 1:16, 22. What solemn admonitions are in other places given on the work of self-scrutiny: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." 2 Cor. 13:5. "Let every man prove his own work." Gal. 6:4. But what can equal the force and impressiveness of the apostle's language and caution in reference to himself? "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means after I had preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away". 1 Cor. 9:27. If such a man, the greatest, the holiest, the most distinguished member, minister, and apostle of the Christian Church, found it necessary to exercise such caution, what must be the need of it on our own part?

The danger of self-deception is also apparent from the alarming declarations of Christ. In the parable of the sower, he divided the hearers of the Word into four classes, of which one only, is composed of sincere believers, although two, at least out of the other three, are represented as receiving the Word and professing it for a while. How solemn and awakening are His words in the sermon on the Mount: "Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;

but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven. Many will say unto Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? And in Thy name have done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from Me ye that work iniquity." Math. 7:21, 23. These persons were not only professors of religion, but of high standing in the Church; they were confident of their safety; yet they were lost; and there were *many* of them!!

Dwell upon the **FACTS** recorded in the New Testament. Judas, though he ended up as a dissembling hypocrite, began in all probability as a self-deceived professor of religion. One *Apostle* out of twelve a false professor of religion! What multitudes at one time followed Christ, and in some way believed on Him, among whom were many rulers of the Jews; and yet so great was the number that afterwards abandoned their profession, that our Lord put this question to the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" implying that the rest had nearly all left Him. Peter speaks of some "who after they had known the way of righteousness, had turned from the holy commandments delivered unto them. 2 Peter 2:21; and John, in describing the case of some in his time, says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." 1 John 2:19. Let any one read attentively the addresses to the seven churches of Asia Minor, contained in the second and third chapters of the Apocalypse, and observe the description of those communities given by One who could not err; they seem to have contained, at least some of them, a great portion of merely nominal Christians. Yet these were Churches under the care of an Apostle.

Does not our observation confirm the fact of the danger of self-deception? To say nothing of open apostates who turn back to sin, error, or the world, and who are cast out of the Church, how many are there that still remain, who though their inconsistencies are not sufficiently gross to make them the subjects of discipline, too plainly indicate by their total want of all spiritually and earnestness of piety, that they have nothing of Christianity but the name! It is no violation of the law of charity to say that persons so worldly in their spirit, so unsanctified in their temper, so little interested by the concerns of Christ's kingdom, either in their own Church or in the world at large, are making but an empty and heartless profession!

However painful, then, the fact may be, it is a fact that the danger of self-deception is alarmingly great.

(To be continued)

The Christian Ministry

by Rev. John Macdonald, A.M., Calcutta

The following sketch was written in 1836 by the late Rev. John Macdonald, A.M., Calcutta, when he was minister of the Scots Church, Islington, London. It forms part of an introduction which this eminent and devoted minister, son of the distinguished Dr. Macdonald, of Ferintosh, "the Apostle of the North", wrote to a small treatise entitled, "Christ in Believers the Hope of Glory", being the substance of several sermons by the Rev. John Brown, of Wamphray, who lived during the times of persecution in Scotland and died in Holland in 1679. Mr Macdonald takes occasion in his introduction to this book to compare the ministry of his own time with that of a former age, and while we, at this date look back to the period at which he wrote as one fruitful in the full and powerful preaching of the Gospel, he, in reflection upon still more glorious times, expresses the fervent longings of his soul for the uprising of a race of Gospel ministers, men filled with the Spirit of Christ, who should take the place of a large number of preachers even in his own day, whose ministrations were dead and formal at the best. After some reference to the personal history of the Rev. John Brown of Wamphray, and the sermons of which he was the author, Mr Macdonald thus concludes this introductory sketch: —

"In Brown of Wamphray's ministrations, we have not obtruded on our famishing souls that oily sentimentalism, or that iced intellectualism, which so abound in this epicurean age of the Church — but we have the true bread, just as it has been gathered, wholesome and nutritious. Oh, that amidst the multitude of our *popular and evangelical* preachers and writers, we had but a phalanx of *godly and spiritual* men like him — men of heart — men of business — who would in right earnest negotiate between the Prince of Life and dying men, and not merely transact between a dead doctrine and a blind intellect; men who will not ever be substituting the vague idea of 'Religion' for the living person of the Son of God, or 'Moral Influence', for the personal operation of the Holy Ghost!

In contemplating a past age, through such a work as this, and in contrasting our present character as a Church, with the worthies of that day, have we not much reason to be "stirred up to call upon the name of the Lord, yea, to take hold on him" as our covenant God, that He may come in and dwell with us, and in us, as our Hope of Glory? Have we not much reason to pour forth our hearts, saying 'O the Hope of Israel, the Saviour therefore in the time of trouble! Why shouldest thou be as a

stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside but for a night to tarry? Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save? Yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not!

Oh do we not in these our days, need a race of men, full of strong and ardent *love* to the living and divine person of our Lord Jesus Christ, who can discern between the Master and His service, and love the latter for the sake of the former; men who can discriminate between the infirmities of the flesh and the image of Christ, so as to love that which is His, in spite of all that mars it?

Do we not need men of *humility*, contented to decrease, provided Christ increased; ready to live or die, to work or cease, to do or suffer, under Christ's eye alone; not desiring notice or advancement from men; but thinking only for that 'Saviour, which is better than life', and wistfully catching that eye whose beam glisteneth upon us in secret and silent power?

Do we not amidst our multitude of covetous worldlings, and laborious earthworms in the Church, need a race of *holy and heavenly-minded* men, who shall pursue after holiness more than riches; and whose evident and supreme ambition shall be, perfect conformity to, and constant fellowship with Him, who sitteth in heavenly places, even the Son of God, who shall speak of heaven as those who do really thirst for it and who would even now prefer it to earth, were their Lord's work but done and His purposes completed?

Need we not also a race of men, in whom Jesus of Nazareth may be evidently seen, dwelling by faith, as their sole and cherished hope, men who will *breathe Christ*, reflect Christ, diffuse Christ, savour of Christ, and glorify Christ; so that every work to which they set their hands, every gift they give, every sermon they preach, every prayer they offer, may be perfumed with the unction of His name; and so that the world might be compelled to say, 'These men also have been with Jesus?'

Is there not need amongst us also of a band of *self-denied* men; who by reason of their living and indwelling Hope of Glory, would lay all things at the feet of Christ, and taking up their cross, would follow Him whithersoever He led them, in whom it would be seen, as in the days of Zion's martyrs, that in their meekness, purity and zeal, they were living sacrifices, ready to be offered; who would stand bound by cords of love, which they would not loose, and cannot break, to the altar of Christ's service; and whose only voice would be 'Thy kingdom come, thy will be

done on earth as it is in heaven?' O how would such confound the armies of the aliens!

Need we not men so *filled with the Holy Spirit* that He should become their very life; men full of joy without levity, full of peace without presumption, full of might without pride; men promoting the kingdom of Christ by their evident happiness, and strengthening their brethren by their constant hopefulness of mind; who should at all times so act, speak, and suffer, as they who are living temples of God the Holy Ghost, ever rejoicing in their hope, even when constrained to exchange Saul's armour for David's sling and pebble; men not blustering in their speech, not vaunting in their turn, but advancing in the silent consciousness of God dwelling within them? Oh for such men of God amongst us!

And lastly, do we not need an army of Christian men, who shall never think that they may sit at ease and rest them, that they may doff their armour, or hang up the Gospel trumpet in selfish silence, while hundreds of thousands in their own land, and hundreds of millions over the world, are trodden under foot of him who 'was a murderer from the beginning', and are daily burying in the pit of eternal death, 'Without Hope?' Jesus is *our* hope: by the Gospel has He become such to us; that Gospel of 'Christ in us our hope' we hold on trust also, for those who are perishing around our dwellings, and over the world: for 'God *would* make known this mystery among the Gentiles': and to us He hath committed the work of its publication.

Men and brethren, let us arise with Christ in our camp as the Hope of Glory: let us each one shake of our sleep of selfish ease: let us arise and take possession of our promised land which is not Judea, but the world. Oh when shall that day once come, when all Christians, in their every calling shall live for this, not as a subordinate, but as a primary end, that 'every creature' in Britain, and 'every creature' in Europe, Asia, Africa and America, and 'every creature' over the whole world may hear of the blessed mystery of 'Christ in us the Hope of Glory!'

'Awake, O north wind, and come thou south; blow upon our garden that the spices thereof may flow out!' 'Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord: awake as in ancient days, in the generations of old. Art not thou it that cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?' 'Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence!' 'Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live.'

Thou'rt fairer than all men;
 Grace in thy lips doth flow;
 And therefore blessings evermore
 On thee doth God bestow.

They sword gird on thy thigh,
 Thou that art most of might;
 Appear in dreadful majesty,
 And in thy glory bright!

Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus'."

Letter

by Rev. Hugh Martin. D.D.

LASSWADE, 14th May, 1875.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — Your greatly liked letter I now acknowledge. It did me good to find you asserting so strongly spiritual death. It compels us towards Him who is "the resurrection and the life", who is the true God and eternal life, the eternal life unsealed to sinners spiritually dead, in and by the glorious sacrifice of Himself. The Lord Jesus approaches dead sinners in these words. "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" — (John 11:25, 26). Now, it is not merely that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, but it is that He Himself comes and tells us so, comes and tells us what are the immediate consequences to us in our spiritual death of His being the resurrection and the life, and then taking us by the hand and looking us in the face He says, "Believest thou this?" What a communion with Christ that soul might have who truly realised Him putting the question, and not to be put off with no answer or half an answer. What answer can or dare we give but this "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief?" Thou art the resurrection and the life, and Thou art not any less so because I have to cry, Help mine unbelief. Thou art on that account all the more precious to me, all the more needed by me. In spiritual death, as I am, I need exactly Thee, the resurrection and the life. And O suffer me, Lord, to say it, for it is true that Thou, as the resurrection and the life, needest dead souls. Thou canst not otherwise be the resurrection and the life. And it is to me

that Thou hast been pleased to come and say "I am the resurrection and the life." It is between Thee and me, here and now, that this wondrous word is passing, and it is to me now Thou art saying, "Believest thou this?" Lord, why askest thou this question of me, unless Thou meanest me to know and feel that Thou dost really need dead souls in order that it may be possible for Thee to be truly and actually the resurrection and the life? Yea, why askest Thou this of me, unless it be that so Thou mayest give me to understand that Thou needest dead and helpless me? It is useless to say, Lord I cannot believe, for I am dead," because if I were not dead, He who is the resurrection and the life needed not to have come to me. Lord, Thou knewest I was dead, and that is why Thou comest as the resurrection and the life, comest that Thou mayest meet my death and do away with it. Lord, if I am dead and Thou has come to me as the life, what can I say or do, but just break down in wonder, in shame, and in thankfulness that it should be so! Yes, Lord, I break down, an unbelieving dead soul before Thee, and Thou as the resurrection and the life sayest, "Arise, live," and if Thou wilt that I, dead and helpless should arise and live, what right, what reason have I to say, "Lord, I cannot." Cannot! even when the Resurrection says, "Rise". Cannot! even when the Life says, "Live". The soul that says so and sticks to it thereby says, "Lord, thou art not the resurrection, thou art not the life, I believe not this.

All the while it remains true, awfully true, that this is just the answer we will give unless the Resurrection and the Life do raise us. He cannot raise us against our will, nor without our will; not that He is limited in power, but because He cannot work self-contradictions and will not work unreasonablenesses. But again, therefore, comes this tender, loving, piercing question, "Believest thou this? Believest thou that I am the resurrection and the life?" And is the response? "Lord, I fain would believe, I dare not say thou art not what thou tellest me thou art." Then this believing acquiescence in His word is just the Resurrection raising you up, just the Life causing you to live. You rise by breaking down; you are raised by being broken down. He Himself became the Resurrection by dying; He Himself became the Life by rising again from the dead. And His people by breaking down, by dying to themselves, rise in Him. He breaks them down that He may raise them up in and with Himself. O what a life is that ! the life that is obtained by dying and rising again, the life that passed through death and resurrection must be eternal life. The life to which entrance is gained by the gates of resurrection is life everlasting. What will all the splendours of the resurrection of dead

bodies be at the sound of the archangel's trump, compared with what my Lord already is as the resurrection of dead souls? And as I hear Him say, "Arise, my love, for the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, death is ended, resurrection is accomplished, life for evermore is entered upon," does he not thereby cause me to know that a splendour of glory belongs to Him, even now, as the Resurrection and the Life, although I scarcely see the most distant tips of the fringe thereof? Ah! well, I think I see this, my great and overpowering need of Him as my Resurrection and my Life . . . Yours, &c.,

HUGH MARTIN

Some Reasons why Saints desire Death.

by Rev. Thos. Watson

It is indeed no wonder that a true Saint desires a dismiss, and is so earnest to have his pass to be gone from hence, if we consider how beneficial death of to a child of God. It puts an end to all his evils. In particular, there are ten evils that death will put an end to.

1. Death will put an end to a believer's sins.

Sin is the sinner's bond, Acts 8:23, and the saint's burden, Psal 83:3. How is a believer tired out with his corruptions? I am weary 'of my life' says Rebecca, 'because of the daughters of Heth', Gen. 27:46. That which makes a child of God weary of his life, is his proud, unbelieving heart. Paul could better carry his iron chain than his sins; 'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Rom. 7:24. When grace spurs the soul forward, the curbing bit of sin checks it, and pulls it back again. There is much of the old man in the new man; there is a party in every regenerate heart that is true to the devil; a party that will not pray, that will not believe. A Christian is like a bowl with a double bias; he has an earthly bias upon his will, and a spiritual bias, and these draw him several ways; 'The evil I would not, that I do,' Rom. 7:19. Sin mingles itself with our holy things; we cannot act either our duties or our graces without sin; we are like children who cannot write without blotting! The sweet rose of grace does not grow without its prickles. No wonder then a believer desires to depart; death will free him from his spiritual distempers; when he has done breathing, he shall have done sinning.

2. Death will put an end to a believer's temptations.

Our whole life, says Augustine, is nothing but a temptation; we tread upon snares. Satan is ever casting in the angle of a temptation, to see whether we will bite. He knows how to suit his temptations. He tempted Achan with a wedge of gold; he tempted David with beauty. We cannot lock the door of our heart so fast by prayer, but a temptation will enter. Sometimes Satan comes more furiously, as a red dragon; sometimes more slyly, as a serpent. Sometimes he baits the hook with Scripture, and tempts to sin under a mask of religion, as when he tempts to evil that 'good may come of it.' Thus can he 'transform himself into an angel of light,' Rom. 3:8.

Is it not a grievous thing for a virgin to have her chastity assaulted? Is it not sad to have the devil's bullets continually flying about our ears? No wonder then a believer is willing to depart; death will set him out of gunshot, he shall never be troubled with Satan's fiery darts any more. Though grace puts a child of God out of the devil's possession, it is death only that frees him from the devil's temptation.

3. Death will put an end to a believer's fears.

Fear is the soul's palsy; 'there is torment in fear,' Job 4:18. Cicero calls fear one of the three plagues of mankind; and the best of the saints are haunted with this evil spirit; they cannot rejoice without trembling. The believer fears lest his heart should put a cheat upon him, he fears God does not love him, he fears lest he should tire in his march to heaven. The best faith may sometimes have its fears, as the best stars have their twinkling. These fears, as Socrates says, arm a man against himself; they are very afflictive, leaving sad impressions of melancholy behind. No wonder, then that a believer longs to depart out of this life. Why should he fear that which frees him from fear? The king of terrors makes all fear vanish.

4. Death will dry up a believer's tears. 'And God will wipe away all tears from their eyes,' Rev. 7:17

Weeping is nothing but a cloud of sorrow gathered in the heart, dropping into water. A Christian often has none to keep him company, but his own griefs and sorrows. He sits as 'Israel by the rivers weeping.' As soon as the child is born, it weeps. When Moses was born, he was laid in an ark of bulrushes, where he did as it were baptise himself with his own tears, Exod. 2:6 'And behold the babe wept.' Ever since we looked upon the tree of knowledge, our eyes have watered. There are many things to occasion weeping. (1) Our sins; who can look into his own heart with dry eyes? (2) Loss of relations which is like pulling a limb from the body. Joseph wept over his dead father, Gen. 50:1. Well then, is it not

to be admired that a believer desires to depart from hence. He shall leave the valley of tears; the bottle of tears shall be stopped; his water shall be turned into wine, his mourning into music, his lamentations into hallelujahs. Death is the handkerchief to wipe off all tears.

5. Death will put an end to a believer's molestations.

'Man is born to trouble,' Job 5:7. He is the natural heir to it. This life is subject to injury. We do not, as Seneca says, finish our troubles while we live here, but change them. Every one has his cross to carry. Sometimes poverty pinches, sometimes sickness tortures, sometimes law-suit vex: man is like a tennis-ball, bandied up and down by providence. While wicked men are in the world, never look for rest. The troubled seas, as the prophet calls them, will be casting forth their foam and mire upon the godly. Well then may a believer say, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart.' Death gives a child of God his *quietus est*, Isa. 57:20. It sends him a writ of ease, Job 3:17. 'There (that is in the grave) the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary be at rest.'

6. Death puts an end to a believer's cares.

Care is vexatious and anxious, it eats out the comfort of life. The Greek word for care comes from a primitive that signifies to cut the heart in pieces. Care frets as a canker, it excruciates the mind, it breaks the sleep, it wastes the spirits. This is the rack which the soul is stretched upon. It is hard, I had almost said impossible, to shake off this viper of care while we live. All our comforts are careful comforts. Care is to the mind as a burden to the back. It loads the spirits, and with overloading sinks them. Care is a fruit of the curse. Adam's want of care has brought us to care. Have you not sometimes seen the briar growing by the honeysuckle, so that you cannot well gather the honeysuckle but you are scratched with the briar? Thus in gathering riches, how is the head and the heart pricked with care? And is there not good reason why a child of God should desire to depart? Is it good being among the briars? Death is the cure of care. We are thoughtful and solicitous how to get such an estate, how to provide for such a child. Now death comes to a believer as a friend, and says, never perplex and distract thy mind thus, I will free thee from all these heart-killing cares; I will strike but once, and that stroke shall relieve thee.

7. Death will put an end to the night of desertion.

Thou 'didst hide thy face, and I was troubled,' Psalm 30:7. The soul in desertion is within an inch of despair. In affliction the world is against a man, in temptation Satan is against a man, in desertion God is against a man. Alstead calls desertion an agony of conscience. This made the

prophet Jonah call the whale's belly, the belly of hell, because he was deserted there. 'Out of the belly of hell cried I, then I said I am cast out of thy sight,' Jonah 2:2, 4. Heman grew distracted upon the suspension of God's favour. 'While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted.' Psal 88:16. But death will free from desertion. A believer after death shall never see any more eclipses. God will draw aside the curtain, and pull off his veil, and the soul shall be for ever sunning itself in the light of God's countenance.

8. Death will put an end to the imperfections of nature.

Our natural knowledge is very imperfect. The most perceptive, intelligent person may say as Agur, 'I have not the understanding of a man.' Prov 30:2. Since tha fall, the lamp of reason burns dim. There are knots in nature that we cannot untie. Why the Nile should overflow in summer, when, by the course of nature, waters are lowest; why the sea should be higher than the earth, yet not drown it; 'How the bones grow in the womb,' Eccles 11:5. Many of these things are riddles and paradoxes. By eating the tree of knowledge, we have lost the key of knowledge. Now we are maimed in our intellect. By the fall we have lost our head-piece. There are some diseases which would make Galen's head ache to find out. The River Euripus was too deep for Aristotle. Socrates said on his deathbed, there were many things which he had yet to learn. Our knowledge is like the twilight, dim and duskish. The greater part of our knowledge is not so much as the least part of our ignorance. All which considered, no wonder to hear this language from a saint, 'I have a desire to depart.' Death crowns a Christian with fulness of knowledge. When he is snuffed by death, the candle of his understanding will burn brighter. At death a child of God perfectly recovers the use of his reason.

9. Death will put an end to the imperfections of grace.

Our graces are our best jewels, but here they are in their infancy and minority. Therefore the saints are said to receive but 'the first-fruits of the Spirit'. Rom. 8:23. The best Christian is like a child put out to nurse. He is very weak in grace; faith is feeble, love lukewarm. Grace though it be not dead is sickly. 'Strengthen the things which are ready to die.' Rev. 3:2. Grace is like gold in the ore, drossy and impure. The most refined soul has some dregs. This motto may be written upon a Christian's graces — *Plurima desunt* — he that shoots farthest in holiness, comes short of the mark of perfection, Eccles 7:20. Well then may a believer desire to be dissolved. Death will free him from the imperfections of his holiness. It will make him pure as the angels, not having spot or wrinkle. Eph. 5:27.

10. Death will put an end to a weary pilgrimage.

We are here in a pilgrim condition, 1 Peter 2:11. A Christian walks with

his pilgrim's staff in his hand, the staff of the promise in the hand of faith. Now death will put an end to this pilgrimage. It takes away the pilgrim's staff, and sets a crown upon his head. No wonder that the gracious soul cries out with Paul, 'having a desire to depart.'

Obituary

The late Reverend Donald Malcolm MacLeod

Mourning the loss sustained by the removal of godly men from the church below has ever been the acknowledged and proper tribute of affection for them. Those who carried the martyr Stephen to his burial "made great lamentation over him". Far from being forgetful of their deceased pastors, the Hebrew Christians were to dutifully remember those who had spoken to them the word of God, whose faith they were to follow, "considering the end of their conversation". The obligation remains. "To remember them in what they did and taught, so as to follow them in their faith and conversation, this is a duty of no small advantage to us." (Owen) The late Rev. Donald Malcolm MacLeod has not only left a fragrant remembrance behind him but also, as a Pastor and Christian, an example worthy of our emulation.

He was born in Glasgow on 8th November 1920, and was "hushed to sleep in Jesus" on 21st June 1978. His parents belonged to Raasay and in the divine purpose events were so ordered that it was there that he was to spend his childhood years. Two months before Donald Malcolm was born, his father, by then a respected elder in the St Jude's congregation, passed away at the early age of forty-two. The stricken widow returned to her native isle and there, with Christian fortitude, brought up her large family. We are told that the father had a promise that one of his sons would be a minister of the Gospel and it is interesting and remarkable that this was to be the one born after his own death.

It would appear that Donald Malcolm was from a very early age found taking interest in Divine things. This interest, under the benign influence of the Holy Spirit, increased and developed as he listened to the Gospel from the lips of those who preached it in Raasay when he was in the days of his youth. He had a special attachment to the late Mr William MacSween (father of the late Rev. Malcolm MacSween) who for many years served the Lord Christ as a lay-missionary on the island. One particular sermon preached by him on the parable of the fig tree planted in a vineyard (Luke 13) seems to have made a deep and abiding impression. The death of a beloved thirteen-year old brother was also an

event that was to ever to be remembered by him. This God-fearing young boy, we are informed, solemnly warned each member of the family to seek the Lord and his dying advice seems to have profoundly affected his youngest brother.

In 1941, he was called up for military service but the following year it pleased the Lord to lay him low with a severe illness. This was to confine him to hospital until 1944, much of the time immobilised in plaster, and learning to endure affliction as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Staff and fellow-patients were left in no doubt as to where he stood in regard to the things of God and that this witness was not without effect appears to have been shown in the change which came over some with whom he came into contact. The "Letter to the Young" in the January, 1968, issue of the "Young People's Magazine" touchingly refers to this period of his life and indicates that his "abounding in the work of the Lord", even restricted to a hospital bed, was "not in vain in the Lord".

Discharged from the Forces in 1945 and enjoying a measure of health he was able to attend communion seasons that year. At Fort William in April he publicly confessed his faith in Christ for the first time. Like others, whose minds came to be occupied with thoughts of entering the ministry, he shrank back at first out of a sense of his own insufficiency, from applying to become a student. Five years were to be spent as a lay-missionary in Plockton before he eventually complied with the constraint laid upon him. How tried he was in connection with this matter is indicated in the account which follows of an incident which took place during his Plockton days. Difficulties having arisen, the young missionary decided to flee his post. 'He went south', we are told, 'to attend Glasgow and Edinburgh communions and had purposed not to return although he had not made anyone aware of this. Late one afternoon he boarded the Edinburgh to Glasgow train and sat down in an empty compartment. About two stations along the line a lady came in and sat down opposite him. She was a total stranger and his dress was in no way indicative of his occupation as in fact he was wearing, for warmth, his Air-force top coat. Without any preliminary conversation she said to him: "You are a Preacher of the Gospel. I hope you are not thinking of giving it up. Such men as you are greatly needed in this evil day. Do not abandon your calling." He returned to his post.'

Being well equipped intellectually he, without much difficulty, completed the prescribed course in Arts at Edinburgh University and thereafter entered upon his theological studies. These, however, were interrupted by another protracted period of illness and a large part of 1954

was spent in Raigmore Hospital during which he was again immobilised in plaster. His mother had by this time passed away and the kindness of friends over this period and especially after his discharge was all the more appreciated. Annie and Hugh MacAngus, Fearn, took him under their roof and tenderly cared for him until he was sufficiently recovered to resume his studies and Donald Malcolm was ever mindful of their kindness. It was in the MacAngus home that he resumed preaching, delivering his sermons in a sitting posture.

In the Lord's kind providence his health improved and after being duly licensed to preach the Gospel he was subsequently inducted to the joint charge of Lairg and Bonar in January 1956. Over the years which followed his labours were much valued both among his own people and throughout the Church as he assisted at communion seasons and became more widely known. Blessed with a rich, resonant voice and having a thorough, experimental grasp of the Truth as it is in Jesus he was an able, attractive Gospel Herald. Moreover, having come through so much trouble himself, he was well qualified to comfort others in tribulation and this he was not remiss in doing. In 1957 he was united in marriage with Miss Shona Fraser who proved herself to be a true helpmeet to him until death did them part. Six children were born to them, the youngest being only four years old when her father died.

After five years in Sutherland he accepted a call to the Stornoway congregation being inducted there on 19th September, 1961. The duties connected with this pastorate were both numerous and arduous and for seven years he conscientiously discharged them earning the respect and esteem of the people in the process. The Day of Judgment will, we believe, reveal that his labour was not in vain in the Lord. Over and above his pastoral work he in a very able and acceptable manner fulfilled the duties of Editor of "The Young People's Magazine", this responsibility being assigned to him in 1957. His opening articles under the title "Letter to the Young" reveal how gifted he was as a writer and how concerned he was for the spiritual welfare of our young people. We believe they will be read with pleasure and profit in generations to come. In 1965 he was appointed Moderator of Synod and carried out the duties of that office with wonted efficiency. For the last year and a half of his Stornoway ministry he also acted as Clerk of the Outer Isles Presbytery.

Mr MacLeod accepted a call to Auckland in September, 1968, and parting with his flock in Stornoway to take oversight of another in a far-distant land was a great wrench and not only for him but also for the Stornoway congregation. In 1975 we welcomed him back for a visit which

included attendance at the Synod meeting of that year. Little was it realised then that when the Synod would meet three years later from that date a message of sympathy and encouragement was to go to the Auckland minister on account of his being critically ill and nearing his end in time!

In January, 1978, he was apparently so obviously unwell that it was decided to carry out exploratory surgery. This revealed the existence of a malignant tumour and that the disease was so far advanced that there was no hope of recovery as far as human means were concerned. This information he, himself, we are told received with great equanimity and shortly thereafter wrote to close relatives in Scotland: 'To let you know that the Lord according to his Word is a present help in trouble. The King has brought me into His banqueting house and His banner over me is love. He has caused me to rest in Him in such a way as that ever since I knew my condition on Saturday, I have enjoyed what is written, "Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee". Only for about five minutes or less on Monday, I think it was, did I feel disturbed at the prospect of death. The Lord has removed the fear of death and I lie as in His blessed arms. "Underneath are the everlasting arms." When I waken at night He is still with me and as I am writing I feel as if "my cup runneth over". Oh, to praise the Lord with me. "Extol the Lord with me, let us exalt His name together." I am all black and vile in myself but He is showing me how white and altogether lovely He is. Oh, seek to know Him I had breakfast in my room, and then read my precious, precious Bible May we all meet "where Christ is all the glory, in Immanuel's land."'

This happy frame of mind continued and those who spoke to him by telephone from Scotland as well as his beloved ones around him can testify of the calmness with which he spoke of his impending dissolution and his longing to enter into that state of everlasting blessedness, which he now, as to his soul, enjoys. Knowing that he was to die and not to live he set his house in order, giving each of his children the same exhortation: "Seek the Lord; be good to your mother; love one another; do not leave the Church of your forefathers", and requesting that the words, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust". Acts 24:15. be inscribed on his tombstone, if one were to be erected. This request was in due course fulfilled.

On Wednesday, 21st June, he departed. The funeral took place the following Saturday. Those present paid their last respects by attending worship at the Otahuhu church and thereafter they laid his mortal

remains to rest in Papakura cemetery to await the Lord's coming.

May his sorrowing widow and children derive much comfort from the consideration that he, whom they loved in time, is now with Christ in glory, and may all of us who profess to be following after him in the heavenly race seek to keep our eye fixed on the same Jesus that we also may finish our course with joy.

Reformation Translation Fellowship

**Report from the Chinese Executive Secretary
Dr Charles Chao**

First of all I wish to give thanks to God for His marvellous leading and care over us through the past years. Deep appreciations should be extended to the British R.T.F. for its noble efforts and support both in prayers and substance to the work here in Taiwan. May God's grace be with all those whose hearts are on the spreading of the Reformed Faith in this part of the world and bless them abundantly.

By the invitation of the Rev. Shigeru Takiura, pastor of Kobe Keiyaku Reformed Presbyterian Church in Japan and the Secretary of the Japan R.T.F. Board, my wife and I made a trip to Japan to meet the Reformed people with a view to promote the work from August 25 to September 17, 1979. On behalf of the R.T.F. I addressed two of the Presbyteries of the Reformed Church in Japan separately in Osaka and Tokyo. Rev. Ryuzo Hashimoto, President of the Kobe Reformed Seminary, is the Chairman of the Japan R.T.F. Board. While I was in Tokyo I also had the opportunity to speak to the student body of Tokyo Christian Theological Seminary which is under the operation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church — Evangelical Synod. Opportunities were given to me to speak to various churches with Reformed persuasion in Kobe area. Praise to the Lord that the people were aroused to pray for the R.T.F. and started collecting funds for the work.

Translation Work

I am very glad to report that the Chinese translation of the late Dr R.B. Kuiper's posthumous book entitled *The Bible Tells Us So* has been completed and funds have been received from the British R.T.F. for the printing. Books on the list for reprinting are the following: Dr E.J. Young's *Old Testament Prophecy*, translated by Rev. E.W. Andres et al

and Dr Samuel G. Craig's *Christianity Rightly So-Called*, translated by the writer of this report. We are hopeful that these two titles might be reprinted in 1980 (D.V.).

Through the financial help of the British R.T.F. the second Chinese edition of the *Shorter Catechism* and *The Reformed Faith and Life Quarterly* were published in the year of 1979. A very interesting letter reached the writer of this report recently from West Malaysia. The name of the writer is Joseph Tan. Joseph is a very faithful reader of *The Reformed Faith and Life Quarterly*. He commented that he was helped and required more copies to be sent to Malaysia. He is very fond of A.W. Pink's works and hopes to be a translator in the future. He asked my help as how to start the work. It is very encouraging to receive words like these from a young Christian Chinese who is so strongly for the Reformed Faith. Please remember him and his efforts in your prayers.

Inside China

I plan to go to Hong Kong with a view that a Hong Kong Committee of the R.T.F. might be considered and formed. In view of the fact that the door of evangelism to the mainland has opened the R.T.F. should move one step further towards making our literature available to the Chinese Christian people in that vast land and to meet their pressing needs.

Reports gathered from various sources indicate that church services are generally resumed in the major cities of China and Bibles are allowed to be brought in. It was reported that the older folks of the Christians in China are still in favour of the old script of the Chinese Bible.

Rev. Jonathan Chao, second son of the writer of this report, Director of Chinese Church Research Centre of China Graduate School of Theology of Hong Kong, made a trip to Canton, South China last year. He is of the opinion that the R.T.F. publications such as Rev. Isaac Jen's *Systematic Theology* ought to be reprinted for the mainland readers. The small booklet edited by Charles H. Chao, in the title of *The Bird's-Eye-View study of the New Testament* is also a suitable one for the Chinese Christians. They have been separated from the general Christian literatures for so long and it is naturally hard for them to grasp heavy reading.

Wang Ming-tao, the Chinese hero of faith who was put in prison 22 years ago, has been recently released and is now living in Shanghai. The Peking Evangelist was well known for his heroic stand for the truth both in the Japanese occupation and the current confrontation with the Communists on the mainland. Brother Wang was born in the year 1900

while the Boxers Uprising was taking place in the Northern part of China. Though the Boxers killed many Chinese Christians yet Wang was born in that year and later God used him as a tool in His hand to lead thousands of the Chinese souls to the saving knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ through his preaching in almost every part of the continent of China. Wang's physical strength has come to an end due to the long imprisonment. His mind is still clear. He confessed to his visitors that though he had been many times a Peter yet he had never been a Judas. He has only five teeth left and with very poor hearing. We give thanks to God for his release.

May we be guided by the Holy Spirit that the current advantage should be taken to do something for His glory while it is day. Though the R.F.T. is a small organisation yet we have a great hope to reach the one fourth of the world population by the printed page!

Note: Since writing the above Dr Chao has been in China and met Wang Ming-tao, under whose ministry he was converted.

Church Notes

Southern Presbytery Clerkship

At its meeting on June 19th 1980 at Glasgow, the Southern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland appointed Rev. D.J. MacDonald, M.A., 167 Glasgow Road, Perth PH2 0LY as their Clerk.

Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)

Southern: At Glasgow on 16th September at 6 p.m.

Northern: At Dingwall on 23rd September at 2.30 p.m.

Skye: At Portree on 14th October at 11 a.m.

Church Deputy to Australia and New Zealand

The Editor expects (D.V.) to leave this country by air on 6th August for Australia and New Zealand as Church Deputy and to remain there until the end of October. He would crave the prayers of the Lord's people in view of this undertaking and that the Lord would be pleased to follow his going out to those parts with a blessing. If readers of the Magazine have friends or relatives there whom they would like the Editor to visit, he will be willing to do whatever he can in this way if they will forward

their addresses to him either before he leaves this country or c/o the ministers in Australia and New Zealand.

Magazine Correspondence

All Free Presbyterian Magazine correspondence from the beginning of August until the end of October should be addressed to the Editor of the Young People's Magazine, Rev. Alex MacPherson, 5 Kempshott Road, Streatham, London SW16, who has kindly undertaken to see the next three issues of the Magazine through the press.

Opening of Barnoldswick Church

The new church at Barnoldswick is to be opened on 13th September (D.V.) at 2.30 p.m. Rev. D. MacLean, Glasgow is expected to preach.

Resolution regarding God's Care over Zimbabwe during the late War

The Synod at its meeting in May, 1980, passed a resolution calling upon congregations throughout the church to remember Zimbabwe Mission in a special way at prayer-meetings held during the first week in September (DV), to thank God for help in the recent past and to pray for His continued blessing in the years ahead.

Staff for Zimbabwe Mission

Teachers are urgently required, especially of Science and Mathematics, at the beginning of next School Session at John Tallach School, Ingwenya. Also, Registered Nurse/Midwives are required for the Mbuma Hospital. Applicants should contact the Rev A Murray, Applecross, or, in the case of teaching appointments, Miss Marion Graham MA on furlough in the UK at 8 Drumblair Crescent, Inverness (Tel: 0463-32860).

Theological Conference

This year's Conference will be held in Inverness God willing, the dates being Tuesday 9th and Wednesday 10th September. It is hoped that the following papers will be read:—

- 1) Andrew Melville — Rev. S.F. Tallach M.A.
- 2) Some moral problems of modern medicine — Dr Roy MacCuish
- 3) The Christian and Evolution — Dr D. MacSween Ph.D
- 4) The Pastoral Epistles — Rev. John MacLeod M.A.

5) Dr Thomas Chalmers — Rev. Neil Ross, B.A.

It is expected that the last named paper will be in public and that Rev. A. Murray M.A. will act as Chairman at the Conference (DV).

Publications Committee

The publishing of books such as *The Westminster Confession of Faith*, *Peep of Day*, *Lady Colquhoun* and others has been carried out by the Publications Committee for many years. Now and then the committee hears from those who have been helped through reading these books. We continue to hear from some who first heard of the committee's work through the diligent and prayerful outreach of the late Mr John Grant, Inverness. We know of one congregation which until recently, was unreformed. Since reading *The Westminster Confession of Faith* both Pastor and people have been persuaded of the need to follow a more scriptural pattern in their worship. May God be pleased to continue to use this valuable book for His own Glory.

Also under the supervision of the Publications Committee is the Bookroom in Glasgow. Our staff there find constant encouragement in their contact with those who come in looking for a reliable book to read. One Glasgow taxi driver comes in for a regular supply of scripture tracts to hand out to his passengers.

URGENT APPEAL

The Synod has given authority for a collection to be taken in December for the work of the Publications Committee. Authority has also been given for an urgent appeal to be inserted in this magazine in order to raise funds for the reprinting of *The Westminster Confession of Faith* before the end of this year. This project will cost almost £10,000, but we consider its importance to be vital. Any who would like to help us in it should send their gifts to our Publications Treasurer, R.W.M. MacKenzie C.A., Hilton of Cadboll, Fearn, Ross-shire.

Sound Christian publications can reach many who are unfamiliar with the doctrines and teaching of God's Word. We ask you to pray for God's blessing on the work.

John Walter Ross
Convener, Publications 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: Anon, Canada, \$20.00

Jewish & Foreign Mission Fund: Mr Berman. Holland. per Bookroom. £4.

Dominions & Overseas Fund: Ness Sabbath School, £20 for Italian Mission.

China Mission Fund: Well wisher, £12.

Bookroom, Glasgow: Harris Friend, £6.

Trinitarian Bible Society: Ness Sabbath School, £20.

Underground Evangelism: Ness Sabbath School, £20.

The Treasurers of the following Congregations wish to acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations: —

Applecross: In memory of Anne (Dolly) Dixon and the Rev. Dr. R MacDonald from Mr L.B. Dixon £40; In memory of our mother Dolly Dixon from Joan and Eleanor £10, both per Rev. A. Murray for Congregational purposes; from Estate of late Mr Donald MacDonald. Kishorn £20 for Congr. purposes per Messrs Munro & Noble, Inverness; A Friend, Applecross £2 for Ballifeary Home; Anon £25 for Applecross Church and Manse Building Fund; A Friend in Stornoway £10 for Cuaig Mission Hall repairs, last three per Rev. A. Murray; Mr & Mrs M. MacL. £10 for Sust. Fund; Anon (in church plate) £5 for Sust. Fund; A Friend £10 for Sust. Fund; A Friend £3 for Jewish and Foreign Missions; Anon (at Communion) £10, £5, £5, £100 for Church Carpet and Blinds, all per R. MacLean.

Dumbarton: J. McN. £5 for Congr. Purposes; Friend, Stornoway £5 per T.M.; N. McC £5; R & I.C. £10, last three for Manse Fund; Anon, Cardross £10 for China Mission.

Edinburgh: Anon (envelope in plate) £100 for Sust. Fund; A.M. Glasgow £5 for Communion Expenses.

Fort William: Mr & Mrs D.C., Lochaline £40; Mr & Mrs J.C., Lochaline £10; Mrs C., Drinmin £10, all for Sust. Fund; Mr & Mrs MacL., Tyndrum £5, all per Rev. J.A. MacDonald.

Glasgow: Anon £5; Anon £10; Anon £100; Anon, Dumfries £8 (thrice); Miss A. McL. £5 per Rev. D.M.; Miss M.D., Balfron £20, all for Sust. Fund; M.S. £2 for Welfare of Youth; D. McS. £5; Stornoway Friend £5; A.M., Stornoway £20, last three for Congr. Fund and all per Rev. D.M.;

M.S. £5 for Communion Expenses; Anon £1; Anon £1, both for Bus Fund.

Inverness: In loving memory of my dear husband £200, to be used where most needed.

Kyle: Graham House, Dornie £1.78 for Organisation Fund per Mr Van Woerden; Friend, Ardineaskan £5 per Mr Van Woerden; Friend £10; Envelope in plate £10, last three for Manse Fund.

Lochcarron: D.M. £10 per K.M.; Mrs MacL., Achintee £33 for Minister's Car; Anon £5 for Communion Expenses per J.W.R.

North Tolsta: Anon, in memory of our beloved parents £15 for Hall Purposes; Anon £50 (£40 for Sust. Fund & £10 for Home & Foreign Mission) in church plate; Harris Friend £5 for Church Hall per J. Murray; Anon £3 for Congr. Purposes; Interested £5 for Trinitarian Bible Society; Anon, North Tolsta, in memory of loved ones £100 for Church and Manse Repairs (last two in church plate); North Tolsta Friend £5; Stornoway Friend £10; North Tolsta Friend £23, last three for Congr. Purposes.

Oban: Friend £5 for Property Fund per Rev. A.M.

Portree: Anon £5 for General Building Fund (in church plate); Friend £5; Friend £5, both for Manse Expenses per F.M.; Mr & Mrs G., Fraser Cres., £10 for each of Trinitarian Bible Society, Sust. Fund, Aged and Infirm Ministers Fund, College and Library Fund, Organisation Fund, Publications Fund, Jewish and Foreign Missions Fund.

Raasay: Inverness Postmark Ps. 18:46 £3 for Home Mission; Raasay Friend £5, both per J.M. MacLeod; Friend of the Cause, Inverarish £10 per M.D. MacKay; Envelope in plate £5, last three for Congr. Fund.

South Harris: Friend, Northton £100 for Sust. Fund.

Stornoway: Friend £5; Friend £2; both for Car Fund and both per Rev. J. Macleod.

Strath: Friend of Cause £5 for Sust. Fund per D.M.K.

Ullapool: Friend £5 for Sust. Fund per M.C.