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The Meeting of Synod

In May each year the Synod, the supreme Court of our Church, meets either in Glasgow or Inverness to deal with matters affecting the life of the Church. Many items of business appear on the Synod agenda and members of Synod, consisting of the ministers and representative elders, are expected to take a lively interest in the business dealt with. Part of the business consists of annual reports given in from the Mission and Overseas Stations, along with reports by Conveners of Committees on different aspects of the Church's work. Apart from a review of the work of the Church in this way, the Synod at times is called on to review cases sent up from Presbyteries and also deal with other difficult matters, matters which if not handled wisely may cause much dissension.

In view of this, what need there is of prayer that the blessing of God's Presence and guidance would be given to those who meet in Synod so that God might in all things be glorified. Only the Lord is able to give the wisdom needed to deal with some of the issues that have to be resolved at such a time. He alone is able so to guide the Synod in its deliberations so that what is done may be to His glory and for the advancement of His Cause in our midst as a Church, and that nothing may be done that would in any way hinder that Cause.

The witness of our Church — set up, as it is, for the defence and proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, was never more needed than it is in our day. The enemies of Christ's Cause would delight to see that witness destroyed and this too is the desire of the arch-enemy of souls. Satan can never rest content so long as the witness of the Free Presbyterian Church is maintained and he will do whatever is in his power to destroy it. It is not Satan's will, however, that is to triumph. It is not in his hand but in the Lord's hand whether or not our witness as a Church stands or falls, and He has promised to maintain His own

witness even in the darkest day. It is our duty, then, not to look to men, but to look to the Lord to maintain it.

While this is so, it is equally clear that the Lord has laid it upon His servants and people to be faithful to that which He has committed to their charge. They are under obligation to the Lord who has redeemed them from death to be faithful to Him even unto death. It is not enough for them to be faithful in word only but also in deed. Many spoke well and yet faltered when the time of testing came. We are in a time of testing in our day from influences and forces that would wrest from us our precious heritage. We have need of being kept in such a time for we cannot keep ourselves. May the Lord be pleased in His mercy to give strength and grace to His servants and people to stand in the evil day.

We do not know when it may please the Lord to build up His Zion again. The darkness which has enveloped the land morally and spiritually may be the precursor of a glorious dawn when the light of millennial glory will break forth to irradiate the whole land, its people and its institutions with light. If it should be so, what a contrast there will be between that time and our present debased state and condition. Glorious will Zion be then, the joy of the whole earth.

Meanwhile let us pray for those days and pray even now that the Lord would bless His Church — "Send now prosperity." The Lord has given His promise in His own Word of a time when He is to favour Zion and He is faithful that promised.

"Thou shalt arise, and mercy have upon Thy Zion yet;
The time to favour her is come, the time that Thou has set."

Sermon

by Rev. Wm. MacLean, Ness.

"I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me." (Isaiah 63: 3).

In this chapter Christ is brought before us as the One who is to obtain the victory over the enemies of His Church. "I will tread them," He says, "in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment, for the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come," the year in which He will plead and vindicate the cause of His people, and take vengeance on the enemies of His Cause. Christ is seen in this vision by the prophet as coming from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah, as a triumphant conqueror. Bozrah was the capital of Edom, and the Edomites who were the descendants of Esau were the

sworn enemies of the people of God. We see that when Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, in the day of Jerusalem's distress, the children of Edom cried "Raze, raze it even to the foundation." (Ps. 137). The Edomites typify the enemies of Christ and His Cause in the world. But in this vision, which is a prophetic vision, the triumph of Christ and of His Church is assured.

Now, as the children of Edom were the sworn enemies of the Cause of Christ in Old Testament times, it is clear from the book of Revelation, that the Papacy, the great harlot of Rome, is the Edom of these latter days. The 19th chapter of Revelation is the key, as it were, to unlock the mysteries of this vision, which the Lord gave to the prophet Isaiah. The destruction of the Roman anti-christ is spoken of in almost identical language with that used in this chapter of Isaiah. In connection with Christ taking vengeance on the Great Harlot who is drunk with the blood of the saints, the apostle John tells us in his vision that he saw Christ "treading the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORDS OF LORDS . . . And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

The vision is not to be understood literally, that Christ in person will come forth on a white horse, and that a literal sword will go forth out of His mouth. The words clearly mean, His coming forth in judgment to overthrow on the one hand, the principalities and powers of the kingdom

of darkness through which Satan the god of this world is deceiving the nations of the earth, and keeping them in subjection to him, and on the other, to deliver and raise up His own Cause.

When Zion by the mighty Lord
Built up again shall be,
In glory then and majesty
To men appear shall He. (Psalm 102: 16).

It is in connection with His coming forth that the mystical Babylon, the apostate Church of Rome, as we read in Chapter 18 of Revelation, will be destroyed, and the millions who are held in bondage to her idolatry and superstition emancipated. Satan will then be bound with a great chain not to deceive the nations of the world for a thousand years. Satan has great power in our day. How the nations of the earth, in our own once highly-favoured nation are being deceived by him! The homage and the honour paid to the anti-christ, the Pope of Rome, is clear proof of it. But Satan's power to deceive the nations will be bound and broken. Christ with His "rod of iron" shall smite down kings that do Him withstand, and with "the sword of His mouth," which is His own Word, piercing the hearts of sinners, as He did on the day of Pentecost. He shall be making a people willing in a day of His power. He shall not faint nor fail until He hath set judgment in the earth, and the isles shall wait for His law; His promises to make His Jerusalem a praise in the earth shall be fulfilled.

"His large and great dominion shall
From sea to sea extend:
It from the river shall reach forth
Unto earth's utmost end." (Psalm 72: 8).

The first resurrection of Revelation 20 in connection with the fall of the anti-christ and of all false and idolatrous systems and the binding of Satan, is a spiritual resurrection. The fulness of the Gentiles has now come and the ingathering of the Jews, which the Word of God declares shall be as life from the dead. Witnesses shall be raised in all lands, for this resurrection is universal, to uphold and to defend and to glory in the glorious truths and doctrines for which the martyrs in former ages laid down their lives. Truth will now prevail. Error, idolatry and iniquity will hide their face for shame. All this shall be accomplished through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in rich measure. It is through His Word and Spirit that Christ quickens sinners dead in trespasses and in sins. It is not by His coming in Person again to this world to sit on a throne in the literal city of Jerusalem that these glorious days will be ushered in. Christ

is now ruling and reigning in His Jerusalem, in His Cause in the world, for He is King of Zion. He will then reign gloriously, for His glory shall then cover the earth as the waters cover the face of the deep. The fanciful interpretations of Premillenarians that Christ is to come down to this world to rule on a throne in the city of Jerusalem would involve a second humiliation for Him. The days of His humiliation are forever at an end. His second coming, as the Word of God makes clear, is at the last day when He shall appear to judge the world in righteousness, justice to give each one.

In chapter 21 the vision of the holy city, the new Jerusalem is the Church in her millennial glory in this world. We are told in verse 2 that John sees this glorious city “coming down from God out of heaven,” and in verse 10 that he saw “that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” “And the nations of them which are saved,” we read in verse 24 “shall walk in the light of it; and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.” The New Testament Jerusalem, the Church of Christ, has now become, as promised, a praise in the earth. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit full and copious as a river — a pure river of water of life clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb will effect this change in the nations of the earth, blessing and accompanying the Word of God read and preached with His quickening and enlightening power, for the leaves of the tree of life will be for the healing of the nations. (Rev. 22: 2).

We have endeavoured to outline the primary meaning of our text — Christ’s victory over the enemies of His Cause, and the subsequent success and prosperity of His Cause in the world. We may also consider Christ’s treading the winepress alone as bringing before us His obedience unto death in working out salvation for lost and perishing sinners. Through the Fall all mankind are exposed to all the miseries of this life, to death itself and to the pains of hell forever. The word of God declares us to be, as we are by nature, children of disobedience and heirs of wrath. The winepress of the holy wrath of God would have been the portion of the whole race of Adam in eternity, had not God in His infinite mercy and love purposed, according to the good pleasure of His will to save a number which no man can number out of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues. It was to this end that He sent His only and eternally begotten Son into the world, that as their Surety and Substitute He would in their room and stead endure the wrath and curse due to their sins. The glory of working out the plan of redemption devised in the counsels of the Godhead before the foundation of the world belongs to

Christ alone. He trod the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with Him.

We shall endeavour to consider: (1) The winepress which He trod; (2) His treading of it; (3) The victory which He obtained, for it is as a triumphant conqueror He is here seen returning from the scene of conflict.

(1) The Truth speaks of the winepress of the wrath of God. It is the place where His wrath is made known. The destruction of the old world with the flood and of Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities of the plain with fire and brimstone from heaven, are solemn manifestations and examples of the wrath of God. These were winepresses of His wrath in this world. But the great winepress of His wrath, where His wrath is everlastingly made known, is in a lost and undone eternity. Hell is the great winepress of the wrath of God. It is called the great winepress of His wrath. It is the wrath of God Almighty. "Who knows the power of God's wrath?" Nothing can resist it nor stand before it. None can stand before God when He is angry. It is everlasting wrath — the consuming fire of God's holiness and justice coming forth in the way of righteous condemnation and judgment upon the finally impenitent. When countless millions of years have run their course, it shall still be, and will unendingly continue to be the wrath which is to come. From this wrath which our sins deserve we are warned to flee. "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain: escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed" (Gen. 19: 17). "Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job 36: 18).

Instead of fleeing to the Saviour, the alone refuge from the wrath which is to come, sinners live carelessly, securely and indifferently. How solemn the thought that the Christless sinner is every moment of his life, awake or asleep in danger of being cast into hell. These are solemn realities. Beware lest, when it is forever too late, and the door of mercy is shut, that you come to realise them. How awesome the question "Who among us shall dwell with devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33: 14). It is in Christ alone there is shelter and safety for us. He is the One who in the sufferings and obedience of His life and death trod the winepress alone. He alone can save us from the wrath which is to come. And none perish that Him trust.

(2) The treading of the Winepress. Christ here says, "I have trodden the winepress alone." And when did He begin treading it? He began treading it when He took our nature in the womb of the Virgin, as it is only in the human nature He could suffer. The treading of the winepress in the room of His people implies the whole course of His obedience unto

death. He was obedient unto death even the death of the cross, rendering, in His life, to the holy law of God which they had broken, perfect and sinless obedience, and full satisfaction in His death to the penalty of the law which they had incurred. He was treading it alone when for forty days He was tempted of Satan in the wilderness. He was treading it alone in Gethsemane when He was in such agony of soul, that His sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. He was then coming in sight of Calvary where He was to endure in His soul and body the fierceness of the wrath of God as the righteous Judge, inflicting in inflexible justice the penalty of the law for sin.

In the light of the agony and the sweat of blood of the Redeemer in Gethsemane, how awful must the treading of the winepress of the wrath of God have been on Calvary! He was treading it alone when arrested by the soldiers. "Then all His disciples forsook Him and fled." He was treading it alone when, before Caiaphas the high priest and the Sanhedrin of the Jews, He was accused, maligned, buffeted and spat on.

He was treading it alone when brought before Pilate the Roman governor, scourged by the Roman soldiers, mockingly arrayed in a scarlet robe, a crown of thorns put on His head, and a reed in His right hand. He was treading it alone in the depths of His sufferings on Calvary. "I looked for one to pity Me, but none I found: comforters found I none." (Ps. 69). None of the people, no finite being could tread where He was treading. The winepress of the wrath of God would have swallowed them up. Christ alone, Deity incarnate, could offer the sacrifice which alone could atone for sin and satisfy all the claims of law and justice, the sacrifice which God in His infinite love provided. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4: 10).

(3) We shall now notice the victory which He obtained. He is seen by the prophet returning as a conqueror from the scene of conflict. We read that through His cross He spoiled principalities and powers and triumphed over them. By His death He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. Satan is a vanquished foe.

Christ triumphed over death, hell and the grave. It is in virtue of His victory that His ransomed church on the morning of the resurrection will have the triumphant song: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It is in connection with treading the winepress alone that Christ could say, "I have glorified Thee on the earth, and I have finished the work Thou gavest Me to do." He made reconciliation for iniquity and brought in an everlasting righteousness. "But this man, because He

continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Hebrews 7: 24, 25).

There are incontestable proofs that He obtained the victory.

(a) His resurrection from the dead on the third day is the great proof that the sacrifice which He offered, when He offered Himself, was of infinite value and efficacy to make the one and only atonement for sin. "He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." (Romans 4: 25). By His resurrection too, from the dead, He was declared and proved to be the Son of God with power, the Second Person of the ever-adorable Trinity, the One who ever was, is, and shall be the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person.

(b) He is said to be glorious in His apparel. By His apparel we may understand His human nature, the robe or apparel in which in the days of His flesh He trod the winepress alone. Not only did God as a God of Peace raise Him from the dead, but glorified Him in the human nature with that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. That body that was buffeted, spat on, scourged and crucified, that image that was marred more than the face of any man, has now a glory and a brightness that far exceeds the light of the sun. His soul that was exceeding sorrowful unto death, that was often grieved and wounded and that reached depths of desertion unknown to any of His people, is now full to overflowing with joy unspeakable. "And thou hast by thy countenance made Him exceeding glad." (Psalm 21: 6).

(c) He is said to be "travelling in the greatness of His strength." How glorious He was when travelling in the greatness of His strength in His ascension to God's right hand, leading captivity captive, and entering into heaven not with the blood of bulls and of goats but with His own blood having obtained eternal redemption for us. His glorious ascension was and shall be the song of His Church:

"Thou hast, O Lord most glorious,
Ascended up on high;
And in triumph victorious led
Captive captivity;
Thou hast received gifts for men,
For such as did rebel;
Yea, ev'n for them, that God the Lord
In midst of them might dwell." (Psalm 68: 18).

"He is travelling in the greatness of His strength" we may say, in fulfilling the purposes of God in providence and in grace. He is ruling in

the midst of His enemies, making willing, in spite of all the powers of darkness, a people in a day of His power, for He is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. He shall strike through kings that do Him withstand, and He shall judge among the heathen. He shall not faint nor fail, as we have already noticed, until He has established judgment in the earth and the isles shall wait for His law. He is travelling in the greatness of His strength in ruling in a most holy, wise and powerful manner over all His creatures and all their actions. It is to Christ as the risen and glorified Head of the Church that the words apply. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth." He is travelling in the greatness of His strength toward the time when He shall bring down the power of the Anti-Christ, and Mohammed the false prophet, and all the false sects and systems which deceive and delude sinners for eternity. He is travelling in the greatness of His strength to the ushering in of the latter day glory, when the knowledge of His glory shall cover the earth as the waters cover the face of the deep. The promise of the Father to the Son as the reward of His obedience shall be fulfilled.

"Ask of Me and for heritage
The heathen I'll make Thine;
And, for possession, I to Thee
Will give earth's utmost line." (Psalm 2:8).

The prayer and desire of His people therefore is "The whole earth let His glory fill, Amen so let it be" (Psalm 72: 19).

(d) A further proof of His victory is to be found in His own declaration — that He speaks in righteousness and that He is mighty to save.

He speaks in righteousness in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. What He speaks is true, for He is the faithful and true witness, and all that He has spoken and revealed as recorded from Genesis to Revelation is divinely inspired, infallible and inerrant.

He speaks in righteousness in the dispensation of His providence, for He is just in all His ways, holy in His works all. "The Lord's voice crieth to the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." (Micah 6: 9).

He speaks in righteousness when He declares that He is mighty to save. He is able to save to the uttermost. What proofs we have of His power to save! He saved Manasseh who caused the streets of Jerusalem to run red with the blood of God's people. He saved Mary Magdalene out of whom He cast seven devils. He saved the woman of Samaria. He saved the woman who was a sinner in the city. He saved Saul of Tarsus who was a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious. He saved the thief on the cross

at the eleventh hour. He has saved millions of our race who are now in glory, all trophies and proofs of the victory He obtained. And today He is saying to us, lost, self-destroyed and hell-deserving sinners though we be, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." It is because He is mighty to save for He saves on the ground of the victory which He obtained and the righteousness which He wrought out. He is calling upon us to look to Him for salvation. It is salvation we need in view of death, judgment and eternity. Without salvation, whatever else we may possess, we shall perish eternally, and have our portion in the winepress of the wrath of God in a lost eternity. Christ is the salvation of His people. There is no salvation outside of Him.

He is speaking in righteousness when He says, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." (Isaiah 45: 22).

(e) The actual bestowing of salvation, the imparting of eternal life to sinners dead spiritually, without hope and without God in the world, is proof that He obtained the victory. He speaks of such in verse 8 of this chapter (63) as His people, children that will not lie, and that He is their Saviour. There was a day when they were not His people, when they were the children of wrath even as others. It is through being born again, quickened by His Word and Spirit and united to Him by the faith which is of the Holy Spirit's operation that they become His children. They were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And as proof that they were born again they received Christ, and they rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is freely offered in the Gospel.

"They are children who will not lie," (v. 8) for the truth is in them. There are many who profess that they will not lie, and yet who are not the children of God. We may mention some respects in which the children of God will not lie. They will not lie in denying the reality of hell and the eternal torments of the lost. All who deny these solemn doctrines are liars in God's sight. They are not His children. Whatever their profession they are bastards and not sons. (Heb. 12: 8). Those who are His children believe them, because they came to see in the day the Holy Spirit convinced them of their sin and misery, that God would be just in their eternal damnation.

The children of God will not lie in holding and believing that any sinner can by any merit or power of his own procure salvation. Man by nature believes that he can or will do in the future what will save his soul. The Holy Spirit in His effectual work burned that lie out of the souls of

those who are His children. In His effectual call the Holy Spirit will not leave as much as a sigh or a groan with the sinner in the way of merit. The children of God have become dead to the law as a covenant. They believe the truth, and no lie is of the truth, that by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified in God's sight.

To all who are God's children Christ is precious in the glory of His Person and in His offices as Prophet, Priest and King. All that pertains to Christ is precious to them, His Word, His Day, His Cause and His people. A godly man once said in the past when speaking to the Question, that whatever change a person might profess to have undergone, unless there was love to the Lord's Day in that person's soul and the love manifested in seeking to keep the Sabbath holy, he could not believe that the conversion and profession of that person was genuine. As in matters of the world so also in religion. "All that glitters is not gold."

(f) The last proof we shall mention is the assurance that the Lord gives to His own that they shall be more than conquerors through Him that loved them. The Captain of their salvation will give them the victory He procured for them. They are an afflicted and poor people, but in all their afflictions He was afflicted, for in treading the winepress alone He was tempted and afflicted in all points as they are yet without sin. He has a fellow feeling with them, and assures them that out of all their afflictions and temptations He will deliver them. He is leading them in a right way, to make Himself, as we are told in this chapter "a glorious name." Their troubles and trials are to His glory and what is to His glory must be to their good. They are not unto death but for the glory of God that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. "Thus saith the Lord, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." (Isaiah 48: 17).

Are they not a blessed and a happy people whose God is the Lord?

We shall conclude by quoting the invitation which Moses extended to Hobab when the children of Israel were on their journey to the land of promise, "We are journeying unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come thou with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel" (Numbers 10: 29). May we all be found followers of them who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises. And if followers of them it is through faith in Him who is the divine Redeemer, of whom we read that this Man receiveth sinners and who says "him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out."

Lord's Table Address

by Rev. Wm. Grant

You are now at the Lord's Table. The Lord of the table invited you. You received a personal invitation. Where was it from? What date does it bear? It came from the Upper Chamber at Jerusalem, and the date is significant. It was that night on which He was betrayed. It was delivered to you over 1900 years after in the North of Scotland. That is a wonder. How is it addressed? To a Sinner saved by Grace. — a Sinner, that is me you said; **saved by Grace** — yes, that is my only hope. It is for me. Look well to the invitation. Satan the great whisperer seeks to separate chief friends. He whispers "It is not for you." Don't believe him. He is the father of lies. Look to the invitation again — it is dipped in blood. "Without shedding of blood is no remission of sin." The blood of bulls and of goats? No! but of the Lamb without blemish and without spot. So, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world."

When your sins were remitted and forgiveness sealed on your conscience the blood mark of Redemption was left there. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you", saith your Beloved. You are at the New Testament Feast. "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, let us therefore keep the Feast not with the old leaven of malice but with the unleavened bread of truth." It reads — "This do in remembrance of Me." See what accompanied the invitation — It reads, "I was wounded for your transgressions, I was bruised for your iniquities, the chastisement of your peace was upon me and by my stripes ye are healed." It says, "This do in remembrance of Me." It is more difficult for you to refrain from obeying his dying command than to do it. It was so with the soldier of Fort George, who, seeing people gather on Sabbath at Redcastle joined them, more out of curiosity than with any particular intentions. That day the arrow of truth pierced his conscience and ere the sermon was finished his wound was healed. He arose and went forward to the Table with the regular communicants. The Elders stopped him, saying, "you cannot go, you have not been before the session." He replied, "It would be easier for me today if you took a dagger and pierced my heart than to say, 'you cannot sit at the Lord's Table.'" The eminent Mr MacPhail hearing this said to the Elders "Let him go," and he proved to have been truly enlisted as a soldier of King Jesus that day. True love is obedient and that is not obedience that does not flow from love. The invitation says, "Eat of friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved," and so I will not

withhold from you any longer the symbols of the broken Body and the shed Blood.

AFTER SUPPER

Wonderful things accompanied the invitation. Thus in John 13 we read, "As the Father hath loved Me, even so have I loved you." This is the amazing, wonderful love that passeth knowledge. Who can fathom the Father's love to the One of whom he said, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him." He who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. Yes! it is love everlasting and unchanging — you are subject to change in your feelings but you are to live by faith on the Son of God who loved you and gave Himself for you. The invitation says, "This do till I come." His coming is very near to some at His Table here today and not far off from any. Do you say you are afraid of death? I read of the bee that when it stings a person it leaves its sting there and has no more power to hurt though it is still a bee, and has the same appearance. Death stung the Blessed substitute in His humanity and lost its sting, "Oh death, where is thy sting, Oh grave, where is thy victory." The strength of sin is the law but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. So go on your way rejoicing, but remember this is not your home. You have to meet the world, the flesh and the devil. Look much to your Beloved; lean upon His omnipotent arm by faith in the promise. He that cometh will come and say "Welcome home" — yes, home to the realm of love to be forever with your Beloved. Witness for Him more and more while time remains — you will not have that opportunity in Heaven — no enemies there. I leave with you His words: "My grace is sufficient for you and my strength is made perfect in weakness." (June 1950).

A Pastoral Letter

by Samuel Rutherford

Dearly beloved and longed-for in the Lord, my crown and my joy in the day of Christ, — Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

I long exceedingly to know if the oft-spoken-of match betwixt you and Christ holdeth, and if ye follow on to know the Lord. My day-thoughts and my night-thoughts are of you: while ye sleep I am afraid of your souls, that they be off the rock. Next to my Lord Jesus and this fallen kirk, ye have the greatest share of my sorrow, and also of my joy; ye are

the matter of the tears, care, fear, and daily prayers of an oppressed prisoner of Christ. As I am in bonds for my high and lofty One, my royal and princely Master, my Lord Jesus; so I am in bonds for you. For I should have slept in my warm nest, and kept the fat world in my arms, and the cords of my tabernacle should have been fastened more strongly; I might have sung an evangel of ease to my soul and you for a time, with my brethren, the sons of my mother, that were angry at me, and have thrust me out of the vineyard; if I would have been broken, and drawn on to mire you, the Lord's flock, and to cause you to eat pastures trodden upon with men's feet, and to drink foul and muddy waters. But truly the Almighty was a terror to me, and His fear made me afraid. O my Lord, judge if my ministry be not dear to me, but not so dear by many degrees as Christ my Lord! God knoweth the sad and heavy Sabbaths I have had, since I laid down at my Master's feet my two shepherd's staves. I have been often saying, as it is written, "My enemies chased me sore like a bird, without cause: they have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me" (Lam. 3: 52, 53). For, next to Christ, I had but one joy, the apple of the eye of my delights, to preach Christ my Lord; and they have violently plucked that away from me. It was to me like the poor man's one eye; and they have put out that eye, and quenched my light in the inheritance of the Lord. But my eye is toward the Lord: I know that I shall see the salvation of God, and that my hope shall not always be forgotten. And my sorrow shall want nothing to complete it, and to make me say, "What availeth it me to live?" if ye follow the voice of a stranger, of one that cometh into the sheep-fold not by Christ the door, but climbeth up another way. If the man build his hay and stubble upon the golden foundation, Christ Jesus (already laid among you), and ye follow him, I assure you, the man's work shall burn and never bide God's fire: and ye and he both shall be in danger of everlasting burning except ye repent. Oh, if any pain, any sorrow, any loss that I can suffer for Christ, and for you, were laid in pledge to buy Christ's love to you! and that I could lay my dearest joys, next to Christ my Lord, in the gap betwixt you and eternal destruction! O if I had paper as broad as heaven and earth, and ink as the sea and all the rivers and fountains of the earth, and were able to write the love, the worth, the excellency, the sweetness, and due praises of our dearest and fairest Well-beloved! and then if ye could read and understand it! What could I want, if my ministry among you should make a marriage between the little bride in those bounds and the Bridegroom? Oh, how rich a prisoner were I, if I could obtain of my Lord (before whom I stand for you) the salvation of

you all! Oh, what a prey had I gotten, to have you caught in Christ's net! Oh, then I had cast out my Lord's lines and His net with a rich gain! Oh then, well-wared pained breast, and sore back, and crazed body, in speaking early and late to you! My witness is above; your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me. I would subscribe a suspension, and a fristing of my heaven for many hundred years (according to God's good pleasure), if ye were sure in the upper lodging, in our Father's house, before me. I take to witness heaven and earth against you, I take instruments in the hands of that sun and daylight that beheld us, and in the hands of the timber and walls of that kirk, if I drew not up a fair contract of marriage betwixt you and Christ, if I went not with offers betwixt the Bridegroom and you, and your conscience did bear you witness, your mouths confessed, that there were many fair trysts and meetings drawn on betwixt Christ and you at communion feasts, and other occasions? There were bracelets, jewels, rings, and love-letters, sent to you by the Bridgegroom. It was told you what a fair dowry ye should have, and what a house your Husband and ye should dwell in, and what was the Bridegroom's excellency, sweetness, might, power, the eternity and glory of His kingdom, the exceeding deepness of His love, who sought His black wife through pain, fires, shame, death, and the grave, and swimm'd the salt sea for her, undergoing the curse of the law, and thus was made a curse for you; and ye then consented, and said, "Even so I take Him." I counsel you to beware of the new and strange leaven of men's inventions, beside and against the word of God, contrary to the oath of this kirk, now coming among you. I instructed you of the superstition and idolatry in kneeling in the instant of receiving the Lord's Supper, and of crossing in baptism, and of the observing of men's days, without any warrant of Christ our perfect Law-giver. Countenance not the surplice, the attire of the mass-priest, the garment of Baal's priests. The abominable bowing to altars of tree (wood) is coming upon you. Hate, and keep yourselves from idols. Forbear in any case to hear the reading of the new fatherless Service-Book, full of gross heresies, popish and superstitious errors, without any warrant of Christ, tending to the overthrow of preaching. You owe no obedience to the bastard canons; they are unlawful, blasphemous, and superstitious. All the ceremonies that lie in Antichrist's foul womb, the wares of that great mother of fornications, the kirk of Rome, are to be refused. Ye see whither they lead you. Continue still in the doctrine which ye have received. Ye heard of me the whole counsel of God. Sew no clouts upon Christ's robe. Take Christ, in His rags and losses, and as

persecuted by men, and be content to sigh and pant up the mountain, with Christ's cross on your back. Let me be reputed a false prophet (and your conscience once said the contrary), if your Lord Jesus will not stand by you and maintain you, and maintain your cause against your enemies.

I have heard, and my soul is grieved for it, that since my departure from you, many among you are turned back from the good old way, to the dog's vomit again. Let me speak to these men. It was not without God's special direction, that the first sentence that ever my mouth uttered to you was that, "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind" (John 9: 39). Is it possible that my first meeting and yours may be when we shall both stand before the dreadful Judge of the world; and in the name and authority of the Son of God, my great King and Master, I write, by these presents, summonses to those men. I arrest their souls and bodies to the day of our compearance. Their eternal damnation standeth subscribed, and sealed in heaven, by the handwriting of the great Judge of quick and dead; and I am ready to stand up, as a preaching witness against such to their face, on that day, and to say "Amen" to their condemnation, except they repent. The vengeance of the Gospel is heavier than the vengeance of the Law; the Mediator's malediction and vengeance is twice vengeance; and that vengeance is the due portion of such men. And there I leave them as bond men, aye and whill they repent and amend.

Ye were witnesses how the Lord's day was spent while I was among you. O sacrilegious robber of God's day, what wilt thou answer the Almighty when He seeketh so many Sabbaths back again from thee? What will the curser, swearer, and blasphemer do, when his tongue shall be roasted in that broad and burning lake of fire and brimstone? And what will the drunkard do, when tongue, lungs, and liver, bones, and all, shall boil and shall fry in a torturing fire? He shall be far from his barrels of strong drink then; and there is not a cold well of water for him in hell. What shall be the case of the wretch, the covetous man, the oppressor, the deceiver, the earth-worm, who can never get his wombful of clay (Ps. 17: 14), when, in the day of Christ, gold and silver must lie burnt in ashes, and he must compear and answer his Judge, and quit his clayey and noughty heaven? Wo, wo, for evermore, be to the time-turning atheist, who hath one god and one religion for summer, and another god and another religion for winter, and the day of fanning, when Christ fan-neth all that is in His barn-floor: who hath a conscience for every fair and market, and the soul of him runneth upon these oiled wheels, time,

custom, the world, and command of men. Oh, if the careless atheist, and sleeping man, who edgeth by all with, "God forgive our pastors if they lead us wrong, we must do as they command," and layeth down his head upon time's bosom, and giveth his conscience to a deputy, and sleepeth so, whill the smoke of hell-fire fly up in his throat, and cause him to start out of his doleful bed! Oh, if such a man would awake! Many woes are for the over-gilded and gold-plastered hypocrite. A heavy doom is for the liar and white-tongued flatterer; and the flying book of God's fearful vengeance, twenty cubits long, and ten cubits broad, that goeth out from the face of God, shall enter into the house, and in upon the soul of him that stealeth, and sweareth falsely by God's name (Zech. 5: 2, 3). I denounce eternal burning, hotter than Sodom's flames, upon the men that boil in filthy lusts of fornication, adultery, incest, and the like wickedness. No room, no, not a foot-breadth, for such vile dogs within the clean Jerusalem. Many of you put off all with this, "God forgive us, we know no better." I renew my old answer: the Judge is coming in flaming fire, with all His mighty angels, to render vengeance to all those that know not God, and believe not (2 Thess. 1: 8). I have often told you that security will slay you. All men say they have faith: as many men and women now, as many saints in heaven. And all believe (say ye); so that every foul dog is clean enough, and good enough, for the clean and new Jerusalem above. Every man hath conversion and the new birth; but it is not leal come. They had never a sick night for sin; conversion came to them in a night-dream. In a word, hell will be empty at the day of judgment, and heaven pang full! Alas! it is neither easy nor ordinary to believe and to be saved. Many must stand, in the end, at heaven's gates (Luke 13: 25). When they go to take out their faith, they take out a fair nothing, or (as ye use to speak) a blaflum. Oh, lamentable disappointment! I pray you, I charge you in the name of Christ, make fast work of Christ and salvation;

I know there are some believers among you, and I write to you, O poor broken-hearted believers: all the comforts of Christ in the Old and New Testaments are yours. Oh, what a Father and Husband ye have! Oh, if I had pen and ink, and ingine to write of Him! Let heaven and earth be consolidated into massy and pure gold, it will not weigh the thousandth part of Christ's love to a soul, even to me a poor prisoner. Oh, that is a massy and marvellous love! Men and angels! unite your force and strength in one, ye shall not heave nor poise it off the ground. Ten thousand worlds, as many worlds as angels can number, and then as a new world of angels can multiply, would not all be the balk of a balance to

weigh Christ's excellency, sweetness, and love. Put ten earths into one, and let a rose grow greater than ten whole earths, or whole worlds, oh, what beauty would be in it, and what a smell would it cast! But a blast of the breath of that fairest Rose in all God's paradise, even of Christ Jesus our Lord, one look of that fairest face, would be infinitely in beauty, and smell, above all imaginable and created glory. I wonder that men dow bide off Christ. I would esteem myself blessed, if I could make an open proclamation, and gather all the world, that are living upon the earth, Jew and Gentile, and all that shall be born till the blowing of the last trumpet, to flock round about Christ, and to stand looking, wondering, admiring, and adoring His beauty and sweetness. For His fire is hotter than any other fire, His love sweeter than common love, His beauty surpasseth all other beauty. When I am heavy and sad, one of His love-books would do me meikle worlds' good. Oh, if ye would fall in love with Him, how blessed were I! how glad would my soul be to help you to love Him! But amongst us all, we could not love Him enough. He is the Son of the Father's love, and God's delight; the Father's love lieth all upon Him. Oh, if all mankind would fetch all their love and lay it upon Him! Invite Him, and take Him home to your houses, in the exercise of prayer morning and evening, as I often desired you; especially now, let Him not want lodging in your houses, nor lie in the fields, when He is shut out of pulpits and kirks. If ye will be content to take heaven by violence and the wind on your face for Christ and His cross, I am here one who hath some trial of Christ's cross, and I can say, that Christ was ever kind to me, but He overcometh Himself (if I may speak so) in kindness while I suffer for Him. I give you my word for it, Christ's cross is not so evil as they call it; it is sweet, light and comfortable. I would not want the visitations of love, and the very breathings of Christ's mouth when He kisseth, and my Lord's delightsome smiles and love-embracements under my sufferings for Him, for a mountain of gold, or for all the honours, court, and grandeur of velvet kirkmen. Christ hath the yoke and heart of my love. "I am my Beloved's, and my Well-beloved is mine."

Oh that ye were all hand-fasted to Christ! O my dearly-beloved in the Lord, I would I could change my voice, and had a tongue tuned by the hands of my Lord, and had the art of speaking of Christ, that I might point out to you the worth, and highness, and greatness and excellency of that fairest and renowned Bridegroom! I beseech you by the mercies of the Lord, by the sighs, tears, and heart's-blood of our Lord Jesus, by the salvation of your poor and precious souls, set up the mountain, that ye

and I may meet before the Lamb's throne amongst the congregation of the first-born. Lord grant that may be the trysting-place! that ye and I may put up our hands together, and pluck and eat the apples off the tree of life, and that we may feast together, and drink together of that pure river of the water of life, that cometh out from the throne of God and of the Lamb. Oh, how little is your hand-breadth and span-length of days here! Your inch of time is less than when ye and I parted. Eternity, eternity is coming, posting on with wings; then shall every man's blacks and whites be brought to light. Oh, how low will your thoughts be of this fair-skinned but heart-rotten apple, the vain, vain, feckless world, when the worms shall make them houses in your eye-holes, and shall eat off the flesh from the balls of your cheeks, and shall make that body a number of dry bones! Think not that the common gate of serving God, as neighbours and others do, will bring you to heaven. Few, few are saved. The devil's court is thick and many; he hath the greatest number of mankind for his vassals. I know this world is a forest of thorns in your way to heaven; but you must go through it. Acquaint yourselves with the Lord: hold fast Christ; hear His voice only. Bless His name; sanctify and keep holy His day; keep the new commandment, "Love one another;" let the Holy Spirit dwell in your bodies; and be clean and holy. Love not the world: lie not, love and follow truth: learn to know God. Keep in mind what I taught you; for God will seek an account of it, when I am far from you. Abstain from all evil, and all appearance of evil: follow good carefully, and seek peace and follow after it: honour your king, and pray for him. Remember me to God in your prayers; I do not forget you. I told you often while I was with you, and now I write it again, heavy, sad, and sore is that stroke of the Lord's wrath that is coming upon Scotland. Wo, wo, wo to this harlot-land! for they shall take the cup of God's wrath from his hands, and drink, and spue, and fall, and not rise again. In, in, in with speed to your stronghold, ye prisoners of hope, and hide you there whill the anger of the Lord pass! Follow not the pastors of this land, for the sun is gone down upon them. As the Lord liveth, they lead you from Christ, and from the good old way. Yet the Lord will keep the holy city, and make this withered kirk to bud again like a rose, and a field blessed of the Lord.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. The prayers and blessings of a prisoner of Christ, in bonds for Him, and for you, be with you all. Amen.

Your lawful and loving pastor,

Aberdeen, *July 13, 1637.*

S. R.

Prayer for the Church by Rev. John Willison of Dundee.

1. Let us pray for a spirit of repentance, mourning, and supplication, to all ranks among us, that we may all be disposed to humble ourselves before the Lord, and mournfully to bewail our sins, our backslidings, and defections, which have provoked God to withdraw from us, and threaten to give us up to reproach. O that Scotland were brought to the temper of penitent returning Israel, 1 Sam. 7: 2, where it is said that "all Israel lamented after the Lord!" Were all ranks moved in a penitent manner to come and lament after a departing God, it would be a hopeful token for the land.

2. Let us pray for God's pouring out his Spirit from on high upon the ordinances and assemblies of this land, for convincing, enlightening, and converting of souls to the Lord: for our affairs will never take a turn to the better, "until the Spirit be poured out from on high," Isa 32: 15; till then, our wilderness will not be turned to a fruitful field. Well, then, let us all pray for a time when gospel-ordinances, dispensed by us, shall be remarkably backed by God's power, and presence; for a time when, by the effusion of the Spirit, a great and effectual door shall be opened to us, as was to Paul at Ephesus, 1 Cor. 16: 9, "a door of utterance" opened in ministers' mouths, and a door of entrance in sinners' hearts; a time when ministers' minds shall be enlightened, their hearts warmed, memories strengthened, and tongues loosed; so that they shall have a great facility in uttering their thoughts; "their hearts shall indite a good matter, and their tongues be as the pen of a ready writer." Let us pray for the time when ministers' mouths shall be opened, and hearers' appetites sharpened, when ministers' hearts shall be enlarged, and hearers' hearts melted; when the arrows of the word shall be directed by a powerful hand, to pierce the consciences of men, and they brought thereby to make serious inquiries about their eternal state, "What must we do to be saved?" This would retrieve our credit.

3. Let us pray earnestly for the down-pouring of the Spirit upon young students and expectants of the holy ministry, that God may make them acquainted with regeneration-work in their younger years, and raise up amongst them eminent instruments of his glory; make them burning and shining lights, men of public spirits, who will desire to spend and be spent for the glory of Christ and the winning of souls; men that will prefer Jerusalem to their chiefest joy; men that will be suitably weighted with the work they are undertaking, and concerned to be cleared about their having God's call to it; men that will not rush for-

wardly upon the work, have an active hand in thrusting themselves into the vineyard, and so run unspent, but wait patiently till God clear their way. O that God would raise up such a ministry in Scotland for the next age! O that he would send such labourers into his harvest! This would prevent our reproach, and retrieve our credit.

4. Let us pray for the continuance of the purity of doctrine and worship in the land, that God may preserve us from deism, and whatever hath a tendency thereto; and from all Popish, Socinian, or Arian errors; and that he may deliver us from all Pelagian and Arminian tenets and opinions; that so men may see and acknowledge God in every thing; whereas Pelagians and Arminians scarce see God in any thing, but make man himself, as it were, a god, by ascribing all to his natural powers, and making him independent with respect to his conversion and spiritual performances. O what a reproach would it be to us, if such errors should prevail among us!

5. Let us pray for the preservation of the peace and unity of this church, and that our breaches may all be healed, and greater breaches prevented; that God may pity us in our present situation, and raise up peace-makers amongst us; that he may inspire all the ministers of this church with a spirit of meekness, charity, and forbearance towards their brethren, who cannot attain to the same light with them in some lesser matters; and that he may deliver us from a spirit of bitterness, malice, or persecution, against our brethren. O how monstrous and reproachful will it be, for those who bear the character of Christ's lambs and doves, to fall to a-biting and tearing one another, like lions and beasts of prey!

6. Let us pray for the removing of all these things which are the causes of division and contention among us; and, particularly, for deliverance from all spiritual oppression, and encroachments upon the rights and liberties of this church, by patrons and others, that so congregations may be supplied with pastors, with the consent and good-liking of the members thereof; this would contribute much for the welfare, and prevent our reproach.

7. Let us pray that God would pour out a spirit of reformation, and of zeal for piety, and against all manner of sin and vice, upon all ranks of persons amongst us; such as magistrates, ministers, elders, heads of families, parents, and teachers of youth; so that every person, in their respective stations, may vigorously exert themselves for suppressing sin, and recommending the exercise of godliness amongst those committed to their charge; and hereby the credit and prosperity of the church would be in a great measure promoted.

Resolutions and Extracts of Diary of Rev. Jonathan Edwards

SECTION I — *His Resolutions*

Mr Edwards was too well acquainted with human weakness and frailty, where the intention is most sincere, to enter on any resolutions rashly. He therefore looked to God for aid, who alone can afford success in the use of any means. This he places at the head of all his other important rules, that his dependence was on grace, while he frequently recurred to a serious perusal of them:— “Being sensible that I am unable to do anything without God’s help, I do humbly entreat him by his grace to enable me to keep these resolutions so far as they are agreeable to his will, for Christ’s sake. He then adds:

“REMEMBER TO READ OVER THESE RESOLUTIONS ONCE A WEEK.”

1. That *I will do whatsoever* I think to be most to God’s glory and my own good, profit and pleasure, ON THE WHOLE; without any consideration of the time, whether now, or never so many myriads of ages hence; to do whatever I think to be my *duty*, and most for the good and advantage of mankind in general — whatever *difficulties* I meet with, how many and how great soever.
2. To be continually endeavouring to find some *new contrivance* to promote the forementioned things.
4. *Never to DO, BE or SUFFER*, anything in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God.
5. Never to lose one moment of *time*; but improve it in the most profitable way I possibly can.
6. To live with all my might, while I do live.
7. Never to do anything, which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.
9. To think much, on all occasions, of my own dying, and of the common circumstances which attend death.
11. When I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances do not hinder.
13. To be endeavouring to find out fit objects of charity and liberality.
14. Never to do anything out of revenge.
15. Never to suffer the least motion of anger to irrational beings.
17. That I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.
18. To live so at all times, as I think is best in my devout frames, and when I have clearest notions of the gospel and another world.

20. To maintain the strictest temperance in eating and drinking.
21. Never to do anything, which if I should see in another, I should count a just occasion to despise him for, or to think any way the more meanly of him.
24. Whenever I do any evil action, to trace it back, till I come to the original cause; and then both carefully endeavour to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my might against the original of it.
28. To study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive myself to grow in the knowledge of the same.
30. To strive to my utmost every week to be brought higher in religion, and to a higher exercise of grace, than I was the week before.
32. To be strictly and firmly faithful to my trust, that Prov. 20: 6 (*A faithful man who can find?*) may not be partly fulfilled in me.
33. Always to do what I can towards making, maintaining, and establishing peace, when it can be done without an overbalancing detriment in other respects.
34. Never to speak in narrations anything but the pure and simple verity.
36. Never to speak evil of any person, except some particular good call for it.
37. To inquire every night, as I am going to bed, wherein I have been negligent, what sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied myself; also at the end of every week, month, and year.
38. Never to speak anything that is ridiculous, or matter of laughter, on the Lord's day.
39. Never to do anything that I so much question the lawfulness of, as that I intend, at the same time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or no: except I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.
41. To ask myself at the end of every day, week, month and year, wherein I could possibly in any respect have done better.
42. Frequently to renew the dedication of myself to God, which was made at my baptism; which I solemnly renewed, when I was received into the communion of the church; and which I have solemnly ratified this twelfth day of January, 1723.
43. Never to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's.
46. Never to allow the least measure of any fretting or uneasiness at my father or mother. Resolved, to suffer no effects of it, so much as in

the least alteration of speech, or motion of my eye; and to be especially careful of it, with respect to any of our family.

47. To endeavour to my utmost to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good, and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, easy, compassionate, generous, humble, meek, modest, submissive, obliging, diligent and industrious, charitable, even, patient, moderate, forgiving, sincere temper; and to do at all times what such a temper would lead me to. Examine strictly every week, whether I have done so.

48. Constantly, with the utmost niceness and dilligence, and the strictest scrutiny, to be looking into the state of my soul, that I may know whether I have truly an interest in Christ or no; that when I come to die, I may not have any negligence respecting this to repent of.

50. I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future world.

52. I frequently hear persons in old age say how they would live, if they were to live their lives over again: Resolved, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old age.

54. Whenever I hear anything spoken in conversation of any person, if I think it would be praiseworthy in me, to endeavour to imitate it.

55. To endeavour to my utmost to act as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the happiness of heaven, and hell torments.

56. Never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

57. When I fear misfortunes and adversities, to examine whether I have done my duty, and resolve to do it; and let it be just as Providence orders it, I will, as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my duty, and my sin.

62. Never to do anything but duty; and then, according to Eph. 6: 6-8, do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not to man; knowing that whatever good thing any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

65. To exercise myself much in this all my life long, viz., with the greatest openness to declare my ways to God, and lay open my soul to him; all my sins, temptations, difficulties, sorrows, fears, hopes, desires, and every thing, and every circumstance; according to Dr Manton's 27th sermon on the 119th Psalm.

67. After afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them; what good I *have* got, and what I *might* have got by them."

SECTION II — *Extracts from his early Diary.*

Though Mr Edwards wrote his Diary for his own private use, exclusively, it is not apprehended that the following extracts are unfairly exposed to public view. Whatever is calculated to do good, and is perfectly consistent with an author's real reputation, may be published with honour, whatever his design might be while writing. Besides, what Mr Edwards wished to have effectually concealed from every eye but his own, he wrote in a particular short-hand. After having written pretty much in that character, he adds this remark in long hand: "Remember to act according to Prov. 12: 23, *A prudent man concealeth knowledge.*"

Saturday, Dec. 22, 1722. This day, revived by God's Holy Spirit. Affected with a sense of the excellency of holiness. Felt more exercise of love to Christ than usual. Have also felt sensible repentance for sin, because it was committed against so merciful and good a God. This night, made the 37th Resolution.

Sabbath night, Dec. 22. Made the 38th Resolution.

Monday, Dec. 24. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Jesus Christ and his kingdom.

Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1723. Dull. I find by experience, that let me make resolutions, and do what I will, it is all nothing, and to no purpose at all, without the motions of the Spirit of God: for if the Spirit of God should be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the week past, notwithstanding all I do, I should not grow; but should languish, and miserably fade away. There is no dependence upon myself. It is to no purpose to resolve, except we depend on the grace of God; for if it were not for his mere grace, one might be a very good man one day, and a very wicked one the next.

Sabbath, Jan. 6, at night. Much concerned about the improvement of precious time. Intend to live in continual mortification, without ceasing, as long as in this world.

Tuesday, Jan. 8, in the morning. Higher thoughts than usual of the excellency of Christ, and felt an unusual repentance for sin therefrom.

Wednesday, Jan. 9, at night. Decayed. I am sometimes apt to think, I have a great deal more of holiness than I really have. I find, now and then, that abominable corruption which is directly contrary to what I read respecting eminent Christians. How deceitful is my heart! I take up a strong resolution, but how soon does it weaken!

(To be continued)

Obituary

The late Mr Alexander MacLennan, Elder, Shildaig.

Alexander MacLennan, in his unconverted days, lived an upright life and was kept from many of the vanities of this world which others freely indulged in, but he was brought to realise that this, being a righteousness which was no more than "filthy rags," was not sufficient before God and in view of eternity.

Alick, as he was affectionately known, was first brought to soul concern when reading "Around the Wicket Gate," by C. H. Spurgeon. The fact that he was concerned about his soul was not unknown to his pious parents who more than once happened to overhear him wrestling in prayer in his room, and they, having faithfully and lovingly taught their children and admonished them to flee from the wrath to come, were no doubt greatly encouraged.

We do not know when he came to the liberty of the gospel, but the time came when he felt it his duty to profess Christ. This was in 1939 under the ministry of the Rev. A. Beaton, Gairloch. In remembering the ministry of Mr Beaton and recalling the scene of a "lectern" full of godly elders and many godly in the congregation, Alick used to say, "I could not have been in a better place on earth."

His upbringing by his godly parents to "remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy," left him a stout defender of that day. While in the Air Force during the war he constantly refused to engage in works which were not necessary and, although he had a hard time by reason of his refusals, he never got into serious trouble. During his time in the Air Force he was involved in boat work and on one occasion was asked by his officer to paint a boat on the Lord's Day. He refused. Some years after leaving the Air Force this officer made a point of going to Diabeg to see him and said, "I could not see eye to eye with Alick's principles but now I have come to admire him."

Alick was not one to speak of his own personal experiences; but "actions speak louder than words" and it was evident to all that he feared the Lord. He was of a warm disposition and had a special place in his heart for the people of God. A native of Diabeg and for many years a much loved driver of the local mail bus, Alick was specially loved as one of the Lord's people. He was ordained to the eldership in Shildaig, on the 26th August, 1951, and the responsibilities of this office he always took most seriously and its duties he discharged most faithfully.

In prayer he was short but his prayers were full of petitions, particularly

for the salvation that is in Christ to be bestowed on sinners. He was a lover of Sion and of the stand made for the cause of Christ by the late Rev. D. MacFarlane; a stand he frequently spoke of in admiring terms.

He struggled for many years under a serious and disabling illness, but his place in the house of God was not empty and he sought to carry out his duties to the end. His gracious resolve to be in the means of grace despite the difficulties, was very much part of Alick MacLennan.

It was with a great sense of loss that many in the church learned of his death. He passed away peacefully on 9th April 1984 in his 68th year, having publicly followed Christ since he was 23 and served as an office bearer for 32 years. His prayers and his presence are very much missed. When we think that not so long ago there was a goodly number of Church members in Diabeg and Shieldaig and it was not uncommon for some who proceeded to church to find the godly in prayer behind the rocks and that now there are so few God-fearing people left, we feel a tremendous blank by the taking of yet another to glory.

Our prayer is that the Lord will raise up the children in place of the fathers. We extend our deep sympathy to his widow, Mrs M. MacLennan, and their family and to his brother and sisters and all connected with the family.

D.A.R.

We should tell what God has done

As far as I know, I did not meet Hugh MacDonald until he came for treatment to the Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. But I was privileged to meet him there on several occasions during August, 1984. He was desperately ill at the time, and not expected to recover. As it turned out, his health improved to the extent that he was able to go back to his home in Lochinver. However, he eventually passed away on Monday, the 4th of March, 1985.

Most of the details below he gave me during my second visit, though I clarified some points at a later stage. His voice was low and indistinct. It was a struggle for him, but he was very anxious to speak, and this is what he said:

Sit down till I tell you about my conversion. It began with a sermon by Neil MacLeod on the Barren Fig Tree. (That was about 1945.) One of the things Neil MacLeod said was that "Seeking you will find, even if you would not be assured of having found until after you die." That is what

started me seeking. I was seeking for about twelve years (I sometimes thought afterwards that in this I was like the woman with the issue of blood).

There were passages of Scripture which gave me some encouragement, but the next occasion which stands out is a prayer meeting on a Tuesday evening in Lochinver, when Mr MacAskill was speaking on the Song of Solomon, chapter 2, from verse 8 on (*The voice of my beloved! Behold, he cometh, leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills . . .*) He quoted a number of Scriptures which had been on my mind, and this encouraged me to think that what was going on in me was not my own work. One of these passages was 2 Corinthians 6: 17-18. (*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.*) It was not humanly possible for him to have known what these passages meant to me.

I said within myself that night that I would just trust. There was no difference in my feelings. But after I went home, and as that week went on, things were getting clearer and clearer to me. I thought of the words, "The path of the just is as a shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Some other texts which were also coming to my mind were: "Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light," "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight . . ." "He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light."

My salvation became as clear to me as could be. I went and told my brother. But afterwards Satan came and said that it was all a delusion — that I was only deceiving myself.

I was sorry then that I had told my brother, and everything was dark. But the darkness only lasted for about a day. After that I was often lying in bed in the morning, thinking of the love of Christ. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." There were other texts like that coming into my mind, but I can't remember them just now. The Holy Spirit brings them to your remembrance. The peace was so great you would be thinking that it was going into your body . . .

The doctors were in today. I asked them if I was going home to die. They wouldn't give me a straight answer. I told them I didn't worry, anyway — that I was in Christ and that I was going to heaven.

You can do what you like with what I told you. I just didn't want to die and not have told any-one. We should tell what God has done.

J. T.

Book Reviews

The "I Wills" of Christ by P. B. Power. Banner of Truth Trust. Price £2.95.

Philip Bennett-Power (1822-89), the author of this soft-back 382-page volume, entered the ministry of the Church of England in 1846 and served in congregations in Leicester, London and Worthing, where he consistently declared man's need of salvation and God's provision for sinners.

The book, first published in 1862, consists of nine chapters, expositions of nine selected "I wills" of the Saviour, beginning with Matthew 11: 28 and ending with John 17: 24. The spiritual teaching conveyed is liberally illustrated by means of extracts relating the spiritual experiences and exercises of a wide variety of Christians: some famous like Augustine, Luther, D'Aubigné, Durham, Romaine and many more; others obscure in their origins and in their lives.

In his preface the author states that he has taken his selected "I wills" and "woven them together so as to present the reader with a picture of the Lord's gracious work upon a soul." This weaving process, although occasionally strained, is, nevertheless, edifying, warmly evangelical and comforting to believers.

The book is attractively produced, moderately priced and can be heartily recommended.

A. G.

Expository Thoughts on Gospel of Mark by J. C. Ryle. Banner of Truth Trust. 370pp. £2.95.

This Banner of Truth paperback is a reprint of J. C. Ryle's book on Mark's Gospel. Ryle said in issuing it that the work makes no pretence to being anything more than a continuous series of short practical Expositions. The three-fold object he had in view was to produce something useful to heads of families in the conduct of family prayers, to assist those who visit the poor and desire to read to them, and to aid all readers of the Bible in the private study of God's Word. This book, like all Bishop Ryle's writings is plain, practical and edifying. From time to time helpful footnotes are given. It contains on the whole few blemishes. We think this book would be most suitable for daily readings. Many different volumes of Daily Readings are issued today and this volume would form a very useful alternative to these other volumes.

D. B. M.

Notes and Comments

The Bishop of Durham

The Bishop of Durham, Rev. David Jenkins, has been instrumental in stirring up a great debate throughout the country on the question of the Virgin Birth and also on the Resurrection. For many years disbelief of many of the cardinal doctrines of the faith characterised most of those who aspired to, or attained high office in the Church of England. Now Dr. Jenkins has appeared on the scene airing these beliefs or disbeliefs more unashamedly and more publicly than such Churchmen were in the habit of doing. No doubt, Dr. Jenkins has his own end in view in doing this — possibly, from his point of view, hoping to bring people to a more 'mature' outlook on the teachings of Scripture. It may be that he has outwitted himself and that his patently heretical views have made people now begin to question his right to be a leader in an ostensibly Christian Church and to make people question the integrity of a man who will take office in the Church while at the same time seeking to undermine the Faith of the Church he professes to serve. We pray that the expression of these heretical views will so stir up the people in the Church of England that they will not rest until they chase Dr. Jenkins and all others of his ilk from the positions of which they are no ornament.

The Swann Report

This controversial report on schooling in Britain calls for changes in the present system in schools. "Multicultural understanding has to permeate all aspects of a school's work," it says. It also maintains that white children must be exposed to a multicultural approach to prepare them for our multi-racial society. The first casualty of this new approach is to be religious education for, according to this new approach, Christianity should cease to dominate morning assemblies and religious education. In Britain now there are two and a half million British born people from ethnic minorities and nothing must be done that would offend their religious susceptibilities. Heathen nations would not act in this way. "Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods?" Yet the Lord had to testify — "but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit." How far Britain has fallen when the entry of an immigrant population into the nation would make her ready to abandon her long-held beliefs and practices. It is good to know that the Government has rejected the recommendation relating to religious worship and religious education in schools which was appeared in the Swann Report.

Church Notes

Meeting of Synod

The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland will meet (D.V.) in the Free Presbyterian Church, Inverness on Tuesday 21st May 1985 at 6.30 p.m. when public worship will be conducted by the retiring Moderator, Rev. A.F. MacKay, Inverness.

Meetings of Presbytery (D.V.)

Southern: At Glasgow on 15th May at 2 p.m.

Australia and New Zealand: At Auckland on 31st May at 2.30 p.m.

Skye: At Portree on 18th June at 11 a.m.

Western: At Laide on 25th June at 11 a.m.

Change of Date of TAIN Communion

The Kirk Session of the Tain and Fearn Joint Congregation have decided that the Tain Communion for 1985 and future years will (D.V.) be held on the second Sabbath of November instead of the second Sabbath of July as previously.

Post of Doctor at Mbumba Mission Hospital

The Committee feel concerned that no applications have been received for this important work on the Mission field, and with nursing staff at the hospital since May the work is being considerably curtailed in the absence of a doctor. The whole of the Nkai District with a population of 100,000 is presently without the services of any medical practitioner. In Mbumba itself there are some 22,000 persons so deprived.

Post of Teacher of Bible Knowledge at John Tallach Secondary School

A need continues for a teacher qualified at least to university level in some other subject to take up these important duties at Ingwenya.

Post of Nurse/Midwife at Mbumba Mission Hospital

Owing to staff coming on furlough a vacancy has arisen for a nurse/midwife at our mission Hospital in Zimbabwe. Enquiries for above posts to the Clerk of the Foreign Missions' Committee, Rev. A. Murray, F.P. Manse, Lairg, Sutherland, IV27 4EH (Tel. 0549 2176).

Acknowledgment of Donations

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

Home Mission Fund: J.M., East Tarbert, £50.

Foreign Mission Fund: Raasay Congregation £40 towards hunger relief in Zimbabwe.

Dominions & Overseas Fund: Mrs Campbell, Sun City, U.S.A., £100 in memory of her mother, Mrs R.S. MacKenzie.

Wellington Church Building Fund: Anon., £50; North Tolsta postmark £20; Anon., I.P.M., £75; Friend, Stornoway £15 in spiritual memory of late Rev. D.M. MacLeod.

Sydney Church Building Fund: Anon., £150; Anon., I.P.M., £75.

The Publications Treasurer wishes to acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:—

Welfare of Youth Fund: Ness — £5; M.M. Gairloch — £5.

Free Distribution Fund: 'Hold Fast' — £3; M.M. Gairloch — £5; 'Watch' — £3.

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

Dingwall: S.C., Invergordon, £25, for Church Funds.

Edinburgh: Anon., Raasay Friend, £10 for Congr. Funds, per Mr. M. Nicolson.

Fort William: Friend, Caol, £10, per Rev. J.A. MacDonald; A. McG., £5, per M.I.M. both for Sust. Fund.

Glasgow: Anon., £5, for Cong. Fund; "In ever loving memory of Hamish B. Grant — mother," £100, per Rev. D.M.; Anon., £10; Anon., £3; Anon., £20; Matt. 6: 3, £10; last five for Bus Fund. Anon., £5; Anon., £5; last two for Sust. Fund. Miss MacIver, £20; Anon., £1; last two for Aged and Infirm Ministers etc. Fund. St Judes Sabbath School, £401, for Jewish and Foreign Mission Fund.

Ness: Friend Raasay, £5, per M.F.; Friend, £5.50; Friend, £10; last two per A.M.L.; Mr and Mrs A. Morrison, Glasgow, £20; Mr and Mrs A.M. Murray Skigersta, £10; Envelope in plate, £5; Friend, Stornoway per K.M., £10; All for Congregational purposes. Friends, £20, per A. ML.; Friend £5, per Rev. W.M.; Friend, £5, per Rev. W.M.; last three for Communion Expenses.

Portree: Anon., £20 (Envelope in plate), for Manse Repairs; K.M., £10, per S.Y.M., Anon., £20, (Envelope in plate); last two for Comm. Expenses; C.A.M., £5, per F.M. for Sust. Fund.

Stornoway: Anon., £30, for Sust. Fund.; Anon., £10, for Foreign Mission Fund.; Anon., £10, for Home Mission Fund.; Anon., £20, for petrol; Anon., £5, for Minister's car; All per Treasurer.