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Love to Christ and His Cause

That love to Christ is basic to any profession of religion is indisputable. Without love to Christ any profession of religion is worthless. "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." The curse of God rests on those who do not possess love to Christ. The reason why this is so should be evident to all who have any understanding of the way of salvation through a crucified, risen and exalted Saviour. It is not only the love of the Father in choosing a people for Himself and giving His beloved Son to be their Saviour and Deliverer, nor only the love of the Holy Ghost in applying to sinners the redemption purchased by Christ, that is revealed in the Gospel of God's grace, but also the love of the Son in giving Himself a sacrifice to satisfy divine justice and to reconcile sinners to God. That manifestation of the love of Christ in giving Himself so freely and so willingly on Calvary's Tree to bear the sins of many demands an appropriate response of love to Him by all who are partakers of His love. This can be nothing less than the love of their whole heart to Him, who loved them and gave Himself for them. It is the inflowing of divine love into their soul that begets this response, as the Scripture reveals: "We love Him because He first loved us."

The love of Christ to His people is an unfathomable deep, a wonder too amazing for them to fully grasp. The desire of the apostle for the Ephesian believers was that they might "be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." That Christ humbled Himself in taking our nature into union with His divine Person was an act of infinite condescension and love on His part. And if this was so, how much

greater a manifestation of love there was on His part to be willing to suffer and to die, to give Himself a ransom for many in His sufferings unto death on Calvary's accursed Tree. The redeemed on Mount Zion above have their hearts ravished with that love, and so it will be for all the redeemed host throughout the endless ages of eternity. Certain it is that His love for them will never grow cold, a love that was tested in the greatest furnace of affliction ever kindled, else their hope of eternal blessedness would fail. And as it is certain that Christ's love to them will never fail so is it certain that their love to Him will never abate. The reason for the latter flows from the former, for as long as His love flows out to them it cannot but produce in them a proper response. It is impossible to be loved with a divine love and have the experience of it in one's soul and yet give no return of love. The soul cannot but go out to God in love through the Lord Jesus Christ and by His Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit that implants that love in the heart, as He implants all the other graces in the soul. God in Christ is the object of the soul's desire and longing. Christ is all and in all to His believing people. Their hope is set on Him and the love of their heart goes out to him.

But what now of love to His Cause or His people in the world? Does love to the people of God in the world or love to His Cause and interests in this world militate against love to Christ? Is the one the antithesis of the other? Can we love Christ's Cause and His people in the world more than Himself? No doubt we can have a hypocritical love to Christ's Cause and people in the world which exceeds our love to Christ, but such a love indicates no true love to Jesus Christ. There is no contradiction between true love to Christ and true love to His Cause and people in the world. Indeed the one will be commensurate with the other. If a person has little love to Christ's people and Christ's Cause it stems from little love to Christ. It is in the measure that we love Christ that we will have love to His people and Cause in the world. It is true that the Pharisees **pretended** great love to God and His Cause in the world but they showed it was false by their enmity to God's Beloved Son and their refusal to accept Him as their Messiah. Had they truly loved God they would gladly have embraced Him whom the Father had sent. They would have loved those who were followers of Christ instead of despising them and persecuting them to the death. They would have prized Christ's Cause instead of seeking to destroy His kingdom. They were actuated by false zeal which did not stem from true love to God. While recognising, on the one hand, the danger of such false zeal for Christ's kingdom, we are to recognise the danger, on the other hand, of pretending love to Christ

while we have no love to His Cause or people in the world. Such love to Christ will be shown to be a sham at last.

We are commanded then to love Christ and to love His Cause in the world. If our love to His Cause weakens we may well attribute it to the fact that our love to Christ is growing cold. This is especially true in a dark day, when the Cause of Christ is under savage attack by the world, the flesh and the devil, and when iniquity abounds on every hand. It is then that the love of many waxes cold — to Christ and to His Cause in the world. On the other hand if we are more devotedly attached to Christ's Cause the more it is attacked by wicked and faithless men, we may have reason to conclude that it is because of our increased attachment to Christ Himself.

Synod Sermon

by **Rev. D. B. Macleod, Retiring Moderator**

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, where by we must be saved." Acts 4: 12.

Peter, in answering those who called him to account on this occasion, made this solemn declaration concerning Christ and the salvation that is in Him. It is recorded here in the Scriptures of truth, therefore it is the very Word of God. It sets before us that there is but one Gospel, that there is but one Saviour and that there is but one salvation, that is, the salvation which was wrought out by Christ at infinite cost on the accursed tree of Calvary.

We would desire to consider this Scripture in the context, not only of this passage but also in the Scriptures as a whole. We may then consider this portion of God's Word:

1. In its whole context.
2. In the light of certain aspects of truth which are closely bound up with it.
3. As it depicts the uniqueness of that salvation that is in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. (1) When we consider this portion of God's Word in its immediate context, Peter is defending himself against those who brought accusations against him because of the healing of the lame man recorded in the previous chapter. He is addressing the elders and scribes and the Jews so that they might receive his testimony concerning the One whom they had

rejected, for he said: "This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner." Yet it was through the Name of this One by the mighty power of God that the miracle of healing was performed. Such was the power accompanying that Name that the lame man was immediately healed when the Apostle said to him: "In the Name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." "And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he leaping up stood, and walked and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God." Acts 3: 6-8. We have here then Peter's defence of himself and the other Apostles when they were charged as though they were guilty of some sin. But they declared to those who examined them that outside Christ there was no salvation.

(2) When we consider this portion in the context of the book of Acts, it follows very quickly upon the day of Pentecost and the confirmation that that day of Pentecost, with the outpouring of the Spirit of God, gave to the reality of Christ's resurrection and His ascension to the right hand of power. It was in a day of God's power that this was spoken by the Apostle Peter, at a time when the Word of God was having a living effect upon multitudes, so leaving the Jews without excuse. They had rejected the Saviour, the Messiah of Israel. They had rejected the chief corner stone.

(3) In the context of the whole New Testament this portion of God's Word comes after the completion by the Saviour of His ministry in the world and of the great work of redemption, and flows from that work. It was Christ's commission that sent His disciples with the Gospel throughout the world to bring the nations to the obedience of faith, and it was in that task that the Apostles were here engaged when they were arrested and brought to account by the Jewish Council. As they went forth in that work it was Christ who empowered them for the great work that was committed to their hand — to disciple all nations and bring all nations to the obedience of faith.

(4) When we consider this portion in the context of the whole revelation of God, then it is the very centre and substance of that revelation. That is very clear. Christ crucified is the very centre and substance of the Gospel. This is the one way of salvation, the one Mediator between God and man. This is the golden thread that runs through Scripture or, as some might say, the blood-red thread or the scarlet thread that runs

through the whole warp and woof of Scripture — the sufferings and death of the Lord of life and glory. It is that which gives unity to the whole of the Scripture, binding all together in one harmonious whole in which there is no jarring note. All is of one piece and all is the product of divine wisdom. This is how the Apostle sums it up: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." This then in the context of the whole revelation of God has its place as the very centre and substance of it. The promises were given from the beginning of the One who was to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. These promises were confirmed and renewed and expanded as the Old Testament unfolded. They were fulfilled in the coming in the fulness of time of the divine Redeemer who was to be a light to lighten the Gentiles as well as the glory of His people Israel. Here then is the very centre and substance of the Gospel — Christ and Him crucified. Therefore the Apostle had to say: "Neither is their salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

2. We would go on to consider the truth that is brought before us here in the light of certain aspects of divine truth which are intimately bound up with this text.

(1) The first aspect of divine truth related very intimately to what we have recorded here is the revealed glory of God. Whatever else Scripture contains, it contains a revelation of the divine glory. It contains a revelation of the transcendent excellency and holiness of the God of eternity. All aberrations from the truth of God's Word stem from false views of God. Much that is found in the evangelicalism of our day suffers from this baneful defect — that the glory of God is to a large extent hidden from the eyes of men. Of necessity it results in a watered-down Gospel, one that cannot save the soul in sin that lies.

What then is the revelation given to us in the Scriptures of truth concerning God? He is made known as the living and true God and as the great I AM of eternity, a God of truth and without iniquity. When we come face to face with the revelation of God in the beginning of the Scriptures, it is as the Creator of the ends of the earth who made all things out of nothing. When we consider Him as the One who created all things we come face to face with the One who is the uncreated God of eternity. Who can enter into the wonder of that revelation of this One as the uncreated Jehovah, the Fountain of all life, all life being derived

from Him, but He himself underived? The infinitely glorious Jehovah, the great I AM of eternity? Such is the revelation given to us in the Word of God. He is the One who has His being in and of Himself, the Creator of the ends of the earth that faints not neither is weary. He is the One who says: "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." God is a Spirit, an infinitely pure Spirit. In His being He is infinite, eternal and unchangeable, and the same is true of all His attributes or perfections. He is infinite, eternal and unchangeable in all these, possessing all these attributes to an infinite degree who is the God of eternity. He is a God of consummate glory and excellency, dwelling in light that is unapproachable and full of glory. Such is the revelation of the God of Scripture. He is revealed in the truth as the unspotted Jehovah, One untainted by sin, the sin-hating and the sin-avenging God who will not suffer sin to go unpunished. He is made known as the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity whose name is holy, the One before whom the seraphins of glory veil their faces and say: "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory." He is the One who says: "I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Again He has declared Himself to be: "The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." He is jealous for His own glory and He declares to man: "Thou shalt have no other god before me." The God of Scripture then is an infinitely glorious Being, a God who rules and reigns on high. Therefore when we consider the salvation that is in Jesus Christ, that salvation must be viewed in the light of the glory of this God who is infinitely glorious and is the sin-hating and sin-avenging One.

(2) But we may view this text also in the light of the revealed glory of the Trinity. The Scriptures are all one. They do not contradict each other but all join together most gloriously and wonderfully in connection with that great salvation that is in Christ Jesus. We know that to the Jews it was said: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord." That is an undoubted revelation of God's Word. Yet there is this glorious revelation also concerning the trinity of Persons in that one Godhead. For in the Godhead there are three infinitely glorious Persons subsisting in the one Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The Father is neither begotten nor proceeding, the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost is eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. These are eternal relationships which ever existed and ever shall exist. Each person of the glorious Trinity possesses the fulness of the divine essence so

that each is to be worshipped as God, yet there are not three Gods but one God; one God in essence, yet subsisting in that one essence there are three infinitely glorious Persons. Within the trinity of Persons in the Godhead there exists a communion of love so glorious that none could be a partaker of it but a divine person. This constitutes the enjoyment of God — the infinite satisfaction which He has in Himself and the infinite enjoyment which He has in the communion of love between the Persons of the Trinity. The doctrine of the Trinity is a deep unfathomable mystery, deep as the being of God, yet it is a glorious mystery, and a mystery that is revealed in connection with the scheme of redemption. For in the scheme of redemption we find a part in that scheme belonging to each of the Persons of the Trinity, the Father electing a people to everlasting life, the Son redeeming them from death, and the Holy Spirit applying that redemption to the souls of men in time in their regeneration and sanctification. The glory then of a Triune God is bound up with the salvation that is in Christ Jesus.

(3) Again if we look at the text in the light of man's apostasy from God and man's unspeakable need, we see why it is that "neither is their salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The Scriptures of truth make known what a glorious being man was as he came from the hand of God, not only as having dominion over the creatures, but as made in the image of God and capable of communion with God, one in whom God could take delight. He was a favourite of heaven with whom God entered into a Covenant of life, and man was destined if he kept his first estate to live forever with God — to live in the paradise of God in the eternal enjoyment of God and in fellowship with Him. Man as he came from the hand of God had his way hedged up on every side lest he should depart from God. Man had only a bias in His will to do the will of God but was subject to fall — and fall man did by sinning against God. What a transformation immediately took place! Man who was such a glorious being was now totally fallen, depraved in all the faculties of his soul. There was no good thing left in him now as fallen into sin. Now he was wholly inclined to evil instead of good, his understanding darkened, his mind blinded, his affections alienated from God, and his will corrupt, in bondage to sin and Satan. Man is now a fallen creature in the grip of spiritual death and exposed to death temporal and to death eternal. Man is now faced with the consequences of his sin. Such is the infinite demerit of sin that man if not delivered from it must lie down eternally under the wrath and curse

of God. "The wages of sin is death." "Dying, thou shalt die" was the threatening of that first covenant if it should be broken. That threat took effect in the day that Adam sinned. Therefore if there is to be salvation for man it must be a salvation that will meet the needs of man in his lost and sinful and ruined and fallen state, far off from God.

(4) We may view the text again in the light of God's provision for man's need. There was no obligation upon the God of heaven to provide salvation for man who had sinned. If there was no recovery for fallen man God could not be charged with any fault. Man had forfeited his right to live. If God had cast man down immediately to everlasting darkness, man would have received the just reward of his sins. Therefore the provision that God made was of His free grace, flowing out of the boundless ocean of love that is in the heart of God, and reaching out in the wonder of God's love and mercy to sinners of this fallen race, to a number whom no man can number, even the whole election of grace. God is a sovereign Lord in choosing a people for Himself and in finding that people in the lost and undone and ruined race of Adam in order that He might deliver them from everlasting death. God purposed to redeem a people out of Adam's sinful race. It was in the electing love of the Father that this took place, His electing love going out to sinners of this race and embracing them in that love. That election of grace did not take place in time but in eternity, for it was in the setting up of the everlasting Covenant that the love of the Father went out to a number whom no man can number in order that they should be redeemed, redeemed from sin and redeemed from death. It was in that everlasting Covenant that provision was made for their deliverance. In that Covenant a Mediator was provided in the person of God's Beloved Son. As we have declared to us here: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Only infinite wisdom could find out a way whereby sinners of this lost race of ours could be brought into a reconciled state with God. It was infinite wisdom that found out that way. What a glorious way this is, the way of God's providing. For the eye of the Eternal, in going out in love to embrace the whole election of grace, was upon His beloved Son that He would redeem this people from death. In the everlasting Covenant there is the provision of a Mediator. That Mediator was found in the person of God's Beloved Son. Christ was set up from everlasting to be the Saviour and the Deliverer of His people. One less than divine would not suffice to accomplish so great salvation. One who did not possess a human nature would be disqualified from undertaking such a task.

We have in Christ that great mystery of godliness — God was manifest in the flesh. What a deep mystery the Trinity is! What a deep this is also — the union of two natures in the one infinitely glorious Person of the Son of God. This is the revelation given to us in the truth of God's Word — the union of these two natures in the one glorious Person and that for ever. Surely this constitutes one of the wonders of redemption — that Christ when He took our nature, took that nature forever, that nature which He did not possess before. For the One who was God's eternal Son from everlasting — this One in the fulness of time became what He was not in taking a human nature — a true body and a reasonable soul — into union with His divine Person and that for effecting the great work of redemption, so that it could be said: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," but the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Such is the revelation that is given to us in the Word of God. In this glorious revelation we have the constitution of this glorious Person in two natures. One has said concerning it that the dust of earth is now on the throne of heaven. And this is for ever. That is wonderful beyond what we can grasp — the human nature united to the Person of Christ for ever. How glorious it is that that glorious One should come into this world to lay hold of our nature and that in the womb of the Virgin Mary. That is what Christ did when He came into this world. He took possession of our nature. It is true that it was a nature cleansed from all sin, yet He was truly man. He became the God-man Redeemer. What infinite condescension on His part that He should take our nature! When we consider for what end he took our nature, how wonderful it is beyond what we can grasp — that He took it in order that He might suffer and die, the Just in the room of the unjust. That was the end He had in view. As the Son of God He could not suffer, but in our nature He was to suffer. It was in order that He should go to judgment and death, even the accursed death of the Cross, and die that death in the place of rebels, in the place of those who were enemies to Him. He was to die their death for them that they might never die but that they might live and declare His praises. What a manifestation of divine love! As there is the revelation in the Gospel of the love of the Father in electing a people from out of this race of ours, what a manifestation of redeeming love there is in the Lord Jesus Christ in the great work of redemption which He accomplished. All these aspects of truth then are bound up with the revelation given in our text.

3. Let us then look at this Scripture as it brings before us the

uniqueness of the salvation that is in Christ in its declaring that there is no other Saviour and no other salvation than that which is in Christ Jesus. Go where you will throughout the universe of God, you will not find another salvation. Christ is the divinely-appointed and the divinely-anointed Saviour of Israel. Of Him the Father says: "Mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." He speaks of Him also as "the Man who is My Fellow." Such is the One who is the Saviour of Israel, the One provided for the deliverance of sinners from their sins, the One concerning whom the Father could say: "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

What then was required of this One in connection with that great salvation? In undertaking and fulfilling that work, the One whom God provided must satisfy the divine law and justice. This was laid upon Him. Justice must be satisfied and the law magnified. There could be no removal of sin without infinite satisfaction being given to the divine law and justice. There is not such a thing as sin being swept away without a ransom being paid that will be received in heaven and accepted as a ransom that meets all the needs of the case.

Again in connection with that salvation, we have been speaking of the glory of God, all of whose attributes are infinite, eternal and unchangeable. In that salvation wrought out by Christ every one of the attributes of God must be honoured and glorified. Without that there could be no salvation. The salvation that is in Christ Jesus is not a salvation in which any of the attributes of Jehovah are sullied. All the attributes of Jehovah are honoured in that salvation wrought out by Him. What other salvation will meet such claims as these — that all the attributes of God be honoured in the salvation that is wrought out? There is none. Only in the great work of redemption do we find that "truth met with mercy, righteousness and peace kissed mutually." In that salvation wrought out by Him, far from any blot being left on any of the perfections of God, all the perfections of God were honoured, and not only honoured but displayed. That is what will constitute the glory of heaven — the unveiling of the revelation of the attributes of Jehovah in the great work of redemption. That is what the redeemed are swallowed up in now, and what you will be swallowed up in yet, if so be that you belong to this blessed people who are redeemed from death.

How unique then is this salvation, the fragrance of which perfumes heaven and ever shall. Heaven would cease to be heaven for the people of God if the perfume of the sacrifice of Christ ceased to pervade the atmosphere of heaven. Such is the glorious sacrifice which He wrought out. Is it any wonder then that infallible truth records: "Neither is there

salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"? It is this glorious sacrifice and the One who wrought out that salvation that are to be the joy and the rejoicing of the hearts of the children of God throughout the endless ages of eternity. He is the Lamb that is in the midst on the Throne who shall feed His people, "and shall lead them unto living fountains of water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." How impossible it must be then if this salvation is rejected to obtain any other salvation. Such is this salvation that none other can compare with it. There is but one salvation, and "how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation," which is set before us in the truth of God's Word? There is but one way of salvation. It is that salvation that the servants of Christ are to proclaim to sinners. They are to bring before sinners the glory of the Person of Christ and the infinite virtue and merit of His atoning death. The Church of God has no other message to declare. If like the Jews in their day, we turn away from the head cornerstone — the One in whom the Church of God is built and in whom Jew and Gentile are united — and reject that Saviour, then there is no other Saviour. This constitutes also the exclusiveness of Christianity and the uniqueness of this salvation. All we need for time and eternity is to be found in the divine Redeemer in the salvation that He wrought out. All we need is to be found in Christ crucified. There sinners may obtain life and salvation and eternal blessedness. Seeing then that this salvation is utterly and totally unique, it necessarily follows that all other religions are false. They are not true. Christianity is the only true religion. It is not one of the many options which men may choose. We live in our day in a multi-religious society when men say that they may choose whichever religion they please, or they say that they will choose the best elements out of all religions. That is not what the Word of God teaches. It is emphatic in its exclusiveness, its singularity and uniqueness with regard to the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. The word of God makes it very plain that there is but one salvation, even the salvation wrought out by Christ. It has its centre and substance in the Person and work of God's beloved Son. That salvation must be applied to our souls with divine power, the power of the Holy Ghost. In no other way can this Word be blessed to us but by divine power. It is a divine revelation and it is a revelation of redemption by the infinitely glorious One and it is a revelation that is applied by God the Holy Ghost in a day of God's power. That is what poor sinners need in such a day as this. God's glory is revealed in it.

It is for this revelation, this glorious revelation, that our own Church

has contended throughout its history in order that this revelation may be displayed before men in all its fulness. That is the very purpose of our existence as a separate branch of the Church of God in our land — that the fulness of this revelation may be made known. It is so that men would not receive a watered-down gospel — a gospel that does not reveal the glory of God, the glory of the Eternal — but a Gospel that makes known that glory in the great work that Christ wrought out which satisfied divine justice and reconciled sinners to God. Any gospel less than that will not save the soul. How solemn it is then when the glory of God in salvation is hidden! Men then never come face to face with the glory of God as the infinitely holy Jehovah, and as the sin-hating and sin-avenging One. What can salvation mean to you if you have not met with this revelation of God's glory and the revelation of sin in the light of the glory of the God of heaven? This is the Gospel that the Fathers of our Church stood for. It was the attempt to mar that revelation in many ways that caused them to come forth in order to hand on to the generations following this glorious Gospel in which God's glory is made great. Woe to us if we mar that revelation! Woe to us if we put a spot on the glory of this God whose glory is revealed in it! Woe to us if we water down the Gospel of God's grace! Such a gospel will not meet the needs of lost sinners. It may meet the needs of those who have never come to know themselves as lost but it will never meet the needs of lost sinners. It is the salvation that is in Christ that is to be proclaimed from all the pulpits of our land! — the glorious Gospel of the blessed God that saves the soul from death, even eternal death, and saves unto eternal life. What a revelation there is given to us in the Word of truth! What a revelation there is given to us in the Word of truth! What a revelation of God's love and mercy and of God's glory. We are then called upon as a people to hold it fast. Our Church was set up to maintain the purity of the Gospel of Christ and of all that pertains to the Church of God, whether in doctrine, worship or practice. We are called to hold fast to these things and to pass them on to the generation following so that when we are lying in the dust this glorious Gospel will be still sounding forth — the revelation of the glory of God in His beloved Son — a salvation suited to meet the needs of the undone and of the lost and of the hell-deserving, but which will lift the poor out of the dust and the needy out of the dunghill to set them among the princes of God's people. Finally, we are told to hold fast to this Gospel for the reason brought before us here in our text: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Man's Original Happiness

by Thomas Boston

I shall lay before you some of those things which did accompany or flow from the righteousness of man's primitive state. Happiness is the result of holiness: and as it was a holy, so it was a happy state.

First, Man was then a very glorious creature. We have reason to suppose, that as Moses' face shone when he came down from the mount; so man had a very lightsome and pleasant countenance, and beautiful body, while as yet there was no darkness of sin in him at all. But seeing God himself is glorious in holiness, Exod. 15: 11, surely that spiritual comeliness the Lord put upon man at his creation, made him a very glorious creature. O how did light shine in his holy conversation, to the glory of the Creator! while every action was but the darting forth of a ray and beam of that glorious, unmixed light which God had set up in his soul; while that lamp of love, lighted from heaven, continued burning in his heart, as in the holy place; and the law of the Lord put in his inward parts by the finger of God, was kept by him there, as in the most holy. There was no impurity to be seen without; no squint-look in the eyes, after any unclean thing; the tongue spoke nothing but the language of Heaven; and in a word, "The King's son was all glorious within, and his clothing of wrought gold."

Secondly, He was the favourite of Heaven: He shone brightly in the image of God, who cannot but love his own image, wherever it appears. While he was alone in the world he was not alone, for God was with him; his communion and fellowship was with his Creator, and that immediately; for as yet there was nothing to turn away the face of God from the work of his own hands; seeing sin had not as yet entered, which alone could make the breach.

By the favour of God, he was advanced to be confederate with Heaven, in the first covenant, called the covenant of works. God reduced the law, which he gave in his creation, into the form of a covenant, whereof perfect obedience was the condition; life was the thing promised, and death the penalty. As for the condition, one great branch of the natural law was, that man should believe whatsoever God should reveal, and do whatsoever he should command; accordingly, God making this covenant with man, extended his duty to the not eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and the law thus extended, was the rule of man's covenant-obedience. How easy were these terms to him, who had the natural law written on his heart; and that inclining him to obey

this positive law, revealed to him, it seems, by an audible voice, Gen. 2: 16 the matter whereof was so very easy. And indeed it was highly reasonable that the rule and matter of his covenant-obedience should be thus extended; that which was added, being a thing in itself indifferent, where his obedience was to turn upon the precise point of the will of God, the plainest evidence of true obedience, and it being in an external thing, wherein his obedience or disobedience would be most clear and conspicuous.

Now, upon this condition, God promised him life; the continuance of natural life in the union of soul and body; and of spiritual life in the favour of his Creator; he promised him also eternal life in heaven, to have been entered into when he should have passed the time of his trial upon earth, and the Lord should see meet to transport him into the upper paradise. This promise of life was included in the threatening of death mentioned, Gen. 2: 17. For while God says, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die:" it is in effect, "If thou dost not eat of it, thou shalt surely live:" And this was sacramentally confirmed by another tree in the garden, called therefore the tree of life which he was debarred from, when he had sinned, Gen. 3: 22,23. "— Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life and eat and live for ever. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden." Yet it is not to be thought, that man's life and death did hang only on this matter of the forbidden fruit, but on the whole law; for so says the apostle, Gal. 3: 10. "It is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." That of the forbidden fruit was a revealed part of Adam's religion; and so behoved expressly to be laid before him: but as to the natural law, he naturally knew death to be the reward of disobedience; for the very heathens were not ignorant of this: "Knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death," Rom. 1: 32. And, moreover, the promise included in the threatening, secured Adam's life according to the covenant, as long as he obeyed the natural law, with the addition of that positive command; so that he needed nothing to be expressed to him in the covenant, but what concerned the eating of the forbidden fruit. That eternal life in heaven was promised in this covenant, is plain from this that the threatening was of eternal death in hell; to which when man had made himself liable, Christ was promised, by his death to purchase eternal life: and Christ himself expounds the promise of the covenant of works of eternal life, while he promises the condition of that covenant to a proud young man, who, though he had not Adam's stock, yet would

needs enter into life in the way of working, as Adam was to have done under this covenant, Matt. 19: 17. "If thou wilt enter into life (viz. eternal life by doing, ver. 16,) keep the commandments."

The penalty was death, Gen. 2: 27. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The death threatened was such as the life promised was; and that most justly, to wit, temporal, spiritual, and eternal death. The event is a commentary on this: for the very day he did eat thereof, he was a dead man in law; but the execution was stopped, because of his posterity then in his loins; and another covenant was prepared; however, that day his body got its death-wound, and became mortal. Death also seized his soul: he lost his original righteousness and the favour of God; witness the pangs and throes of conscience, which made him hide himself from God. And he became liable to eternal death, which would have actually followed of course, if a mediator had not been provided, who found him bound with cords of death, as a malefactor ready to be led to execution. Thus you have a short description of the covenant, into which the Lord brought man, in the estate of innocence.

And seemeth it a small thing unto you, that earth was thus confederate with heaven? This could have been done to none but him whom the King of heaven delighted to honour. It was an act of grace worthy of the gracious God whose favourite he was; for there was grace and free favour in the first covenant, though "the exceeding riches of grace," (as the apostle calls it, Eph. 2: 7.) was reserved for the second. It was certainly an act of grace, favour, an admirable condescension in God, to enter into a covenant, and such a covenant with his own creature. Man was not at his own, but God's disposal: nor had he any thing to work with, but what he had received from God. There was no proportion betwixt the work and the promised reward. Before that covenant, man was bound to perfect obedience, in virtue of his natural dependence on God: and death was naturally the wages of sin; which the justice of God could and would have required, though there had never been any covenant betwixt God and man. But God was free; man could never have required eternal life as the reward of his work, if there had not been such a covenant. God was free to have disposed of his creature as he saw meet: and if he had stood in his integrity as long as the world should stand and there had been no covenant promising eternal life to him upon his obedience, God might have withdrawn his supporting hand at last, and so made him creep back into the womb of nothing, whence almighty power had drawn him out. And what wrong could there have been in this, while God should have taken back what he freely gave? But now the covenant being made, God becomes debtor to his

own faithfulness: if man will work, he may crave the reward on the ground of the covenant. Well might the angels then, upon his being raised to his dignity, have given him that salutation, "Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee."

Thirdly, God made him lord of the world, prince of the inferior creatures, universal lord and emperor of the whole earth. His Creator gave him dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the air, over all the earth, yea, and every living thing that liveth upon the earth: "He put all things under his feet," Ps. 8: 6,7,8. He gave him a power soberly to use and dispose of the creatures in the earth, sea and air. Thus man was God's deputed governor in the lower world; and this his dominion was an image of God's sovereignty. This was common to the man and woman; but the man had one thing peculiar to him, to wit, that he had dominion over the woman also, 1 Cor. 11: 7. Behold how the creatures came to him to own their subjection, and to do him homage as their lord; and quietly stood before him, till he put names on them as his own, Gen. 2: 19. Man's face struck an awe upon them; the stoutest creatures stood astonished, tamely and quietly adoring him as their lord and ruler. Thus was man "crowned with glory and honour," Ps. 8: 5. The Lord dealt most liberally and bountifully with him, "put all things under his feet;" only he kept one thing, one tree in the garden, out of his hands, even the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

But you may say, And did he grudge him this? I answer, nay; but when he had made him thus holy and happy, he graciously gave him this restriction, which was in its own nature, a prop and stay to keep him from falling. And this I say upon these three grounds: 1. As it was most proper for the honour of God, who had made man lord of the lower world, to assert his sovereign domain over all, by some particular visible sign; so it was most proper for man's safety. Man, being set down in a beautiful paradise, it was an act of infinite wisdom, and of grace too, to keep from him one single tree, as a visible testimony that he must hold all of his Creator, as his great Landlord; that so while he saw himself lord of the creature, he might not forget that he was still God's subject. 2. This was a memorial of his mutable state, given to him from Heaven, to be laid up by him for his great caution: for man was created with a free will to do good, which the tree of life was an evidence of; but his will was also free to evil, and the forbidden tree was to him a memorial thereof. It was in a manner, a continual watchword to him against evil, a beacon set up before him, to bid him beware of dashing himself to pieces on the rock of sin. 3. God made man upright, directed towards God as the chief end. He

set him like Moses, on the top of the hill, holding up his hands to heaven; and as Aaron and Hur stayed up Moses' hands, Exod. 17: 10, 11, 12, so God gave man an erect figure of body, and forbid him the eating of this tree, to keep him in that posture of uprightness wherein he was created. God made the beasts looking down towards the earth, to show that their satisfaction might be brought from thence; accordingly it does afford them what is commensurable to their appetite; but the erect figure of man's body, which looketh upward, showed him that his happiness lay above him in God, and that he was to expect it from heaven, and not from earth. Now, this fair tree, of which he was forbidden to eat, taught him the same lesson; that his happiness lay not in the enjoyment of the creatures, for there was a want even in Paradise; so that the forbidden tree was in effect the hand of all creatures, pointing man away from themselves to God for happiness: it was a sign of emptiness hung before the door of the creation, with this inscription: This is not your rest.

Fourthly, As he had a perfect tranquillity within his own breast, so he had a perfect calm without; his heart had nothing to reproach him with; conscience then had nothing to do, but to direct, approve, and feast him; and without, there was nothing to annoy him; the happy pair lived in perfect amity; and though their knowledge was vast, true and clear, they knew no shame; though they were naked, there were no blushes in their faces; for sin, the seed of shame, was not yet sown, Gen. 2: 25, and their beautiful bodes were not capable of injuries from the air; so they had no need of clothes, which are originally the badges of our shame; they were liable to no diseases, nor pains; and though they were not to live idle, yet toil, weariness, and sweat of the brows, were not known in this state.

Fifthly, Man had a life of pure delight, and unmixed pleasure in this state; rivers of pure pleasure ran through it; the earth with the product thereof, was now in its glory; nothing had yet come in to mar the beauty of the creatures. God set him down, not in a common place of the earth, but in Eden, a place eminent for pleasantness, as the name of it imports; nay, not only in Eden, but in the Garden of Eden; the most pleasant spot of that pleasant place: a garden planted by God himself, to be the mansion-house of this his favourite. As, when God made the other living creatures, he said, "Let the water bring forth the moving creature," Gen. 1: 20. And, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature," ver. 24. But when man was to be made, he said, "Let us make man," ver. 26. So, when the rest of the earth was to be furnished with herbs and trees, God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, and the fruit-tree," &c. Gen. 1: 11. But of Paradise it is said, God planted it, chap. 2: 8, which cannot

but denote a singular excellency in that garden, beyond all other parts of the then beautiful earth. There he wanted neither for necessity nor delight; for there was "every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food," ver. 9. He knew not these delights which luxury has invented for the gratifying of lusts; but his delights were such as came out of the hand of God, without passing through sinful hands, which readily leave marks of impurity on what they touch. So his delights were pure, his pleasures refined. And yet I may show you a more excellent way; wisdom had entered into his heart. Surely then knowledge was pleasant unto his soul. What delight do some find in their discoveries of the works of nature, by the scraps of knowledge they have gathered! but how much more exquisite pleasure had Adam, while his piercing eyes read the book of God's works; which God laid before him, to the end he might glorify him in the same; and therefore he had surely fitted him for the work. But above all, his knowledge of God, and that as his God, and the communion he had with him, could not but afford him the most refined and exquisite pleasure in the innermost recesses of his heart. Great is that delight which the saints find in these views of the glory of God, that their souls are sometimes let into, while they are compassed about with many infirmities; but much more may well be allowed to sinless Adam; no doubt he relished these pleasures at another rate.

Lastly, He was immortal. He would never have died, if he had not sinned; it was in case of sin that death was threatened, Gen. 2: 17, which shows it to be the consequence of sin, and not of the sinless human nature: the perfect constitution of his body, which came out of God's hand very good, and the righteousness and holiness of his soul, removed all inward causes of death; nothing being prepared for the grave's devouring mouth but the vile body, Philip. 3: 21, and "those who have sinned," Job 24: 19. And God's special care of his innocent creature, secured him against outward violence. The Apostle's testimony is express, Rom 5: 12. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Behold the door by which death came in! Satan wrought with his lies, till he got it opened, and so death entered; and therefore is he said to have been "a murderer from the beginning." John 8: 44.

Thus have I shown you the holiness and happiness of man in this state. If any shall say, What is all this to us, who never tasted of that holy and happy state? they must know it nearly concerns us, in so far as Adam was the root of all mankind, our common head and representative; who received from God our inheritance and stock to keep it for himself and his children, and to convey it to them: the Lord put all mankind's stock

(as it were) in one ship: and, as we ourselves should have done, he made our common father the pilot. He put a blessing in the root, to have been, if rightly managed, diffused into all the branches. According to our text, making Adam upright, he made man upright; and all mankind had that uprightness in him; for, "if the root be holy, so are the branches." But more of this afterwards; had Adam stood, none would have quarrelled with the representations.

A Story of Grace in Times of Persecution:

Or, the Murderer and the Martyr

In the year of our Lord 1552, the subterranean dungeons of the city of Lyons were tenanted by two prisoners of strongly opposite character. In one of these dark, damp, and dismal vaults, bound hand and foot, and tormented not only by the vermin which infested this noisome abode, but by the fierce cravings of hunger, which the scanty prison allowance of bread and water seemed rather to stimulate than to satisfy, lay Jean Pierre Chambon, who having, three years before, committed robbery and murder, had at length fallen into the hands of justice.

Shut out from the light of day and the sight of his fellow-men, save when once in twenty-four hours, the jailer entered with the sparingly doled out portion of food, from which a dog might have turned away with loathing, this ruthless robber had for two weary months been fain to vent his impotent rage by impatient tossings on his mouldy straw, making the gloomy walls resound with the clanking of chains, mingled with blasphemies against God, and curses on the day of his birth, his parents, and all mankind.

But, a few days before the period at which our relation commences, most unwonted tones disputed with the blasphemer the hitherto undivided empire of those cavernous receptacles, and the harmonious sounds of psalms and hymns were borne distinctly to his ear from neighbouring dungeons.

The year 1552 is, alas! marked in the annals of France as one of grievous Protestant persecution, and many pious Huguenots were incarcerated in Lyons, and in other parts of France, for their adherence to their holy faith. From them proceeded the unwonted sounds; which produced no other impression on Chambon than a stirring up of the native enmity of his heart, impelling him to redouble his blasphemies

whenever the accents of prayer or praise fell with distinctness on his ear; for he was rude and boisterous by nature, his heart was hardened by crime, and so entire was his ignorance of the Gospel, that, although familiar with the name of St Francis, he was wholly unacquainted with that of Christ the Saviour of the world. Such was the bodily and spiritual estate of this miserable man, when, in the gracious providence of God, it came to pass, that as all the cells were overfilled with persecuted Gospel confessors, one of them, named Peter Bergier, a native of Geneva, was placed in the same dungeon with Chambon.

Bergier being engaged in commerce, had come to Lyons in the course of business, probably little anticipating any evil results from his journey thither. He was a man of considerable property, was highly esteemed by his fellow-citizens, and specially happy in the possession of a devoted wife and promising children; yet none of these temporal advantages had so absorbed his affections, as to induce him to neglect the higher and holier ends of his being; but, like that merchant of whom the Saviour speaks, he had been a seeker of "goodly pearls", and having recognised in the Gospel the "one pearl of great price", he felt ready to part with all, even life itself, rather than forego possession of it. In being subjected to bonds and imprisonment for the truth's sake, Bergier knew he did but share the lot of all Christ's disciples, from apostolic times down to his own; yet was he not a little startled when he learned with whom he was to be imprisoned, and still more was he appalled when he heard the curses and blasphemies which flowed unceasingly from "the evil treasure" of the wretched Chambon's heart. But the thought that for this soul also the Saviour may have died, changed his horror into compassion, his disgust into an earnest longing to contribute to the rescue of the lost one.

Bergier began by beseeching, with all gentleness and kindness his rude companion to desist from cursing and blaspheming; representing to him that these could not possibly help, but would most assuredly injure him, by "heaping up wrath against the day of wrath" on his devoted head; and he further entreated the unhappy man to join with him in prayer. Chambon replied that it was very true that his curses did not bring him any aid, but that Bergier's prayer would bring himself as little. Finding, therefore the futility of his attempts to induce his wretched associate to pray for himself, Bergier was only the more fervid in intercessions for him, and at the same time evinced his sympathy and good-will towards him by performing (for he was unfettered) many little services for the manacled prisoner, and even by sharing with him the better food with which private friends in the city strove to lighten the privations of the

martyr's imprisonment. The result was, that Chambon ceased to disturb, at least, the good man's prayers, by the accustomed rude and blasphemous interruptions, and began by degrees to listen with patience, if not with interest, to what Bergier communicated to him from the Word of God. With true Gospel wisdom, Bergier dwelt on the love of Christ in "emptying Himself" of his Glory for our sakes; in becoming a man, yea, a man of sorrows; and in at length submitting to the bitterest sufferings and death, even the death of the cross, in order that none who believe in Him should perish, but that all, all without exception, who turned their believing eyes on Him, might be saved by free grace, and receive the gift of eternal life.

And lo! what bolts and bars, dungeon darkness, dungeon fare, manacled limbs, and hunger-wasted frame could not effect, was effected by the preaching of the Gospel. As "a fire" the words of free favour enkindled repentance in the heart of this sin burdened man, and as "a hammer" did they break in pieces his stony heart. Sighs after pardon and forgiveness burst from his labouring bosom, and his sins rose up before his mental vision in all their condemning enormity. Like Cain, he had committed murder, and like him too, he was tempted to despair. But Bergier pointed out to him the mercy of God, who "willeth not the death of the sinner, but that he should turn to Him and live". "What I even a murderer?" asked Chambon, with averted face. "Yes!" replied Bergier, "for thus speaks the Lord by His prophet to those whose hands were full of blood, 'Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do well; and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool'". "But what good can I now do," asked Chambon, "bound and fettered, and appointed to death as I well know myself to be?" "You can believe God's declaration," replied Bergier, "and look to Him for the forgiveness of your sins. It was a criminal like you, one nailed hand and foot to the cross, appointed to death, and disabled from living a life of obedience, that said to Jesus, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom'; and to him the Saviour gave the comforting assurance, 'Today shalt thou be with me in paradise'. Take that for your example and your warrant". "And do you really believe," cried Chambon, on whose mind a ray of hope began faintly to dawn, "that I can be saved?" "Only believe, and thou shalt be saved," said Bergier, with solemn earnestness; and straightway kneeling down, he began to pray aloud that Jesus Christ would take compassion on the repentant sinner, and give him assurance of His grace.

Chambon had fallen on his knees likewise, and with folded hands and trembling voice joined in Bergier's prayer with the petition, "Lord Jesus, dear Saviour, have mercy on me! I am indeed unworthy of Thy notice, and merit nothing but damnation; but Thou hadst mercy on the malefactor on the cross; O! have mercy on me also, even on me!" And now, as it was the first time in his life that he had really prayed, so he learned also now for the first time that prayer can help us. Even while he prayed the ray of hope grew brighter in his heart, and the Holy Spirit, which had, by means of the word, begun the good work in his soul, carried it on by the same instrumentality to the day of redemption.

From that hour Chambon commenced, as he himself afterwards expressed it, a new walk. Openly confessing himself the chief of sinners, bewailing his shameful life and horrid acts, he continued instant in prayer to God for mercy and pardon. At the same time he drank in the Scriptures, which Bergier repeated to him, as the thirsty earth drinks in the rain from heaven, until he at length attained to the firm assurance that he too, all unworthy as he was in himself, had obtained, through the Lord Jesus Christ, "redemption in His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace". The lips of him who was before "a blasphemer, and injurious," now overflowed with thanksgiving and praise for the mercy which had been vouchsafed to him. He bore now every suffering with patience, acknowledging he had deserved much more both from God and man, and professed a humble but devoted love for that God of whom he had once refused to hear.

About the time when this entire change took place in his inward man, it pleased God, who is rich in mercy, to appoint him some alleviation of his outward sufferings by the removal of his fetters, and the being furnished with better food. But far more than over such bodily comforts did the repentant sinner rejoice in the acquisition of a Bible, which some friends had sent to Bergier, and which he gladly permitted his fellow-prisoner to read. A very little light fell into the dungeon through a small air-hole, and before this orifice Chambon would stand hour after hour, poring with extreme difficulty, but unsatiated delight, on the newly obtained treasures of the sacred page.

Bergier, who seems to have met sympathising abettors among the prison officials, found opportunity of communicating to other Gospel confessors, who pined within the same walls, the great mercy which Chambon had experienced from the Lord; and in order to strengthen his faith and comfort his heart, they sent to him some books they had themselves received from pitying friends, accompanied by a letter of

encouragement and exhortation. Chambon obtained, through the kindness of one of the prison attendants, writing materials, and replied to those Christian prisoners in the following terms:— “Time would fail me were I to attempt to rehearse all the mercies and benefits which the Almighty hath bestowed on one whose godless life and daring crimes deserved nothing but judgment at His hands. But thanksgiving and praise be to Him for the merciful chastisement with which He had graciously visited me in this world, that I might not be condemned in the next. For, although my punishment is severe, I yet feel and confess that I have deserved a thousandfold worse. Hence, I no longer regard my pains and torments as heavy to bear, but looking away from them, endure all patiently, only wondering at all the goodness and mercy which God hath displayed towards me. Wherefore I am ready and willing to undergo whatever further trials He may see fit to lay upon me, and will take them all patiently. But I earnestly entreat you to do me one kindness, and that is, to write to me how I may best prepare myself for death, in case I be doomed thereto, and I further beg that you will not forget me in your prayers. The Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, comfort you, and give you patience in your imprisonment!”

Thus it was with Chambon, as with all Christians — “old things passed away and all became new”.

But the Lord showed him yet another distinguished mercy. His brother, though wholly innocent of all participation in Jean Pierre’s blood-shedding, had been accused, arrested, and imprisoned as an accomplice, and, worse than all, had been put to the torture to make him confess himself guilty! Bergier, having opportunity of meeting him occasionally in the cell of another prisoner, availed himself of these opportunities to relate to him his brother’s change of mind, and to urge him to follow his example. And the Lord “opened his heart, so that he received the word with joy,” and Bergier became the honoured instrument of his conversion also. This was the greater joy to Chambon, as he justly felt himself to be the procuring cause of his brother’s misfortunes, and he thus alludes to the circumstance in the already mentioned letter to his Christian fellow-prisoners: — “I must also inform you of the great grace which God hath shown my brother, and thus made him ample amends for the torture to which he was innocently subjected. He came into this prison with blinded eyes as well as I; but by God’s mercy and blessing the instruction of our brother Bergier, he will leave it with the light of the knowledge of the Divine word; so that his benefit is greater than his injury; and if brother Bergier had never done any other good but this, it

would be a wondrous deed, for I esteem it higher than if my brother had gained the whole world!"

Chambon continued to grow in grace, so that at length he was able to meet his fearful punishment with courage and hope. He was condemned to be broken on the wheel, and yet, notwithstanding the well known tortures which accompany this death, he listened to his sentence with composure, and bore its execution with patience. At the place of punishment he confessed, with much contrition, his many sins in the hearing of the assembled multitude, and entreated their forgiveness for the scandal and offence he had occasioned, even, as he trusted, God had forgiven him for Christ's sake, for which grace he praised God with a loud voice, and then quietly laid himself down to endure his fearful doom.

And what became of Bergier? He might easily have not only saved his life, but obtained permission to return to his home and family, had he been willing to purchase these favours by a recantation of his Protestant faith. But he remembered his Saviour's declaration, "Whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it;" and so he manfully "held fast that he had," that "no man should take his crown," continued steadfast in the faith without wavering, and was condemned to be burned to death. On his way to the place of execution, we are told, the peace of God so illumined his countenance, that his friends deemed they had never seen him look so beautiful and engaging: and as he passed along in the condemned car, he greeted such as were known to him by bidding them a friendly "Good night", whilst he at the same time entreated every one whom he might unintentionally have offended to forgive him, as he from the heart forgave all his fellow-creatures. Unmoved by this touching evidence of Christian humility and love, a Romish priest called out to him, "Thou art going straight to hell, thy fitting dwelling-place," to which the martyr replied, "The Lord forgive thee!"

A vast multitude having accompanied him to the scene of his sufferings, Bergier cast on them a compassionate look, exclaiming "Oh, how great is the harvest! Lord, send labourers into thy harvest." (Matt. 9: 38). He then repeated the confession of faith, and cried out at its conclusion, "Oh, Lord, how sweet and lovely is Thy name!" As they were binding him to the stake, Bergier prayed, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit." And when the fire was kindled, and the flames began to wrap him round, he looked upward and said, "I see heaven open!". These were the last words he was heard to utter. Smoke and flame choked his voice, and his soul ascended to Him who hath promised, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life".

What gave Bergier the strength thus to hold out to the end? The same Word and Spirit which changed Chambon, the reckless, ruthless murderer, into the humble, contrite, and patient disciple, and thus united the murderer and the martyr. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." And this Word and Spirit are offered to all — to you, also, Oh reader! Oh, lay then to heart the words of the Lord Jesus, "Blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."

— *From Christian Treasury, 1858*

A Short Reminiscence

By Rev. J. A. MacDonald, Fort William.

Many besides me, no doubt, will often be found reminiscing upon sweet portions of God's Word which they heard from the lips of the man of God, Rev. D. A. MacFarlane, late minister of Dingwall. Indeed, he was a succourer of many, both young and old. Favourite petitions often heard from his lips were: "Create a clean heart, Lord renew a right spirit me within," "Oh, Lord do thou possess us; oh, possess us." "Increase our faith and hope for eternity." It was obvious that he longed for Job's full assurance: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Mr MacFarlane was most helpful, particularly to the weak of the flock, when serving the Lord's Table at Communion times. We believe he had them before his mind and sought to obey the divine command: "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith the Lord."

We have the most precious recollections of his unfeigned steadfastness in the Synod, particularly when the historic Protest of Rev. D. MacFarlane in the Assembly of the Declaratory Act Free Church of 1893 was assailed by those, who had failed to grasp the crucial significance of this important event. Mr MacFarlane often helped to break the clouds, thus causing the blessed sun to shine again, as well as, "turning to flight the armies of the aliens."

When he was appointed Tutor by the supreme court of our Church, he obtained permission from that Court, to take a refresher course in Hebrew at the London University. There he made his mark, as the writer well knows. During this period he also supplied the London Congregation, having three services every Sabbath.

I was once with him one Sabbath in his own pulpit at Dingwall, when he preached from Psalm 45: 2, "Thou fairer art than sons of men." In his own usual masterly way he spoke of His saints and angels, as they eternally continue to view Him, as "fairer than the sons of men," "the

Lamb in the midst of the throne.” However, in the Church’s own eyes she viewed herself as indeed poor and needy, as we find her confessing: “From the soul of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises, and putrifying sores.” While the Lord’s people are in the valley of Baca, he said, their prayer must be: “Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

He further proceeded to illustrate his text in a most unique way, as the following shows. When in London he said, I was sort of fascinated by a notice in a shop window in the Strand area: “A Beauty Parlour!” Afterwards, however, I discovered that to these parlours many of the so-called aristocracy, film stars, and actresses came, from time to time, to be made beautiful; that is, to get rid of many spots, blemishes and wrinkles, etc, before they appeared at the various theatres in that vast city. But you are saying: “There is not one beauty parlour in Dingwall.” Oh my, yes! yes! There has been a beauty parlour in Dingwall since 1893, although it is erected of corrugated iron. But you answer: “There are no ‘stars’ who live so far North as Dingwall.” Oh, yes! yes! there are two beautiful stars at Garve, who frequent this place Sabbath after Sabbath, as well as the mid-week Prayer meeting, rejoicing in this — that “the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Many others of whom we so often think are away to the mountains of spices — “a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” They shall sing for ever and ever: “Thou fairer art than sons of men.” May we be of them in the day when He makes up his jewels.

Book Reviews

The Gospel Pedlar by Nigel R. Pebworth. Evangelical Press, 313pp.

This attractive paperback gives the story of Rev. John Berridge, Vicar of Everton and also of the revival which took place in his congregation in 1759. The book consists of a re-assessment of Berridge and appears to be well documented. His conversion after he had become Vicar of Everton, his refusal to be confined within the bounds of his own Parish, his evangelistic zeal, his relationships with Whitefield and Wesley, and other evangelical leaders of that period, such as Venn, Newton and the Contess of Huntingdon, his change from an Arminian outlook to a firm Calvinistic one, are all detailed in this account of Berridge. The strange manifestations of bodily convulsions during the revival in his congregation are documented, indicating the unsatisfactory nature of some

aspects of that revival. The chapter on Berridge, the hymn writer, seems to bring out unwittingly the criticisms so often levelled against hymn writers by those who believe in inspired psalmody. The book includes in one of the appendices Berridge's last farewell sermon on Psalm 62: 8. The book is a well written and easily read account of Berridge, who was one of the noted preachers of his day, and we are glad to commend it.

D. B. M.

Luke Vols. I and II by J. C. Ryle, Banner of Truth Trust, Vol. I £2.95, Vol. II £3.50.

These two paperback volumes of Ryle's Commentary on the Gospel of Luke follow the pattern of those on Matthew and Mark already reviewed and recommended. We are glad to recommend these two further volumes which came from Bishop Ryle's pen and are now reprinted by the Banner of Truth Trust. Bishop Ryle is one of the clearest writers one can come across, his style of writing being very plain. Not only so, it is also strongly evangelical in tone. The fact that Ryle held firmly to the inspiration, infallibility and inerrancy of Scripture makes his Commentaries on the Gospels very valuable. He aimed at making his comments suitable for the ordinary reader. These volumes on Luke, as with his volumes on the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, are very suitable as portions for daily reading. Apart from hints here and there suggesting a pre-millenarian outlook and some minor blemishes these volumes are worthy of high praise. Ryle applies each portion with which he is dealing to the reader, so that the diligent reader may receive both comfort and also correction from the comments he makes.

D. B. M.

Notes and Comments

Freemasonry

A Church of England Report prepared as a discussion paper for this year's General Assembly is the latest Church Report to come out against Freemason rituals. In 1985 the Methodist Church recommended that Methodists should not join Masonic lodges. The Church of England Report, drawn up after a two-year investigation by an inquiry panel, does not go so far as to recommend Church of England members to give up membership of Masonic Lodges, yet says that it found clear evidence that some Christians found the impact of Masonic rituals disturbing and a few perceived them as positively evil. The most serious theological objection which the inquiry panel found to Freemasonry was the term

Jaobulon, the name of God given to initiates of the fourth or Holy Royal Arch degree and which is composed of the names given to the deity in three different religions. The panel rejects the United Grand Lodge view that Masonic rituals contain no element of worship but think that craft Masonry represents typical 18th Century Deism.

It is good to see this cult of Freemasonry further exposed in this way for the evil that it is, an evil that has blighted many parishes in the Highlands of Scotland over a long period of time. Our own Church took a stand against it long ago by refusing Church privileges to Freemasons or members of other secret societies. It is of course a world wide organisation affecting the lives of many scattered throughout the world and giving many a false hope for eternity on the basis of a religion of good works. It is sad to think that the Duke of Kent occupies high office in Masonry as Grand Master of the United Grand Lodge of England. May the Lord be pleased to open his eyes to see the evil of it, and may others also ensnared by it be delivered in the kindness and mercy of God.

Methodist Conference and Gambling

A proposal is being put to the Methodist Church to relax its former firm stand against gambling. Up till now all forms of gambling were regarded as immoral but it is now proposed that raffles to raise money for charities may be acceptable. This is on the basis that not all forms of gambling have harmful consequences. No change will be made until the Church has opportunity to debate the matter. It is to be hoped that the Methodist Church will maintain its firm opposition to all forms of gambling on the ground of gambling being inherently evil in itself and not only on the ground of the consequences which follow it.

Relaxation of Licensing Laws

Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, indicated that the Government was intending to bring in twelve hour opening of public houses. This would mean that they would be open from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. from Monday to Saturday while the Sabbath drinking laws would remain unchanged. The British Medical Association has warned that relaxation of these laws could increase the incidence of alcoholism. A spokesman for the Churches Council on Alcohol and Drugs said that there is no doubt that the degree of harm in any society is closely related to total consumption by any individual. The Home Secretary maintained that the Government's plans would extend consumer choice and also create up to 50,000 new jobs.

It is sad to think that a Government newly elected to a third term in office would make the relaxation of licensing laws a priority in its legislative programme. The mushrooming of licensed premises has occurred even in small towns and communities. Instead of being given increased scope for what is to a large extent a trade destructive of spiritual moral and social values, they ought to be restricted so that the lives of countless families will not be ruined through the scourge of alcoholism. Why should the Government be a party to the breaking down of the moral fibre of the nation?

Moderator of Church of Scotland and Rome

The Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Rev. Dr. Duncan Shaw, has been appointed a Commander of Merit of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta by the prince and grand master of the Roman Catholic order. This has no doubt been conferred to further the ecumenical movement and draw the Church of Scotland nearer to the Church of Rome. When Rome smiles on any one let that person beware. The honours that Rome bestows usually carry a curse with them. Pity the man, be he a Moderator or any other person whom the Roman Catholic Church delights to honour.

Earl of St. Andrews to marry a Roman Catholic

The engagement has been announced of the Earl of St. Andrews, the elder son of the Duke and Duchess of Kent to Miss Sylvana Tomaselli, a Canadian divorcee. Lord St. Andrews is presently seventeenth in line to the throne but by the Act of Settlement of 1701 he will be automatically excluded from the succession on his marriage.

The influence of the Roman Catholic Church on the Royal Family has been increasing in recent times and these marriages to Romanists bode ill for the Protestant Settlement of the Throne. Such persons, especially if dedicated Romanists can wield considerable influence within the Royal family. We would desire to see the influence of Rome reduced and not increased in the high stations of our land.

Divorce

A speaker at a Conference held by the National Council for Christian Standards in Society maintained that the Divorce Reform Act of 1969 had contributed to an increase in the instability of family life in Britain. He said that in the past 15 years the number of divorces had trebled, with divorce now becoming the legal norm. With the increase of instability in

family life rises have also followed in illegitimacy, abortion, children in care, juvenile crime and drug abuse. He declared that there is widespread misery with 50 per cent of second marriages also breaking down. The speaker, a lawyer specialising in divorce criticised the 1969 Act for changing the grounds of divorce from matrimonial misconduct to irretrievable breakdown of marriage. He maintained that there has to be a moral base upon which the stability of family life and of society depend.

It was all too evident at the time of the passing of the 1969 Divorce Reform Act that such would be the outcome of this particular piece of legislation but Parliament decided to legislate in a way that was perfectly in harmony with humanistic principles rather than on the basis of the law of God. The nation accordingly has suffered untold damage already and is likely to be even further injured in time to come so long as this Act remains on the Statute Book.

Muslims Protest Against Homosexual Lessons

Followers of the false prophet Mohammed had good reason to be angered by plans drawn up by the far left London Borough of Brent to promote positive images of homosexuality in its primary and secondary schools. What a sad reflection on a Christian land that Mohammedans should have cause to protest against a School Council promoting the vile sin of sodomy. How low has Christian Britain come when this is so. What need there is of national repentance lest there be divine retribution.

Church Notes

Presbytery Meetings D.V.

Southern: At Glasgow on 18th August at 6 p.m.

Outer Isles: At Stornoway on 1st September at 12 noon.

Canadian: At Toronto on 10th September at 10 a.m.

Skye: At Portree on 15th September at 11 a.m.

Deposition of Chesley Minister

At a *pro re nata* Meeting of the Canadian Presbytery on 31st March 1987 the Rev. D. M. Campbell (Chesley) was deposed from the office of the ministry for adultery. The Chesley congregation was declared vacant from that date.

Rev. Malcolm MacInnes, Clerk of Presbytery

Overseas Deputies

Rev. Dr. James Tallach returned home safely on 26th June after four months overseas as Church Deputy to Canada, Australia and New Zealand. It is a matter for thankfulness to the Lord that Dr. Tallach was preserved from all harm during his journeys right round the world. We pray that his labours in the different countries may be blessed to many souls.

Subject to medical approval, it is expected that Rev. Fraser Tallach will leave this country at the end of August (D.V.) as the Church's Deputy to Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Mr Tallach has agreed to go for a period of four months. In the event of him being able to undertake this journey it is our hope and prayer that he may be sustained in health during his time overseas and that his labours may be owned of the Lord to the good of never-dying souls.

Assessor to Canadian Presbytery

Rev. Alex Murray who was appointed an assessor to the Canadian Presbytery expects to visit Ontario from 8th September to 10th November (D.V.) in order to attend the next meeting of the Canadian Presbytery and also to supply Chesley Congregation for some weeks. He expects to be accompanied by his wife and grandchild. We trust that they will be preserved in their journeys and that Mr Murray's labours may be blessed.

Student Received

At a meeting of the Western Presbytery on Tuesday 23rd June, Mr John Goldby M.A. was received as a student studying for the ministry of the Free Presbyterian Church.

Rev. Neil Ross, Clerk of Presbytery

Retiral of Rev. A. F. MacKay, Inverness

At a meeting of the Northern Presbytery on Tuesday 23rd June, Rev. A. F. MacKay, Inverness tendered his resignation from the charge of the Inverness Congregation. This was accepted with regret by the Presbytery with effect from 31st July. Members of Presbytery expressed their appreciation of Mr MacKay's 40 years as Pastor of Inverness Congregation and long years of service to the Church. The Presbytery also wished Rev. and Mrs MacKay every blessing in their retirement.

Rev. Alex Murray, Clerk of Presbytery

Staff Vacancies at Ballifeary Home of Rest

Applications are invited for the post of Matron and Senior Care Assistant at the Ballifeary Home of Rest, Inverness. These posts will fall vacant in August. Immediate enquiries would be welcome and should be directed to: The Clerk of the Home of Rest Committee, Rev. Dr. James R. Tallach, Free Presbyterian Manse, Raasay, Kyle, IV40 8PB.

Acknowledgement of Donations

The General Treasurer, Mr Wm. D. Fraser, Room 7, Seafield House, Seafield Road, Inverness IV1 1SJ, acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:-

Foreign Mission Fund: Friend, Lutterworth, £156; Mrs Barbara Beatty, Dawson Creek, B.C., "In memory of beloved mother, Elizabeth F. Fleming", £300; Beaully Congregation, £361 for African Relief Collection.

Church Bookroom: Mr A. B. MacLean, Church Bookroom, Glasgow acknowledges with sincere thanks the following donation: Anon. £17.30.

The Treasurers of the following Congregations acknowledge with sincere thanks the following donations:-

Applecross: Mr W. B., Lonbain £2000 for Cuaig Mission Hall Loan Repayment; From the Estate of the late Mrs Gillanders, Arrina £1000 for Congregational Purposes; A Harris Friend at Communion £10 for Communion Expenses, last two per Murdo Gillanders.

Barnoldswick: Mr M. McC. £20; Anon., South Humberside £5; Ps. 61: 5 £10; Anon., Haworth £20; Anon., £50 for Church Manse Fund.

Bracadale: Friend £15 for Communion Expenses per Rev. D. N.; Anon., £10 for Communion Expenses (envelope in plate).

Breasclete: Anon., £60 for Sust. Fund and £50 for Home Mission Fund.

Dingwall: S. C. Invergordon £10; J. G., Dalmore £10, both for Church Funds; Harris Friend £10 where most needed.

Dumbarton: Anon., Glasgow £20; Anon., Glasgow £10; Anon., Glasgow £10, all for Congregational Fund.

Dundee: Inverness Friend £50 per Rev. D. C. M.

Fort William: Envelope in plate, £12 for Church Floor Repairs; Anon., £25, in loving memory of a beloved husband and father; Friend, Caol, £10; A. N. £10; Mrs B., £10; Friend, Caol, £10; Mrs R., £10; Mrs S., £10, all per Rev. J. A. MacDonald, last five for Sust. Fund.

Glendale: Friend of the Cause £20; Anon., £10, both "where most needed" and both per Rev. D. Nicolson.

Greenock: For T. B. S. £61.50; Anon., £40 for T. B. S.; Two Friends, Dumbarton £10, where most needed; Anon., £40 for T. B. S.

London: A Friend £50 for London Congregation per Rev. D. MacLean.

North Uist: M. MacD., Middlequarter £30; M. MacD., Hosta £100; Wellwisher £40; Anon., £50; Mrs D. C., Claddach £20; R. K. M. £50, all Church Repairs; A Friend £50; D. E. MacL. £40, £10 and £15; Miss C. MacD. £15; all "where most needed"; Mrs P. MacD., Trianaid £5 for Door Coll.; D. A. MacD., Cross Roads £80; Anon £230; Mrs H. S., Avonbridge £20, all for Church Repairs; Anon £2; Anon £10 for petrol; Estate of Late Miss Christina MacDonald, Dusary £108.20; Miss MacD., Clarkston £100 for Church Repairs; Anon., £20 for Fabric Fund, last five per Rev. A. M.; M. M. D. £50 for Church Repairs; Envelope in plate £10 for Door Coll., Anon £10 for Pulpit Supply.

Stornoway: Anon., £40 for Barnoldswick Church and Manse Fund; Envelope in plate £10 for Sust. Fund; Miss K. A. MacLeod, The Cottage, Callanish £40 for Petrol per Rev. J. MacLeod.

Strath, Skye: Mr M. MacL. £10 for Comm. Expenses per Rev. H. I. MacKinnon.