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## Satisfy us Early with Thy Mercy

At the beginning of a New Year, we are reminded that we are creatures of time, but the Lord would have us to consider that we are also destined for eternity.

Moses, in Psalm 90, contrasts man's mortality with the everlasting God. The cause of death is traced to sin; we are consumed because of the anger of God against our sins. This displeasure of God against sin continues all our days. So the Psalmist's conclusion is that we should apply our hearts unto wisdom while we have the opportunity, "so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom", verse 9.

His solution is that the way in which we may spend our days in joy and gladness is by being satisfied with the mercy of God, "O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." The mercy of God is a glorious attribute. He is the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. He has manifested His mercy in sending His own Son, the Lord Jesus, to be the Son of consolation for poor sinners. Christ, by His finished work, has procured the authority to forgive sin. This He did by laying a foundation in justice for the forgiveness of sin by His atoning death on Calvary's tree. The mercy of God is revealed through Him.

We are to satisfy our souls with the mercy of God by faith in Christ as Saviour and Lord. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." What havoc is caused by doubt, by unbelief, as it robs the miserable soul of the comforts that Christ extends to it in the Gospel. He cries out to those who are vainly pursuing satisfaction at the world's cisterns, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not

bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." True satisfaction is to be found in Him.

Yet the Psalmist says, "O satisfy us early with thy mercy." The word "early" is literally "in the morning". In the night of sorrow, we may pray this prayer. In the morning of one's life, we would be wise to seek this mercy. "Those that seek me early shall find me." In the morning of a New year it is an appropriate prayer for us. In a Psalm reminiscing on the brevity of life, it may be that the Psalmist had the morning of the Ressurrection before his mind. The passing of the old year and the dawning of the new may engender thoughts of "this mortal putting on immortality". It would be good for us if a sense of our own mortality would spur us to use the prayer that Moses prayed when he was meditating on this subject. The things of time and sense would then be put in perspective and we may be able to join in with David when he said:

"From men, which are thy hand, O Lord, from worldly men me save, which only in this present life their part and portion have.

But as for me, I thine own face in righteousness will see;  
and with thy likeness, when I wake, I satisfied shall be."

## Sermon

by Christmas Evans (1766-1838). This is an abridged version of his famous Graveyard Sermon.

"For if, through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." (Romans 5: 15)

Man was created in the image of God. Knowledge and perfect holiness were impressed upon the very nature and faculties of his soul. He had constant access to his Maker, and enjoyed free communion with Him, on the ground of his spotless moral rectitude. But, alas! the glorious diadem is broken; the crown of righteousness is fallen. Man's purity is gone, and his happiness is forfeited. "There is none righteous; no, not one." "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." But the ruin is not hopeless. What was lost in Adam is restored in Christ. His blood redeems us from the bondage, and His gospel gives us back the forfeited inheritance. "For if, through the offence of one, many be dead; much

more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." Let us consider, first, the corruption and condemnation of man; and secondly, his gracious restoration to the favour of his offended God.

I. To find the cause of man's corruption and condemnation, we must go back to Eden. The eating of the "forbidden tree" was "the offence of one," in consequence of which "many are dead". This was the "sin", the act of "disobedience", which "brought death unto the world, and all our woe". It was the greatest ingratitude to the divine bounty, and the boldest rebellion against the divine sovereignty. The royalty of God was contemned; the riches of His goodness slighted; and His most desperate enemy preferred before Him, as if he were a wiser counsellor than infinite wisdom. Thus man joined in league with hell against heaven; with demons of the bottomless pit against the almighty maker and benefactor robbing God of the obedience due to His command and the glory due to His name; worshipping the creature instead of the creator; and opening the door to pride, unbelief, enmity, and all the wicked and abominable passions. How is the "noble vine", which was planted "wholly a right seed", "turned into the degenerate plant of a strange vine"!

Who can look for pure water from such a fountain? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." All the faculties of the soul are corrupted by sin; the understanding dark; the will perverse; the affections carnal; the conscience full of shame, remorse, confusion, and mortal fear. Man is a hard-hearted and stiff-necked sinner; loving darkness rather than light, because his deeds are evil; eating sin like bread, and drinking iniquity like water; holding fast deceit, and refusing to let it go. His heart is desperately wicked; full of pride, vanity, hypocrisy, covetousness, hatred of truth, and hostility to all that is good.

This depravity is universal. Among the natural children of Adam, there is no exemption from the original taint. "The whole world lieth in wickedness." "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags." The corruption may vary in the degrees of development in different persons; but the elements are in all, and their nature is everywhere the same; the same in the blooming youth, and the withered sire; in the haughty prince, and the humble peasant; in the strongest giant, and the feeblest invalid. The enemy has "come in like a flood". The deluge of sin has swept the world. From the highest to the lowest, there is no health or moral soundness. From the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, there is nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores. The laws, and their violation, and the punishments everywhere

invented for the suppression of vice, prove the universality of the evil. The bloody sacrifices, and various purifications, of the pagans, show the handwriting of remorse upon their consciences; proclaim their sense of guilt, and their dread of punishment. None of them are free from the fear which hath torment, whatever their efforts to overcome it, and however great their boldness in the service of sin and Satan. "Mene! Tekel!" is written on every human heart. "Wanting! wanting!" is inscribed on heathen fanes and altars; on the laws, customs and institutions of every nation; and on the universal consciousness of mankind.

This inward corruption manifests itself in outward actions. "The tree is known by its fruit." As the smoke and sparks of the chimney show that there is fire within; so all the "filthy conversation" of men, and all "the unfruitful works of darkness" in which they delight, evidently indicate the pollution of the source whence they proceed. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The sinner's speech betrayeth him. "Evil speaking" proceeds from malice and envy. "Foolish talking and jesting" are evidence of impure and trifling thoughts. The mouth full of cursing and bitterness, the throat an open sepulchre, the poison of asps under the tongue, the feet swift to shed blood, destruction and misery in their paths, and the way of peace unknown to them, are the clearest and amplest demonstration that men "have gone out of the way", "have together become unprofitable". We see the bitter fruit of the same corruption in robbery, adultery, gluttony, drunkenness, extortion, intolerance, persecution, apostasy, and every evil work — in all false religions; the Jew, obstinately adhering to the carnal ceremonies of an abrogated law; the Mohammedan, honouring an imposter, and receiving a lie for a revelation from God; the papist, worshipping images and relics, praying to departed saints, seeking absolution from sinful men, and trusting in the most absurd mummeries for salvation; the pagan, attributing divinity to the works of his own hands, adorning idols of wood and stone, sacrificing to malignant demons, casting his children into the fire or the flood as an offering to imaginary deities, and changing the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the beast and the worm.

For these things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience." They are under the sentence of the broken law; the condemnation of eternal justice. "By the offence of one, judgment came unto all men unto condemnation." "He that believeth not is condemned already." "The wrath of God abideth on him." "Cursed is every one that

## SERMON

continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do th  
“Woe unto the wicked; it shall be ill with him, for the reward o  
hands shall be given him.” “They that plow iniquity, and  
wickedness, shall reap the same.” “Upon the wicked the Lord shall  
fire, and snares, and a horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of t  
cup.” “God is angry with the wicked every day; if he turn not he v  
whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready.”

Who shall describe the misery of fallen man! His days, though few, a  
full of evil. Trouble and sorrow press him forward to the tomb. All th  
world, except Noah and his family, are drowning in the deluge. A storm  
of fire and brimstone is fallen from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah.  
The earth is opening her mouth to swallow up alive Korah, Dathan, and  
Abiram. Wrath is coming upon “the beloved city”, even “wrath unto  
the uttermost”. The tender and delicate mother is devouring her darlin  
infant. The sword of men is executing the vengeance of God. The earth  
emptying its inhabitants into the bottomless pit. On every hand are “cor  
fused noises, and garments rolled in blood”. Fire and sword fill the land  
with consternation and dismay. Amid the universal devastation wild  
shrieks and despairing groans fill the air. God of mercy! is Thy ear  
heavy, that Thou canst not hear? or Thy arm shortened, that Thou canst  
not save? The heavens above are brass, and the earth beneath is iron; for  
Jehovah is pouring His indignation upon His adversaries, and He will  
not pity or spare.

Verily, “the misery of man is great upon him”! Behold the wretched  
fallen creature! The pestilence pursues him. The leprosy cleaves to him.  
Consumption is wasting him. Inflammation is devouring his vitals. Burn  
ing fever has seized upon the very springs of life. The destroying angel  
has overtaken the sinner in his sins. The hand of God is upon him. The  
fires of wrath are kindling about him, drying up every well of comfort,  
and scorching all his hopes to ashes. Conscience is chastising him with  
scorpions. See how he writhes! Hear how he shrieks for help! Mark what  
agony and terror are in his soul, and on his brow! Death stares him in the  
face, and shakes at him his iron spear. He trembles, he turns pale, as a  
culprit at the bar, as a convict on the scaffold. He is condemned already.  
Conscience has pronounced the sentence. Anguish has taken hold upon  
him. Terrors gather in battle array about him. He looks back, and the  
worms of Sinai pursue him; forward, and hell is moved to meet him;  
above, and the heavens are on fire; beneath, and the  
e: listens and the judgment

penetrates his soul with anguish unspeakable — “Depart! ye accursed! into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!”

Thus, “by one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” They are “dead in trespasses and sins,” spiritually dead, and legally dead; dead by the mortal power of sin, and dead by the condemnatory sentence of the law; and helpless as sheep to the slaughter, they are driven fiercely on by the ministers of wrath to the all-devouring grave and the lake of fire!

But is there no mercy? Is there no means of salvation? Hark! amid all this prelude of wrath and ruin, comes a still small voice, saying: “Much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.”

II. This brings us to our second topic, man’s gracious recovery to the favour of his offended God.

I know not how to present to you this glorious work, better than by the following figure. Suppose a vast graveyard, surrounded by a lofty wall, with only one entrance, which is by a massive iron gate, and that is fast bolted. Within are thousands and millions of human beings, of all ages and classes, by one epidemic disease bending to the grave. The graves yawn to swallow them, and they must all perish. There is no balm to relieve, no physician there. Such is the condition of man as a sinner. All have sinned; and it is written, “The soul that sinneth shall die.” But while the unhappy race lay in that dismal prison, Mercy came and stood at the gate, and wept over the melancholy scene, exclaiming — “Oh, that I might enter! I would bind up their wounds; I would relieve their sorrows; I would save their souls!” An embassy of angels, commissioned from the court of heaven to some other world, paused at the sight, and heaven forgave that pause. Seeing Mercy standing there, they cried: “Mercy! canst thou not enter? Canst thou look upon that scene and not pity? Canst thou pity, and not relieve?” Mercy replied: “I can see!” and in her tears she added, “I can pity, but I can not relieve!” “Why canst thou not enter?” inquired the heavenly host. “Oh!” said Mercy, “Justice has barred the gate against me, and I must not — can not unbar it!” At this moment, Justice appeared, as if to watch the gate. The angels asked, “Why wilt thou not suffer Mercy to enter?” He sternly replied: “The law is broken, and it must be honoured! Die they, or Justice must!” Then appeared a form among the angelic band like unto the Son of God. Addressing Himself to Justice, He said: “What are thy demands?” Justice replied: “My demands are rigid; I must have ignominy for their honour, sickness for their health, death for their life. Without the shed-

ding of blood there is no remission!" "Justice," said the Son of God, accept thy terms! On me be this wrong! Let Mercy enter, and stay t  
carnival of death!" "What pledge dost thou give for the performance  
these conditions?" "My word; my oath!" "When wilt thou perfor  
them?" "Four thousand years hence, on the hill of Calvary, without th  
walls of Jerusalem." The bond was prepared, and signed and sealed i  
the presence of attendant angels. Justice was satisfied, the gate was open  
ed, and Mercy entered, preaching salvation in the name of Jesus. The  
bond was committed to patriarchs and prophets. A long series of rites  
and ceremonies, sacrifices and obligations, was instituted to perpetuate  
the memory of that solemn deed. At the close of the four thousandth  
year, when Daniel's "seventy weeks" were accomplished, Justice and  
Mercy appeared on the hill of Calvary. "Where," said Justice, "is the  
Son of God?" "Behold him," answered Mercy, "at the foot of the hill!"  
And there He came, bearing His own cross, and followed by His weepin  
church. Mercy retired, and stood aloof from the scene. Jesus ascended  
the hill like a lamb for the sacrifice. Justice presented the dreadful bond,  
saying, "This is the day on which this article must be cancelled." The  
Redeemer took it. What did He do with it? Tear it to pieces, and scatter it  
to the winds? No! He nailed it to His cross, crying, "It is finished!" The  
victim ascended the altar. Justice called on Holy Fire to come down and  
consume the sacrifice. Holy Fire replied: "I come! I will consume the  
sacrifice, and then I will burn up the world!" It fell upon the Son of  
God, and rapidly consumed His humanity; but when it touched His dei  
ty, it expired. Then was there darkness over the whole land, and an earth  
quake shook the mountain; but the heavenly host broke forth in rap  
turous song — "Glory to God in the highest! on earth peace! good will to  
man!"

Thus grace has abounded, and the free gift has come upon all, and the  
gospel has gone forth proclaiming redemption to every creature. "By  
grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift  
of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." By grace ye are loved,  
redeemed, and justified. By grace ye are called, converted, reconciled  
and sanctified. Salvation is wholly of grace. The plan, the process, the  
consummation are all of grace.

"Where sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded." "Through  
the offence of one, many were dead." And as men multiplied, the of  
fence abounded. The waters deluged the world, but could not wash away  
the dreadful stain. The fire fell from heaven, but could not burn out  
accursed plague. The earth opened her mouth 1

the monster sin. The law thundered forth its threat from the thick darkness on Sinai, but could not restrain, by all its terrors, the children of disobedience. Still the offence abounded, and multiplied as the sands on the seashore. It waxed bold, and pitched its tents on Calvary, and nailed the Lawgiver to a tree. But in that conflict sin received its mortal wound. The victim was the victor. He fell, but in His fall He crushed the foe. He died unto sin, but sin and death were crucified upon His cross. Where sin abounded to condemn, grace hath much more abounded to justify. Where sin abounded to corrupt, grace hath much more abounded to purify. Where sin abounded to harden, grace hath much more abounded to soften and subdue. Where sin abounded to imprison men, grace hath much more abounded to proclaim liberty to the captives. Where sin abounded to break the law and dishonour the Lawgiver, grace hath much more abounded to repair the breach and efface the stain. Where sin abounded to consume the soul as with unquenchable fire and a gnawing worm, grace hath much more abounded to extinguish the flame and heal the wound. Grace hath abounded! It hath established its throne on the merit of the Redeemer's sufferings. It hath put on the crown, and laid hold of the golden sceptre, and spoiled the dominion of the prince of darkness, and the gates of the great cemetery are thrown open, and there is the beating of a new life-pulse throughout its wretched population and immortality is walking among the tombs!

This abounding grace is manifested in the gift of Jesus Christ, by whose mediation our reconciliation and salvation are effected. With Him, believers are dead unto sin, and alive unto God. Our sins were slain at His cross, and buried in His tomb. His resurrection hath opened our graves, and given us an assurance of immortality. "God commendeth his love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; much more, then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from the wrath through him; for if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

"The carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Glory to God, for the death of His Son, by which this enmity is slain, and reconciliation is affected between the rebel and the law! This was the unspeakable gift that saved us from ruin; that wrestled with the storm, and turned it away from the devoted head of the sinner. Had all the angels of God attempted to stand between these two conflicting seas, they would have been swept to the gulf of destruction. "The blood of bulls and goats, on Jewish altars slain," could not take

away sin, could not pacify the conscience. But Christ, the gift of divine grace, "Paschal Lamb by God appointed," a "sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they," bore our sins and carried our sorrows, and obtained for us the boon of eternal redemption. He met the fury of the tempest, and the floods went over His head; but His offering was an offering of peace, calming the storms and the waves, magnifying the law, glorifying its Author, and rescuing its violator from the wrath and ruin. Justice hath laid down his sword at the foot of the cross, and amity is restored between heaven and earth.

Hither, O ye guilty! come and cast away your weapons of rebellion! Come with your bad principles and wicked actions; your unbelief, and enmity and pride; and throw them off at the Redeemer's feet! God is here waiting to be gracious. He will receive you; He will cast all your sins behind His back, into the depths of the sea; and they shall be remembered against you no more forever. By Heaven's "unspeakable gift", by Christ's invaluable atonement, by the free, infinite grace of the Father and Son, we persuade you, we beseech you, we entreat you, "be ye reconciled to God"!

It is by the work of the Holy Spirit with us that we obtain a personal interest in the work wrought on Calvary for us. If our sins are cancelled, they are also crucified. If we are reconciled in Christ, we fight against our God no more. This is the fruit of faith. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." May the Lord inspire in every one of us that saving principle!

But those who have been restored to the divine favour may sometimes be cast down and dejected. They have passed through the sea, and sung praises on the shore of deliverance; but there is yet between them and Canaan "a waste howling wilderness", a long and weary pilgrimage, hostile nations, fiery serpents, scarcity of food, and the river of Jordan. Fears within and fightings without, they may grow discouraged, and yield to temptation and murmur against God, and desire to return to Egypt. But fear not, thou worm Jacob! Reconciled by the death of Christ; much more, being reconciled, thou shalt be saved by His life. His death was the price of our redemption; His life insures liberty to the believer. If by His death He brought you through the Red Sea in the night, by His life He can lead you through the river Jordan in the day. If by His death He delivered you from the iron furnace in Egypt, by His life He can save you from all perils of the wilderness. If by His death He conquered Pharaoh, the chief foe, by His life He can subdue Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, the king of Bashan. "We shall be saved by his life." Because He

liveth we shall live also. "Be of good cheer!" The work is finished; the ransom is effected; the kingdom of heaven is open to all believers. "Lift up your heads and rejoice," "ye prisoners of hope!" There is no debt unpaid, no devil unconquered, no enemy within your hearts that has not received a mortal wound! "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

## Sketch of the Life and Times of George Gillespie

by Rev. John Colquhoun

(Continued from page 375)

### 7. THE END

On 17th December, 1648, at the age of thirty-five years, the subject of this sketch passed from this world of sorrow to the place prepared for him by his adorable Saviour. Two days before his death he partly wrote and partly dictated his "Testimony against association with malignant enemies of the truth and godliness." This Testimony was afterwards published along with his letter on the same subject addressed to the Commissioners of the General Assembly, and extracts from some of his sermons. In connection with his death we may quote the words of Dr. Hetherington:- "So passed away from this world one of those bright and powerful spirits which are sent in troublous times to carry forward God's work among mankind. Incessant toil is the destiny of such highly-gifted men while here below; and not infrequently is their memory assailed by those mean and little minds who shrunk with instinctive fear and hatred before the energetic movements which they could neither comprehend nor encounter. But their recompense is in heaven, when their work is done; and future generations delight to rescue their reputation from the feeble obloquy with which malevolence and folly had endeavoured to hide or defame it. Thus has it been with George Gillespie to a considerable extent already; and we entertain not the slightest shadow of doubt that his transcendent merit is but beginning to be known and appreciated as it deserves, and that ere very long his well-earned fame will shine too clearly and too strong to be approached by detractors."

The industrious Woodrow, the Historian, gives a minute account of his last illness and death, which he had from Gillespie's cousin, Patrick Simson, minister of Renfrew, part of which we quote:-

“The next morrow being Friday, he not being able to write, did dictate out the rest of a paper, which he had been before writing himself, and did subscribe it before two witnesses, who also did subscribe; wherein he gave a faithful and clear testimony to the work and cause of God, and against the enemies thereof, to stop the mouths of calumniators and to confirm his children.

“In all his discourses this was mixed as one thing, that he longed for the time of relief, and rejoiced because it was so near. His breath being very short, he said, ‘Where the hallelujahs are sung to the Lamb, there is no shortness of breath.’ And being in very great pain all the Friday night, his mother said in the morning, ‘In all appearance you will not have another night.’ To which he said, ‘Think you that your word will hold good?’ She said, ‘I fear it will hold over good.’ He said, ‘Not over good.’ That day he blessed his children and some others, (Mr Patrick Simson, the writer of this) and said, ‘God bless you, and as you carry the name of your grandfather so God grant you his graces.’ That afternoon, being Saturday, came Mr Samuel Rutherford, who, among other things, said, ‘The day, I hope, is dawning, and breaking in your soul, that shall never have an end.’ He said, ‘It is not broken yet; but though I walk in darkness and see no light, yet I will trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon my God.’ Mr Samuel said, ‘Would not Christ be a welcome guest to you?’ He answered, ‘Welcome! the welcomest guest that ever I saw.’ He said further, ‘Doth not your soul love Christ above all things?’ He answered, ‘I love Him heartily: who ever knew anything of Him but would love Him?’

“Mr James Wilson going to pray asked what petitions he would have him to put up for him? He said, ‘For more of Himself, and strength to carry me through the dark valley.’

“Saturday night he became weaker, and inclined to drowsiness and sleeping, and was discerned in his drowsiness a little to rave; yet being to the last half hour in his full and perfect senses, and having taken a little jelly and drink, about half an hour before his death he spake as sensibly betwixt as ever, and blessed some persons that morning with very spiritual and heavenly expressions. About seven or eight of the clock his drowsiness increased, and he was overheard in it speaking (after he had spoken more imperfectly some words before) those words, ‘Glory! Glory! a seeing of God! I hope it shall be for His glory!’ After he had taken a little refreshment of jelly, and a little drink through a reed, he said that the giving him these things made him drowsy; and a little afterwards, ‘there is a great drowsiness on me, I know not how it comes.’

“His wife seeing the time draw near, spake to him and said, ‘The time of your relief is now near, and hard at hand.’ He answered, ‘I long for that time. O! happy they that are there!’ This was the last word that he was heard sensibly to speak. Mr Frederick Carmichael being there, they went to prayer, expecting death so suddenly. In the midst of prayer he left his rattlings (The death-rattle in the throat of the dying man), and the pangs and fetches of death began thence; his senses went away. Whereupon they rose from prayer, and beheld till, in a very gentle manner the pins of his tabernacle were loosed.”

He was buried in Kirkcaldy and a Latin inscription put on his tomb-stone, for the following English translation of which we are indebted to Dr. Hetherington:- “Master George Gillespie, minister at Edinburgh, in his youthful years overthrew a host of ‘English popish ceremonies;’ as he approached full manhood, having been sent as commissioner to the Westminster Assembly, his attention was directed to the task of extirpating Prelacy from England, and promoting purity and uniformity in the worship of God. He chastised Erastianism in his ‘Aaron’s Rod Blossoming’. Having returned to his native country he weakened the violators of the covenant, who were bent on provoking a war with England. Having been chosen moderator of the General Assembly which met at Edinburgh in the year 1648, he devoted his last exertions to the service of his country so as to draw forth public approbation: and having as an eye-witness, seen that ruin of the malignants which he had foretold, departing in peace on the same day on which the League of the three kingdoms was solemnly renewed, in the 36th year of his age, he entered into the joy of the Lord. He was a man profound in genius, mild in disposition, acute in argument, flowing in eloquence, unconquered in mind. He drew to himself the love of the good, the envy of the bad, and the admiration of all. He was an ornament of his country, — a son worthy of such a father.”

Through the influence of Archbishop Sharp, the Committee of Estates in 1661 caused his tomb-stone to be brought to the Cross of Kirkcaldy, on a market-day, and broken by the hangman. The inscription, however, was preserved and in 1746 his grandson, Rev. George Gillespie, minister of Strathmiglo, caused a tablet to be erected to his memory on which the same inscription was carved, with the addition:- “This tomb being pulled down by the malignant influence of Archbishop Sharp, after the introduction of Prelacy, Mr George Gillespie, minister of the Gospel at Strathmiglo, caused it to be re-erected in honour of his said worthy

grandfather, and as a standing monument of dutiful regard to his blessed memory; Anno Domini, 1746.”

The Committee of Estates, by an Act dated 20th December 1648, which was unanimously ratified by an Act of Parliament, dated 8th June, 1650, voted the sum of £1000 sterling to his widow and children, “as an acknowledgment for his faithfulness in all the public employments entrusted to him by this church, both at home and abroad, his faithful labours, and indefatigable diligence in all the exercises of his ministerial calling, for his Master’s service, and his learned writings, published to the world, in which rare and profitable employments, both for Church and State, he truly spent himself and closed his days.” Owing to the trouble and confusion caused by Cromwell’s invasion his wife or family did not get a penny of it.

Though his widow and family were deprived of what their country voted for them yet we are sure that the Lord whom George Gillespie served so faithfully and zealously did not forsake them, but that He often manifested Himself as the God who “relieveth the fatherless and widow”. As a proof of His goodness to them it may be noted that one of his sons, Robert, became a minister of the Church of Scotland, and although he did not attain to his father’s stature, yet was an outstanding witness on the side of Christ in his day and suffered much in the days of persecution. The Editor of Woodrow’s Correspondence, in an explanatory note prefixed to a letter of Woodrow to his son, the Rev. George Gillespie, Strathmiglo, quotes from a letter to Woodrow the following statement with reference to Rev. Robert Gillespie, that he “was persecute from the day he was licensed until the day of his death, and that merely for preaching the Gospel, for he was neither at Pentland nor Bothwell Bridge.” Correspondence II.p.411.

Woodrow, himself, says of him; “April 2nd. I find Mr Robert Gillespie before the council, where he confesses he had kept one house-conventicle in the town of Falkland: but refusing to delate whom he knew among his hearers, and to be an evidence against them, the Council order him to be carried prisoner to the Isle of the Bass, their lately contrived prison. Upon the 7th of May, they allow him the liberty of the Isle of the Bass above the wall, but strictly require he be not permitted to preach, or exercise any part of his ministry there. Here he continues till the beginning of the next year, when he fell sick, and January 8th, the Council permit him, on his petition, to be let out some time for his health.” *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland*, Vol. II.p.223.

### Gillespie's Other Writings

Along with what has been noticed already of his writings, Gillespie seems to have written other works which do not appear to have seen the light of day. Rev. Robert Woodrow of Eastwood, already quoted, says, "The known bookseller, Pankhurst, who died some twelve or sixteen years ago, had, in manuscript, the three volumes of Gillespie on the Covenant, and by his letter to me offered to print it, if I would procure three hundred subscriptions at half-a-crown the book in sheets. I wrote to him I would do it; and soon after he died. It would be of use if the manuscript could be recovered and printed." Correspondence, III.p.286. It does not appear that this manuscript was ever recovered, for, as Woodrow wrote in 1727, it seems to have been a different production from that referred to in *The Treasury of the Scottish Covenant*, by Rev. J. C. Johnston, and entitled *The Ark of the Testament Opened: In a Treatise of the Covenant of Grace*, Printed in London 1661. In the published Records of the Commission of Assembly for 5th January 1649 we find, in reference to his Testimony, that "the Commission appoints it to be registered, and to be printed together with his sermons he preached against the associations with the enemies of truth and godliness." *Commission Records*, 1648-49, p.141. In a foot-note the editors say, "The sermons do not appear to have been published, but shortly after his death an extract from them was published under the title: 'An Useful Case of Conscience Discussed and Resolved, concerning associations and confederacies with idolaters, infidels, heretics, or any other known enemies of Truth and Godliness' By Master George Gillespie, late Minister of Edinburgh, whereunto is subjoined a letter written by him to the Commissioners of the General Assembly in the time of his sickness, together with his testimony unto this truth, within two days before his death. 4to. Edinburgh 1649." According to Woodrow there were twelve or fourteen volumes of notes written by Gillespie containing an abstract of the deliberations of the Westminster Assembly, but at the time Mr David Meek edited the *Notes* on that Assembly only two volumes could be found. Dr. Hetherington, in his *Memoirs of Gillespie*, prefixed to his collected works, gives it as his opinion that the remaining volumes may have contained, not notes of the Westminster Assembly, but portions of his more elaborate works. What has been published of his *Notes* is well worth careful study. In Woodrow's *Analecta* it is stated that Gillespie also prepared a volume of sermons for the press but that the Sectaries bribed the printer to sell them, and that they were probably destroyed. After his death his brother Patrick, published his *Treatise of*

*Miscellany Questions.* He tells us that he had the author's consent for publishing these papers, which indicates that George Gillespie intended them for publication. They treat of various matters, such as, The Ministry, Election of Pastors, Ordination, Infant Baptism, Assurance of an Interest in Christ and various other subjects, clearly stated and supported by Scripture and the testimony of antiquity.

At the time of Gillespie's death both Scotland and England were in a serious condition. King Charles I who had entered into a league with the Engagers, had no other end in view in doing so, but to further his own designs of setting up an absolute monarchy. The Covenanters in Scotland were divided; some were for the Engagement and some against it. The Scottish politicians, who were for the Engagement, were under the necessity of appointing the Duke of Hamilton to the command of the Scottish Army, because, neither the Earl of Leven nor David Leslie would abandon the Covenant. Hamilton's first move after he was appointed General was to lead his army into England where he suffered a disastrous defeat at the hands of Cromwell. After this defeat the Marquis of Argyle, the Earls of Cassilis, Eglinton, and Loudon, took up the reins of government, proved to Cromwell that they were in no way in favour of the Engagement and so hostilities were averted. A new parliament was called which passed very stringent laws against the Engagers, prohibiting them, according to their degrees of delinquency, to hold positions of power. At this time, however, a great deal of uneasiness was caused through receiving intelligence that the English Parliament intended to proceed with the trial of the King. This was too much for these stern Covenanters. They and their ancestors might, in conference with the King, use great plainness of speech which often amazed his subjects south of the Border, but they never dreamt of arraigning him at their bar on charges which, if proved, deserved the death penalty. Charles was summoned to answer to the charges of being "a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and a public and implacable enemy of the Commonwealth of England," which charges were supported by evidences which could not be contradicted. In spite of his refusal to plead at the bar of a court which he held to be unconstitutional he was sentenced to death. On 30th January 1649 he stepped on to the scaffold from one of the windows of Whitehall and a few moments later he entered into the presence of his Judge to give an account of his stewardship. Much has been said of late to make him appear a saint and a martyr. The history of the times and his own actings show him to have been neither. It cannot be claimed for him that either his courage or his manliness were of a very high order.

Treacherous in the extreme, in his dealings with those with whom policy forced him to enter into treaties, for at the very time at which he entered into these treaties he was devising schemes for breaking them, so that, as far as the English Parliament could see, there was nothing which could secure the liberty of his subjects but his death.

The Covenanters were looking at the matter from another point of view. As Dr. Hetherington puts it: "They, even by the terms of their Covenant, were the vowed supporters of a monarchy based upon and pervaded throughout by Scripture principles. No sooner, therefore, did they receive the melancholy intelligence of their sovereign's death, than they hastened to proclaim his son king, by the designation of Charles II; not omitting, however, in their proclamation, the significant intimation that their support of his pretensions to the throne would involve the necessity of his subscribing the Covenant." *History of the Church of Scotland*, 6 ed. p116. This drew Cromwell into Scotland again and for many a day afterwards the Church of Scotland was as "a lily among thorns", but this part of her history extends beyond the limits of this sketch.

(Concluded)

## The Sacrifice of the Mass

*The following editorial appeared in the March, 1918, Free Presbyterian Magazine from the pen of the Rev. James S. Sinclair.*

It has occurred to us that it may not be without profit at the present moment to give a brief explanation of the sacrifice of the Mass, and some account of the delusive errors involved in it. Protestants may sometimes take it too easily for granted that they know all about such a matter when their memories require to be refreshed.

I. Let us then notice, first, the peculiar character of this service. It consists of the offering up by the priests of the bread and wine, which have been already changed (as they hold) through the words of consecration into the actual body and blood of Christ, as a real propitiatory sacrifice unto God for the sins of the living and the dead. Observe the following statements taken from the Catechism of the Council of Trent: "We confess that the sacrifice of the Mass is one and the same sacrifice with that upon the cross; the victim is one and the same, Christ Jesus, who offered Himself once only a bloody sacrifice upon the cross; the bloody and unbloody victim is still one and the same, and the oblation of the cross is

daily received in the eucharistic sacrifice; the priest is also the same Christ our Lord; the ministers who offer this sacrament consecrate the holy mysteries, not in their own, but in the person of Christ; the priest does not say, This is the body of Christ, but This is My body; the holy sacrifice of the Mass, therefore, is, not only a commemoration of the sacrifice of the cross, but also a sacrifice of propitiation by which God is appeased and rendered propitious." Again, it is declared in "the Missal" that the Mass "serves to appease God's wrath, to obtain remission of sins, redemption of souls, and all spiritual grace and salvation. It serves for all other necessities, as well of man as of beast, as well for the dead as for the living." These are Rome's own explanations of the rite.

2. Let us next point out some of the serious errors involved.

(1) There is the erroneous dogma of Transubstantiation. According to the Roman creed, it is maintained that no sooner does the priest pronounce the words, "This is My body," than the bread and wine are changed into the veritable "body and blood, soul and divinity, bones and nerves" of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus it must have been that Christ, at the first institution of the Supper, made the bread and wine into His own "body and blood, soul and divinity, bones and nerves," and so there were then present two Christs, absolutely distinct from one another, and yet absolutely the same. Could any dogma be more absurd, monstrous, or self-condemnatory? Still further, as every priest professes ability, according to his creed to do the same thing, there have been millions of Christs called into existence since this error budded forth, and all identical with the one true Christ. This is a monstrous blasphemy, contrary to Scripture and reason in the last degree, though received in simplicity as truth by thousands of our fellowmen who regard the Pope as the head of the Church. The extraordinary dogma of Transubstantiation is at the foundation of the Mass.

(2) The gross error of a repetition of Christ's sacrifice. The sacrifice of the Mass is expressly declared to be "one and the same sacrifice with that upon the cross; the victim is one and the same, Christ Jesus," etc. The only difference allowed is that the sacrifice upon the cross was a *bloody* sacrifice, but this an *unbloody* one, and yet with the usual inconsistency it is also asserted that the "victim is still one and the same". Surely there is something appalling in the idea that the Mass is to all intents and purposes a repetition of Christ's sacrifice upon the cross, not a commemoration or anything of that kind. It is difficult for the Protestant, whose Christian intelligence or ordinary reason is left unimpaired, even to grasp the fearful absurdity of this figment of the imagination. And yet this is

what Roman Catholics are required constantly to believe, that there is a regular repetition (in an unbloody way) of Christ's sufferings and death upon the cross every time the sacrifice of the Mass is offered. How expressly contrary it is to the plain statements of God's Word, that "Christ hath *once* suffered for sins" (1 Peter 3: 15), and "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9: 25-28).

(3) This sacrifice pronounces in effect Christ's sacrifice on the cross as *without efficacy*. Rome maintains that the Mass "serves to appease God's wrath, to obtain remission of sins and redemption of souls." What is this but declaring that Christ's sacrifice, in the days of His flesh, was insufficient for these ends? In professing to exalt His sacrifice to the highest pitch of honour, Rome only dishonours it to the utmost, and by necessary consequence, also, reflects upon God the Father in His judicial capacity, as always unsatisfied and unappeased.

(4) The erroneous doctrine of Purgatory underlies the sacrifice of the Mass as offered for the dead. Masses for the souls of the faithful dead clearly teach that these souls are in a supposed place called Purgatory undergoing purification from their sins. Rome's system of doctrine and worship is full of the most palpable absurdities. Though masses are observed for the living, in which Christ's sacrifice is constantly offered to God, these do not avail to take all sins away, but the faithful must go at death to a fancied Purgatory, where they may remain thousands of years, till the work is completed. The recent Mass for Bishop Chisholm at Aberdeen was a Requiem Mass, a mass for the rest of his soul, clearly implying that his soul had gone to Purgatory. We see, then, that the delusive errors of Purgatory and Prayers for the dead are mixed up with this blasphemous sacrifice. God's Word tells us of one all-sufficient purgatory now in time, in the memorable sentence: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleaseth us from *all* sin" (1 John 1: 7).

(5) The idolatrous place given to the priest in connection with this sacrifice is to be noted. Let readers observe the quotations already given from the Catechism of the Council of Trent: "The priest is also the same Christ our Lord; the ministers who offer this sacrament consecrate the holy mysteries, not in their own, but in the person of Christ; the priest does not say, 'This is the body of Christ', but 'This is My body'." One would almost conclude from these words that the opinion is held that, not only are the bread and wine changed into the body and blood of Christ, but the priest is changed into the person of Christ. What dreadful presumption, to say the very least, is this! It should be explained that the service, as received by the faithful, is described as a sacrament, but when

offered to God in the Mass, as a propitiatory sacrifice. For this latter aspect there is no foundation in Scripture, as already shown.

We now conclude our remarks meantime on this subject, and trust they will contribute to show how dishonouring to Christ and His truth is the sacrifice of the Mass.

## Mission News

### Letter from Malawi

*Rev. D. B. Macleod and Mr Dick Vermeulen have been working together in Malawi and Rev. Macleod sends us this account.*

Blantyre

We have been kept very busy during the last two months, first in Kenya and then here. We visited most of the stations where the men hold services. On Sabbath they hold a Shorter Catechism class for old and young before the services. In Malawi the men have translated the catechism into Chichewa their own language. They use this in the class. At the end of the class the people can ask questions and they do this, so it should be of help in establishing them in the doctrines of truth.

In Kenya and here in Malawi there appears to be an opening for a permanent work if staff can be found for it. We do hope that anyone that comes out here will learn the language, if possible, before they come. The Lord can raise up such if it is His will that our witness as a Church be established in these countries.

The heat in the far south of the country is very great — one building with an iron roof where we held a service was like an oven. Mostly we are in thatched mud-brick built churches or outside under a tree. One congregation consists of Mozambique refugees. They have built a church of their own and want to be connected with our Church even when the way opens (D.V.) for them to return to their own land.

### Zimbabwe News

One of the most cheering sentences in recent letters from Zimbabwe has been:— “They are busy building churches here. David Ndlovu and his men roofed two churches for the Rev. Z. Mazvabo last week, one at Mberengwa and another at New Canaan.”

I think reference has been made before now to Meetings of two or three people being held under a tree in the Mberengwa area, and then in

no time we hear they are building a church. We hope for an abundant blessing on these gatherings.

As many of our people know, Miss Marion Graham has returned to Zimbabwe, and received a very warm welcome. Miss Macaulay is due home at the end of the year D.V. She and Miss MacLennan have had a very strenuous term, and will be glad to shed some of their responsibilities. Mr and Mrs Neil Murray have returned safely to Zimbabwe. Many friends will have enjoyed seeing their slide shows, and hearing their descriptions of Mission work.

Miss Macaulay was in the habit of going once a year to correct Scripture Knowledge Examination Papers, in Harare, 300 miles away. However, this year the circular states that the meetings will take place during Saturday and Sabbath. For this reason Miss Macaulay will not be able to go. Workshop Science Meetings for the New Syllabus have also been arranged for the weekend, which is a very disconcerting trend. The Minister for Education is Fay Chung, Zimbabwean Chinese, a committed Socialist. The Secretary for Education is Mr Isaiah Sibanda, a nephew of the Rev. A. B. Ndebele. His mother is a member with us at Zenka. At one of our Communion services we congratulated Mrs Sibanda on her sons' success at school and University. "Do not congratulate me," she said with a kindly smile, "until my sons are converted."

A few weeks ago a Communion was held at Somakantana, a small preaching station with a school attached, which lies on the northern side of the formidable Shangani River which in flood, is about half a mile in width, and is frequented by the wily crocodile. The officiating minister was the Rev. P. Mzamo and most of the European staff were present, and were accompanied by our Treasurer and Administrator, Mr Mziya. The services were well attended and it was a pleasant occasion. During the war there were no Communion services held there as there was known to be a Training Camp for Dissidents twelve miles further on, with an arsenal of weapons hidden in a 45 gallon drum. It is only in the dry season that our people cross the wide sandy bed of the Shangani River.

During Dr. Tallach's time there was a series of clinics held throughout the surrounding countryside, and including Somakantana. Most of the Clinics were closed during the War, but only last year a very sad occurrence took place near Dagamela, where a Government group were holding a clinic under a tree. Three African nurses and two Orderlies were killed. However, the clinics are reopening, which is a good sign. The police and army units which were stationed within the Mbumba Hospital Security fence have been withdrawn. It is no longer essential for our peo-

ple to have an army or police escort when travelling to Bulawayo. The Isolation Ward which had been requisitioned by the army is now available for hospital patients.

Dr. Hak, our young doctor from Holland, is still working at Mpilo General Hospital in Bulawayo. It has been suggested by the Health Department that Dr. Hak spend an additional two months in the Paediatrics Department in Mpilo, and as there are hundreds of children treated at Mbumba during the year for various illnesses, this would seem to be appropriate.

One of the members at Ingwenya for many years was Mr Abia Sobantu. He was very short of stature, and had various physical disabilities, but had an engaging personality and a melodious singing voice. The late Rev. John Tallach took a great interest in Abia. He had been converted under his ministry, and was obviously disadvantaged in many ways. Mr Tallach decided to send him for Teacher Training. Abia taught in several of our schools over the years, and latterly was teaching at Maqaqeni, three miles from Ingwenya. When visiting the school one ascended a small grassy hill, and invariably one heard the sweet strains of childish voices singing a psalm. As one entered the low door-way passing from the brilliant sunshine into the rather dark, cool interior of the thatched classroom, it was touching to see Abia's small figure standing on the brick platform conducting his small choir, his melodious voice coming in to support the tenor or contralto.

Abia took ill and after some months of severe illness passed away. At his funeral there was a large crowd of about 400 people. The Rev. A. B. Ndebele writes: "The Rev. P. Mzamo and I spoke at the funeral. The whole atmosphere was conducive to solemnity. He was a great, small man who knew the Lord Jesus as he told me while lying on his deathbed. "My hope and confidence rests only on the finished work of Christ which took Him to the Cross of Calvary."

Abia's son, Monde Sobantu, is Headmaster of Ingwenya Primary School.

J. N.

### **Mission to Communist Countries**

Our recent visit to the Communist bloc of Eastern Europe and to the Soviet Union lasted for almost four weeks from 5th September. It was a very tiring journey of 50,200 miles, but we record, with gratitude to the Most High God, His protection over us, His provision for us, and the opportunity He has afforded us for giving some little help to the persecuted church.

I was accompanied by Mr William Campbell, Edinburgh, who kindly gave the use of his car for the long journey. By his efficient and willing help in dealing with all the necessary documentation for travelling, our border crossings were made so much smoother.

The first country we entered was Hungary, which of all the Communist countries visited, is the least severe in its practise of Communist ideology. It was gratifying to find that the books which were posted from the Church Bookroom in Glasgow had arrived safely and were much appreciated, (as was the case in Romania also). In Hungary we disposed of most of the Bibles, Reformed Literature, clothing and medicines, by handing them over to those who are in a position to take them into both Romania and Russia.

During our crossing into Romania, customs officials confiscated all our literature, which included private reading material; but thankfully the Russian Bibles were not noticed. However, when we were about to reload the car, the customs officer said the word "student", to which I readily replied "Yes"; for in the work of the ministry I am, and hope always to be, a student. At this he conferred with a colleague and with a graceful sweep of the arm, he invited us to retrieve all our literature. Needless to say, we complied with alacrity and were thankful to the Lord.

We discovered, after entering Romania, that divinity students, through their tutors, are allowed to receive religious literature. Therefore a number of our books went to divinity students as well as to ministers of the gospel. In fact, the Principal of the Divinity Faculty of a certain university informed us that one of the text books he uses for teaching theology is *Systematic Theology* by Louis Berkhof, and that he would much appreciate our sending more copies for the students.

The Soviet Union, with a population of 270 million, is among the least evangelised countries in the world. It was cause for gratitude to cross the border safely with some Bibles, Gospels according to John, Bible concordances and a few religious books and pamphlets. Then, on our travels in the Soviet Union, it was very heartening to meet with those who appear to truly fear God. We now have the opportunity, due to "glasnost" to send over 300 Bibles to individuals by post. It is an opportunity we must seize with both hands, for we do not know how long this door may remain open to us. There is also some hope that we may be able to send, in bulk, a quantity of Reformed literature and a few thousand Bibles. We desire the support of our people by their prayers and givings so that we may make the most of these opportunities.

In Czechoslovakia, which we next visited, we were confirmed in our view that it is not yet possible to post Bibles or religious literature to people there. One pastor whom we met, and to whom we gave a small amount of religious literature, clothing and medicine, has been banned from preaching for the past sixteen years for speaking against the oppression of Christians by the authorities.

While our visit to these Communist countries was successful above our expectations, we must not for a moment underestimate the evil power of Communism. "Glasnost" (openness) and "perestroika" (restructuring) give some opportunity for sending Bibles to Russia, and a little easing of the horrendous persecution of Christians there; but many believers in the Communist bloc have little confidence in this change, for they continue to be a people persecuted by the state for their faith. We must not forget that Lenin defined "glasnost" as "letting the Party know everything" — a definition often quoted approvingly by Gorbachev. And the persecution of Christians that is found in Russia is also found, more or less, in all other Communist states. This is to be expected since Communism is atheistic at heart and is essentially opposed to, and hates Christianity.

Another point we wish our people to bear in mind about mission work in Communist countries, is that there is great need that Reformed literature be sent to them. There is so much literature propagated which, alas, is of a liberal and Arminian nature. Therefore we should do all we can, as a church, to distribute sound literature among these peoples, so that they may have the Reformed view of scripture.

There are some groups who are sending considerable numbers of Bibles into these countries; but all in all it is but a drop in the ocean. There are vast multitudes in the Communist world who are without the Word of God, "having no hope, and without God in the world".

May the Lord be pleased to prosper our very small effort, in these ways, to promote His kingdom and to further His cause in those most needy countries.

D.A.R.

## Book Reviews

**True and False Worship, A Vindication of the Doctrine that the Sacrifice of the Mass is Idolatry** by John Knox. Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1988, Paperback, 32pp, £1.75.

**Forbidden Alliances: concerning associations and confederacies with idolaters, infidels, heretics or any other known enemies of truth and**

**godliness** by George Gillespie, Presbyterian Heritage Publications, 1988, Paperback, 30pp, £1.75.

Presbyterian Heritage are to be congratulated on making these booklets available in such an attractive format and reasonably priced. It is gratifying to know that others believe it timely to remind this age of the idolatry of the mass and of the dangers of association and confederacy with idolaters etc. In an introductory essay to *True and False Worship*, Kevin Reed says, "In the modern pluralistic age, the Church has lost a sense of the immorality of false worship. False religious beliefs and practices are not simply academic differences; they are moral corruption which destroy the souls of men." Knox himself concludes: "The Mass is nothing but the invention of man, set up without all authority of God's Word, for honouring God; and therefore it is idolatry. Unto it is added a vain, false, deceivable, and most wicked opinion; that is, that by it is obtained remission of sins; and therefore it is abomination before God. It is contrary unto the Supper of Jesus Christ, and has taken away both the right use and remembrance thereof, and therefore it is blasphemous to Christ's death."

In the Publisher's Introduction to *Forbidden Alliances* we read, "The perceptive reader will find many areas of contemporary application . . . Gillespie gives us the overarching scriptural principles which apply in a variety of situations. He shows us how fidelity to Christ is the pre-eminent claim which must regulate all our alliances among the sons of men." Having presented the main bulk of his argument, and when coming to apply the message, Gillespie is so conscious of the subterfuges of the heart that he begins by saying, "Let us now, (1) examine ourselves, whether there be so much tenderness of conscience in us as to close with those Scripture truths, or whether we are still in a way of consulting with flesh and blood." More than once he uses the line of argument, shall we do voluntarily what God abominates in the heathen? In this day of compromise, it is useful to have drawn to one's attention such scripture texts as 1 Cor. 5: 11; 2 Cor. 6: 14, 15; 2 Thes. 3: 14, 15 and 2 Tim. 3: 5, though suprisingly he misses Rom. 16: 17. These texts are balanced by Rom. 12: 18 and 2 Tim. 2: 24, 25; however most of the treatise draws upon the well-tried principles in Old Testament scripture. This treatise is mentioned on pages 10 and 14 of this issue of the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* in which the article on Gillespie's life is concluded.

The text of each booklet has been edited to bring it into greater conformity with contemporary spelling, punctuation and grammatical usage.

This makes them more accessible to the modern reader and the booklet on the mass has subsections introduced to help the reader to follow the argument. On the whole this has been successfully done, but it has resulted in John Knox addressing the Most High as "you" in two short prayers on page 2 and 8. This reviewer believes that in such instances the original "thy" should have been retained. Both booklets are available from the Free Presbyterian Bookroom.

## Notes and Comments

### AIDS Education in Schools

A recent editorial in *Ethics and Medicine* by Dr. Nigel Cameron of Rutherford House draws attention to the unsatisfactory nature of the video approved by the Governemnt for showing in secondary schools to 14-16 year old children. The video *Your Choice for Life* is accused of giving a different message from the accompanying *User's Guide*. "This *Guide* is actually much better than the video. More to the point, it is simply different. . . . The main problem with the video is its failure to encourage its viewers (*young people aged 14 to 16*) to abstain from sexual intercourse. It is extraordinary that it fails to do so, the more so in the light of the *Guide*. The *Guide* reminds us that the law forbids heterosexual intercourse below the age of 16 (and homosexual below the age of 21); the video says nothing on the subject of the law. Indeed, the assumption runs through the video that its viewers are promiscuous." The editorial says, "We deserve better than this."

### The Fake Shroud of Turin

Scientists have now pronounced the Shroud of Turin to be the medieval forgery it ever was and not the linen sheet in which the Saviour was reputed to have been wrapped when he lay in the grave. Tests carried out in laboratories in Oxford, Zurich and Arizona have apparently established that the cloth was manufactured sometime between 1260 and 1390 and the human features imprinted on it cannot thus be those of Jesus of Nazareth. We did not of course need the tests and findings of scientists to convince us of that. All true Christians, taking the Word of God as their guide, regard the worshipping and venerating of so-called relics as abhorrent. Not so, poor misguided idolaters within the Church of Rome, who are in this particular instance not prepared to accept the scientific evidence but remain firmly wedded to the view that the shroud is genuine. One devotee is reported as having expressed his view thus: "I

will continue to come here to pay homage whenever I can. No matter what they say, that for me is the cloth in which Our Lord's body was wrapped after His death." Judging by press reports, such an attitude is not likely to be condemned by the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Several of them spoke of the "symbolic value" of the shroud and the Archbishop of Turin, where it is kept in its silver casket, is reported as having said that he personally saw the shroud as "the revelation of the face and body of Christ", whatever that means.

It is clear that Rome has not changed over the centuries since Calvin trenchantly denounced the "vile and sordid traffic" in relics which was plied in his own day. This is what he had to say on the matter: "In regard to the linen clothes in which our Saviour's body was wrapped, I would, in like manner, ask how it comes, that while the Evangelists carefully enumerate the miracles which took place at the death of Christ, and omit nothing which is pertinent to the history, this wondrous miracle so completely escaped them, that they say not a word about the impression of our Lord's body which was stamped on his grave-clothes? The circumstance surely was as worthy of being mentioned as many others. John declares that Peter went into the sepulchre, and saw the linen clothes lying in a place by themselves, but he makes no mention of the miraculous impression. It cannot be supposed that he would have suppressed so wondrous a miracle, had it really been performed. But another doubt occurs. It is nowhere said by the Evangelists that the linen clothes were carried away out of the sepulchre by the disciples or the holy women. Though they do not speak in express terms, they rather insinuate that they left them there. Then the sepulchre was guarded by the soldiers, and of course the linen clothes remained in their power. Is it likely that they gave them to some pious individual for the purpose of being converted into relics; especially when it is considered that the Pharisees had bribed them to perjure themselves by declaring that the disciples had secretly stolen away the body? It is almost unnecessary to add, that the imposture may be completely detected merely by inspecting the impression which is exhibited. It is perfectly clear that it was painted by a human hand. I cannot cease wondering how those who framed the imposture were so dull of understanding as not to use more craft in the doing of it; and, still more, how others were so silly as to allow themselves to be blindfolded, and thereby unfitted to see through a matter so very transparent. Nay, it appears that they have painters at hand. For one napkin happening to be burned, another was forthwith produced. No doubt, it was affirmed to be the same that was shown before, but the pic-

ture was so fresh that there would have been no room for the falsehood, had not eyes been altogether wanting to perceive it.

“To conclude in one word, their impudence will be proved by an argument which cannot be gainsayed. In all the places where they pretend to have the grave-clothes, they show a large piece of linen by which the whole body, including the head, was covered, and, accordingly the figure exhibited is that of an entire body. But the Evangelist John relates that Christ was buried, “as is the manner of the Jews to bury”. What that manner was may be learned, not only from the Jews, by whom it is still observed, but also from their books, which explain what the ancient practice was. It was this: The body was wrapped up by itself as far as the shoulders, and then the head by itself was bound round with a napkin, tied by the four corners, into a knot. And this is expressed by the Evangelist, when he says that Peter saw the linen clothes in which the body had been wrapped lying in one place, and the napkin which had been wrapped about the head lying in another. The term napkin may mean either a handkerchief employed to wipe the face, or it may mean a shawl, but never means a large piece of linen in which the whole body may be wrapped. I have, however, used the term in the sense which they improperly give to it. On the whole, either the Evangelist John must have given a false account, or every one of them must be convicted of falsehood, thus making it manifest that they have too imprudently imposed on the unlearned.”

J. McL.

## Church Notes

### **Presbytery Meetings (D.V.)**

**Australia and New Zealand:** At Auckland on 27th January, 1989 at 2 p.m.

**Skye:** At Portree on 7th February at 11 a.m.

**Outer Isles:** At Stornoway on 14th February at 12 noon.

**Southern:** At Glasgow on 21st February at 6 p.m.

**Northern:** At Dingwall on 14th February at 2 p.m.

### **Southern Presbytery decision of 4th November, 1988**

“Having heard the parties at the bar, the Presbytery expresses its disapproval at the conduct of Lord MacKay of Clashfern, in attending a Requiem Mass for Lord Russell of Killowen at Westminster Cathedral

On 16th July, 1986, as being inconsistent with the Protestant profession of an elder of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, all the Office-bearers of which church profess as part of their Christian belief that the Mass is idolatrous worship, and the Pope of Rome is that AntiChrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ and all that is called God.

Such disapproval of attendance at Requiem Masses has been the consistent view of the Courts of this church for almost ninety years.

The Presbytery also notes that Lord MacKay expresses no regret for his attendance at this Requiem Mass, nor is he willing to undertake not to be present on any similar occasion in the future. Taking all the circumstances into account, The Presbytery sustain the Appeal and reverse the judgment of the Kirk Session by substituting in its place the judgment that Lord Mackay of Clashfern be suspended from the exercise of the functions of an elder and the sealing ordinances of the church for a period of six months from this date."

It is felt necessary to make this decision known to the people of our Church because of the widespread publicity this matter has received and the great amount of misinformation carried by the media. This decision of the Presbytery has been appealed against, to the Synod, and is therefore *sub judice* and no comment can be made on the substance of the case.

**Rev. D. J. MacDonald**  
**Presbytery Clerk**

### **Northern Presbytery Resolution of 29th November, 1988**

For the avoidance of doubt and the guidance of all within its bounds, the Northern Presbytery of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland met at Dingwall this 29th day of November 1988 hereby declares:-

1.) Its firm adherence to the Christian's right of Private Judgment as declared in the subordinate standards of this Church, viz. Catechism 105, "The sins forbidden in the first commandment are . . . making men the lords of our faith and conscience." (cf. 2 Cor. 1: 24, Matt. 23: 9).

2.) Its satisfaction with and adherence to the Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland's decision at Edinburgh, the 19th day of May, 1960 (carried by a majority of 31 votes to 5), maintaining the right of "all men professing godliness within our Church" to associate themselves with other Churches at funeral services.

**Dumbarton Communion**

Would interested friends please note that as from 1989 onwards the dates for both Dumbarton Communions are to be changed to the 2nd Sabbath of March and the 2nd Sabbath of September.

G. I. M.

**Financial year end, 31 December, 1988**

Will Congregational Treasurers please note that all funds in respect of 1988 should be in the General Treasurer's hands by **Wednesday, 10th January, 1989**. Funds received after that date will be credited to 1989.

**Ingwenya Mission**

The Foreign Mission Committee wish it to be known that there is still a shortage of staff at the John Tallach Secondary School at Ingwenya. Any person with a University Degree although not necessarily possessing Teacher Training, would be welcome there and would be acceptable to the Department of Education in Zimbabwe.

Readers should continue to bear the needs of the mission-field to the Throne of Grace continually. Anyone who is interested in giving a period of service to the Mission as outlined above should contact the Clerk of the Foreign Missions Committee, F.P. Manse, Saval Road, Lairg, IV27 4EH.

**Aberdeen Church Opening**

A large congregation comprising local people and friends from a distance gathered at Alford Place, Aberdeen, on 4th November, 1988 for the formal opening of the new church building. The Rev. R. R. Sinclair, Moderator of the Northern Presbytery, took as his text "the church of the Thessalonians", referring to those spiritual elements which are essential to the beginning and building up of the church of Christ, contrasting these with the bareness of a mere building without the presence of God. Mr Sinclair spoke of God's providence, of the preaching of God's word, about the need for the power of God's Spirit, the blessings of peace and prosperity, and the fruit of practical godliness and the participation by God's people in fellowship.

After public worship, Mr Tallach referred to letters of encouragement and Christian greeting which he had received from friends of the congregation. The Rev. Alexander Murray as Clerk of the Northern Presbytery expressed good wishes to the congregation, both on behalf of the Presbytery and on behalf of others present. Mr Tallach then thanked the Trustees of Christ's College, who had given the congregation a uni-

que opportunity to acquire the building; and introduced Dr. Henry Sefton, Master of Christ's College. Dr. Sefton spoke briefly of the history of the building, and of the joy which the trustees felt at the prospect of the building continuing to be used as a place of Christian worship and witness.

Mr William Fraser then spoke, as one of the General Trustees of the Church. He referred to Judges 1: 15 where the daughter of Caleb asked her father, not only for a good land, but also for springs of water. He expressed the wish that we would have, not only a beautiful building, but also the blessings of the Holy Spirit. Thanks were then expressed to everyone who had contributed practically and spiritually, to the arrival of the congregation in their new location. After prayer, the ladies of the congregation then provided supper which enabled the congregation and friends to enjoy a time of fellowship together.

**David K. Laing**  
Session Clerk

### **Opening of the Flashadder Church**

The new church at Flashadder was officially opened on Friday the 11th of November, 1988 when the Rev. Fraser MacDonald, Portree, preached an appropriate and edifying sermon from the words of the angel addressed to the Apostle John in the Isle of Patmos: "Worship God". Rev. 22: 9. After the sermon and the singing the interim Moderator declared the church officially open for the public worship of God and thanked all those who helped in the building and construction of the church at Flashadder and especially the contractor Roderick MacFarlane whose workmanship attracted the attention of all.

He then went on to speak of the difficulties encountered in building the church, even as Nehemiah and Ezra and those who were with them had to contend with the power and devices of Satan it is still the same. Satan can use a Peter, even an Apostle, a Sanballat, Tobiah and men of all ranks to oppose any work we are doing for the Lord however insignificant and small that work may be in our own estimation. But there is no uncertainty about the outcome for: "If God be for us who can be against us?"

He then expressed the hope that the worship of God and the Gospel in its purity would be maintained in the Church at Flashadder for many generations to come.

Others who spoke at the meeting were: Rev. Mr Ross, Lochcarron; Dr. Tallach, Raasay; Rev. Mr Roberts, Applecross; and Mr William Byers.

They all conveyed and expressed their good wishes for the prosperity of the cause at Flashadder. Mr Byers also commended the work done by the contractor Roderick MacFarlane. He said he was more competent than many to comment on such work having been associated with it for many years. He went on to say that an excellent finish characterised the whole of the building not only the inside but the outside also.

We were sorry that Mr MacKay the missionary being incapacitated, was not able to attend the service that night but we hope that the Lord will restore him to normal health soon for more useful work at Flashadder and in the Lord's vineyard.

We are sure that most people throughout the church will rejoice with the Flashadder people that they have a place of worship of their own.

**Donald Nicolson**

## Acknowledgment of Donations

The General Treasurer, Room 7, Seafeld House, Seafeld Road, Inverness, IV1 1SJ acknowledges the following donations with sincere thanks:—

**Foreign Mission Fund:** "For Misison work in Africa from Reformed Church, Eaglescliffe, per Rev. A. MacPherson, £166"; Two friends, Stornoway, £50; Friend, Stornoway, £10; Friend, North Tolsta, £10; Two Friends, Stornoway, £10; Dingwall Congregation, £200 all per Neil Murray, for Mbuma Hospital.

**Home of Rest Fund:** From the estate of the late Miss W. Fraser, per MacLeod and MacCallum, £50.

**Free Distribution of Magazine Fund:** A Friend, Staffin, £5.

**Trinitarian Bible Society:** Raasay Congregation, £104.50.

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

**Aberdeen:** From a friend Breasclete, per M. M. £20 for the Aberdeen congregation; from Flora Skinner, sister of the late Mrs Colquhoun of Inverurie, £15 for the Aberdeen congregation.

**Barnoldswick:** £30 Anon., per R. K. MacCuish; £70 Friend Perth per Rev. D. J. M. for Manse Fund; £66.58 deed of covenant, £19.49 congregational funds, both per General Treasurer.

**Beaully:** £10 Anon., for door collection per Congregation Treasurer.

**Dumbarton:** £10, two friends St. Jude's for communion expenses per envelope in plate; £10 Anon., "Where most needed" per envelope in plate; £20 Anon., for congregational fund per M. H.

**Dundee:** Anon., Wick, for Church Building Fund; Anon., Lairg, for Sustentation Fund; both per Rev. D. C. M.

**Edinburgh:** £150, R. A. & Mrs M. MacLeod, Middlesborough, for Congregational Fund per Rev. Angus Morrison.

**Flashadder:** D. & N. MacFarlane £30 for Church Funds; £1564 per Mr K. MacLoed, Glendale, in memory of a beloved sister for Flashadder Church Building Fund; both per Treasurer; £20, a friend, for Church Building Fund; per D. M. MacKay.

**Fort William:** £10, Mrs B. per envelope in plate; £20 Anon., Psalm 103, per F. MacN.; £10, friend, Caol, for Sust. Fund per D. MacN.

**Glendale:** £50 from the estate of Catherine Colquhoun for property fund; £20 Glendale friend, where most needed; £40, J. & C. O. for Congregational Funds; all per Rev. D. Nicolson.

**Greenock:** A Friend, Glasgow, £10; a friend, Uig, per Rev. MacL. £10; Anon., £40 for T.B.S.; estate of late Mrs Mary Cameron, £500 for general purposes.

**Harris (South):** £20, Mr & Mrs D. Macleod, Strath Conon for congregational fund, per J. Nicholson; £10, Friend, Lingerbay, congregational fund per D. MacKenzie; £10, Friend, Stockinish, congregational fund per Rev. K. Macleod; £10, Anon., Sabbath School donation.

**Kames:** £50, Friend, Kyles of Bute, Church funds; £500 legacy from will of late Mrs Mary Cameron for general purposes of congregation; £10, Friend, Balfron, church funds.

**Lochcarron:** Friend, Carnoustie, £20 in collection plate.

**Portree:** Anon., £8, T.B.S., envelope in plate; Anon., £20 Sust. fund, envelope in plate; Anon., £5 Foreign Mission Fund, envelope in plate; Anon., £20 Foreign Mission Fund, envelope in plate; Anon., £6 Italian Mission Fund, envelope in plate; Glendale friend, £5 for congreg. purposes per F. M.; H. C. £11 Sust. Fund per F. M.

**Raasay:** £20 Friend, Raasay for Foreign Mission; £10, Friend Raasay, for Home Mission; £40 envelope in plate for sending Bibles and Testaments abroad; Rachel and Sheila £18, communion expenses; all per Treasurer. All the following for Car Fund per Treasurer —

£10, Rachel and Sheila; £20 R. G., Raasay; £15, 14-15 Inverarish; £10, Anon.; £10, Anon; £20, Macrae, Mill Park; £30 N. MacK., Raasay; £6, Anon.; £30, Anon.; £10, Campbell, Raasay; £60, L. MacL., Raasay; Anon., £10; Anon., £20; M.G., £15; T.M.L., £10; J.M.M.L. £10; Anon., £30; C.F. £10; S.T., Raasay, £10; Macleod family £10; Anon., £5.

Correction in October Magazine should have read A. & C. MacL., Raasay £20.

**Staffin:** J. D., Portree, £40 for Congregational purposes, envelope in plate.

**Stirling:** £20 in memory of loved ones, for church funds, in plate.

**Stornoway:** £10 Anon., in plate for Home Mission fund per Treasurer; £40, M. & C., door collection, per Rev. J. MacLeod.

**Uig:** Anon., £10; Anon., £10; Anon., £10 all for communion expenses; D. W. £10 for communion expenses; Anon., £20 for Church door collection, all envelopes in plate.