

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine

AND

MONTHLY RECORD

(Issued by a Committee of the Free Presbyterian Synod.)

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth."—Ps. lx. 4.

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Pressing Towards the Mark.

FROM the eventful day when the face of the Apostle Paul was turned towards heaven there was no lingering look cast behind nor one sigh of regret that he had left all for the Lord that had loved him and given Himself for him. The tremendous earnestness and energy that naturally characterised him were turned by the Holy Spirit into new channels, ennobling them with a heavenly dignity. No one can read the Acts of the Apostles and the Pauline epistles without being impressed with the whole-hearted devotion and zeal with which this great herald of the Cross proclaimed the divine dignity and peerless excellency of his Lord. To him Jesus was the great God and his Saviour Jesus Christ. Nothing short of divine honour paid to his Lord would satisfy the Apostle's heart. We marvel as we read the wonderful story of his life so full of human interest, so disinterestedly lived, so patiently seeking the highest interests with noble aims and burning eagerness to realise them. As we read the 11th chapter of ii. Corinthians we are impressed that these are not the idle claims of a boaster who is wishing to impress his audience; but the sober words of truth of one who without ostentation is making known what he endured for Christ's cause in the world. It is a noble record which even his bitterest enemies could not besmear. As the record is read and pondered over the question naturally arises in the mind, what was the motive power that energised the Apostle to undergo such trials, endure such hardships and accomplish such tremendous tasks. The Apostle himself furnishes the answer—it was the love of Christ constraining him. His whole aim in life and death was

to glorify the Saviour who had so graciously redeemed one who had been a persecutor and a blasphemer. Whatever others may have thought of the Lord Jesus, Paul could never forget that it was not by works of righteousness which he had done, but according to His great mercy that he had been saved. It was so manifestly an act of the sovereign grace of God that he gloried in magnifying that grace. Notwithstanding the clearness of the call and the distinctness with which he saw the road mapped out before him, with the goal in the far distance, it proved no easy path to the city—"When we were come into Macedonia," he says on one occasion, "our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears" (ii. Cor. vii. 5). The Apostle tells us openly of the difficulties that beset him as he went forward with his eye intently fixed on the goal. Within, the remnants of indwelling sin were asserting themselves. The struggle was not a sham battle—sin was a reality, a terrible reality which he dreaded. It was no visionary evil that wrung from his heart the cry: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death" (Rom. vii. 24). There are no enemies so difficult to deal with as the enemies in one's own house. Outside enemies may be troublesome enough and malicious enough but there is something about the enmity of the enemies of one's own house that is particularly annoying. It was such enemies as these that the Apostle had to contend against. He had given up the world with its honours, applause and allurements, without a sigh, but the world within called forth many a sigh from his heart. It is true that through the cross he was crucified to the world and the world to him. He was dying a lingering death to the world, his desires in that direction were getting weaker and weaker and the world, which crucified the Lord of glory, was dying to him. Another world was taking its place and was one day to completely fill his heart. In running the race to the goal he was laying aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us.

But he had not only to contend with inward foes—there were also outward enemies, subtle, aggressive instruments of the devil, that made the progress no easy matter. There were also false

friends, concerning whom the Apostle has to make complaint, who failed him in the day of trial. In that wonderful account he leaves of his trials he says: "In labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods; once was I stoned; thrice I suffered shipwreck; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeying often; in perils of waters; in perils of robbers; in perils by mine own countrymen; in perils by the heathen; in perils in the city; in perils in the wilderness; in perils in the sea; in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness; in watchings often; in hunger and thirst; in fastings often; in cold and nakedness. Besides those things that are without that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches" (ii. Cor. xi. 23-28): But in the face of it all he kept his eye fixed on the goal and pressed towards the mark. As a minister of God he approved himself "by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report; as deceivers and yet true; as unknown and yet well-known; as dying and behold we live; as chastened and not killed" (ii. Cor. vi. 8-9). One would have thought that such a devoted servant of Christ would have escaped the attention of men who were babes in service and witness-bearing but it was not so. He fought a good fight and kept the faith and God set His seal upon his labours.

The faithful bear a twofold affection in their hearts. For on the one side they are vexed, yea, distracted by sundry fears and cares; but God breatheth secret gladness into them, and that according to their necessity, so that no gulf of miseries, howsoever deep, may swallow them up.—*Calvin*.

Work for Christ may be done from many spurious motives, and from excitement, from emulation, from party-spirit, or from love of praise. *Suffering* for Christ will seldom be endured from any but one motive, that motive is the grace of God.—*Bishop Ryle*.

The Moral Law.

A Sermon preached by the Rev. W. ROMAINE, M.A.

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandments holy, just, and good.” (Roms. vii. 12.)

THE great Creator and Possessor of heaven and earth has an indisputable authority to make laws for the government of His creatures, and to require their obedience. Since every thing that they have is received from His hands, and held under Him at His pleasure, it therefore behoves them to inquire upon what terms they hold it. And if God has given them any laws, it is their duty to study them, and their interest to obey them. If there be any sanctions to enforce these laws, any rewards or punishments, they should inquire whether these things are to be known, and by what means discovered; that they may obtain the reward, and escape the punishment.

Whenever a serious, unprejudiced person desires to be satisfied in these points, which so nearly concern his present peace of conscience, and his future happiness, he will soon be convinced that God has made a gracious provision for his instruction. God has opened His mind and will in this matter. He has recorded His laws, and published them. The sacred volume of Divine statutes is in our hands, and in our mother tongue. It is so very short, that none can want time to peruse it; and it is so very plain and intelligible, as to the rule of duty, that none can plead ignorance. He that runs may read it; and the simple may understand it, and learn knowledge; for upon a very cursory view of this Divine treatise, it will appear that there are three distinct bodies of law mentioned in it; namely, the moral law, the ceremonial law, and the law of faith. We are all highly concerned to inquire into the nature of these laws; and therefore I purpose, through God's assistance, to inquire into the scope and design of each of them. At present I shall confine myself to the moral law, which alone is spoken of in my text. The apostle is treating of its usefulness to discover the sinfulness of sin: “I had not known sin,” says he, “but by the law.” The law must first lay down a rule, before it can be known what sin is, which is the transgression of that rule. “For I had not known lust,” and that the very first rising and motion of evil in the heart was a sin, “unless the law had said,

Thou shalt not covet." This is the law of the tenth commandment; from whence it is very evident, that Paul is here treating of the moral law, which is of such perfect purity, as to reach to the desires and covetings of the heart; and which, by restraining them, makes them appear more sinful, and grow more outrageous: But sin took an occasion by the commandment, and wrought in me all manner of concupiscence; for without the law, sin is dead; although it be in us, yet it is not perceived, until it be held before the holy, spiritual law of God, and then it begins to stir and rage; for, as it follows, "I was once alive without the law," says the apostle; when I knew not the law, I thought myself alive; my conscience never troubled me, nor did I apprehend the deadly nature of sin; "but when the commandment came," when I began to understand the commandment in His spiritual nature, and it came to my conscience, and was applied with a Divine power to my heart, "then sin revived, and I died"; I found myself dead in trespasses and sins; "for the same commandment which was ordained unto life, was found to be unto me unto death; but sin took occasion by the commandment, not through any fault in the commandment, but entirely through my own fault, deceived me, and by it slew me. What shall we say then? Is the law and the commandment sin? God forbid. The law is holy; all the fault is in us, who abuse the law; "and the commandment is holy, and just, and good." The occasion of the words, and the context thus in part opened and explained, may help us to determine;

I. What the moral law is;

II. Whether it be still in force;

III. Whether we all have kept it; and if not,

IV. What is the penalty due to the breach of it. And then I shall draw some practical inferences from these particulars. And may the Spirit of the living God apply what shall be spoken. May He enlighten all your understandings with a clear view of the spiritual nature of the moral law, that by it you may be brought to the knowledge of sin, and to see and to feel your want of a Saviour. Under the teachings of this good Spirit, let us consider,

I. What the moral law is. I define it to be the holy, just, and good will of God, made known and promulged to His creatures, in all these particulars, wherein He requires their perfect obedience in order to their happiness. The law is the discovery of His will; for the almighty Creator and sovereign Lord of heaven and earth governs all His works and creatures according to the good pleasure of His own will. His will is the absolutely perfect law of the natural world. He hath given to the inanimate works of His hands, a law which shall not be broken. The active powers in nature shall work, and passive matter shall obey by an unalterable rule, until the heavens shall be folded up like a scroll, and the earth and all the works therein shall be burnt up. And His will is as absolute a law to His rational creatures, as to the natural agents; because he can enact no laws, but what partake of His own adorable perfections. His law is His will made known. It is a copy of His infinitely pure mind. It is a fair transcript of His holiness, justice, goodness, and of every other Divine attribute; for by the law He discovers to His creatures, what it is His will they should be and do, in order to preserve His favour. He would have them holy, just, and good; and the law makes known to them the rule of their obedience, by an exact conformity to which they are holy, just, and good. The will of God revealed in the law is holy, and conformity to it is holiness. Holiness, in the Old Testament language, signifies a separation from impurity; and when applied to the Divine nature, it rather expresses what God is not, than what He is. It is a negative idea, denoting an entire separation from everything which can defile. Holiness, in God, excludes all possibility of pollution. In Him there neither is, nor can be, the least impurity. He is of purer eyes than to behold the least iniquity. He cannot even look upon any thing which is in the least unclean; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Now the law is an exact copy of God's holiness. It is the outward discovery of His most holy mind and will, informing His creatures how perfectly pure they must preserve themselves, if they would preserve His favour. The law discovers to them what God is, and shows how like Him they ought to be, in holiness. And since God cannot behold the least impurity,

consequently His law cannot, because it is His mind and will revealed concerning this matter. He will not suffer any deviation from His law, no, not in thought; for the language of the law is positive and express out of the mouth of the supreme Lawgiver Himself, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." And are you, my brethern, thus holy? This should be a matter of close examination. Are you what the law requires you to be? Do you look upon the law as perfectly, infinitely holy in itself, even as holy as God is? and have you considered sin as an offence against the holiness of God and of His law, even such an unpardonable offence, that you could never make the least satisfaction for it? It is very evident these things are not well understood, because the practice of mankind shows what low ideas they entertain of them. What makes sin appear light and little, and some offences small? Is it not, because sinners are ignorant of the absolutely perfect holiness of the law? And after they have broken it, how mean an opinion have they of its holiness, when they think that a little sorrow and some few tears, that their repentance and amendment can make them holy, and satisfy the demands of the broken law! If any of you entertain these unworthy ideas of God and of His law, you should consider that although God does require you to be perfectly holy, yet He can require nothing of you but what is just. The law is just, as well as holy; just in all its demands, and just in the rule of its process in rewarding obedience, and punishing transgression. The Scripture word for justice is taken from human affairs, and from thence is applied to Divine. In the first ages of the world, money was paid and received by weight, and he who kept an even balance in paying and receiving was a just man. His justice consisted in keeping the scales even, in weighing all things with an equal balance, and in giving and taking only what was lawful and right. Now the Law holds this balance of justice in its hands, that it may prove the Judge of all the earth does right, and will be glorified in all that He requires of His creatures; for the holy obedience which He demands of them is a just obedience. He had a sovereign authority to require it, and He gave them power to pay it Him; and, therefore, they could not complain of any injustice, if He should inflict the punishment threatened to the disobedient, any more than if He should bestow the reward

promised to the obedient. Thus the law is just. It is the exact copy of God's justice, and is as perfectly just as God is. It can no more require and do an unjust thing, than God can; for the law only discovers what is the infinitely just mind and will of God concerning the behaviour of His creatures. The law says, "Do this, and thou shalt live: transgress this, and dying, thou shalt surely die." This is the will of the supreme Lawgiver, and His justice is engaged to see the honour of His law maintained, as well in punishing transgression with death, as in rewarding obedience with life. The law cannot possibly do any injustice, because it is directed by the unerring will of God. God, and His will, and His law, are alike just. For it is written in the law, "The Lord's work is perfect; for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is He" (Deut. xxxii. 4).

All His ways and dealings with the children of men are perfectly just, and they are also good. His law is good. It partakes of the goodness of its Divine Author, inasmuch as it tends to promote the welfare and happiness of His creatures. The creature was made to show forth the glory of its great Creator, and the law was the rule by which it was to walk in order to promote His glory; and in this holy walking there was all good to be met with. It was the way of pleasantness, and the path of peace. It preserved the assurance of the Divine favour, afforded a perpetual feast of conscience, and gave sure and certain hopes of a glorious immortality: "for Moses thus describeth the righteousness, which is of the law, that the man who doeth these things shall live by them." If he do all the things written in the book of the law, he shall live unto God, and shall live with God. He shall enjoy a life of happiness here in the love and communion of God, and he shall enjoy an endless life of glory. Surely, then, the law is good; since the keeping of it would have produced all good, and since the transgression of it has brought all the evil upon man, which he can suffer in time and in eternity. Consider, my brethren, how good the law is, from that deluge of evil which came in upon the breach of it. When the Lord God, at the end of His six days' work, surveyed all that He had made, behold, it was very good. There was then no evil of any kind to afflict either body

or soul; but by sin, the body became subject to sickness, pain, and death, and the soul to guilt and misery; and in the next life both body and soul were subject to the worm that never dieth, and to the fire that never shall be quenched.

Such is the goodness of the law. It is the all-wise provision which God has made for His own Glory, and for the happiness of His creatures, to whom He has published it. He made it known to our first parents in paradise. It was their rule of action, while they stood in the likeness and image of God. They had no opposition then to His good, and acceptable, and perfect will; but the understanding had a clear view of it, the will chose it, and the heart loved it, and they were able to do it with all their mind and with all their strength. And when sin entered into the world, the will of God was not changed, nor His law repealed. The law was in full force from Adam to Moses, in whose time the Lord God recorded it with the most awful majesty on Mount Sinai, and engraved it, with His own hands, upon two tables of stone. And it stands unrepealed to this day; promising life to obedience, and threatening death to transgression.

Since, then, the law has been properly promulged, an holy, just, and good law, that altereth not, let us hear what it requires. It is the will of the Lawgiver, that he who doeth the things written in the book of the law shall live by them. But then he must do all things without exception; he must not fail in any one point. If he will enter into life, he must keep all the commandments. He must be universally holy, just, and good, as the law is. If he ever receive the promised reward, he must perform the condition; that is, he must pay the law perfect, uninterrupted obedience, with every faculty of soul and body, in their utmost strength and vigour; for it cannot suffer any transgression, but for the least inflicts the threatened punishment.

This is an essential property of the moral law. Upon the very first offence it cuts the sinner off from all claim to the promised reward, and as to anything that he can do, cuts him off for ever. It is not in his power to make himself innocent again. Having once failed in his obedience, the law knows nothing of mercy, cannot accept the greatest repentance, nor be

satisfied with the deepest sorrow for what is past; but immediately passes sentence according to what is written: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." If you fail in one single instance of obedience, you do not continue to perform all things, but fall under the curse of the broken law, and are as much liable to punishment, though not in the same degree, as if you had failed in every instance. In which sense the words of James are to be understood, "He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all."

I have now gone through the several parts of the definition before given of the moral law, and it appears to be the holy, just, and good will of God, made known and promulged to His creatures in all those particulars wherein He requires their perfect obedience, in order to their happiness. Since this is the case, it highly concerns every one of us to inquire, whether we be under an obligation to keep this law, which is the Second particular I proposed to consider; namely,

Whether the moral law be still in force, and still requires of them who expect to be saved by it, perfect, unsinning obedience. And upon the first proposal of this question, it would occur to every attentive person, that the law being as holy, just, and good, as God is, can no more admit of any variableness or shadow of turning, than God Himself can. He says, "I change not"; and how then can His law, which is the discovery of His mind and will, be changeable? Man may change, but the law is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. It altereth not: if man does not keep it, it will lose none of its honour. Justice will be glorified by supporting the holiness of the law, and by inflicting the deserved punishment on the transgressors of it. But let us consult the law and the testimony. The Psalmist says (Psa. cxi. 7, 8), "All His commandments are sure; they stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness." All His commandments, not excepting one, are fixed upon a sure, immovable foundation; for they stand fast for ever and ever in full force, established by the unchangeable will of God, and are ordained in perfect harmony with all the Divine attributes, being done in truth, which cannot lie, and uprightness, which cannot err. To the same purpose he says

in another Psalm, cxix., 160, "Thy word is true from the beginning; and every one of Thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." These righteous judgments are the decrees of the moral law, and there is not one of them that can be repealed, but they shall all endure in full force for ever. Our blessed Saviour has thrown great light upon this subject. The whole moral law is summed up in the ten commandments, which He has reduced to these two—the love of God, and the love of our neighbour: on these two commandments, says He, hang all the law and the prophets; for love is the fulfilling of the law, and love never faileth; consequently, the law of love can never fail, but its debt of gratitude will be paying; and happy is he who shall be paying it to all eternity. Thus the moral law stands established by the authority of our Divine Teacher. In His sermon upon the mount, He reforms the abuses and false comments, which the Scribes and Pharisees had put upon the moral law, and He begins with this remark (Matt. v. 17), "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil": to fulfil the law by paying it infinitely perfect obedience, and by being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; and by this active and passive obedience, He showed that it was easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than that one tittle of the law should fail. If the law could have abated anything of its demands, there would have been no necessity for Christ's fulfilling it by His obedience and death. But the law was unalterable. It could not be satisfied with any obedience, but what was absolutely holy, just, and good; and as all men had failed in paying it this obedience, they must therefore have been punished in their own persons, unless God, out of the riches of His wisdom and grace, had found out a way, by which the honour of His law might be advanced, and yet the sinner might be saved. And that was by sending His Son to fulfil the law. He was equal to this work, because He was God, equal with the Father; and He took our nature, and God and man were united in one Christ, that He might be capable of doing and suffering and meriting in an infinite degree. Accordingly, in the fulness of time He stood up in the place of sinners; and therefore He became liable to do and to suffer whatever law and justice demanded, that having magnified the law by obeying its precepts, and made it honourable by suffering

its penalties, the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in them who should believe on Him to everlasting life; but the law is still in force to condemn every one who does not savingly believe on Him, and will be for ever in force to inflict the deserved punishment.

It is evident then, that the moral law stands to this day unrepealed. Although man be changed from what he was at first, yet the law is not. It is still the holy, just, and good will of God, requiring perfect obedience. And when the holiness of the law is violated, the justice of God is bound to see the sanctions of the law executed upon the disobedient; and the Divine goodness cannot plead an arrest of judgment, because it is a good law which is broken, and therefore it is a good thing to see that the transgressors of it be paid the wages of sin.

My brethren, are not these very alarming truths, and ought they not to suggest to every one of you such reflections as these? What! am I under the law, bound to keep it with a perfect unsinning obedience? Can the law abate nothing of its demands; but must I love God always, and with all my mind, heart, soul, and strength, and my neighbour as myself, if I hope to enter into life by keeping the commandments? Surely, then, I ought to examine whether I have always loved God and my neighbour, as the law requires. If these be the thoughts of your hearts, then you are prepared to follow me to a serious consideration of the Third head of discourse; namely,

Whether we all have kept the moral law. Its demands are very great. It will not accept of any obedience, unless it be continual. You must continue, without the least interruption, to do all things that are written in the book of the law. And have any of you walked with a steadfast course in the way of the commandments, without once turning aside? Consult conscience. Does it not accuse? Consult Scripture. Does it not say, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way"? leaving the way of God's commandments.

The law also requires spiritual obedience. It reaches to the inmost thoughts and intents of the heart. You must never have one sinful thought in you, if you expect life from your keeping the law; for the law is spiritual; it searches the heart

and the reins, and strikes at the very first motion or rising of sin. One sinful desire cuts you off from legal righteousness, as much as ten thousand sins; for it is written, "Thou shalt not covet"; and he that covets, offends in one point, and therefore is guilty of all.

Besides, the law is perfect, perfectly holy, just, and good; for it is the will of God, and can no more suffer the least iniquity in its sight, than God Himself can. It will abate nothing of absolutely perfect obedience. All the strength, and all the mind, every faculty of the soul and body is to be exerted, and with the utmost vigour, in the observance of the law. The heart, too, is to love it, and the affections are to be delighted with obeying it.

This is what the law demands of every one of you. It will have a continual, a spiritual, and a perfect love of God, without one thought ever arising in opposition to His holy will, and the love of your neighbour must be like the love of yourself. And does any man or woman keep the law in this manner? Do any of you? Certainly you cannot suppose that you have never broken the law, because you have just now declared the contrary out of your own mouths. You have confessed this day, and on your bended knees, before God—"We have offended against Thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done." And when you spake these words, did not your conscience assure you that they were true? For have you not offended against the holy law of God, and have not you left undone what it required, and done what it forbid? Surely you did not prevaricate with God, when in another part of the service you confessed that you had broken all the commandments. The rubric says,—“Then shall the priest, turning to the people, rehearse distinctly all the ten commandments; and the people still kneeling, shall, after every commandment, ask God mercy for their transgressions thereof for the time past, and grace to keep the same for the time to come”; and accordingly, after every commandment, you prayed God to have mercy upon you for breaking it, and to incline your hearts to keep it. And is it not certain, then, that you

have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God, by robbing His law of its due obedience?

What! would you make me a breaker of all the commandments, says some self-righteous formalist? I never murdered anybody, nor committed adultery. No! Had you never one angry thought or word against your neighbour? This is murder. Or did not one impure and unclean thought ever arise in your mind? This is adultery, according to the spiritual law of God. You look at your actions in the glass of man's law, and because you have not outwardly offended, you think you have kept the law of God. There is your mistake. Look at Matt. v. 21, etc., and at 1 John iii. 15, and you will see that anger and hatred are murder in the eye of God; and read Matt. v. 27, 28, where our Lord teaches you, that one lustful look is heart-adultery. God regards the heart, and heart-sin is as much sin against His spiritual law, as outward transgression; and when the formalist sees his heart, naked and open, as God sees it, he will not pretend that he has not broken all the commandments, but will rather desire God to have mercy upon him, and incline his heart to keep His laws.

If any of you refuse to be determined by these authorities, hear what the Lord God has declared concerning you, and His decree will, I hope, be decisive. He is represented in the 14th Psalm, as looking down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek after God: but they were all gone out of the way; they were altogether become filthy, there was none that did good, no, not one: there was not one of the children of men that did good, and sinned not. We have in the third chapter of the Romans, the apostle's comment upon this psalm. After having proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin, and transgressors of the law, as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one, legally righteous, he says, verse 19, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." Thus God Himself has declared, that you have not done good, that you are under sin, and in His sight guilty. And what can you object to these Scriptures? Sirs, are you not greatly alarmed at hearing them? For they come home to every one's case, and ought

to reach every one's conscience. And what are the present apprehensions of your minds concerning them? Have you broken the holy law of God, and you know you have, and do you not dread the consequence of your transgressions? What can tempt you to hope that you shall escape the threatened penalty? Has your sorrow for breaking the law, or your repentance, or your amendment, merit enough so far to undo the sin committed, as that law cannot demand, nor justice inflict punishment for it? Or have you some blind notions of absolute mercy in God, as if He would cease to be just, rather than not be merciful to you? Men and brethren, if any or all of these false notions tempt you to be secure under the breach of the law, and under the wrath of the almighty Lawgiver, let us bring them to the standard of Scripture, and inquire,

What is the penalty due to the breach of the moral law?

When God published His law, He enforced it with proper sanctions. He promised reward to the obedient,—“Do this, and thou shalt live.” And He threatened punishment to the disobedient,—“In the day that thou transgressest, dying thou shalt surely die.” This is the rule of God's process. If you keep the law, you shall have the life promised: but if you transgress, you shall be alienated from the life of God, and subject to death; to the first and to the second death, to a death of nature, and to a death of grace; for both these kinds of death are the punishment of sin:—“For as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” And beside this death of the body, there is a death of the soul,—“The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. xviii. 4); it shall be alienated from the life of God for ever and ever, and shall suffer the vengeance of eternal fire. So that the broken law not only cuts you off from the fountain of life, but also pours out its curses, and inflicts real torments upon the unholy, the unjust, and the evil, according to the description in Rev. xxi. 8:—“And the fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolators, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

These are the penalties which every transgressor of the law deserves, and these God has threatened to inflict. His will herein is unchangeable. His truth requires the performance of His threatenings. His justice is bound to see them inflicted. His holiness and goodness call upon justice for the immediate execution of the penalties due to sin. And how can the sinner escape? What can he do to deliver himself? He has nothing in his own power wherewith to satisfy the demands of law and justice. Suppose him sorrowful for his sin; that sorrow proves him guilty, and leaves him so. Say, he tries to repent; the law knows nothing of repentance; its language is, Do this, or thou shalt die. Grant, he amends his life for the future; yet what becomes of his past sins? Is his doing part of his duty any satisfaction for neglecting part of it? The law makes no provision for any such groundless pleas, but insists upon perfect obedience, and for the least failure puts the sinner under the curse, and under the wrath of God, and there leaves him to suffer the just punishment of his sin.

But some persons perhaps may object, If this be the case, what flesh can be saved? None; no, not one can be saved by keeping the law; for all have sinned and transgressed the law of God, therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.

But still some may ask, Why then do you preach the law? Because it is a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ. It teaches them the nature of sin, and convinces them of their want of a Saviour. "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20, and vii. 7). Men are secure and careless in sin, until the law, that worketh wrath, reach their consciences; then they begin to know sin, and to feel the exceeding sinfulness of it; "for it is the ministration of condemnation" (2 Cor. iii. 9). The law, spiritually understood and applied, convinces the sinner that he is a condemned creature, shows him in God's word the sentence passed upon him, and makes him dread the execution of it. And thus it becomes to him "the ministration of death" (2 Cor. iii. 7), proving him to be guilty of sin, and to be deserving of death. The apostle's case is very common. I thought myself alive, says he, without the law: he had no doubt but he was alive to God, while he was a strict Pharisee; but when the holy,

spiritual nature of the law was made known to him, he found himself to be dead in trespasses and sins. This, then, is the office of the law. It brings transgressors to the knowledge of sin, condemns them for it, and puts them under the sentence of death; and when the law has thus convinced them of their guilt and of their danger, they then find their want of a Saviour. But without this work of the law, they would not have been sensible that they stood in any need of him. If they were never sick, they would never send for the physician. If they were never brought to the knowledge of sin, they would never desire the knowledge of a Saviour. If they never found themselves under guilt and condemnation, they would never sue for His pardon; and would never ask life of Him, unless they found that they deserved to die the first and the second death. For these reasons the law must be taught. It is the schoolmaster appointed of God to bring sinners unto Christ; and when the schoolmaster comes in the name and power of the Divine Spirit, and convinces them of their distressed state and condition, and makes them sensible of their guilt and of their misery, then He brings them to Christ, earnestly to ask, and humbly to receive, mercy from Him Who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

And now, men and brethren, let us hear this schoolmaster, who is sent from heaven to teach us a Divine lesson. He speaks to you, ye careless and secure in sin, and denounces the anger of the almighty Lawgiver against you. Oh! with what a terrible voice does he reveal the wrath of God from heaven against all your ungodliness and unrighteousness. There is nothing dreadful in earth or hell, nothing to be feared in time or in eternity, but what is included in this most awful sentence,—“Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them” (Deut. xxvii. 26). Have you done them? have you done ALL that the law required? and in the perfect manner required? I dare appeal to your consciences. You may try to stifle their evidence, but they will speak; and do they not at this very time charge you with sin? You know that you have not kept all the law, and what then is the consequence? Why, the law pronounces you cursed, and it would make your ears tingle, and your heart melt within you, if you were to consider what

it is to be under the curses of the law, and to have the wrath of God abiding upon you for ever and ever. Have you no sense of these things, and no fearful apprehensions about your present condition? Is not conscience alarmed at the greatness of your danger? and do not the terrors of the law stir you up to flee from the wrath to come? If not, if all be quiet within, while you hear the law of the most high God, which ought to convince you of your guilt, and to make you apprehensive of your misery, then you are indeed sleeping the sleep of death. Oh! may the God of all mercy take pity on you and awaken you, lest you should sleep on, until the curses of the law be actually inflicted, and wrath come upon you to the uttermost.

Some persons may think it happy for them, that they are not careless and secure in sin; for they endeavour to keep the law as well as they can, and God is a merciful God, He will forgive them, when they do amiss. This is a common, but it is a very dangerous mistake: for it supposes that the law can abate something of its demands, and can accept of an imperfect obedience. Whereas the law is the holy, just, and good will of God, which altereth not. It requires perfect and universal obedience; and in case of the least transgression condemns the sinner, and passes sentence. If he plead that he never offended but in this particular instance, that is pleading guilty. If a man be indicted for murder, and the fact be proved upon him, and he be found guilty, and the judge pass sentence, what would it avail him, if he should make this plea, that he had never been guilty of high treason? The judge would observe to him, that he was not accused of high treason, but of murder, of which he was found guilty and condemned, and his not being a traitor was no reason why he should not be executed for being a murderer. So your not having broken this or that command have broken any of them. Suppose you are not an adulterer, merit cannot save you from the just sentence of the law, if you yet if you are a murderer, you deserve to die, and to receive the wages of sin:—"For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law" (James ii. 11).

But some will say, Shall we not be accepted, if we endeavour to keep the law as well as we can? No. The style of the law is, *Do*. It does not say, *Endeavour to keep the commandment*, but it speaks with authority, *Do it, and do it perfectly*, and in every point, and with all the mind, and with all the soul, and with all the heart, and with all the strength. Here is no room left for good resolutions, or good endeavours, but an actual performance of the whole law is demanded. The least failing or short coming is a transgression, and therefore is an absolute forfeiture of legal righteousness, and of every blessing promised to the perfect keeping of the law.

Some persons go a little farther than good endeavours, and think God will accept them for their sincere obedience. Whereas the law has nothing to do with sincerity. When you come to be tried by the law, the only question will be, whether you have broken it or not? If not, the promised reward is yours. You may claim it as your due: for to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But if you have broken the law, your sincere obedience cannot be accepted in the place of perfect obedience; because the law has made no provision for your case. It requires a continual performance of all its commands, and in a perfect manner; and if you fail, and then plead your sincerity in your favour, that is owning your guilt, and is a confession of your not having continued in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them; and therefore, as your sincere obedience is not perfect, it leaves you still under the curse of the law, and under the wrath of God.

There are other persons, who think that there is some kind of absolute mercy in God, and that although they have sinned, yet He is ready to forgive. But this is not the character of God as drawn in the law: for the law considers Him as the sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, having absolute authority to enact laws for the government of His creatures, over whom He presides with unerring justice, to see His laws carried into execution. Justice is the ruling attribute of the supreme Law-giver. As His law is just, so are its sanctions. It is equally just in Him to punish transgressors, as to reward the obedient: for the Judge of all the earth cannot but do right, and distribute impartial justice. Whether He can show mercy to the guilty,

is not the question; but whether He has made any provision in the law for showing them mercy; and He certainly has not. God is not described in the law as a God of mercy, but as a sovereign Judge, whose wrath, and not whose mercy, is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.

But if the Lawgiver has made no promise in His law, that He will show mercy to sinners, yet will He not be prevailed on by their sorrow and tears, their repentance and amendment? There is not one word in the law to encourage a sinner to hope for mercy, because he is sorry for his sin. It is full of threatenings against the least offence, and, for the least, cuts the offender off from all claim to legal righteousness. When he is in this state, what merit is there in sorrow, that it should change the laws of the most high God, or what efficacy in tears, that these should cause him to be reputed innocent, who is in fact guilty? He has forfeited all right and title to the happiness, which the law promised to obedience; and when he sees this, he grows sorry for what he has done amiss. So does a murderer, when found guilty, and condemned to suffer; but does the judge pardon him, because he is sorry for his crime? By no means. But he gives signs of true sorrow. He weeps bitterly. Suppose he does, yet the law demands obedience, and not tears for disobeying. These tears flow from a sense of guilt, and if there were rivers of them, they could not wash the stain of guilt out of the conscience; because the law has not ascribed any such virtue to them, as to accept of many tears for having offended, instead of unsinning obedience. And granting he goes a step farther:—he repents and amends. But what becomes of the broken law and of the deserved penalty? Can simple repentance undo the sin committed? Or can amendment for the future avert the penalty already deserved? No, these are things impossible. The law will have obedience or punishment, and justice is engaged to see that the law be obeyed, and the threatened punishment inflicted; and therefore, after you have disobeyed, the law can allow no place for repentance, nor no way to escape punishment, although you seek it carefully with tears.

But if the law cannot show the offender mercy, does it leave him without hope? Yes. It can show him no mercy, nor does

it give him any hope. It convinces him of sin, condemns him for it, and sentences him to the first and to the second death.

What! must he despair then? Of being able to attain mercy by any means in his own power he must despair—despair of working out for himself such righteousness as the law demands—despair of escaping, by any sorrow or repentance of his, the punishment which justice is bound to inflict. And when he finds himself in this guilty and helpless state, then will he be glad to hear of a Saviour. Blessed be God, there is salvation for him who despairs of being saved by the law. To him the Gospel offers (or proclaims) a free pardon. When he flies to the Gospel, seeking to be saved by free grace, then there is mercy for him and plenteous redemption. When he cries out, Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the curses of the broken law, and from the justice of an offended God? the Gospel points out unto him the victorious Saviour, who hath redeemed His people from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, and hath satisfied all the demands of His Father's justice, having made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness; and, therefore, He can save to the uttermost. If there be any of you, whom the broken law accuses, and whom justice is pursuing to inflict the threatened punishment, fly to this almighty Saviour, and you will find in Him a safe refuge. He can save you from the condemnation of the law; for there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. And He can deliver you from the stroke of justice; for who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect, since it is God Himself that justifieth them?

This is the great salvation set before you, who despair of being saved by the law. It is a free, full, and eternal salvation. He who has it to give, has graciously convinced you of your want of it, and has made you willing to receive it as a free gift. Ask it, then, of Him deeply sensible of your unworthiness, and of your helplessness, and He will incline His ear unto your petitions; for He never cast out the prayer of the poor destitute. Ask, and ye shall have the precious gift of faith, and great joy and peace in believing, that you are redeemed from the curse of the law, and that you are enriched with the blessings of the Gospel. You will be made the children of God, and will receive

the adoption of sons through faith in Christ Jesus; and if sons, then you will be heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, of an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you; which may the Father reserve for you all, for the sake of His beloved Son, through the effectual grace of the Holy Spirit, that to the three Persons in one Jehovah you may be happy in ascribing equal honour and glory, and blessing and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Worship of Burns.*

WE are glad to observe a bold protest against the growing worship of the poet Burns on the part of many Scotsmen at home and abroad, some of them even professing to stand high in the Christian world. The temptation to this is quite intelligible, and it is quite in keeping with that dangerous mixture of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, which forms one of the singular features of the present time, "Having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof." Of course it is impossible to deny the immense talent of Burns, but a man deserves no praise for the mere possession of talent. The great question is, and must be, now and hereafter, how has this talent, which is a great gift from God, been employed? And if little more can be said, in the language of another, of any man's talents, than that "God gave the use and the Devil the application," the man is only the more criminal. We have read Mr. Ferguson's sermon on the subject of Burns with great pleasure, and we cordially tender him our thanks for his manly protest against what is becoming little better than a modern worship of Bacchus. Admitting that Burns wrote many beautiful things (and we scarcely think Mr. Ferguson always does him full justice in this respect), the evil of his verses immensely preponderated over the good; and the influence of his writings has been, upon the whole, extremely pernicious to

* This is a notice of the Rev. Fergus Ferguson's sermon on the "Worship of Burns" which appeared in the "Watchword" (March, 1869). It is interesting in view of statements made recently in connection with the controversy which appeared in the Northern papers to note that the "Watchword" was edited by Dr. Begg.
—The Editor.

Scotland. Of course Mr. Ferguson has met with much abuse for his courage and faithfulness, but he knows that no man can be of the least public service in the cause of Christ and truth who is not prepared for this. "Marvel not if the world hate you." "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." The great pity is, that there are so few ministers in the present day, possessed of faith and nerve enough to brave the tide and denounce public wickedness. This is one reason why the pulpit has lost its power, in so far as it has really lost it. We most cordially thank Mr. Ferguson, and commend his sermon.

Induction at Dingwall.

On Tuesday, the 15th day of May, 1930, the Northern Presbytery meet at Dingwall for the induction of the Rev. D. A. Macfarlane, M.A., formerly of Oban.

The Rev. D. J. Matheson preached from the words—"Holding forth the word of life," Philippians, ii. 16. Thereafter, the Rev. Ewan Macqueen put the usual questions to Mr. Macfarlane, who, on answering them satisfactorily, and on signing the formula, was admitted to the pastoral charge of the joint congregation of Dingwall and Beauly. After receiving the right hand of fellowship, the newly-admitted pastor was suitably addressed by the Rev. D. Beaton. The congregation was addressed by the Rev. Finlay Macleod. He reminded them of the great privilege they enjoyed in the past when they had that faithful servant of Christ, the late Rev. D. Macfarlane, as their pastor, and, now that they had another pastor given them, who would declare the same message of salvation, their responsibilities were truly great.

There was a very large congregation. Friends of the cause from Sutherland, Inverness, and the surrounding districts of Ross-shire were present. We fervently wish that the Lord may abundantly bless both pastor and people.—D. J. M.

If therefore a person should keep holy the other six days of the week and profane the seventh, his services on those days would be detestable, because God has commanded him to keep holy the seventh day.—*John Love*.

Nadur an Duine 'na Staid Cheithir Fillte.

I. AN STAID NEOCHIONTACH, NO A' CHEUD IONRACAS SAN ROBH AN DUINE AIR A CHRUTHACHADH.

(Continued from Page 35.)

'San dara àite, Luidh a thoil dìreach ri toil Dhé, Eph. iv. 24. Cha robh truaidlidheachd 'na thoil, cha robh fiaradh no clonadh a chum uile, oir is peacadh, sin, mar is ceart a ghoirear dheth; uaith so a deir an t-Abstol, Rom. vii. 7. "Cha b' aithne dhomh peacadh, ach tre'n lagh; oir cha bhiodh eòlas agam air sannt, mur abradh an lagh, na sanntaich." Clonadh a chum uile, is e sin da rìreadh tobar a' pheacaidh, agus uime sin neo-fhreagarach ris an ionracas agus an treibh-dhireas a tha 'm bunn teagaisg gu soilleir a' dearbhadh a bh' aige 'na chruthachadh. Bha toil an duine an sin, gu nadurra ag amharc, agus ag aomadh ri Dia agus ri maithreas, ged a bhi i caochlaidheach. Bha an toil, 'na ceud deilbh, air a h-aomadh gu toil a Cruitheir a' leantuinn, mar tha'm faileas a' leantuinn a' chuirp; agus cha robh i air a fàgail ann an tomhas eothromaiche gu maith agus ole: oir nam biodh i mar sin, cha bhiodh an duine dìreach, no ann an nàdur freagarach ris an lagh, nach mò a dh' fhuilingeas do 'n chrèutair a bhi aon mhionaid, gun a bhi 'g aomadh ri Dia mar àrdchrioch, na dh' fhulaingeas e do'n duine bhi 'na dhia dha fèin. Bha 'n lagh air a dhaingneachadh air anam Adhaimh: a nis that so, a réir an nuadh choimh-cheangail, leis am bheil iomhaigh Dhé air a h-aiseag, ann an dà ni, 1. A' cur an lagha 'san inntinn; a ta ciallachadh eòlas air: 2. Ga sgiobhadh anns a' chridhe; a ta ciallachadh aomaidhean anns an toil freagarach ri aitheantaibh an lagha, Eabh. viii. 10. Air chor, as mar bheir sinn fa'near do 'n toil, 'nuair a tha i air a nuadhachadh le gràs, gu bheil i leis a' ghràs sin ag aomadh gu dhasach gus a' cheart naomhachd a tha'n lagh ag agradh anns gach earrann dheth; mar sin bha toil an duine, 'nuair a Bheir sinn fa'near dha, mar a rinn Dia an toiseach e, sgeudaichte le aomadh nadurra gus na h-uile na a ta air an àithne leis an lagh. Oir ma tha iadsan a ta air an ath-ghineamhuin 'nan luchd comh-pairt do 'n nàdur dhiadhaidh, mar gun teagamh a

ta iad; oir mar sin a deir an Scriobtur, 2 Pead. i. 4, agus mu tha'n nadur diadhaidh a' ciallachadh ni nach lugha na aomadh a' chridhe gu naomhachd, mar sin gu cinnteach, cha b'urrainn toil Adhaimh a bhi dh' easbhuidh na naomhachd so, oir annsan bha iomhaigh Dhé iomlan. Is fìor gu bheil e air a ràdh, Rom. ii. 14, 15, Gu 'm bheil na Cinnich a' nochdadh obair an lagha sgriobhta 'nan cridheachaibh; ach tha so a mhàin a' nochdadh an eòlais air an lagh sin mar a ta e: ach tha 'n t-Abstol a chum nan Eabhruidheach, 'sa chaibdeil a dh' ainmicheadh, a' gabhail an fhocail *cridhe* an seadh eile; 'ga eadar-dheallachadh gu soilleir o'n *inntinn*. Agus is éigin aideachadh, 'nuair a tha Dia a' gealltainn, 's a' choimhcheangal nuadh, "Gu 'n sgriobh e a lagh ann an cridheachaibh a phobuill," gu bheil e ciallachadh ni nach 'eil idir aig na Cinnich; oir ged tha breithneachadh a' air 'nan inntinnibh, tha'n cridheachan a' dol rathad eile: fhuair an *toil* clonadh agus aomadh a tha calg dhìreach an aghaidh an lagha sin. Agus uime sin, éigin do'n fhocal, anns an t-seadh so, a bhi ciallachadh a thuilleadh air breithneachadh na h-inntinn gu bheil aomadh na *toil* a' dol leis; oir ged tha'n t-aomadh so air a choimeasga le truailidheachd anns a' chreutair nuadh, bha e fìor-ghlan ann an Adhamh, 'na threibhdhìreas. Ann an aon fhocal, mar a b' aithne do Adhamh toil a mhaighstir a thaobh dleasdanaìs, mar sin sheas a thoil ris na b' aithne dha..

San treas àite, Bha aignidhean an duine, riaghailteach, glan, agus naomha; nithe a ta 'nan earrann fhèumail do 'n treibhdhìreas san robh e air a chruthachadh. Tha 'n t-Abstol a' cur suas athchuinge ann 2 Tes. iii. 5. 'Gu seòladh an Tighearn bhur cridheacha chum gràidh Dhé.' 'Se sin, "Gu deanadh an Tighearn bhur cridheacha dìreach;" no, gu d' thugadh e orra luidhe dìreach ri gradh Dhé: agus tha ar bonn teagaisg ag innseadh dhuinn, gu 'n robh an duine mar so air a dheanamh dìreach. Tha 'n nuadh dhuine air a chruthachadh ann am fireantachd agus ann am fìor-naomhachd, Eph. iv. 24. A nis, feudaidh an naomhachd so, mar a ta i eadar-dhealaichte o fhìreantachd, a bhi ciallachadh fìor-ghloine agus deadh riaghailt nan aignidhean. Agus mar so, an t-Abstol, 1 Tim. ii. 2. Is aill leis fir a dheanamh urnuigh "a' togail suas lamha naomha, gun fheirg, gun amharus;" do bhrìgh mar nach fhaicear dealbh na gréine ann an uisge salach; mar sin tha 'n cridhe a ta làn a dh' aignidhean neoghlan agus mi-riaghailteach neo-iomchuidh air co-chomunn diadhaidh. Cha 'n 'eil teagamh, nach robh na h-iarrtuis anns an duine a ta 'g éirigh o 'n chorp a' dol a mach an déigh ebuspairean a bheireadh riarachadh do bhuaidhibh

a' chuirp. Oir do bhrìgh gu'n robh an duine air a dheanamh suas do chorp agus do anam, agus gu'n d'rinn Dia an duine so gu féin a ghlorachadh agus a mhealtuinn; agus a chum na eriche so, gu'n gnathaicheadh e a chreutairean, ann an umhlachd d'a uachdranachd féin: tha e soilleir gu'n robh toil an duine gu nadurra air a h-aomadh gu maith spioradail agus mothachail; gu h-àraid gu maith spioradail, an t-àrd-mhaith, mar àrd chrioch. Agus uime sin, bha gach gluasad agus iarrtus a bha sruthadh o'n chorp fuidh cheannsal d'a *reusan* agus d'a thoil, a luidh dìreach ri *toil* Dhé; agus cha robh iad anns an ni bu lugha 'na h-aghaidh. Mur biodh e mar sin, bhiodh e air a dheanamh suas do nithibh a tha'n aghaidh a cheile; air d'a anam a bhi gu nadurra ag aomadh gu Dia, mar a chrioch mhòr anns a' chuid a b'airde dheth; agus an t-anam ceudna bhi 'g aomadh gus a' chreutair mar a chrioch mhòr anns a' chuid a b'isle dheth, mar a deir iad; ni a ta do-dheanta; oir cha'n urrainn duine san aon uair dà chrioch a bhi aige. Bha aignidhean an duine ma ta, 'na cheud staid saor o gach salachar, saor o gach tinneas agus galar, do bhrìgh gu'n robh iad fuidh umhlachd dhligheach d'a reusan soilleir, agus d'a thoil naomh. Bha cumhachd aige mar an ceudna, gu dheanamh, a reir a *thoile*, cumhachd gus a' mhaith a dheanamh, a bha fios aige bu choir a bhi deanta, agus a dh'ionnsuidh an robh a thoil ag aomadh, eadhon, uile lagh Dhé a choimhlionadh. Mur biodh e mar sin, cha'n iarradh Dia umhlachd iomlan uaithe; oir, a bhi ag ràdh, gu bheil an Tighearn "a' tional san ionad anns nach do sgaoil e," is droch thoibheum e, an aghaidh an Dé mhaith, agus fhial, Mat. xxv. 24, 25.

O na chaidh a ràdh, feudar fhaicinn, gu'n robh a' cheud fhìreantachd a mhinich sinn iomlan agus nadurra, gidheadh caochlaidheach.

Sa' cheud àit, Bha i iomlan; araon d'a thaobhsan aig an robh i, (an duine gu h-uile,) agus a cuspair (an lagh gu h-uile,) iomlan a deiream, d'a thaobhsan aig an robh i; oir bha'n fhìreantachd so a' comhdachadh an duine gu leir: bu thaoisgheur bheannaichte i, a thaosnaich am meall uile. Cha robh aon tarrainn mearachdach am pàillion nàduir an duine, 'nuair a chuir Dia suas e, ciod air bith mar tha e a nis air a chur as a *cheile*. Bha'n duine an sin, naomh 'na anam, 'na chorp, agus 'na spiorad. Am feadh 'sa mhair an t-anam neo-thruaillidh, bha ionad còmhnuidh air a chumail glan, agus gun smal: bha buill a chuirp 'nan soithichibh *coisrigte*, agus 'nan armaibh

fireantachd. Bha gleachd eadar feoil agus spiorad, rèusan agus miann; eadhon an clonadh bu lugha gu peacadh, no gu ana-mhiann feolmhor anns a' chuid a b'isle do 'n anam, gu h-uile neo-fhreagarach ris an treibhdhìreas so san robh an duine air a chruthachadh; agus bha so air a dheilbh gu sgail a chur air truailidheachd nàduir an duine, agus gu duibh-nèul a chur air gràs Dhé ann an Iosa Crìosd: Tha e ro chosmhuil ri cainnt Adhaimh 'nuair a thuit e, tha fàgail a' pheacaidh aig dorus a Chrùitheir, Gen. iii. 12. "A' bhean a thug thu gu bhi maille rium, thug ise dhomh do'n chraoibh, agus dh'ith me." Ach mar a bha'n fhìreantachd so iomlan, d'a thaobhsan aig an robh i, a chionn gu'n do chomhdaich i an duine gu h-uile; mar sin, mar an ceudna, bha i iomlan thaobh a' chuspair an *Lagh naomh*. Cha robh ni anns an lagh, ach ni bha freagarach r'a *rèusan* agus r'a *thoil*, mar a rinn Dia e; bha anam air a chumadh ann am fad agus ann an léud, ris an àithne, ged tha i ro-fharsuinn. Air chor as nach e mhain gu'n robh a' cheud fhìreantachd so iomlan ann an ruigsinn air an duine gu h-uile, ach mar an ceudna iomlan anns na h-uile bhuaidh do'n duine.

San dara àite, Mar bha'n fhìreantachd so iomlan, mar sin bha i nàdurra dha, agus cha robh i os ceann nàduir anns an staid sin. Cha'n e nach fheudadh e bhi d'a h-easbhuidh, agus a bhi fathast 'na dhuine, oir nam biodh e mar sin, cha b'urrainn dha a call a dh'easbhuidh a dhearbhbhith a chall: ach bha i co'-cheangailte ris. Bha e air a chruthachadh leatha; agus bha i freagarach ris an iomlaineachd anns an robh an duine, mar a thainig e mach o làimh Dhe: iomchuidh gu dhaingneachadh ann an staid threibhdhìrich.

Gidheadh, *san treas àite*, Bha i caochlaidheach; b'fhìreantachd i a dh'fheudta chall, mar tha soilleir o'n truaighe a lean. Cha robh a thoil caoin-shuarrach gu maith no gu h-ole, shuidhich e a h-aoman air chor as nach b'urrainn dhi atharrachadh. Ni h-eadh, bha e'n comas dhi tionndadh gu ole; agus sin a mhain leis an duine féin, air do Dhia cumhachd gu leòir a thabhairt dha gu seasamh anns an treibhdhìreas so, nan toilicheadh e. Na biodh gearan aig duine sam bith air obair Dhé anns a' chùis so, oir nam biodh Adhamh fireanta ann an dòigh neo-chaochlaidheach, b'fheudar gu'm bitheadh e mar sin a thaobh nàduir, no le saor-thiodhlac: Cha b'urrainn dha bhi mar sin a thaobh nàduir, oir buinidh sin a mhain do Dhia, agus tha e neo-roinn-phairtiche ri creutair sam bith; nam b'ann le saor-thiodhlac, cha d'rinneadh eucoir air, ann an cumail uaithe an

ni nach b'urrainn dha thagar. Daingneachadh ann an staid fhireanta, is duais gràis e, air a thabhairt air son buanachaidh firinneach trid staid na deuchainn; agus a bhitheadh air a tabhairt do Adhamh, nan seasadh e mach an ùine dh'orduicheadh airson deuchainn leis a Chruithear: Agus a ta da réir sin air a tabhairt do na naoimh, airson toillteanaidh Chrìosd, a bha *umhal eadhon gu bàs*. Agus an so tha barrachd aig creidmheach air Adhamh, anns nach urrainn iad gu bràth tuiteam gu h-ìomlan, no gu h-uile o ghràs.

Mar so bha'n duine air tùs fireanta, air dha bhi air a chruthachadh a réir coslais Dhé féin, Gen. i. 27, ata a' co-sheasamh ann an dearbh bhuaighibh an eòlais, na fireantachd, agus na naomhachd, Col. iii. 10; Eph. iv. 24. Bha gach ni a rinn Dia ro mhaith, a réir an naduirean fa leth, Gen. i. 31. Agus mar sin bha'n duine dìreach agus maith, air dha bhi air a dheanamh a réir ìomhaigh-san a ta maith agus dìreach, Salm xxv. 8. As eugmhais so, cha b'urrainn e freagradh do'n echrìch mhòir a bha 'na chruthachadh, ni a b'e eòlas a ghabhail air Dia, gràdh agus seirbhis a thabhairt da a réir a thoile. Cha b'urrainn dha bhi air a chruthachadh air dòigh eile; oir b'éigin da bhi co'-fhreagarach ris an lagh, 'na bhuaighaibh, 'na nàdur, agus 'na iarrtuisibh, no bhi an aghaidh sin; mu bha e air a chruthachadh mar sin, bha e fireanta; agus mu bha e an aghaidh sin, bha e 'na pheacach; ni a ta neo-reusanta agus uamhasach ri smuaineachadh.

MU CHEUD SHONAS AN DUINE.

San dara àite, Leigidh mi fhaicinn cuid do na nithibh a bha'n co'-chuideachd no a shruth o fhireantachd ceud staid an duine. Tha sonas a' sruthadh o naomhachd; agus mar a bha'n staid so naomh, mar sin bha i sona.

Sa' cheud àite, Bha'n duine aig an àm sin, 'na chreutair ro ghlormhor. Tha aobhair againn a bhi smuaineachadh, mar a dhealraich aghaidh Mhaois 'nuair a thainig e nuais o'n t-sliabh; gu'n robh aig an duine gnùis soilleir agus taitneach agus maiseach, am feadh 'sa bha e fathast gun dorchadas sam bith ann. Ach a cheann gu bheil Dia féin glormhor ann an naomhachd, Eesod. xv. 11, is cinnteach gu'n d' rinn a' mhaise spioradail a chur Dia air an duine 'nuair a chruthaicheadh e; 'na chrèutair fìor-ghlormhor e! O eionnus a dhealraich solus 'na chaithe-beatha naomh gu glòir a Chruitheir! am feadh nach robh anns gach uile ghniomh ach boilsgeadh dealrach de'n t-solus ghlormhor neo-choimeasgta sin, a chuir Dia a suas 'na anam; am feadh a mhair an lòchran gràidh sin, a shoillsich o nèamh

a' lasadh 'na chridhe, mar anns an ionad naomh; agus am feadh a bha lagh an Tighearn, a chuireadh san taobh a stigh dheth le meur Dhé, air a choimhead mar anns an ionad as ro-naomha! Cha robh neo-ghloine ri fhaicinn o'n taobh a mach; cha robh clonadh anns na suilibh an déigh ni truailidh sam bith; cha do labhair an teanga cainnt sam bith, ach cainnt nèimh; agus ann an aon fhocal, bha "Mac an Rìgh uile glormhor an taobh a stigh, agus bha 'eudach air oibreachadh le h-òr."

San dara àite, B'e cuspair fabhair nèimh e. Dhealraich e gu soilleir ann an iomhaigh Dhé, nach urrainn gun ghradh a thabhairt d'a iomhaigh féin, ciod sam bith aite am bheil i. Fhad 'sa bha e 'na aonar san t-saoghal, cha robh e 'na aonar, oir bha Dia maille ris. Bha a chomh-chomunn agus a chomh-labhairt r'a Chruithear do ghnath: oir fathast cha robh ni sam bith gu aghaidh Dhé a thionndadh air falbh o oibre a lamh féin, oir fathast cha d'thainig peacadh a steach, an ni a mhain a b'urrainn am bearn a dheanamh.

Le deadh-ghean Dé, bha e ar ardachadh gu bhi ann an co-bhoinn ri neamh anns a' cheud choimhcheangal, ris an abrar coimhcheangal nan gnìomh. Chuir Dia an lagh a thug e dha 'na chruthachadh ann an suidheachadh coimhcheangail, san robh umhlachd iomlan air iarraidh mar chumha; b'e beatha an ni a bh'air a ghealltainn, agus b'e bàs am peanas. A thaobh a chumha, b'e aon earrann mhòr do'n lagh naduir, gu'n creideadh an duine ciod air bith a dh'fhoillsicheadh Dia, agus gu'n deanadh e ciod air bith a dh'aithneadh e; de réir so, air do Dhia an coimhcheangal so dheanamh ris an duine, leudaich e dhleasdanas ann an toirmeasg dha itheadh do chraoibh an eòlais mhaith agus uile: agus b'e 'n lagh mar so air a leudachadh, riaghailt umhlachd coimhcheangail an duine. Cia cho so-dheanta 'sa bha na nithe so dhasan aig an robh an lagh naduir sgrìobhta air a chridhe; agus an lagh sin 'ga aomadh gu umhlachd a thabhairt do lagh no h-aithne so a dh'fhoillsicheadh dha, mar tha e soilleir le guth ard, (Gen. ii. 16.) air dha bhi cho fhurasda ri dheanamh? Agus gun amharus bha e ro iomchuidh gu'm bitheadh riaghailt agus brìgh umhlachd a' choimhcheangail mar so air an leudachadh; air do'n ni a chuireadh ris, a bhi ann féin co dheas, far an robh umhlachd glan, gu tionndadh ri toil Dhé, an dearbhachd as soilleire air fìor-umhlachd, agus air da sin a bhi o'n taobh a mach, o'm faicte umhlachd no eas-umhlachd air dòigh ro shoilleir. A nis air a' chumha so, gheall Dia beatha dha; buanachadh na beatha nadurra, ann an coimhcheangal anama agus cuirp; agus beatha spioradail ann an

deadh-ghean a Chruitheir: gheall e dha mar an ceudna beatha shiorruidh air nèamh, gus an rachadh e steach, 'nuair a chaitheadh e aimsir a dhearbhaidh air thalamh, agus an uair a chitheadh an Tighearn iomchuidh atharrachadh gus an Aros is airde. Bha'n gealladh so air beatha air a ghabhail a steach ann am bagradh a' bhais a ta air ainmeachadh, Gen. ii. 17. oir an uair a ta Dia ag radh, "Anns an la dh'itheas tu dheth, gu cinnteach basaichidh tu;" tha e mar an ceudna a' ciallachadh, "Mur ith thu dheth mairidh tu gu cinnteach beò," agus bha so air a dhaingneachadh le Seula craoibh eile anns a' gharadh, ris an goirte, "Craobh na beatha," o'n robh e air a dhruideadh a mach, an uair a pheasaich e, Gen. iii. 22, 23. "Air eagal gu sineadh e mach a lamh, agus gu'n gabhadh e mar an ceudna do chraoibh na beatha, agus gu'n itheadh e, agus gu'm biodh e beò gu siorruidh. Air an aobhar sin, chuir an Tighearn Dia a mach e á garadh Edein." Gidheadh cha'n fheudar a smuaineachadh, gu'n robh beatha agus bàs an duine an crochadh a mhain ris an aon ni so mu'n mheas-thoirmisgte, ach air an lagh gu iomlan; oir mar sin a deir an t-Abstol, Gal. iii. 18. A ta e sgriobhta, "Is malluichte gach neach nach buanaich anns na h-uile nithibh a ta sgriobhta ann an leabhar an lagha, chum an deanamh." B'e am meas toirmisgte earrann fhoillsichte do chreidimh Adhaimh; agus mar sin b'fheudar gu'm biodh e air a chur gu soilleir fa chomhair: ach a thaobh an lagh nadurra b'aithne dha gu nadurra gu'm b'e bàs duais na h-easumhlachd; oir cha robh na Cinnich féin aineolach mu'n ni so; "Muintir d'an aithne ceartas Dé gu bheil iadsan a ni an leithide sin do nithibh toillteanach air bàs." Rom. i. 32. Agus a thuilleadh air so, dhaingnich an gealladh a bh' anns a' bhagradh, beatha Adhaimh, a réir a choimh-cheangail, fhad 'sa bheireadh e umhlachd do'n lagh nadurra, a chuireadh ris an dearbh-aithne sin; air chor as nach robh feum aige gu'm biodh ni sam bith air ainmeachadh dha sa' choimh-cheangal, ach na bhuineadh do itheadh a' mheas thoirmisgte. Gu'n robh beatha shiorruidh air neamh air a gealltuinn sa' choimh-cheangal so, tha e soilleir do bhrìgh gu'm b'e am bagradh peanas siorruidh ann an ifrinn: ni 'nuair a dh' fhàg an duine e féin buailteach dha, bha Crìosd air a ghealltuinn a chosnadh beatha maireannaich le 'bhàs. Agus tha Crìosd e féin a' mìneachadh geallaidh coimh-cheangail nan oibre mu thimechioll beatha maireannaich, 'nuair tha e gealltuinn cumha a' choimh-cheangail sin do dhuine òg uaibhreach, neach ged nach robh stòras Adhaimh aige, a bha gidheadh, ag iarraidh dol a steach gu beatha ann an rathad oibreachaidh, mar bha

Adamh gu dheanamh fuidh'n choimheangal so, Mata xix. 17. "Ma's àill leat dol a steach chum na beatha, ('se sin ri ràdh, beatha mhaireannach le deanadas, rann 16) coimhid na h-àitheanta.

B'e bàs am peanas, Gen. ii. 17. "Anns an là dh'itheas tu dheth, gu cinnteach bàsaichidh tu." Bha'm bàs a bh'air a bhagradh, mar bha bheatha a bh'air a gealltuinn, agus sin gu ro-cheart, eadhon, bàs aimsireil, spioradail, agus siorruidh. Tha na thachair a' mìneachadh so; oir anns a' cheart là san d'ith e dheth, bha e 'na dhuine marbh san lagh; ach cha do chuireadh a bhinn an gnìomh air ball, a chionn gu'n robh a shliochd 'na leasraibh, agus gu'n robh coimheangal eile air ulluchadh: gidheadh, fhuair a chorp air an là sin féin a bhuille-bàis agus dh'fhàs e bàsmhor Rinn bàs mar an ceudna greim air anam; chaill e a cheud fhìreantachd, agus deàdh-ghean Dhé; mar dhearbhadh air so, gabh beachd air a bhioradh agus air a ghearradh coguis, a thug air e féin fholach o Dhia. Agus dh'fhàs e buailteach do bhàs siorruidh, a leanadh gu cinnteach air a dhéigh, mur bitheadh Eadar-mheadhonair air ulluchadh, a fhuair ceangailte e ann an cuibhrichibh a' bhàis, mar cheannaireach ullamh gu bhi air a chur gu dìth. Mar so tha beachd ath-ghearr air a thoirt air a' choimheangal gus an d'thug an Tighearn an duine, ann an staid na neo-chiontachd.

Ri leantainn.

Let the Lord absolutely have the ordering of your evils and troubles; and put them off you by recommending your cross and your furnace to Him who hath skill to melt His own metal, and knoweth well what to do with His furnace. Let your heart be willing that God's fire should have your tin, and brass, and dross.

—*Samuel Rutherford.*

I dare not thank myself, but I dare thank God's depth of wise providence, that I have an errand in me while I live, for Christ to come and visit me, and bring His drugs and His balm with Him. Oh, how sweet is it for a sinner to put his weakness into Christ's strengthening hand, and to lean a sick soul upon such a Physician, and to lay weakness before Him, to weep upon Him, and to plead and pray! Weakness can speak and cry, when we have not a tongue.—*Samuel Rutherford.*

Notes and Comments.

Church and State in Malta.—Reference has been made already in these Notes to the friction between the Roman Catholic Church and the civil authorities in Malta. It is evident that the high claims of Hildebrandianism are still unblushingly asserted by the Church of Rome where she imagines she has sufficient power. "The Glasgow Herald," commenting on the situation in a leading article says—"A situation which must be nearly without parallel in modern times and is certainly unique in the British Empire has been created in Malta through the action of the Archbishop of Malta and the Bishop of Gozo in interfering actively in the General Election now in progress by means of a pastoral letter forbidding Catholics to support the Constitutional or Government Party and threatening them with refusal of sacraments should they disobey. Polling takes place in the Colony in a few days; but so great has been the agitation caused by the publication of the Bishops' letter that Lord Strickland, the Prime Minister, has judged it advisable in the interests of the public peace to prohibit all meetings in support of his own party and thus virtually to hold up the election campaign."

A later development of the controversy is indicated in a Press despatch announcing that the Archbishop of Malta condemns the "Daily Malta Chronicle" and the "Ix-Venix," "The Sun," Lord Stricklands' paper, and prohibits their reading and sale under the penalty of mortal sin.

Kitty Smith.—In an interesting letter which we have received from Mr. Malcolm Matheson, Govan, in which he mentions the fact that Kitty Smith was his grand-aunt, he points out that her birth place was the island of Pabay, Lewis, and not Skye, as stated in the biographical sketch in our April issue.

The Wider Union.—Speaking at the Congregational Union of Scotland at Aberdeen yesterday, according to a Press report, the Rev. Dr. T. Templeton, Coatbridge, said he thought the need of the present ecclesiastical situation was that they should form a federation of non-established Church in Scotland. They should have a drawing together of various types willing to join the U.F. Church (Continuing), the Free Church, the Baptists, and the Methodists might and should draw together and find out how far they fitted together, and then later something of a comprehensive union might come. But it must be prepared for, not engineered. It should grow up naturally.

Literary Notice.

CHRISTIAN UNITY IN THE LIGHT OF OUR LORD'S TEACHING AND OF APOSTOLIC TIMES, by the Rev. THOMAS HOUGHTON, Editor of "The Gospel Magazine," London: Gospel Magazine Office, 23 Bedford Street, Strand, C.2. Price, 2d.

This excellent pamphlet is a reprint from "The Gospel Magazine." Mr. Houghton deals in a scriptural way with Christian Unity. He rightly points out that our Lord's prayer for unity is not the kind of unity that is so much sought after in our day and so much stressed by ecclesiastical leaders. "It is the corporate unity of the various visible Churches," he rightly says, "for which so many are working. For such a unity the Lord does not pray. His prayer has reference only to those who through divine grace are living believers in Himself, as the true and only Saviour of His people." That is well and fitly said and it would be a good thing if advocates of union in all the Churches would cease misapplying our Lord's words to a kind of unity he never prayed for. The pamphlet deserves a wide circulation. It contains truths which need to be emphasised in our day and as these are backed up by Scripture references it will be found useful and instructive.

Church Notes.

Communion.—June—First Sabbath, Applecross and Coigach; second, Sheildaig; third, Helmsdale, Loch Carron, Glendale and Dornoch; fourth, Gairloch; fifth, Broadford and Inverness. July—First Sabbath, Raasay, Lairg, Thurso and Beaul; second, Tain, Staffin and Tomatin; third, Daviot, Flashadder and Rogart; fourth, Halkirk (note change of date), Plockton, North Uist and Bracadale. August—First Sabbath, Dingwall; second, Stratherrick and Portree; third, Laide and Bonar-Bridge; fourth, Stornoway. September—First Sabbath, Ullapool; second, Strathy; third, Stoer. South African Mission—The following are the dates of the Communion:—Last Sabbath of March, June, September and December. *Note.*—Notice of any additions to, or alterations of, the above dates of Communion should be sent to the Editor.

Collection for this Month.—By the Synod's appointment the Collection for the Fund of Aged and Infirm Ministers,

Ministers' Widows and Orphans, is to be taken up during the month of June.

The Church Courts.—By the time this issue is in the hands of most of our readers the Church Courts will have risen. We hope, as in former years, to give a brief review of the proceedings of these Courts in a later issue. As our own Synod was in session when the Magazine went to press we are unable to give even a brief summary of the proceedings, but a full report will (D.V.) appear in our July issue.

Church's Deputies to U.S.A. and Canada.—The Rev. William Grant landed safely at New York on 2nd May and by the time this Magazine will have reached our Canadian subscribers he will be in Winnipeg. Mr. Grant will (D.V.) give due intimation to the various places at which he is to preach. The Rev. Finlay Macleod reached Scotland on Monday, 12th May. His report of his visit to our Canadian Mission stations will be awaited with interest.

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