

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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**Notes of a Sermon.**

By Rev. NEIL MACINTYRE.

"How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3).

THESE are most solemn words. The Apostle is drawing a distinction between the privileges and advantages they had under the gospel, compared with the privileges they had under the legal dispensation and consequently their responsibility and condemnation would be greater. So he puts the question "How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation."

God at sundry times and in divers manners spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. The legal dispensation under which they were had glory but the glory of the gospel dispensation far exceeds it. "The law was given by Moses but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1-17). So in beginning of this chapter the Apostle presses upon them that they ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which they heard lest at any time they should let them slip." He points the awful consequences of an indifferent attitude towards the gospel. He points out what befell those who refused to listen to the words spoken by angels. "How shall we escape if we neglect this great salvation." We shall notice I. This great Salvation. What makes it great. II. The question asked regarding it. "How shall we escape if we neglect it?"

I. This great Salvation, and what makes it great.

1. It is great because of the Person who provided it. "It was wisdom who dealt with prudence that found out this witty invention." Neither man nor angels could find out a way by which man could be saved and the claims of God's law and justice conserved. Were it not that God intervened man would be as lost and hopeless as devils but God intervened on behalf of man. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son."

God is great in all things but man is small and helpless. He can only use the material God puts at his disposal. He can create nothing, not even a fly or a blade of grass. Now if God is great in the smallest things how great must He be in the greatest of all things, the salvation of lost, guilty men. This is the most wonderful thing ever heard of that God could be just and the justifier of the ungodly.

2. This salvation is great because of the Person who wrought it out. The eternal Son of God in our nature. In the first chapter He is described as the eternal Son, the heir of all things by whom also He created the worlds." But this glorious Person became incarnate. The salvation is therefore great because of the Person who wrought it out but it is also great because of His humiliation and sufferings. In working out this great salvation He had to humble Himself. To veil His glory to take the form of a servant and to be found in fashion as a man, and made under the law. The Father as judge exacted of Him all that the law demanded of His people. The first Adam's obedience was only from day to day and when he sinned he had nothing to fall back on. He immediately came under sentence of death. But the glorious Person "by one sacrifice forever perfected them that are sanctified." Not only that He satisfied forever the claims of the law but He satisfied the claims of justice in laying down His life for His people. His people were under the curse of the law which demanded of them perfect obedience but they were also under sentence of death. But He laid down His life on their behalf. "Who delivered us," says Paul, "from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us" (2 Cor. 1-10).

3. This salvation is great because of the Person who applies it. The Holy Spirit. The salvation may be presented and offered to sinners in the gospel but until the Holy Spirit will make the sinner able and willing to accept of it he will reject it. But "when He (the Spirit) is come He will convince the world of sin of righteousness and judgment." When the sinner is awakened to realise his lost, ruined state no creature can give him any hope or comfort but when the Spirit reveals Christ to him and enables him to accept of Him, he sees that Salvation as great that should he have a thousand souls he sees enough in this salvation. He sees enough for the whole world if they would only accept of Him.

It is the Spirit that leads and comforts God's people in the world and will finally bring them to glory without spot or wrinkle.

4. This salvation is great in comparison with the ceremonial law. The ceremonial law was certainly great. It was appointed by God. There were many things designed in it to bring this "Great Salvation" before them. "It was the shadow of good things to come." But it could not take away sin nor make the comers there unto perfect as pertaining to the conscience" (Heb. 9, 9). "For then would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshippers once purged should have no more consciences of sins" (Heb. 10, 2). All the sacrifices offered under the law, and they were innumerable could not take away sin, but Christ by one sacrifice forever perfects them that are sanctified. It is a "great salvation."

5. This salvation is great because of its length, breadth, depth and height.

- (1) If we take its length, it stretches back to the beginning of time. Abel was made partaker of it. So was Noah, Lot, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and countless number of others under the old dispensa-

tion but it is to-day as "great" in the world as ever. It is no doubt despised and rejected by most but that does not take away its greatness. It will continue great in the world until all whom God purposed to save will be brought in.

- (2) It is great because of its breadth. It is not confined to one place or nation. The day is coming when His knowledge shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11, 9). The last account we saw was that there are about 65,800,000 people who are still without the knowledge of this "great Salvation, yet the day is coming when the whole earth shall be filled with His knowledge. It was David's prayer and ought to be ours that the whole earth be filled with His glory" (Ps. 72, 19).
- (3) If we take its depth it goes down to the lowest and most degraded sinner. It could descend to wicked Manasseh. He was carried captive to Babylon and when he was in affliction, he besought the Lord his God and the Lord heard him and brought again to Jerusalem. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord he was God" (2 Chronicles 33, 12). It descended to Saul the persecutor and made him a great preacher of the Cross of Christ. It made Mary Magdalene a virtuous woman. There is none so low but it can reach. Though our sins be as scarlet He can reach us.
- (4) If we take the height of it. Not only that it stretches from the beginning to the end of time but it goes into eternity and will be great there forever and ever. The song of the redeemed will be forever praising God for this "great Salvation." Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins will be the theme of their song forever.

4. It is great because of the wonderful change it makes in the life and conduct of the people to whom it comes. If we take the history of this land before this "great Salvation" came to us. We were a wild barbarous idolatrous people. We boast of our culture and civilisation. What made us to differ from other nations? It was this "great Salvation." If we take the history of the South Sea Islanders they were wild cannibals but whenever this "great Salvation" came to them and accepted their conduct was completely changed.

Take the individual who accepts it what a change it will make.

The drunkard, the swearer, the adulterer and Sabbath desecrator are changed and they become virtuous persons. Paul confessed that he was blasphemer and a persecutor and injurious but this "great Salvation" turned him to be the greatest preacher of the gospel. It will turn the vulture to be a dove and the lion to be a lamb.

If we take the extraordinary change it produces in the case of the person who accepts it. Man is an enemy to God under condemnation, but whenever he accepts of this "great Salvation" he is set free and made an heir of God and joint heir with Christ. "No condemnation." But not only that his state is changed but his corrupt nature will be changed so that at last he will be presented soul and body holy and unblamable before the Father in glory. What a wonderful Salvation.

It is great because of its freeness. It is "without money or price." If it were to be bought by anything the sinner might do he might well despair of ever acquiring it. It is so valuable that all the riches of the world could not purchase it. But it is to be had freely.

"Without money and without price." We buy worldly pleasures and pay dearly for them, but the pleasures of this world are nothing but bubbles and vapour, that will soon vanish and leave you more miserable and empty than ever. But this great and free Salvation will put the sinner in possession of an "inheritance incorruptable and undefiled and that fadeth not away" (I Peter 1, 4).

It is great because it is suitable to our case and disease. There is no one medicine of men that is suitable for all diseases. But this Salvation is suitable for all whether we be rich or poor, young or old, sick or healthy, good or bad this salvation is suitable for all. Now some poor sinner might be ready to say my heart is so hard and the Word has no effect on me. "Come," says the Author of this Salvation, "I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and I will give you an heart of flesh" (Ezek. 11, 19).

Another poor sinner might say I am guilty of sins which no one knows but myself and God. "Come," says this Person, "now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow" (Isa. 1, 18).

Another might say I have despised this great salvation and I fear my day of grace is gone. To such we would say remember the thief on the cross who all his lifetime despised this great Salvation. But he cried and was heard. "Remember me when Thou comest unto Thy Kingdom. To-day thou shalt be within paradise."

Take the awakened sinner, he finds all the Word of God, law and gospel against him but Christ says to him come and I will in no wise cast you off. If we take the child of God who finds his corruptions so strong and the enemy so subtle to whom can he go? No hope or refuge but applying daily to this "Great Salvation." None perish that trust in Him.

II. The question asked "How shall we escape if we neglect so great Salvation."

There is no answer given for the answer is implied in the question.

1. Devils do not neglect this "great Salvation" because it was never offered to them. It is only offered to sinners of Adam's race.

The neglecting and rejection of this Salvation is the greatest sin of which man is guilty. "This is the condemnation that light came into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil" (John 3, 19).

2. How do men neglect this "great Salvation." To use an illustration.

(a) If one were seriously ill and the doctor prescribed a certain medicine and told the patient if he would take it it would cure him but if he would not take it he would certainly die. The patient took the medicine from the doctor's hand and laid it on the table but

never tasted it. What would be the result? He would die. Now there are many and outwardly they are most circumspect in their outward conduct but neglect this "great Salvation." What will be the result? They shall die eternally.

- (b) Or let us take another case. One may take the bottle of medicine from the doctor's hand but they think they must mix it with some concoction of their own. The result would be that they would die. Such will be the case of those who profess religion but who go about to establish their own righteousness and will not submit to the righteousness of God" (Rom 10, 3. They shall die.
- (c) If we take the case of another person. He took the bottle of medicine and dashed it to the ground. Now there are many in our day and instead of accepting God's "great Salvation" they reject it and deny it. Such as Infidels and Atheists and others. What will be the result? They shall die.

Now we are so ready to excuse ourselves for rejecting this Salvation and lay the blame on this, that and the other thing but our excuses will not stand. God is freely offering this "great Salvation" to us. "Unto you O men I call and my voice is to the sons of man" (Prov. 8, 4). God is calling in His Word and offering this great Salvation and the rejection of it will be greatest condemnation. How shall we escape if we neglect and refuse it.

### **A Criticism.**

FOR the last fifty years the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland has been witnessing against the declensions in the Protestant Churches of Britain, and we should be truly thankful to God and praise His holy name that in His finite mercy a small remnant has been left in the land to bear public testimony against evildoers.

We have often warned our people against the destructive, and ruinous tendency of the present Church of Scotland to obliterate from the memory of the young the glorious attainments of the Reformation in Scotland. It is evidently a Jesuitical policy, a policy which will ultimately bring grief, pain, and maybe bloodshed to this land.

You would have read in the press that the Corporation of Glasgow have been engaged and preparing to open on the Lord's day places of amusement to entertain the young! We have not the least hesitation in saying that that is a pernicious falsehood and pharisaical hypocrisy. It is purely a moneymaking concern for these places of amusement, music halls, theatres, picture houses, etc., pay huge interest to the shareholders. I happened to notice on one occasion in reading the paper that a certain picture house paid 35 per cent. on the capital invested to the shareholders, in one year. It is of course the working classes that pay, for few, if any, of the really rich frequent the crowded picture house at any time.

It is all the time a question of money. I have in my possession a letter from the highest legal authority of the nation which bears out the above

statement to the hilt, and is my own personal observation as well. It is all for money.

It will be readily admitted by all right-thinking men and women that if a nation or individuals have no regard to moral principles that nation or individual must inevitably suffer the consequences. The trained, and experienced physician knows very well if the patient will not take his advice that there is absolutely no hope for a cure. He may have to give up in despair because the patient would not take his advice nor act according to his instructions. God, who has declared, "As I live I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth" may give us up because He has prescribed laws, rules, and guidance for us to follow. It's clear to all that if we deliberately, and knowingly, reject and ignore the law of God we must suffer the awful consequences thereof. There can be no alternative!

No ecclesiastical court on earth can legislate rules, nor regulations contrary to the Word of God that will stand at last. The Reformers in the 16th Century understood that, and worked hard to have the people freed from man-made laws. They restored to millions of human beings what is, and should be, the birth-right of every child born into this world, "liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment."

It is nonsense to hold the view that it is "liberty of conscience" to act contrary to the Word of God. The inalienable "right of private judgment," can only be a "right" if the judgment is in accordance with the revealed will of God in His Word. If we deny in part or in whole that the Moral Law of God is not binding, and a rule of life, we deny the Christian faith, and revert to human philosophy, paganism, and ideological experiment which must end in disaster! It will correspond to what Eliphaz the Temanite said:—"For he stretched out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty. He runneth upon him, even on his neck, upon the thick bosses of his bucklers: because he covereth his face with his fatness and maketh callops of fat on his flanks" (Job. 15. 25, 26, 27).

As reported in the *Glasgow Herald*, February 7th, the Glasgow Presbytery of the Church of Scotland met, *inter alia*, "The intention of Glasgow Corporation to provide concerts in city halls on Sunday evenings was discussed yesterday by the Presbytery of Glasgow." Rev. Dr. A. Neville Davidson who submitted the resolution on behalf of Social Problems Committee, said, "that, except in very limited circles, the old puritanical Sabbath was dead—"dead as the dodo"—and very few of them would wish to bring it back. They wanted not a puritanical Sabbath, but a Christian Sunday, a day on which the first and most important activity was the worship of God. Anything which was likely to frustrate or discourage that must be viewed by convinced Christians with disquiet and alarm."

The Presbytery accepted the resolution of Rev. Dr. Davidson and his Committee. It is lamentable to read such a report from a Protestant Presbytery claiming, or rather arrogating for itself to speak in the name of the Glasgow Protestant citizens of the City of Glasgow. The B.B.C.



was giving a report of what Dr. Davidson said at the Presbytery. "How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophecy lies? Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart; which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal" (Jer. 23, 26-27).

The Church of Scotland is leading the people who listen, uphold, and countenance this corrupt organisation to eternal ruin. We hope that there are men and women in this Church, who are grieved at heart with the graceless tendency of many, if not the most of their pastors. They are in danger for eternity if they will not separate from that Church. It is sinful to be supporting with their presence and means a Church which would tolerate a body of men within the Church, who would daringly and presumptuously declare in public that the Puritan view Lord's day was as "dead as the dodo."

Our advice and considered opinion is that all who love the Word of God and the gospel of Jesus Christ should separate from the "Church of Scotland" It was a different thing coming out of Egypt, from seeking to go back into Egypt.

If the Lord's day is cast away so easily and willingly as indicated by the Glasgow Presbytery of the so-called Church of Scotland, the civil and religious liberties of the people can be as easily bartered for Romanism Communism, or Paganism. The Free Presbyterian people have been seeing this coming on Scotland for fifty years, and far worse to follow, if repentance, and genuine turning to the Word of God will not prevent it. Millions of people are longing for the war in Europe and Asia to come to an end! What is to come after the war? Peace, harmony, goodwill among men, prosperity, unity, morality and respect to moral codes? No, and a thousand "no's," but chaos, ruin, destruction, famine, cleanness of teeth, disease, irreligion, and immorality on a scale which will cause the stoutest heart to shudder with terror!

The godless clergy are opening up every gate and avenue for the floods of iniquity to prevail, and the civil magistrates are the caretakers to provide the godless mob to forget God, His Word, gospel, family ties, marriage ties, and instead of benefitting by the lessons of war we have become morally seven times worse as the divorce courts of Britain show as reported in the public press.

Rev. Dr. Davidson says with ease and evident delight that the puritanical Sabbath is as dead as the "dodo!" The seventh commandment is torn to shreds, and profaned to such an alarming extent that it too is as dead as the "dodo" in scores of thousands of cases. Was the seventh commandment a puritanical precept? The appalling conditions prevailing beggars description. Men in prison camps having to divorce their wives. Men in thousands fighting for civil and religious liberties will find on their return no home, no family, no place to receive them was this work of the "puritans" or the libertines who have abolished the Lord's day from the land. Let me appeal with all my heart to all who have respect to themselves, to the Word of God, and their children to separate from the Church of Scotland, infinitely better to do so ere it be too late.



The Sabbath Day may be as dead to Dr. Davidson and his friends as the "dodo" but the God of the Sabbath is not dead, and the justice of God is not buried, which will yet speak in the heart and consciences of ungodly sinners. When the Church was in Babylon the godly had to hang their harps on the willow trees not because of their Jewishness, nor because they had forgotten Jerusalem but because they were in captivity. It is to be feared that the gospel and the precepts of God are as dead as the "dodo" to the Presbytery of the Church of Scotland in Glasgow. Is it any wonder then if there is such deplorable immorality, appalling iniquity going on in Glasgow! Dr. Davidson accepts and advocates for a "Christian Sunday" (whatever that may mean) going to church on "Sunday morning" (as reported) but let the rest of the sacred day be given up to the pleasures of sin, dancing, singing, and music. The next move will be a demand to open the public houses, drinking clubs, football pools, and football matches on "Sunday afternoon" as "the puritan Sabbath is as dead as the 'dodo'" and the "Christian Sunday" introduced as a modern substitute for the Lord's day.

We have warned our people, and strongly urge upon them never worship, nor associate with the religious hypocrites of the Church of Scotland. The curse and wrath of God is upon that Church—and she will yet persecute the godly as maliciously as the Episcopal Church did under the Stewart Kings, and the Church of Rome at Reformation times. Flee out of this modern Babylon if you value your souls and the good of the land.

### **The Late Mrs. Janet Miller, Wick.**

IT is with deep regret that we record the death of Mrs. Janet Miller of Wick Congregation, which occurred rather unexpectedly, in the 8th day of December, 1944. Mrs. Miller was born 64 years ago in Wick and was the eldest daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Alex. Sinclair. Her mother was well known in the Church as a lively witness on the side of Christ and his truth in her day.

Mrs. Miller, very evidently followed the Saviour for many years of her life in a gracious and consistent manner according to the doctrine of His glorious Gospel, and was not ashamed to own Him in whatsoever company she found herself. She was possessed of a bright and happy disposition, and, intermingled with this, a faculty for speaking a word in season relating to the salvation of the soul, to young and old, high and low, alike. She disclosed at times, that she was keenly sensible of the "plague" of her own heart and of her need of "the precious blood of Christ" and of the power of divine grace, to deal with her sinfulness. The Gospel remedy was her only hope.

She was active and most useful. After being trained as a nurse, she ultimately became Matron of the Bignold Hospital, Wick, where her services were highly valued by the medical profession and the public. And even after retiral at the end of the last war, on account of her marriage, she frequently called at homes in the town where there was

sickness and sorrow. The local press has recorded, "Mrs. Miller won a special place in the hearts of the community where she was born. Her passing will be keenly felt in the town."

The Apostle Paul in writing to the Philippians refers to, "Those women which laboured with me in the gospel." They were neither elders nor preachers, as modern Churchmen would have women to be; yet they found Scriptural ways and means of supporting the cause of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so it was with Mrs. Miller. The South African Mission of our Church has lost a genuine friend in Mrs. Miller, who, as a labour of love, supervised the Clothing Fund for the Mission in a most efficient manner, for years.

About three years ago, she passed through a serious illness from which she made a good recovery, but her general health was greatly impaired. It became obvious that the Word of God was now becoming increasingly sweet to her and some of the psalms in particular were as green pasture to her soul, especially the last four or five verses of the 16th psalm, e.g.:—

"Because my soul in grave to dwell  
shall not be left by thee;  
Nor wilt thou give thine Holy One  
corruption to see.  
Thou wilt me shew the path of life:  
of joys there is full store  
Before thy face; at thy right hand  
are pleasures evermore." v. 10, 11.

She valued God's House more than ever, the nearer she came to the end of the earthly journey; and determination to attend public worship even when heart and flesh fainted and failed, was revealed by her presence at the weekly meeting in the Church, a day before she died. "The tabernacles of thy grace, how pleasant Lord they be!" (Ps. 84, v. 1).

The Church of Christ in the Song of Solomon, ch. 6, v. 2 speaks thus of Christ, "My beloved is gone down into his garden, to the beds of spices, to feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies." Yes, to gather lilies! And we humbly believe that the Beloved has gathered Mrs. Miller, along with others, from the garden of the Church in the world, home to the Father's house of many mansions; yet leaving more spiritual desolation with us and cause for mourning on our own account.

husband, as well as to the sisters and brothers, in their sorrow. May they find grace and comfort in Naomi's God and be enabled to say, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1, 16).

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## **The Shortness of Human Life.**

By Rev. THOMAS BOSTON.

"When a few years are come, then I shall go the way whence I shall not return" (Job xvi. 22).

TIME is in constant motion. Years are like rivers flowing fast away, and still running a straight, but no hope of their running a backward

course. The year now gone will never return, and that now come will run on till it is also run out. Meanwhile, our life here is also running to an end. Our text mentions an important removal, that is abiding all. This is, "We shall go the way whence we shall not return." Death is the going to that place, that state. A removing from time to eternity, from the world of sense, to the world of spirits. There will be a return of the body from the grave, but no return from eternity. We have also the longest term fixed from this removal. It may be within a few months, weeks, days, hours, that we shall be called away. But without all preadventure, the term of removing will be to all of us within a few years. "When a few years are come," by that time we will be gone. Doctrine. The coming in of a few new years will set us out of this world, never to return to it. However vain men make new years, new occasions of renewing their follies, superstitions, carnal mirth, and jollities. They thus act as those in whom madness is in their hearts while they live, and after that they go to the dead. I see not how serious persons can fail to have this serious thought on such an occasion. Here I shall very shortly,

I. Shew in what respects, we can have but a few years to come.

II. Why is the coming, and not the going of these years mentioned.

III. When the few years have sent us off there is no returning.

We are then,

I. To shew in what respects, we can have but a few years to come.

(1) In comparison of the many years to which man's life did sometimes extend; namely, the ages before the flood. Gen. v. When man's life was of that great extent, an ill use was made of it; and Enoch, the best man of that period, had the shortest life namely, three hundred and sixty-five years. Now our years are dwindled into so small a number, that the odd number even of Enoch's years, is a long life with us, which few comparatively reach.

(2) In comparison to the years of the world that are past, now about five thousand, seven hundred and twenty-four. If we consider what of the world's time was run before we knew it, how late incomers we are, and how soon we must be gone, we must need say, we have but, at most, few years to come. Our life is but a short visit made to the world of sense.

(3) In comparison to the work we have to do, namely, our salvation, and generation work. If we were to live hundreds of years, we have as much work laid to our hands as might fill it all up; and we would be convinced of that, if once we would rightly consider, that we have both our own souls to attend to, and to be useful for God in the world.

(4) In comparison of eternity. If our life was lengthened out a hundred times the length of the ordinary period of it, it would be no more in that case, than a drop of water to the ocean or a grain of sand to a mountain. How few then must our years be which we probably have to come. But let us enquire.

II. Why is the coming, and not the going of a few years mentioned?

(1) Because, that by the time they are fully come in, they are gone out; so that the coming, and the going of a year, are all upon the matter. It is not one or two, or a month, or eleven month of days, that make a year; till the last day and hour of the year is come, and then it is gone by that. How quick is our time, thence ill its motion; how soon do our years pass, which no sooner are come, than they are gone again.

(2) Because that year will at length begin to come in, which we will never see the going out of. Every year is that to some, and to which of us, this year may be it, who knows. But in ordinary course of providence, it cannot fail to be so, to some or other of us, in the place. The term of the year should certainly suggest this serious thought to us. We are now,

III. To shew when the few years have sent us off, there is no returning.

(1) Men cannot come back, Job. xvi. 14. If men cannot help themselves alive, far less can they restore themselves to life, and return after death hath carried them away. Nothing less than an omnipotent hand can loose the hands of death, make up the ashes into a body again, and re-unite the soul to it. And,

(2) God will not bring them back again. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." God has appointed this life for the time of a trial, when it is ended, the sentence is passed, and no place remains for a new time of trial. With respect to the godly after death, their souls are at rest with God, in heaven; their bodies rest in the grave, sleeping in Jesus. He will not pluck them out of their rest. As for the wicked, they have had their time, and it is out, the sentence is passed, and there is no reversing of it.

For improvement, let the going out, and coming in of years be so noticed and improved by you, as that you may apply your hearts to wisdom on that occasion. I cannot think that the observing of such a time in the way of carnal mirth, feasting and giving of gifts and handbells, is becoming Christianity. It is certain that was the manner of the heathen; and it is certain, that God strictly forbade His people to symbolise with the heathen, and follow their customs. "You shall not," said He to them, "walk in the manner of the nations, which I cast out before you; for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them." But it appears very proper in such a time,

(1) That men seriously weigh with themselves that they are now a great step nearer another world than they were. A year is a very considerable part of one's life, for there are not many of them in our whole life. And if you be in case for passing into another world, you may lift up your head with joy," for now is your salvation nearer, than when you believed." But, hearer, if you be not, you should be stirred up the more to make ready.

(2) That they take a humbling back-look of their way, and consider, the many wrong steps which you have made in their past years, and particularly in the year last past. The way of providence towards them

in it; what mercies, what rods, what deliverances they have met with, and what improvements has been made of them. Taking up resolutions, in the strength of grace to walk more closely with God in all time coming.

(3) That they renew their acceptance of the covenant, and lay down measures for their safety in another world what time. So all their few years shall come to an end. That is, that in prospect of their going out of the world at the time appointed by God, they do, what they would do, if it were told they should never see the end of the 'year. Ezek. xlv. 18-21. And it would be proper to take a particular time for this, shorter or longer, for the more solemn managing of the work. None shall bind themselves to any time to which God has not bound them; but it were good to take the time most convenient for the work.

(1) Consider how many years have gone over our heads, and how short way our business for eternity is come, nay, with many of us it is not yet begun. They who have a long journey before them, and have loitered in the morning, had much need to mend their pace, when the day is far spent. For every seven years any of us have lived. We have had a whole year of Sabbaths. And at this rate, seven years of Sabbaths, have passed with most of us. But how unprepared we are as yet, for the eternal Sabbath in the heavens.

(2) How quickly do years run out, and make no stay. They pass like a tale that is told. And if all more years yet to come, these that are to come, will pass away with no less speed, than those that are now gone, and will never return.

(3) We know what is passed, but what may be to come, we know not. The lower end of our sand glass of time is within our view, and we see what is run out. But the upper end is covered to us; we know not how much, or how little remains to run.

(4) Our years are gone, there is no bringing them back again. If our work has been neglected in them, it must be forever undone for them; and we must either do and make up the former neglect, by improving the present opportunity, or we are forever ruined.

Lastly, eternity is a business of the greatest weight. It is that in which we, and the world itself too, will together be swallowed up. The great glass of time for the world's duration, was set up in the beginning. Gen. 1. It is not to be turned for this world, but when it runs out, the world ends: and we may be sure it is towards the end by this time. Now the happiness of the other world is too great for us to be indifferent about it, and to be cheated out of it by Satan and our vain hearts. The misery of the other world is too great a burden to be easy about, while we are not secured against it. The punishment of loss, and the punishment of sense, are things which require our utmost care and concern to escape. The eternity and unchangeableness of these things, add immensely to their weight. There is no change there for ever. But once happy, happy for ever more; and once miserable, miserable for ever more. Finally, when it will come upon us we know not. Our few years being come, then we go, and shall know in our experience what that is, about which we have so often heard so much. Amen.

## **Constructive Criticism of the Youth Service Schemes in Scotland.**

By NORTHERN PRESBYTERY FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

On reviewing this Scheme, we conclude that there is much under the headings, "PHYSICAL," "MENTAL," "CITIZENSHIP," and "WORK," which is commendable.

Strictures, however, fall to be made regarding the Scheme as a whole, and, especially, on aspects of its bearing on what is moral and spiritual.

First, regarding the Scheme as a whole, can there be any occasion for it at all in its present form, if parents had not, to a great extent, abandoned their solemn responsibility for the moral and spiritual welfare of their families?

Secondly, we would refer more in detail to the moral and spiritual aspects of the Scheme. And, frankly, under the heading, "MORAL" (page 5), which is defined as "Self-discipline; having a sense of responsibility to one's self and to one's fellows," etc., we take serious exception to the fundamental omission of any reference to one's responsibility to God and the moral law. Youth cannot have a true sense of responsibility to one's self and to one's fellows apart from the moral law.

As regards the "SPIRITUAL" aspect, which is defined as follows:—"Being inspired not only by a knowledge of conceptions and ideals that are greater than man himself, and call forth the highest service of which he is capable, but also by a reverence for them"—the explanation here of what pertains to the spiritual sphere is totally inadequate. It is vague. It fails to set forth, even in brief compass, what these conceptions and ideals are, or their source. The fact is that the Biblical meaning of the term. "SPIRITUAL," according to the tenor of this pamphlet, is what is in accordance with human reason. This is evident from the use made of the quotation from Socrates. We point out that the term, "godly," as used by Socrates, means what has the approval of "the gods," but the same term as used in the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and in the Greek of the New, has evidently quite another meaning; as much, indeed, as "God" is different from "the gods." We may add that despite the ideals of the Greeks, they lived in a moral morass.

This Youth Service Scheme is, in our estimation, non-Christian in spirit in the strict sense of the term. Let us cite the statement on page 21, regarding the proposed misuse of the Christian Sabbath. Instead of being the day of the memorial of the resurrection of the Lord of Glory from the dead, it is proposed to use it for purposes which are secular, e.g., experiments in social and mental education. It, indeed, seems that the authors of the Scheme lament that, on the Lord's Day, there are in the majority of areas "no cinemas, nor dancing-halls, nor provision of any kind to attract young people."

Those responsible for drawing up this Scheme aim at the moral, cultural, and spiritual welfare of the youth of our land. The standards referred to can never, in our judgment, be attained by the spirit manifested and the principles adopted in this Scheme.

We, therefore, point out that Christianity is the hope of the world. To attain to the standards belonging to it can only be done by truly Christian ideals. We herewith submit some of the essential truths of the Christian faith, which is the basis of these ideals. Such ought to be brought to bear on the youth by all concerned. These are as follows:—

(1) The supernatural inspiration of the Scriptures. On this subject we observe that only the self-revelation of God given in the Bible can now, owing to the blight of sin, be considered adequate for conveying the requisite knowledge of Himself and of divine things to man. In the Bible alone we have a knowledge of God which is free from error and superstition, answering to the spiritual needs of fallen man. And it is by faith that the whole counsel of God is appropriated in an ever-increasing measure so that God may receive honour and glory through man.

Our Lord and His Apostles evidently regarded the Old Testament collection as authoritative. An appeal to it was the equivalent of "God says." As to the New Testament, Christ solemnly promised the Apostles the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and they themselves were conscious of the fact that their word was the word of God and therefore authoritative. The reason for our adverting to this subject is the profound necessity to study prayerfully the truth concerning this doctrine, to receive it and act upon the fact that the Scriptures form the alone supreme rule of faith and manners. If once such an attitude were arrived at, by the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, we would, in family life and educationally, be well on the way to a new era.

(2) THE MORAL LAW. This is the law delivered by God to man as an abiding rule of righteousness. The sum of it is to love the Lord with all the heart, and our neighbour as ourselves. Here is the rule for moral conduct. Were this the rule of the Youth Scheme, and instilled into the minds of the young, it would be calculated to restrain them from open sin evidencing itself in present-day juvenile delinquency. To conform oneself to God's law is true self-discipline, and He, the moral Governor of men, richly rewards those who do so.

(3) The Person of Christ. The Saviour is God manifest in the flesh. He is the eternal Son of God. He became man to die, and thereby obtain eternal redemption for all who obey Him. He is now the alone Head of His body, the Church, and Head over all things for the Church.

(4) The Holy Spirit is a Divine Person. His work is essential to enlighten souls in the truth of the written Word of God, to impart eternal life to them, and lead all who believe to have ultimately every thought brought into obedience to Christ.

We ask, in the light of these doctrines—to mention these only at present—how would we as a generation stand, parentally, socially, and educationally, were we, with unfeigned faith, to embrace them, and live according to them?

*(To be continued.)*



## Notes and Comments.

*General Dobbie.*—The following cutting has been sent us with a request for its publication in the Magazine:—General Sir William Dobbie can be assured that thousands of Christian people in this country are following his American tour with the greatest interest. Evidently, the General occasioned some surprise at the opening of his tour by his insistence upon observing "Sunday" as a day of worship and rest, without the intrusion of week-day interests. When the inevitable journalists came to interview him, he told them that he preferred not to talk with them on "Sundays," and made it plain that if publicity depended upon "Sunday" interviews he would forfeit the publicity.

## Church Notes.

*Communion.*—April, first Sabbath, Portnalong and Breasceleite; second, Fort William; third, Greenock; fourth, Glasgow; fifth, Wick. May, first Sabbath, Kames and Oban; second, Scourie; third, Edinburgh and Broadford. June, first Sabbath, Thurso. *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.

*Acknowledgments.*—Mr. H. S. MacGillivray has collected 200 volumes for the South African Missionary School Library. As in former years Mr. Donald Grant (Grant Educational Company, Union Street, Glasgow) has generously given a goodly number of school books and the Church is indebted both to Mr. MacGillivray and Mr. Grant for their interest in our Mission.

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