

Notes of a Sermon.

Preached by the REV. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall,
on Sabbath, 1st September, 1918.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith” – Romans 1:16,17.

The Apostle Paul wrote this Epistle to the Romans, in which there are all the doctrines that pertain to the Christian faith. At that time there was a congregation in Rome, in which there were many true Christians. He addresses his epistle to these, describing them as “beloved of God and called to be saints.” The word “saints” does not apply only to a certain class of God’s people, as some hold, but it applies to all of them, as all of them are to some extent holy or sanctified. He thanks God that there were such in Rome, and they were so famous that “their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world.” He prays for them and longs to see them. He often purposed to visit them, but was hitherto hindered. He desired to go to Rome to preach the gospel to them, that he might establish them in the faith. On account of God’s great mercy to himself personally, he felt that he was under obligations “to preach to the Greeks (Gentiles), and to the barbarians, and to the wise and the unwise”; so that as much as in him was, he was “ready to preach the gospel to them at Rome also.” His intended visit would, he hoped, be of mutual benefit to them and to himself. He hoped to impart spiritual gifts to them, to the end that they might be established, and that he might himself be comforted by his intercourse with them.

In addressing you from the words of our text, we shall notice –

- I. – That the apostle was “not ashamed of the gospel of Christ”; and
- II. – The reason he gives for this confidence.

I. – He was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. This implies that some were ashamed of it. Not only the Jews who put Christ to death were ashamed of it, but the pagans in Rome, who thought so much of their own false religion, were ashamed of the gospel of Christ and persecuted those who professed the Christian religion. To look for salvation to a person who suffered an ignominious death, was a thing of which they would be ashamed. Rome was the capital of the then known world, and contained learned men, such as philosophers and others, who thought much more of their own learning than of the gospel of Christ, and despised those that preached the gospel; but Paul was not ashamed to preach the gospel to these. He gloried in preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified. “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Galatians 6:14). Some who are in the land of the gospel are ashamed of the gospel. They want something new; something strange. Christ’s ministers are not ashamed to preach the gospel, howsoever much they may suffer from their enemies for their work. They are often ashamed of themselves, because of their imperfections and shortcomings in performing their duties in connection with the glorious work which God has given them to do. Many are ashamed of the gospel who are not ashamed of sinning against God. The proud and self-righteous are ashamed of the gospel, but not those who have found out their great need of the gospel.

II. – The reason why he is not ashamed of the gospel. There are two things in the reason.

(1) “Because the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” The gospel is the channel through which God exerts His power to save sinners. He created

the world by the word of His power, but He saves sinners by the word of the gospel. The bare word is not sufficient for this end; it requires the power of God, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, to accompany it in order to salvation. So the word of the gospel came to the Thessalonians, as the apostle states, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Ghost" (1 Thessalonians 1:5). The end for which God exerts His saving power through the gospel, is salvation. The salvation of our souls is the most important thing for us. If we are not saved, we shall be miserable for ever in eternity. Many are satisfied if they are supplied with everything that their bodies need, and care not what may become of their souls; but "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36.)

In order to be saved, faith is necessary. The gospel is the power of God to every one that believeth. What are we to believe? And in whom are we to believe? We are to believe the gospel, as it testifies of Christ; and we are to believe in Christ by means of the gospel. You cannot believe in Christ savingly without believing the word of the gospel. When Christ began His public ministry, He said, "Repent, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). And when the jailer at Philippi asked, "What must I do to be saved?" the apostle said unto him, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The gospel has been experienced to be the power of God unto salvation by many who are now in heaven and by some who are yet in the world. The Christians in Rome, to whom the apostle wrote this epistle, are in heaven, and they praise God for sending the gospel to them while on earth and for making it effectual unto their salvation. The gospel will not benefit you unless you believe it.

While the apostle declares that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, he shows the sinful and miserable condition in which all men, Jews and Gentiles, are by nature. They are all exposed to the wrath of God on account of their sins. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness" (verse 18). The description he gives of the Gentiles shows how abominable they had been in their practice, and in the third chapter he states that there is no difference between Jews and Gentiles as they are by nature. Before the gospel is blessed to sinners, the Spirit convinces them of their sins and misery, in order that they may see their need of Christ to save them. In the preaching of unconverted ministers, there is little or nothing said about the necessity of the work of the Spirit in applying Christ's redemption, though the necessity of being "born of the Spirit" is clearly taught in Scripture. It was the first lesson that Christ taught Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).

(2) The second thing in the reason that the apostle gives for not being ashamed of the gospel of Christ is that "therein is the righteousness of God revealed." The righteousness of God here is the righteousness on the meritorious ground of which sinners are justified and saved. It is called the righteousness of God, because it was appointed by God the Father, and approved by Him, and because it was wrought out by God the Son in our nature. This righteousness is revealed in the gospel, and is imputed to every sinner that believes in Christ. We had no hand in working out this righteousness in whole or in part, and God imputes it to us as our own. The sins of His people were imputed to Christ; although He had no hand in committing these sins. He endured the penalty of our sins that we might receive the benefits merited by His righteousness. Many refuse to be saved on the ground of Christ's righteousness, because they expect to be saved on the ground of their own righteousness. They are under a covenant of works, and expect to be saved on the ground of their own works, though Scripture clearly teaches that "by the works of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God." Nothing can root out self-righteousness from the hearts of sinners but the grace of God, and the teaching of the Holy Spirit, which declares that all our righteousness are as filthy rags. Before Paul was converted, he trusted in his own

righteousness, but after his conversion he said that he had “no confidence in the flesh.” All his hope for salvation was founded upon the righteousness of Christ, and the Spirit that taught him this is the same that teaches all true Christians. The standard of righteousness is the law of God, and no sinner by his own works can come up to that standard, but Christ by His obedience unto death satisfied all the requirements of the law, and if His righteousness is imputed to us, the law is satisfied with us on the meritorious ground of His righteousness.

This righteousness is “revealed from faith to faith,” that is, according to some interpreters, from the faithfulness of God in His testimony concerning this righteousness, to the faith of believers in receiving that testimony; and according to others, from the first act of faith to repeated acts of faith during our time in the world. The latter seems to be the meaning, as it is spoken by the apostle in connection with the words, “The just shall live by faith.” It is said of believers, not only that they came unto Christ, but that they continue to come unto Him “as to a living stone” (1 Peter 2:4), and that as they continue to run the race set before them, they are by faith looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. The exercise of faith is continued during our time in the world. There are some who say that they believed in Christ once, and that they have no need of believing in Him again. But that is not the case with us; if we are true Christians, we need to come to Christ by faith daily. When we enter the closet to pray in secret – when we gather at the family altar for family worship, or attend the prayer meeting and the preaching of the gospel in public – we need to look to Christ by faith, till faith is swallowed up in vision when we enter heaven at death. If Christ and His righteousness are yours, you are a rich and a happy person although you would be stripped of all temporal possessions as Job was. The Lord sometimes deprives people of their wealth and health, that they may make choice of Christ as the good part that shall not be taken away from them.

In closing this great subject we ask, “What do you think of the gospel of Christ? Is it great and precious in your estimation, or are you ashamed of it as a thing of no value to you?” Oh, how thankful we ought to be to God for revealing to us the way of salvation in the glorious gospel! “If it is hid, it is hid to them that are lost,” who are blind and cannot see it.

If you have experienced the gospel as the power of God unto salvation, you are a changed person, changed in your nature, in your state, and in your practice. There are many in the land of the gospel who manifest by their filthy language that they are still in a state of sin and misery. They curse and swear, and if you ask them why do they use such bad language, they would say, if they spoke the truth, “We speak the language of our father the devil, the language that is spoken in hell.” It would not be a wonder to us, although such bad language might be heard among the heathen; but it is a shame to hear it in the land of the gospel. But heathens in the land of the gospel are worse than those in heathen lands, and their punishment in eternity shall be greater than that of those who never heard the gospel. “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers” (Ephesians 4:29). To those to whom the gospel is blessed the Lord promises to turn a pure language. “For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one consent” (Zephaniah 3:9).

[November 1918]

Notes of a Sermon.

By the REV. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall,

“He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shew it unto you” – John 16:14.

Christ speaks thus of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the glorious Trinity. As we have it in the Shorter Catechism, “There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.” In His actings and operations the Holy Spirit is spoken of as a person. He speaks: He spoke through the prophets, and the apostles; and in the book of Revelation, it is written, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches” (Revelation 3:6). As a person, He convinces of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He comforts those that are sorrowful. It is as the Comforter Christ promises to send Him to His disciples who were sorrowful when He told them that He was to go away to the Father that sent Him. As a person, He was to take of the things of Christ, and shew them unto His people.

In speaking from our text, we shall notice: –

- I. – That the Spirit shall glorify Christ; and
- II. – The manner in which He shall glorify Him.

I. – Christ glorified the Father by finishing the work which He gave Him to do. He glorified Him on earth, and the Father glorified the Son in heaven, with the glory which He had with Him before the world was, and the Spirit whom He sends glorifies Him also. Not that He makes Him more glorious than He is, but that He shows forth His glory. He shows forth in the Scriptures the glory of His person as a glory that transcends that of angels, and men. In the first chapter of Hebrews, the Spirit, through the writer of that epistle, shews that the glory of Christ far excels the glory of angels. “Being made so much better than the angels as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship Him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands. They shall perish; but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment. And as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail. But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?” (Hebrews 1:4-13).

Comparing Him with men, He is more glorious than any man in the Church, however good. The Jews thought much of Moses as the greatest man in the Old Testament Church, but Christ is infinitely more glorious than he. “For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses, verily, was faithful in all his house as a servant. . . . But Christ as a Son over his own house” (Hebrews 3:3,6). Moses was only a servant in the house, but Christ was the owner of the house. The Holy Spirit in the Scriptures shews the glory of Christ’s person, of His two natures as God-man, the glory of His threefold office as prophet, priest, and king, the glory of His atoning sacrifice; and He does so that we might value Him, come to Him, believe in Him, and glorify Him. It is the Spirit in the Lord’s people that enables them to glorify Christ.

Those who pretend to have the Holy Spirit and despise Christ are not taught of God; and those who reject the Scriptures in whole or in part are not led by the Holy Spirit, for the teaching of the Scriptures and of the Spirit agree, and Scripture is the medium through which the Spirit speaks, as holy men of old were the instruments by which He spoke.

II. – The manner in which He shall glorify Him. It is by receiving of the things that are Christ's, and shewing these things to His people. What are those things that are Christ's? They are all that the Father has. "All things that the Father hath are mine" (verse 15). The blessings of the covenant of grace belong to the Father. The love of God, which is the source of salvation, belongs to the Father, and salvation or life eternal, grace and glory, belong to the Father. In the Shorter Catechism the blessings of salvation are spoken of as justification, adoption, and sanctification, and at death, glorification. All these are given to Christ by the Father. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things unto his hand" (John 3:35). As Christ received all these blessings from the Father, He is rich with these blessings. No wonder that the Apostle Paul says, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). We are poor and miserable, but Christ is rich to supply our needs. We do not receive the blessings of salvation immediately from God the Father, but through Jesus Christ, the one Mediator between God and men. He received these blessings from the Father, not for Himself, but for such poor sinners as we are, and we are made partakers of these blessings by the Holy Spirit, of whom Christ says in our text, "He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." There is a beautiful order in the communication of salvation to sinners. Christ receives the blessings of salvation from the Father, and the Holy Spirit receives these blessings from the fulness of Christ, and believers receive them from the Holy Spirit. These blessings are, first, the Father's; secondly, the Son's; thirdly, the Spirit's; and fourthly, the believer's. The Father was rich with these blessings, Christ was rich with them, the Holy Spirit was rich with them, and now believers are rich with them. "All things are yours" (1 Corinthians 3:21). The Spirit glorifies Christ by taking of His things and shewing them unto us, or applying them to us in a saving manner. Before He applies them to us, He convinces us of our need of them as sinful, lost, and ruined by sin. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." Have you been convinced of your sins as a sinner, guilty and liable to be punished forever? It is the Spirit that works faith in us to receive Christ in the free offer of the gospel. It is in union with Christ the Spirit communicates to us the benefits of His redemption. The Spirit not only convinces us of our need of Christ, but He also enlightens our minds in the knowledge of Him, and He does so by means of the Scriptures, which testify of Christ as "able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by Him." He shews us that Christ's death is the only ground of salvation, and we are satisfied with that ground. By nature we are ignorant of the way of salvation, and as we are under a covenant of works we expect to be saved by the works of the law. But those who are taught of the Spirit have renounced that way and rest upon Christ alone for salvation. This is a more excellent way, a way in which we are saved consistent with the glory of God.

We have been speaking on a great subject, and we feel that it is so great that we can only touch the hem of its garment. It is in the Scriptures the Spirit shews the things of Christ, and it is by the Scriptures He applies the blessings of salvation to us. It is in the Scriptures God speaks to us now, and not as of old, sometimes by dreams and visions. The rich man in the parable thought that if a man was raised from the dead to tell his brethren on earth of the terribleness of being lost in eternity, that they would repent; but he was told by Abraham that they had Moses and the prophets, and that, if they believed not them, they would not be persuaded though a man rose from the dead. Many die, but none comes back from eternity to tell us whether they are in heaven or in hell. The only way in which we can know where they are is in the word of God in the Bible. If they gave evidence during their lifetime that they

were in Christ we conclude that they are in heaven; but if they lived carelessly, walking according to the course of the world, and died in that condition, we may conclude that they are in hell.

Though God's people are, in a sense, poor, yet how rich they are! All that the Father hath is theirs; all that the Son hath is theirs; and all that the Holy Spirit hath is theirs. If these things are yours, think of the order in which they came to be yours. They were originally the Father's; secondly, the Son's; thirdly, the Spirit's; and fourthly, yours. The glory of salvation then is due to the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and seek grace that you may ascribe that glory to them.

In Scripture the plan of salvation is ascribed to the Father; the working out of salvation is ascribed to Jesus Christ, the Son; and the application of salvation is ascribed to the Holy Spirit; and as Christ, as mediator, secured the blessings of salvation by His death, He is Lord over these blessings. As Joseph was the steward over the provision which he made for the time of famine, and as Pharaoh said to those who applied to him for food, "Go to Joseph," so God says to sinners who seek salvation, "Go to Christ; He is the dispenser of the blessings of salvation." And He ministers out the blessings to needy souls through the agency of the Holy Spirit, and by means of the Scriptures of truth.

[December 1918]

Communion Table Addresses.

By the late REV. PROFESSOR JOHN DUNCAN, LL.D.,
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[By the kindness of a relative of the late worthy Miss Robertson, who was housekeeper to Rev. Dr. Duncan, we have obtained the use of MSS., containing Addresses and Sermons, taken down by Miss Robertson from Dr. Duncan's lips, and hitherto unpublished. We are confident that our spiritual readers will peruse these valuable Communion Addresses, etc., with much interest and appreciation, and also, by the divine blessing, with much

spiritual edification. We feel grateful to God for the privilege of being instrumental in publishing for the first time these Spirit-taught utterances of His eminent servant, John Duncan, who "being dead, yet speaketh." – ED.]

TABLE SERVICE NO. I.

(Address before Distribution of Elements.)

Three years had now elapsed from the time when Jesus, who had grown up before Jehovah as a tender plant and a root out of a dry ground, had been manifested to Israel, and solemnly recognised at His baptism by a voice from heaven – "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." During these three years, years the most eventful that ever occurred in the history of this world, or in the history of all worlds, many glorious and gracious words had fallen from the lips of Jesus, many glorious and gracious works had been performed by Him. Before the Gospel was preached even, a few beheld His glory, those whom He had chosen to be witnesses of all He spake and did, and also of His death and resurrection.

And now the time came, when they commemorated the deliverance from the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; that deliverance which was followed by the legislation and the covenant which God made with Israel in Horeb. But God had said, "Behold, the days come, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying 'Know the Lord;' for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Now, the first covenant was not ratified without blood; but the new covenant had to be ratified with better sacrifices than these. Jesus is Himself the Mediator of the new testament.

And now at the expiry of the public ministry of our Lord, Jesus was calling His disciples to commence a new ordinance, the solemn commemoration of the sacrifice by which the new covenant is sealed. He said, taking bread, "This is my body which is broken for you, eat ye all of it," and, taking the cup, "This cup is the new testament in my blood, shed for many for the remission of sins." Oh, what words! Oh, what a scene! Who is He that presides? Who are they that sit at meat? What are the viands? At what cost is this feast prepared? What will be the consequences of it to Him? What the consequences to them?

Who is He that presides? It is Jehovah, Israel's own God, come as the messenger of the covenant, who here presides. It is Jehovah. It is the Son of the living God, the Word that "in the beginning was with God, and was God," and it is the Word made flesh. It is the only begotten Son of the Father, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person, who is in the Father and the Father in Him; who, because the children were partakers of flesh and blood also Himself likewise took part of the same – very God and very man – the Son of God, and the Son of man; who is not ashamed to call us brethren. At this table He presides.

And who are they that sit there? "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." They are indeed the holy apostles of the Lord – but sinners. "Shed for many for the remission of sins, drink ye all of it." He, knowing them to be such, eats with sinners the bread of heaven; not with holy angels, but sinners He calls to eat; yes, sinners. Ah! how does He appear at that table, when we think that He receives sinners, and eats with them! But they were sinners of whom He spake to the Father. "They have known that I came out from thee and they have

believed that thou didst send me.” “I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them.” Perhaps their faith at this time was going no further than the knowledge of His person, and the knowledge that He had the words of eternal life which He had brought from the Father’s bosom. And now He gives them more deeply than ever before the words of eternal life. “This is my body broken for you, this is my blood shed.” This Man gives them His flesh to eat – “my body” – the body and blood of the eternal Son of God, body and soul. Jesus had given them both His body and mind and soul before; they had heard Him; they had conversed with Him; they had listened to His words; they had received them as the words of eternal life; they had received Him as the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel. Now it is not merely Christ, but a broken and bruised Christ. He gives them His body and blood, His body broken and His blood shed. Ah! we may learn a lesson of what God is as a just and holy God, and of what we are as guilty sinners, deserving to be eternally bruised, covered with shame, under God’s curse. And what a lesson of the Father’s infinite love, of the Son’s free love! “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.” “Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.” “I lay down my life.” In this death His soul was put to grief; in this death there was the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood. Ah, there is something deeply mysterious in it! He gives them this bread to eat, this cup to drink, this cup of salvation.

And what are the consequences of it to Him? From the sacramental table we follow Him to Gethsemane. He had given them the cup to drink. Then, in our stead, in order that He might give the cup of salvation, He was to drink the cup of curse and condemnation. Jesus had already, as it were, pledged Himself. Now, not only was it sure in the purpose of Jesus, not only was it sure in the covenant of the Father and the Son, with the Holy Spirit’s consent; not only was it sure by His incarnation and coming into the world for this very purpose; but, as it were, the former bond was renewed, for already He had given a cup of salvation into the hands of His disciples, already said, “This is my blood of the new covenant, shed for many for the remission of sins.”

Now, it is altogether impossible that this cup should pass from Him. They have, first, the precious security; He has pledged Himself to these eleven men, pledged Himself by that cup of salvation. And now let us see how strict divine justice is. He leaves the three chosen disciples behind to watch and pray. He advances a few steps before them, and there falls prostrate on His face, His sweat, like great drops of blood, falling down to the ground; and He cries, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” Three times over He prays the same words, yet saying, “Not my will, but thine be done.” Yes, He knew what was in the cup, and His holy humanity shrank from it with a holy dread. But He had engaged – He had put into their hands the cup of salvation – and it was not possible that this cup should pass from Him, and His promise to them be fulfilled. He is now alone in Gethsemane, and there are no mockers here, no high priests, no Scribes and Pharisees, no cross – He is alone with the Father, and there He takes the cup. In one sense, in covenant engagements from eternity, and actually at His incarnation, it was taken; but now, more specially, the imputation of guilt is brought home, all that divine justice required Him to take out of the hands into which He has put the cup of salvation. And from Gethsemane to Calvary, where He is crucified in weakness. It is said an angel appeared, strengthening Him, strengthening the Mighty One, and so He is crucified in weakness. The Almighty! but it is in weakness that He is crucified, it is in weakness that He cries, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” And such is the cup in which, O blessed be God! He did not leave one bitter drop for us, but drank it to the dregs; and, instead, He puts into our hands the cup of salvation. But oh, with this cup of salvation there is ever the acknowledgment that Christ got that cup of wrath which was ours, that we might have this cup; and there is bitterness mixed with its sweetness when we look

upon Him whom we have pierced, and are in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.

“On that night in which our Lord was betrayed:”

(Address after Distribution of Elements.)

Now “unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father – to him be glory and dominion throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”

After supper is ended comes the garden, Gethsemane’s garden. And from it comes a lesson, a lesson which is best learned just in Gethsemane itself, where its strongest motives are, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.”

Jesus, when about to enter this garden, took three of the disciples with Him, Peter and James and John. He told them before He took a few steps forward from them, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” and wanted them to watch till He came. And all the three fell asleep. We are not to be harder on them than Jesus Himself was concerning this. He said, “The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

It pleased the Lord to bruise Him, to put Him to grief; and the very atmosphere perhaps, with the excessive sorrow after great joy and long watching, overcame them. They had not forsaken Him, as they did afterwards; but still they were not awake. He sought comforters; He sought them to watch and pray; but they did not. Oh what reliance shall we put on the intercession of the saints, when Peter, and James and John fall asleep, while our Lord goes alone to bear our burden and drink our cup? Not the zeal of Peter, not the integrity of James, and not the bright, burning, pure love of John, can keep them awake.

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” Temptation will come after the supper – it came to Judas, and it came to Peter – and we are called to watch and pray that we enter not into temptation.

To watch – “Watch with me” – let us watch in Gethsemane, let us watch with Christ. And to pray, let us learn to pray from Him – to pray; then to pray as in an agony, a prayer that terminates with this, “Thy will be done.” He has taught us to say, “Thy will be done,” and the saying of it will not cost thee so much as it cost Him.

“Ye do shew the Lord’s death until he come.” “I will make Thy name to be remembered in all generations,” and this day, hearing His word, and sitting at the table, we are witnessing the fidelity of God to Christ in this promise.

“Till I come.” Then this cup shall be drunk new in the Father’s kingdom at the marriage feast of the Lamb, when there shall be the realising of these words, “The Lamb shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters.”

We are reminded very solemnly this day how short our time is, how the day is far spent. The night is not far off in the course of nature to some of us – and none of us know how near it is. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;” and how shall we die in the Lord? Paul says, “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” “Present in the body, absent from the Lord, wherefore we labour that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him.” Meanwhile, He hath said, “Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.”

Go from the table of the Lord, and may He be with you according to His faithful word.

[December 1918]

Notes of a Sermon.

By the REV. D. A. MACFARLANE, M.A., Lairg, Sutherland.

“And she said, According unto your words, so be it. And she sent them away, and they departed: and she bound the scarlet line in the window” – Joshua 2:21.

Our subject of discourse and meditation we may call the Covenant of the Scarlet Thread. There was the Covenant of the Bow in the Cloud. There was also the Covenant of Circumcision. Not but these two were in a way much wider in scope, having to do with Noah

and Abraham not only as private individuals, in their standing before God, but also with them as representatives of posterity. What we here take the liberty of calling the Covenant of the Scarlet Thread is first and foremost personal in its bearing, and not, in the first instance at all, between God and any member of the human race. It was entered into and ratified by members of two different families of the human race. Yet so far-reaching were the consequences of this solemn agreement, that in due course Rahab became an ancestress of the Lord Jesus, according to the human nature.

In this chapter, then, there is an account given of the coming of two spies from the camp of Israel to the walled town of Jericho, of what befel them there, and of their subsequent return. Keeping especially in view the conduct of Rahab the harlot towards them and her action on their behalf, with the manifold salvation which she, through faith, came to enjoy as her very own, we shall seek to handle our subject, as enabled, under the following heads: –

1. What is told of her before their coming to Jericho;
2. What she did on their behalf when there;
3. The covenant, with its pledge; and
4. “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter.”

1. Rahab belonged to the land which the Lord promised to give to the children of Israel for a possession and earthly inheritance. She was a heathen, and, like others who were or may be brought from darkness to Gospel light, and from being outlaws of heaven to have peace with God, was by nature without hope and without God in the world. Not that Jericho and her people round about were without religious rites and practices. Far from it. They doubtless served their idols, their false gods, day and night instantly, and laboured to stand well in their sight. A prophet of the Old Testament or preacher of the Gospel, if such a messenger had been sent to them by the Lord, might have said to them, “I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious.” They were idolaters, although the true God “be not far from every one of us: For in him we live and move, and have our being.”

Along with idolatry, there was another form of evil prevalent in this town and in the land generally, that is, immorality in various forms. Rahab was an harlot, and seems, when the spies came, to have had a lodging-house or hostel for merchants and travellers in their goings and comings. The atmosphere of intercourse was a heathen one, and to be an harlot and have such an hostel would be at no great remove from one another.

If the seeds of evil have not been allowed to yield such wild and rank fruit among us, let us thank God for His mercy in this, and learn that, “as in water, face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.” Let us not think nor speak harshly of the Rahab of those remote days, when sin in similar ways may walk at noonday openly in lands professing to be regulated by the Word of God. There was once One on this earth who said to a self-righteous man, “Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee.” And he said, “Master, say on.” And the Lord showed him how the weeping and penitent sinner, however soiled, is received, and washed, and cherished by Him, and given to know His undying love, when those who are upright in their own eyes will be sent away empty to perish in their own righteousness.

How did Rahab come to know of Jehovah before the spies came? Answer – The news of God’s doings at the Red Sea soon spread. Also, it was the intention and purpose of this wonderful, wandering people to enter the land, or at least He who led them was to guide them thither, and place “His sanctuary there, like to a palace high.” Pharaoh’s name was a byword for power, dominion, and worldly glory. But the God, who brought the Hebrews out of Egypt, was stronger than Pharaoh – even in heathen eyes. Neither the god of the Nile, nor of the valleys, nor of any hills, could resist Jehovah. Enemies fade before Him as grass on housetops which withers before it be fully grown. We see that what Moses and Israel sang was fully and repeatedly corroborated afterwards. In Exodus 15 we have the whole song. “I

will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously, . . . he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation, my father's God and I will exalt him. . . . The people shall hear and be afraid, . . . sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina, . . . all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. . . . By the greatness of thine arm, they shall be as still as a stone, till the people pass over, O Lord, till the people pass over which thou hast purchased." And so to the end of the song.

Rahab heard of God's deeds. Rahab became convinced of God's will or good pleasure to favour Israel, of His power to cast down enemies, and to do for His people all that He promised. It may be that the fact of her having flax on the flat roof is an indication of her being honourably employed at last, though her former designation stuck to her. She may now have been going "softly." At any rate the Lord prepared her, in a way she knew not, for the great change which followed. "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them" (Isaiah 42:16.) By the time that the spies came, her bent of mind and desire seems already much inclined towards the new disposition and character which the Israel of God manifests. She was now to be blessed according to the promise, "I will bless them that bless thee" (Genesis 12:3.)

2. We now come to the second head: – What she did on behalf of the spies when they entered Jericho. The hand of God in His grace and providence is very evident in the guidance of the two spies to her house on that memorable occasion. It was reported that men of the children of Israel had come in, and the King sent officers to her to apprehend them. She determined to protect them, and mislead the officers. Two things at least are noteworthy here:

First, the hour of trial came. It was marvellous that they came to her house at all. But there is an overruling Power. You remember that everything was arranged for the triumph of Haman over Mordecai, but "on that night could not the King sleep," and the very reverse of what Haman expected took place. Here also then was the finger of God. But yet it was a time of trial. God was with her to an extent she knew not. The action and decision was hers. On the one hand, there is the warp and woof of life, intercourse, and association with and among her own people. Over against this, there the prospect in store for Israel; there is overthrow for enemies, as Sihon and Og were overthrown; there is that God, "the Lord your God, he is God in heaven above and in the earth beneath." The door of the tomb was now open. Was she to go out of this tomb by faith, and manifest the reality of it by receiving the spies with peace? Or, having heard of God and expressed herself as she did, was she now to draw back to perdition? Was Jericho to become a sepulchre for her as well as "for them who believed not"? Was her home to become a family vault for her father and people – the door of it about to close down heavily for ever, with her and hers on the inside, body and soul?

The mere coming of two men may seem insignificant, but here it meant the difference, in God's grace and providence, between being His and not being His! "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matthew xii. 30). Blessed be His name, she said in spirit to each, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord" – in to that moral dungeon and spiritual waste, and in due time she went forth to abide with those whose people became her people, and their God her God.

The second thing we wished briefly to refer to is that she said, "whither the men went I wot not," though they were hid by herself. We are not to defend her in this. The Word of God does not conceal the errors of God's people, like many biographies. The Holy Spirit has caused to be recorded what He saw right. But God gives repentance and pardon, and they themselves, we believe, often feel that if they received mercy and know the salvation of God, it is in a sense in spite of themselves, and what He does will for ever be to the praise of His glorious grace – "Not of works, lest any man should boast." She had taken the decision, hid

the spies at grave risk to herself, and even in the midst of much ignorance still, yet performed works as evidences of her faith, when “she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way” (James 2:25).

3. We come in this third place to remark somewhat more minutely on the covenant entered into between them and her. It was made when she got a favourable *opportunity* to meet with them. She had an heart to help them, and at the same time sought her own highest welfare. When the soul in its depths is concerned with its welfare for eternity, plans will be made to use the appointed means for seeking the Lord, and for helping His cause and people. The wisdom and wariness of the serpent are to be sought as well as the harmlessness of the dove. When a soul is persuaded as to the sacred reality of “the things that accompany salvation,” the Lord will help and meet with that soul. He will not only bless him, but as far as that is for His glory, make him a blessing. “Bless, Lord, his substance; and accept the work of his hands.”

This covenant was also *ordered in all things* that were needful for her and hers. We need not at present do more than refer you to the text of it in the chapter. They were to deal kindly with her as she dealt with them in the day of their distress. You may say that each had a claim on the other. But the Lord dealt kindly toward her in putting it into her heart to shew kindness to them! And He dealt kindly with them in enabling them to accomplish their mission successfully! So there was no room for claim in any meritorious way, when God was “all and in all” in the matter!

This covenant was, in addition, *sure*. “This line of scarlet thread in the window” was given as a “true token.” It was the very cord which they were let down by. So their lives hung on that occasion upon that thread. In a somewhat different sense, so did her life and the lives of her father’s house. If it were on her window, well; but, if not the guilt of innocent blood lay at her own door.

As to the pledge of the covenant, observe that in itself it was, on the whole, a *trivial* thing. So may a worldly man or scoffer look upon the symbols of our New Testament Sacraments. Some water in Baptism with no admixture! Yet how full of meaning! A piece of bread, blessed and broken! Yet “this is my body, which was broken for you.”

Again, the pledge was to be hung in a place *conspicuous* to all Israel – from a window on the wall. All Israel doubtless saw it, daily for six days and seven times on the final day! So with the Cross of Christ in its Bible-and-Holy-Spirit revelation. It is not on any marble altar it need be, nor hanging literally from a man’s neck or woman’s. It is to be known and confessed by the Israel of God as the centre and source of “grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

But while conspicuous to the children of Israel, it was hid from the rest of Jericho. They hated Israel. Their enmity she well knew. Some perhaps saw a scarlet line hanging as they passed out and in for a season, but it had no meaning to them. How many are there in Christendom who are still ignorant of the “secret of the Lord,” who see no meaning in, and attach no value to, the shedding of that blood wherewith the eternal covenant of peace and mercy is ratified! “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them who are lost” (2 Corinthians 4:3). And how many yet never heard that Jesus Christ “is come into this world to save sinners!” (1 Timothy 1: 15).

Lastly, it is especially worthy of notice that the thread was *scarlet* in colour. There was just one thread to hang there until the time of liberty, and it was a scarlet one. We find the “scarlet” in the days of Abel, of Noah, of the patriarchs, of the ceremonial law up to the Cross of Christ, where the “shadow” passed away and gladly gave place to the “substance.” Yet we have the symbol of His shed blood with us still, for “the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ?” (1 Corinthians 10:16).

The covenant for her, then, was ordered in all things and sure. And so with us if we enjoy like faith, and repentance and new obedience. May the covenant sealed with the blood of Christ be all our salvation and all our desire!

4. "The conclusion of the whole matter." It came to pass that she staked not her all in vain on the covenant with its pledge and oath in the name of Jehovah (verse 12). The true token was there until the day of deliverance. She was preserved and openly acknowledged in that day. The Church of God has her pledge, "till he come." Though flesh and heart will faint and fail the members of His mystical body in this world, yet God will fail them never.

Rahab was not only delivered but highly favoured, becoming – as far as may be determined – the ancestress of Boaz, and, therefore, of our Lord.

"Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity: but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness, otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Romans 11:22).

"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh unto God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). May He bless His Word. Amen.

[January 1919]

Communion Table Addresses.

By the late REV. PROFESSOR JOHN DUNCAN, LL.D.

Edinburgh.

(Hitherto Unpublished.)

TABLE SERVICE NO. II.

[This Table Service was delivered in Free St. Luke's, Edinburgh (Rev: Dr. Moody Stuart's),
on Communion Sabbath 28th January, 1865.]

(Address before Distribution of Elements.)

The Lord God, having in the beginning created the heavens and the earth, made man – formed him of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. "In the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." And He gave man a command, which man, tempted by the serpent, the devil, transgressed. And God "drove out the man," having given a word, at once of threatening to the serpent and of promise to the man. And so from that time forth hath begun a dispensation

of God toward man in which is manifested His grace. Men, having multiplied on the earth, and all flesh having corrupted its way, God brought down the waters of the flood, and destroyed the world of the ungodly. And afterwards, when men began again to be corrupt, and that corruption was also universal, God called Abraham from the land of his nativity, to go into a land which God would give him; and made him many promises, specially this one: "In thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." "And Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." And God confirmed His covenant to Isaac, and Jacob, and to their seed after them. He sent a famine in the land of Canaan where they dwelt, but sent a man into Egypt before them, Joseph, by whom they should be fed.

And when another Pharaoh, that oppressed them, rose up, He sent them His servant Moses; and after signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, He brought them out after the celebration of the passover, in which Israel acknowledged themselves guilty as well as Egypt. He brought them to the Red Sea and to Sinai, where He spake to Moses, saying, "Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel – Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself: Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation." And Moses reported these words to the elders of Israel and to all the people: and all the people said, "Amen; all that the Lord hath spoken we will do." So He entered into covenant with them, giving them the law of the ten commandments, written with His own hand on the two tables of stone; and many other commandments and ordinances by the hand of Moses He gave unto them. And when Moses had made an end of speaking every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover, he sprinkled with blood likewise both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry." "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." That sacrificial blood connected the book and the people, the book of the Lord and the people of the Lord. And that sacrificial blood connecting the book and the people, connected the vessels of the ministry, the tabernacle and the whole sanctuary; all were connected with the tabernacle and with Jehovah. God hath said, "The wages of sin is death," but He gave the children of Israel the blood of the animal slain in sacrifice, to be a propitiation for their sin outwardly, and typically, to give assurance to them for the covenant made at Sinai. But the people transgressed, and God sent many prophets, and at last sent unto them Jeremiah about the time of their captivity in Babylon, who said, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah." Israel, returned from captivity, were many days forsaken. There was no prophet or seer in Israel.

At last we go to Jerusalem, and in an upper chamber, Jesus of Nazareth with His disciples is met for the celebration of the passover. After the paschal feast, Jesus takes the bread, and breaks it, and gives it to them, saying, "This is my body," and takes the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood," the new covenant promised by Jeremiah, "shed for many for the remission of sins." "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." And this ordinance of Jesus was delivered in His commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." And Paul says to the Corinthians, who were mostly, if not altogether, Gentile, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." Well, this is one and the same feast. "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have

commanded you, and lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” Jesus is at the head of this Table. Jesus speaks the same words, “Do this in remembrance of me. As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do shew the Lord’s death until he come.”

“He is therefore the Mediator of the new covenant.” Jesus, the Christ, the Anointed – Jesus, the Son of the living God – God’s Son whom He sent – “made of a woman, made under the law” – God’s Son, being His Son before He sent Him, and therefore eternally, whom God sent to be “the Saviour of the world”; Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Son of man, the Son of God of the second Psalm and the Son of man of the eighth – “Lo! I come,” says the Son of God, “to do thy will – a body hast thou prepared me.” “Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same.” The angel announced His birth to the virgin Mary. “That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” – because He was the Son of God. God and man, the one Mediator between God and men; having a body, that He might be a sacrifice; having blood, that it might be the blood of the new covenant, wherewith the book of God and the people of God, and all the instruments of the worship of God, the tabernacle on earth, and the better tabernacle into which He has entered, were sprinkled; all consecrated with that blood.

Well, Jesus, who was the institutor, and as the institutor was and is at the head of His own Table, is also the food. “Take, eat,” says He at the head of the Table; “this is my body, broken for you; this cup is the new covenant in my blood; drink ye all of it.” The priests did eat of the things wherewith the atonement was made; and as Israel in the first covenant, so, in the new covenant, the sprinkled with the blood of Jesus are consecrated priests to God, and eat of the things wherewith the new covenant atonement was made. “My flesh,” said Jesus on a former occasion, “is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.” My flesh is meat in reality, and my blood is drink in reality. Man lives by bread; he is connected with the outward world; he is not sufficient to himself even as regards his body. He stands connected with this world, and must take in part of this world, in the form of fruits, vegetables, and animal produce, because he is not sufficient to himself as regards his corporeal life. And man, as a spirit, is not sufficient to his own spiritual life; the fountain of life remains with God; the whole source of supply remains with God. “That eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested unto us, which we have heard, which we have seen, which our hands have handled.” He, who was the Living One, became dead; and this life having died, Jesus, having given His life as the Mediator of the new covenant and as a ransom for the souls of many, this fountain of life, this “eternal life which was with the Father,” eaten by us, drunk by us, becomes to us the source of an eternal life. “As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.” Yes, Jesus is really present, and His words are really true, “This is my body, this is my blood.” Not, indeed, after a corporal or carnal manner, but by the divine appointment connecting the signs with the things signified, which divine connection is a reality, Jesus who is present to faith in the Word is also present to faith in the Sacrament. Ah, how costly a feast is this! It is precious. How precious! the body of the Son of God, the blood of the Son of God. But how costly! It is the *broken* body and the *shed* blood of the Incarnate Word, of the only begotten Son of God. Precious and costly.

“Broken for you,” sinner; for you. And why? “He is therefore the Mediator of the new covenant, that by means of death, for the redemption of the *transgressions* that were under the first covenant.” It is for transgressors. For transgressors; but all Jerusalem and all the nation on were transgressors. It was for transgressors; but it was for John leaning on Jesus’ bosom; it was for Peter to whom had been revealed these things; it was for all the others who had forsaken all and followed Jesus. For transgressors; but for such transgressors, for those who had received Jesus’ words, and had known that He came out from God and believed that He had sent Him. And not for those present only, but according to the prayer of intercession, “for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” What a feast is provided! It

begins at Jerusalem and goes out to the ends of the earth; for “Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.” “In this mountain will the Lord of Hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things.” And, as precious as it is, and as costly as it is, it required the mission, the incarnation, the obedience, and the perfecting of the obedience by the atoning death of the Son of God. It is given heartily, “Take, eat, drink ye all of it.” “Eat, O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!” Receive and be blessed, and let Him, who is at the head of the Table, have the enjoyment of that privilege of which He tells us in the words preserved by Paul, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” “On that night in which he was betrayed,” etc.

(Address after Distribution of Elements.)

How closely, believing communicants, does Jesus give Himself to your appropriating faith! “Take, eat, this is my body.” “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, drink ye all of it.” “That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.” That body, which you have eaten, that blood which you have drunk – not after a corporal or carnal manner, but by faith; that body, which was broken, is risen again; that blood, which was shed, Jesus hath entered with it into the holiest of all. What a connection between Him who dwells in heaven, and Him who dwells in the heart!

But now remember the Lord’s *priesthood*; remember the Lord’s *vineyard*; remember the Lord’s *race*; and remember the Lord’s *battle*.

Remember the Lord’s *priesthood*. “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2). Remember your sacerdotal office. Remember your kingly and sacerdotal office, and remember your prophetic office, “that ye should *shew forth* the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

Remember the Lord’s *vineyard*. For sitting at the Lord’s Table as the Lord’s disciples and servants, we receive the living bread, “the bread which came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world,” for life’s purposes. We live by eating and drinking, and by eating and drinking we live that we may work. And so having sat at the Lord’s Table, we have bound ourselves to the Lord’s work, to labour in the vineyard of the Lord, to be “steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.” Bountiful provision; let there be hearty work.

Remember the Lord’s *race*. Jesus, “for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame,” and let us run with patience and perseverance the race set before us, looking unto Him. “Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue (courage); and to courage, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity, for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.” And for running the race, take the use of this meat, as God enabled His servant Elijah to go in the strength of the meat He gave him many days.

Remember the Lord’s *battle*. The battle is against the devil, the world, and the flesh. About this battle, especially against the flesh, we have been hearing much. Ah! it is a heavy trial when a man’s enemies are those of his own house; worse still, when they are those of his own heart; and when that heart is on the side of the legion of enemies: when a man’s flesh connects him with the world against which he has to fight; and the world against which he has to fight connects him with the devil. But let us fight the battle out, against the devil, the world, and the flesh, in the strength of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

And when remembering the Lord’s death, we shew it “till he come.” This feast is in prospect of a coming one; it is the feast of espousals, not that of the consummated marriage. The espousals indeed are sure and certain, but then the terms are that we be for Him and not

for another, and the ground on which this is claimed is surely good, that He has given Himself for us.

Jesus instituted this supper, and died. We also must die. Nay, "He that believeth in me shall never die; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Jesus will come again, and "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed." "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." And that sleep is awaiting us, or the state at the second coming of the Lord – when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, when "the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air." Till that be, our death is a departing to be with Christ, which is far better. Therefore, for life, and the work of life, let us ask, and the Lord will give us the living bread.

There would not be every day in the prodigal's father's house the fatted calf, but the everyday home provision; and we are to count not on the supply of the Sacramental Table, but on the everyday fare of the home. Yet these two are substantially the same, for His flesh is meat indeed and His blood is drink indeed. Let there be a daily eating and a daily working, and a daily running and a daily fighting, and a daily prospect of the blessed end, so as we may be able through grace to say at last, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith."

"For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." "Amen, even so; come, Lord Jesus."

[January 1919]

Notes of a Sermon.

Preached by the REV. D. MACFARLANE, Dingwall,
on Sabbath, 8th December, 1918.

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, and give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth" – Isaiah 62:6,7.

The prophet felt concerned about the Lord's cause, and as a faithful servant in the Church, he resolved to labour by preaching and praying for its success, and he was encouraged to this by the promises given by God concerning the coming of His kingdom. The Gentiles were to be brought in, and the Church was to be made glorious. She was no more to be forsaken. The Lord Himself was to dwell in her and to delight in her. "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee and thy land shall be married. For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee" (verses 4,5). That these promises might be fulfilled, the Lord set up ministers in the Church, as we have in our text. The Church consists of ministers and people, and in order that it might prosper, both parties have their duties assigned to them, and they ought to perform these duties faithfully.

In the text we shall notice the following particulars: –

- I. – The watchmen;
- II. – They that make mention of the name of the Lord; and
- III. – Their work.

I. – The watchmen. Who are the watchmen? Under the Old Testament prophets were watchmen. Under the New Testament the Apostles were watchmen, and after the Apostles left the world, ministers of the gospel were watchmen. All these were set up by God Himself in their office in the Church. They were set up on the walls of Jerusalem. The office of prophets, Apostles, and ministers of the gospel is the highest in the world. It is much higher than the office of kings. As they were set up by God in the Church, they had the highest authority. There were false prophets who were not set up by God, and there were false Apostles, and these would do no good to the people but much harm. And there were, and still are, men in the office of the ministry who were not set up by God, and in our day these are more numerous than the true ministers of Christ. But the Lord had true ministers in His Church in the past till this day, and He will have such till the end of the world. He will take care of His own cause. This should not hinder people from being anxious about His cause in the world. It is a good sign to see people anxious about their own salvation and about the Lord's cause.

The difference between prophets and Apostles, and ministers of the gospel now, is that prophets and Apostles were inspired men, while ministers are not now inspired, but they are illuminated by the Spirit and qualified by God for their work. Also the prophets and Apostles had their commission direct from God Himself. There were two things necessary in order to be an Apostle: –

- (1) That he had seen the Lord with his bodily eyes; and
- (2) That he had his commission direct from Him.

Some doubted Paul's right to be called an Apostle, and in self defence, he said, "Am I not an Apostle? Have I not seen the Lord?" (1 Corinthians 9:1); and it is evident that he had his commission direct from the Lord Jesus. The Lord said to Ananias concerning Saul: "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:15,16). "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth" (Acts 22:14). Although ministers in the Church after the Apostle's time have not seen the Lord with their bodily eyes, they have seen Him by the eye of faith, and that is as sure as if they had seen Him with the bodily eyes; and although they have not their commission direct from Him, they have it from Him through the medium of the Church.

II. – They that make mention of the name of the Lord. These are the praying people. Although these do not occupy the office of the ministry, they have their own place in the Church. And while it is men only that are in the office of the ministry, there are women as well as men in this class of members in it. We shall say more about them when we come to speak of the work of both parties to which we now proceed.

III. – Their work.

1. The work of the watchmen. They are to watch day and night, and give warning to the people under their charge when they see any danger approaching, like Ezekiel who was a watchman to warn his people. If he neglected his duty and the people perished, their blood would be required of him. But if he warned them, and if they did not take the warning, their blood was to be upon their own heads. The Apostle Paul was such a faithful watchman that in

preaching his last sermon to the Ephesian elders, he said to his hearers, "I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:26,27). As the office of ministers is the highest office, it is a most responsible office, for they have to give an account of their stewardship to Christ at the last day. In order to be faithful, they must watch and warn. Among men if a sentinel who has to watch and warn, sleeps and neglects his duty, the penalty is death. The jailor at Phillippi knew this, and thinking that the prisoners under his charge escaped while he was asleep, he took hold of his sword to take away his own life, but Paul prevented him by telling him that they were all there. In order to be faithful, ministers must not flatter their people by concealing from them the danger to which they are exposed, but warn them of it. What are they to give warning of?

(1) They are to warn them of the wrath which is to come. All the fallen race of Adam are liable to that wrath. John the Baptist, as a watchman, said, "Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:7). By nature we are under the wrath of God, and if we die in that condition, we shall be exposed to His wrath without end. After millions of years are past the wrath of God is a coming wrath. There is no end to it for those that are lost in eternity.

(2) They are to warn them of sin which is the cause of God's wrath. They are to exhort "The wicked to forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and to return to the Lord who will have mercy upon them and abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). If ministers did their duty in this respect, their hearers would be restrained from open transgression from fear of punishment, if the love of God did not actuate them to lead a holy life. They are to warn them not to "neglect the great salvation." Sin against the gospel is more dangerous than transgression against the law, for it is a sin against the remedy, and if sinners persist in that sin to the end of their life, there is no way of escape from God's wrath. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Hebrews 2:3). The Apostle warns himself and others of the danger of coming short of salvation, and enforces his exhortation by what happened to others on account of their unbelief. "Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it" (Hebrews 4:1,2).

(3) They are to warn their hearers of error in the doctrines to be preached. These doctrines must be scriptural. Paul exhorted Timothy "to preach the word," that is, the doctrines of God's word; and he tells him "that the time was coming when people would not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Timothy 4:3,4). That time came after the Apostles left the world, and continued till the Reformation in the sixteenth century. And in our own day it is comparatively few that will endure sound doctrine, and in order to gratify the carnal craving of these, ministers have framed an unscriptural creed and preach the pernicious doctrines of that creed to their people.

(4) They are to give warning of God's judgments which they see coming upon the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity. The terrible war that has been raging for several years, and which has now in the Lord's good providence come to an end, was, among other things, a work of judgment on our own nation and other nations for the prevailing iniquity. Some say the war was the work of the Kaiser, but the Kaiser was only a rod in God's hand, and when that rod did its work, it was broken to pieces and thrown away, as the German Emperor is now. Faithful ministers were giving warnings of this coming judgment, and Dr. Kennedy in particular gave many solemn warnings of it. Though this judgment has come, it is lamentable to observe that there are very little signs to be seen in our own nation and in other nations that were engaged in the conflict, of turning to the Lord with repentance. God's

goodness in putting an end to the war may lead to repentance, but if not, we may expect another judgment to follow. There were millions of precious lives cut off from the land of the living during the war, some of whom were truly godly and are now enjoying their everlasting rest in heaven, but it is to be feared that the great majority were careless and are now lost in eternity. We sympathize with parents whose sons and other relatives were killed, but parents, who have reason to hope that their sons and other relatives were prepared for death, have no reason "to sorrow like those who have no hope" (1 Thessalonians 4:13). God was speaking to us by His works in providence as well as in His written word. "Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man" (Proverbs 8:4). If ministers who are watchmen warn their hearers, and if their hearers do not turn from their evil ways, they shall perish in their sins, and those that warn them shall be free from their blood, but if ministers will not warn their people, and their people die in their sins, their blood shall be required of these ministers. Ministers who neglect their duty in this respect shall be punished not only for their own transgression of God's law, but also for the great sin of being the means of the everlasting ruin of their people. Unfaithful ministers are Satan's nurses, whom he employs to lull asleep poor sinners by crying, "Peace, peace, to them, when there is no peace." They are a curse and a plague in the land. The late Rev. Lachlan MacKenzie of Lochcarron said that the time was coming when unfaithful ministers would be as numerous as the locusts in Egypt, and that the Lord only knew which would be the greater plague of the two.

2. The work of the praying people, men and women. They make mention of the name of the Lord. Ministers have to pray as well as to preach, as Ezekiel was commanded to do in order that the dry bones might be brought to life, but their congregations are not set up in the high office of the ministry. They have their own work to do, and among all their other duties they have to pray, and the praying people are as useful in their own place in the Church as ministers. The more numerous these are in any age, the more abundant the blessing comes from above. Although the Lord promised to send down the blessing, He was to do so in answer to prayer. Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit to His people, but they were to tarry in Jerusalem praying for the fulfilment of the promise, and, in due time, the Spirit was sent. There were more in the upper room waiting for the coming of the Spirit than the Apostles; there were many praying people along with them in the upper room. The praying people spoken of in our text were not like the Quakers, silent; they were commanded not to keep silent, but to speak out the desires of their heart. They were to be earnest and importunate in prayer. They were not to give any rest to the Lord till He answered their prayers by establishing and making His Church a praise in the earth. It was not a trouble to the Lord that they prayed to Him so often. He was not like the unjust judge who granted the request of the widow, lest she should by her coming to him so often trouble him (Luke 18:5). The Lord gives the Spirit of prayer to His people as the forerunner of a work of revival in His Church on a large scale, but alas, the praying people are very few in our day. Many families go to church who do not keep family worship, and who do not pray that they might receive a blessing in the public means of grace. No wonder although these return home more worldly and harder than before they came to church. But the Lord's people are a praying people. They pray for themselves, for their minister, for their own families, and for their fellow sinners, wherever they are in the land of the living. The praying people like the watchmen are not to keep silent day nor night; though they need sleep like other people, they pray while others are fast asleep, and they pray sometimes when they themselves are asleep. The Church said, "I sleep, but my heart waketh" (Song 5:2).

Concluding remarks. – Ministers, that are faithful in the discharge of their office, warn their people of every evil, and such among us are bound by their ordination vows "to assert, maintain, and defend the doctrines of God's word as contained in the Confession of Faith and

the purity of worship as presently practised in the Church, and to submit to the government and discipline, and to concur with the same, and not to endeavour directly or indirectly the prejudice or subversion thereof, but to the utmost of their power, in their station," to maintain, support, and defend these principles. In addition to this, ministers and other office-bearers of the Free Presbyterian Church are asked at their ordination if they approve of the Deed of Separation, and the same question has been asked parents before they got baptism for their children. And some of the ministers, that have left us, required of parents to promise to abide by the Free Presbyterian Church to the end of their life. These ministers did not do what they made others promise to do. They left the Free Presbyterian Church, not because of any error in the Church, but it is to be feared, for other motives; some for getting a position and honour, and others, because they went so far in advocating Union with a Church, which was not sound either in doctrine or in practice, that they felt that their usefulness in the Free Presbyterian Church had gone, and that they had lost the confidence of their congregations. They thought, at first, that they could carry our people with them into the union, but the people were more steadfast than themselves. We had only two ministers to begin with, and a large number of missionaries, and the people adhered steadfastly to the Church. Many congregations, for several years, were without a minister, and some are so yet. It was, to say the least, a very mean thing for those that left us to have done so without any real cause. In past years there was none louder in their condemnation of the Church of their adoption than they. If they considered themselves bound to enter into the union in order to have the communion of saints, it would not be likely that they would remain long in the Free Church without seeking to unite with other corrupt Churches, on the ground that their people are baptized, according to the latitudinarian view now held. The communion of saints inculcated in the Word of God is a communion of the people of God who are in some degree sanctified or made holy, and not a communion with all that are baptized. Paul, in writing to the Corinthians, addresses his letter, "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints" (1 Corinthians 1:2). But in the midst of all changes we should resolve and act like Joshua, who said to the children of Israel, "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve . . . but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15).

We would warn our people, young and old, to adhere to the faithful testimony raised in defence of God's truth in 1893, and not to follow the example of ministers who change their position with every wind that blows.

These men have done all in their power to pull down our Church which they had a hand in building up in the past, and vowed to defend. In joining the Free Presbyterian Church, they did not count the cost as the man of whom Christ says, "For which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest, haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build and was not able to finish" (Luke 14:28,30). Hence their failure in not continuing in the work which they began to do with us. In changing their position, we are persuaded that outside influences were brought to bear upon them which they failed to resist. Some of them profess to have great happiness in their changed attitude towards our Church, but it is to be feared that their happiness is a delusion, for men cannot have true happiness in doing that which is wrong. These men are now preaching in opposition to us, some of them in our neighbourhood. "But if God be for us, who can be against us?" Notwithstanding all the opposition offered to us for the last twenty-five years, hitherto the Lord hath helped us, and He that helped us in the past will help us to the end, and these men who say they have happiness may find out that they may have to sorrow for their inconsistency, before they get to heaven. How often we learn by experience how little confidence we can put in men! But in the midst of all changes, "Jesus Christ is the

same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." Let us then adhere to Him and to His truth, although all men would fail us. Let us abide by the testimony we have raised, and it is our belief that that testimony shall be kept up in our Church till the Millenium, "When the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the face of the sea."

[February 1919]

Communion Table Addresses.

By the late REV. PROFESSOR JOHN DUNCAN, LL.D.

Edinburgh.

(Hitherto Unpublished.)

TABLE SERVICE NO. III.

[This Table Service was delivered in Free St. Luke's, Edinburgh (Rev: Dr. Moody Stuart's), on Communion Sabbath 14th July, 1867. – Ed.]

(Address before Distribution of Elements.)

Jesus, when He was risen from the dead, having finished transgression and made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness, before He ascended to His heavenly Father, whom He had designated to the apostles, "My Father and your Father, My God and your God," gave this command, "Go ye into all the world, and proclaim the good news to every creature," viz., the good news that "All power is given unto Me." "Go ye into all the world, and proclaim this good news to every creature." "Go ye and disciple all nations, baptising them into the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the consummation of the age." And you having heard that word, having been discipled, having been taught to observe all things whatsoever Christ commanded, have found among the commands this one, which the apostles, having received of the Lord, delivered unto us, "That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread," and so forth. You have, therefore, as discipled, and as taught to observe all things commanded, come to observe this one thing commanded, this peculiar and special thing commanded of the Lord. You have also heard what an apostle by the Spirit taught with regard to this, a command with regard to this command; "Let a man examine himself, and so let him

eat of that bread and drink of that cup.” You have heard, and I trust have obeyed the holy command; you have examined yourselves, that you might eat of that bread and drink of that cup. You have examined yourselves concerning your knowledge to discern the Lord’s body, and concerning your faith to feed upon Him, concerning your repentance, love, and new obedience.

And I think the felt result of examination as to some, perhaps all of you, has been, sad defect; sad defect of knowledge to discern the Lord’s body, sad defect of faith to feed upon Him, sad defect of repentance, love and new obedience; I say defect, I say not, absence.

Led and encouraged by the Spirit of God, notwithstanding of defect, in the grace of the Lord Jesus you have come forward; with defective knowledge, with defective faith, with defective repentance, with defective love, with sadly defective new obedience; defective, not absolutely awaiting.

Now, as our Catechism teaches us, proof from Scripture, were this the time and opportunity, could be shown that “the Lord’s Supper is a sacrament, wherein the worthy receivers are, not after a corporal or carnal manner, but by faith, made partakers of Christ’s body and blood, with all His benefits, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.” Yes, to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. Therefore true, but defective discerners of the Lord’s body, true but defective believers on Christ, true but defective penitents, true but defective lovers, true but defective obedient, are called to this Supper, for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace.

Ah, there is much defect in our knowledge. “If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.” There is much defect in our faith, much that needs Christ, much that needs the ministering of which Paul speaks; “that we might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.” There is much defect in our repentance, love, and new obedience. There are, thank God, on earth just men that do good, but “there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not.” Well, then, this Supper is for discerners of the Lord’s body, who discern it not so perfectly, so completely, as they ought. It is for believers who need still to cry, “Lord, increase our faith.” It is for penitents who need again to look upon Him whom they have pierced, and to mourn, I do not say, with another mourning, but with another intensity of mourning. It is for those who love, but who know that their love hath no adequacy of correspondency either to the loveliness or the love of Christ. It is for those who know that they do not adequately realise their obligations or adequately fulfil them. Truth of grace, then, being presupposed, defect of grace is that which this ordinance, and every other, but this especially, is designed to meet.

For all defect, provision is made. For defect of faith there is Christ’s perfect faithfulness. He was faithful to Him that appointed Him. And in this ordinance, that is shown. Faith rests on Christ’s fidelity, and from this, faith daily is to be strengthened. He undertook to do the work, the great work, the arduous and painful work. How arduous and painful I do not know, He knows Himself. He undertook it, and He was faithful to Him that appointed Him; He undertook to save sinners, to do the work that was needful to save sinners, and He did it. On that faithfulness let us rest.

Let us go to Gethsemane. “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” All nature recoils; faithfulness recoils not. Nature recoils; faithfulness goes forward to do the Father’s will. It was He to endure it, or we to endure it, and it was a hard question, “Shall He bear it, or we bear it?” And he said, “I will bear it.” Then, “If ye seek Me, let these go their way.” Look at Him taking the cup, which was not His but ours, and was taken by Him only because it was ours, and was His because of His voluntary engagement to the Father. Salvation by grace is joyful, but oh, it is voluntary substitution that is the heart-breaking, heart-melting thing. I might speak of all the particulars; our time will not allow; let me speak but of one other.

For the defect of love, provision is made in Christ's perfect love. And that is shown in this ordinance; "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?" "Lord, Thou knowest all things, Thou knowest that I love Thee." But if Christ had asked – He did not ask – but were it asked, and the soul that truly loves will ask itself the question, "Lovest thou Me as I deserve to be loved?" oh what a defect would be found there, what a feeble response to such love as that wherewith He loves, what a feeble spark encountering that infinite flame!

But for all defect provision is made. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down His life for His friends." Christ laid down His life for His friends, and only for His friends. But when? Not when they were His friends, but when they were enemies. "God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us." "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." That is, "when we were in mortal disease which would have ended in eternal death, Christ died for the ungodly." But His love is to His friends at His table, though it was to His enemies when He died. He hath brought you there reconciled by His death, but you are remembering the love wherewith He loved you when you were enemies. And you may judge of the one thing by the other, of His love to His friends now by His love to them when they were enemies. "For if, when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." The emblems of that death, the pledge, as it is the price and the proof of the life, I now put into your hands. "Ye do shew the Lord's death till He come." This is the region of death, but among all deaths there is no death like one death; there are the deaths of sinners; this one death is the death of the Lord of glory, of the Prince of life; of the Eternal Life; of the Eternal Life as Mediator. The fountain is deeper than that; of the Eternal Life as the only-begotten Son of the Father, the Father having life in Himself, so He having life in Himself.

(Address after Distribution of Elements.)

Believing communicants, "My God shall supply all your need," all your wants.

They are very great. The world could not supply all your wants; the world could supply none of them, at least, none of the greatest of them. All that supply would leave you poor and destitute. You have learned, defectively learned, but learned, that it would profit you nothing, though you were to gain the whole world, and lose your own soul. You have learned that the world is a poor world, and that it is not only poor, but that "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." You have lost it; you should realise that you have lost it. If it was counted gain for you, it is among the things which you have counted loss, the all things which, that you might win Christ, and be found in Him, you have lost. It passeth away, and the fashion thereof. Transitory world, let it go! World that is not of the Father, let it go! Count it loss; count the loss of it gain. "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world: Because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." Christ's choice, the world's hate; put these together, cleave to them in faith. Hate the world, yet hate not the world's men. The lust of the flesh, that is not a man; the lust of the eyes, that is not a man; the pride of life, that is not a man. These are the things that are in the world. "I have chosen you out of the world." Ye were worldlings when ye were in it; but Christ loved you when you were in it to take you out of it. Love them that are in it, that they may be brought out of it. Love men, love sinners; not their sin, but sinners. The foundation of your faith is the faithful saying that Christ came into the world to save sinners. Save sinners, save sinners as you can. You cannot as He can, but save sinners in your own way; pluck them as brands out of the burning, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Go ye into the world and save sinners. "To whom now I send thee: To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and

inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Me.” Can Paul do that? Christ bids him do it, and Paul can do it through Christ strengthening him. Only, Paul proclaims that he cannot do it, but that Christ can; Christ does it, and in his own way under Christ, Paul does it. Mind you have got the sinner’s gospel. That was the foundation of your faith; faith rests on the sinner’s gospel. There you began; there you must end; there you must end, for this among other blessed purposes; “Holding the beginning of your confidence steadfast unto the end.”

You have a good gospel for everybody. If you had only a saint’s gospel, what would that do for sinners? But you are everybody’s debtor, because you have got the sinner’s gospel, and salvation in the sinner’s Saviour. You can tell sinners that you are not more welcome to Christ than they are, that you have got no better gospel than they have got. Oh, therefore, mind that, being saved by the sinner’s gospel, you are made an evangelist to the world of the sinner’s gospel, for which you are responsible to all sinners.

“Christ loved us, and gave Himself for us.” The sum of God’s Law is, “Thou shalt love”; the sum of God’s gospel is “God so loved.” Wherefore, let the law of love be in your heart and your life. Love, love, love, love, the fulfilling of the law.

Now, may “the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ,” and come that ye may abound in love more and more one toward another and toward all men, to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable and unproveable before Him in love.

[February 1919]

Communion Table Addresses.

By the late REV. PROFESSOR JOHN DUNCAN, LL.D.

Edinburgh.

(Hitherto Unpublished.)

TABLE SERVICE NO. IV.

[This Table Service was delivered in Free St. Luke’s, Edinburgh (Rev: Dr. Moody Stuart’s), on Communion Sabbath 27th October, 1867. – ED.]

(Address before Distribution of Elements.)

It is the death that Jesus accomplished at Jerusalem which we this day commemorate. And in the commemoration thereof we eat of that Bread which came down from heaven, that a man might eat thereof and live for ever. “By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin.” There have been many deaths on this earth – all the men who died have died on it, because all were sinners. But this is a peculiar death, a wondrous death, for He who died was “Jesus Christ the righteous.” Death passed upon all, for that all have sinned, but Christ died, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. This, then, is no ordinary death. Every other death is a sinner’s death. But what is this peculiar death? It demands a peculiar attention; it is a peculiar fact in the administration of a holy and righteous God, bearing on the case of all mortal, because sinful, men.

Now about this death, on which we are to meditate for a few minutes, I would suggest a few thoughts, and but a few examples of that which is so rich in thought, fitted to furnish an occupation for our mind, with all its powers and faculties, both in time and eternity. Of the many thoughts, therefore, which it suggests, let us for a few minutes take these two, viz., Love and Life. We commemorate this day a death which is the exhibition of love, and which is both the exhibition and price of life.

Believing communicants, ye know what ye were. Among other things, ere ye were quickened, ye were in death. “We ourselves were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, hateful and hating one another.” This is a sad account of fallen humanity. Nor is this the

worst brand on us, that we are a misanthropical race (hating mankind). Not only are we all misanthropical, but we are misotheistical also, that is, haters of God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither, indeed, can be." And it forms the chief element of our hatefulness, that we hate God: and it is the chief source of our misanthropy, of our hating one another. Well, "Such were some of you"; such in your primeval estate ye all were. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." And ye are now come as a living and loving people to meditate on love, and to warm your poor sparks at the flame of divine love.

"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us." Had we loved God, that had not been worth talking about, because He is so amiable, but herein is love, that God loved us who did not love Him. Now, who can tell the hatefulness of not loving God? And yet here is the wondrous display of love, surpassing surely the Law's display of it, which is a display of it, that God loved us, and so loved us as "to send His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." For God could not put aside the law of love, because God is love. God is justice, and justice maintains law. But what is law? The demand of love. He could not in love put love aside. He could not put aside the law of love. Justice it is that maintains law, and the summary of law is, "Thou shalt love." He could not in love put love aside, because of His great love to the breakers of the law, and in breaking the law, the violaters of love. He could not put love aside: it could not be that the loving God could put the claims of love or the interests of love aside. But He so loved as to give His Son to maintain the law of love, when He loved His enemies, giving His Son to be a propitiation. Love is a wondrous thing. High is the praise which Paul gives of it to the Corinthians, and still higher the praise which John gives of it in the words, "God is love, and He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in Him." Now, it is the exhibition of this love – God giving His Son to be the propitiation for the sins of enemies – that lays the foundation for the outpouring of love to the fulfilment of that promise which we have in the covenant of grace established in Christ. "The Lord thy God shall circumcise thine heart to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." "I will put My law in their heart and write it in their inward parts," that law of which the summary is, "Thou shalt love." God's love, as being holy love, could not compromise law, because that would be compromising love; it could not compromise justice, for justice requires only the law, which says, "Thou shalt love."

Well, let us meditate for a little on the love. The whole exhibition which God has made of Himself to man as a spiritual being, though His natural perfections are revealed in the works of creation, is in His law and in His gospel. And what is the summary of the law? Shortened into ten precepts, in compassion to our poor faculties, and shortened again for our poor faculties into the two great commandments, it is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind, and thy neighbour as thyself." And what is the uniting principle of this, the summary in the two great commandments? It is, "Thou shalt love." God is love, and the whole summary of His law is, "Thou shalt love." And what is the summary of the Gospel? It is, "God so loved." The sort of death which Christ died, expresses the "so." "God so loved the world." God in the law, the loving God, requires only love, and God in the Gospel, the loving God, so loved those who loved Him not as to give His only-begotten Son. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love." "Herein is love, not that we loved God." If we had done so, poor thanks to us, for God is infinitely amiable. His command rests most truly on a Creator's right and property, that gives Him a right; but as a moral law it is shown that it is equitable, because He who demands it, is not only our Creator, having a right to all our being, but amiable, and having thus a right to demand love. It is a moral obligation because of the divine amiability. God is a lovely Being. Well, "Herein is love, not that we loved God." We

were hateful and hating one another, and our carnal mind was enmity against God, and not subject to His law. We were not subject to His law which told us only to love, and we were such haters that we hated God who only bade us love. "Not that we loved God," the amiable demander of love; we hated love; we hated the amiable demander of love; we hated God. And God could not compromise justice, which, being holy, requires holy and just love; but "Herein is love" that God loved us, His enemies, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins; that, justice satisfied, He might come and write the law of love in our hearts, and put it in our inward parts. We commemorate love, the just love, the wondrous love, the Lovely and the Loving dying for the hateful and hating, dying for them to make them lovers.

(Address after Distribution of Elements.)

Love and Life. Love and Life are bound together, not by any arbitrary tie, but by a oneness. "He that hateth his brother abideth in death." Love and Life; hatred and death. A life of hatred is a death in sin. That is the death which we fell into. There was death as a sentence, no doubt, because we had broken the law of justice, which is the law of love; we had broken that, and in breaking that, had incurred death as a penalty, but we fell also into death as a state. For hatred is death. God is love, and God lives; and he who hates is dead, dead in trespasses and sins. For sin is the transgression of the law, and the summary of the law is, "Thou shalt love."

Well, we commemorate a death which brings life; that death which is the life of the faith which works by love, and the love of the faith with respect to God's love and which works in the production of love. For, as I said, this is a peculiar death. "I am the Living One, and I became dead, and behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of the unseen state and of death." Now, "I am the Living One," lies at the bottom of His bestowal of the life by becoming dead. How did He by becoming dead become life? Because He was the Living One, and had thus to bestow on us an infinite fountain of life. "Because of life the fountain pure remains alone with Thee." The character of Jehovah is that He is the Living One.

Now, the Son, being in the form of God and thinking it no robbery to be equal with God, that is, having the divine nature and in it divine independence, being servant of none, took upon Him the form of a servant. He is the eternal life which was with the Father, Jehovah the living God, full of all being, of infinite being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth unchangeably. And He is the eternal life by the eternal generation. "As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in Himself." Being the Son as contradistinguished from all other creatures, He hath life in Himself, this holy, blessed life. But that this life might be communicated to dead sinners, He who was the life took on Him humanity, the form of a servant, for dead me, for guilty me, for unholy me. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God: And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

"I am the life." "The fountain of life remains with Thee." "I am the life." "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father, even so He that eateth Me shall live by Me." That we should eat Him and live, He took flesh, and gave that flesh that we might have life through the mystical union with the only-begotten Son of God who lives by the Father.

Thus our life reverts into the three-fold union:

- First, that by which the three Persons are one God;
- Secondly, that by which the two natures are one Christ, one God-man; and
- Thirdly, that by which we are members quickened together by His Spirit and accepted through His atoning death.

Thus we, by virtue of our mystical union to the Son of God, who is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, live with a divine life from and in the living One, who is the eternal life which was with the Father, and has been manifested to us.

Now this death is that through which the divine life that is in Christ outflows. It is thus: – That life could not flow out, because the sentence of death had passed on us, being lawbreakers. We were not lovers, because we were haters. But love could overcome that. God cannot let go His demand of obedience to the law, but divine justice being satisfied, out flows His Spirit to bring us into connection with Him who is the giver of life; not simply because He died for us, but because He who died for us is Himself the eternal life in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. According to the Father's and His own agreement, with the consent of the Holy Spirit, the applier, He comes and dwells in us, that we may live by union to Him who is the life.

In all this, I think it is somewhat apparent that love and life are so united, not arbitrarily, but in the very nature of things, as that they are inseparable. And what does all teach us? Surely this, "Walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God." So the gospel brings us back to the law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart and soul and strength and mind: and thy neighbour as thyself," and law and gospel unite in one covenant testimony. "God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Now, love to God will make us very careful of offending the good God; and love to our neighbour – "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour" – will make us do all the good we can. For "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

And so I stop with the prayer, "The Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ." "And the Lord make us to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, to the end He may establish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God."

[March 1919]

Notes of a Sermon.

By the REV. M. MORRISON, Lochinver, Sutherland.

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” – Matthew 11:28.

In this chapter you observe that the Lord Jesus reassures John the Baptist, who had been ruthlessly imprisoned for his faithfulness in rebuking sin, of the identity of His own person as the Christ that was to come. The circumstance of being in prison, the prospect of his life being cut off and his career ended, which, to the eye of sense, would not appear to tally with all that was prophesied of John as Christ’s forerunner, would seem for the time being to becloud John’s vision, and to occasion fear and doubt in his mind. The message sent by the Saviour to John dispelled all his fears, and he was restored to the enjoyment of his former assurance while still in prison. This incident in connection with John the Baptist seems to have been so providentially ordered as to give the occasion to the Lord Himself, at an opportune moment, to bear the most sublime testimony to John that ever was borne to a mere man. His hearers were many and of a mixed kind, and they would therefore scatter abroad Christ’s words concerning John. John’s own testimony, during the first part of his ministry, concerning the Lord was of the most clear, explicit, and certain character, but when plunged into the depths of persecution and suffering, he is tempted as to Christ’s identity, and sends the question, “Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?” Satan takes advantage of all the circumstances in which the most faithful of Christ’s witnesses find themselves, in order to weaken them in their faith and in their testimony.

Further, the Lord Jesus here points out, in the hearing of His audience, the awful condition of the cities which, continuing in their impenitence, disbelieved the message of salvation delivered by the Saviour Himself. Their doom was pronounced with no uncertain sound, and what a solemn lesson it conveys to us also, to whom the Gospel has come, and before whom Christ crucified is held forth as the only remedy from the disease of sin! What an account will have to be rendered by Gospel hearers, as well as by those who would not hear, when they appear before the bar of judgment! The aggravated guilt of Gospel hearers is not simply that they are sinners or have committed many sins against God’s law, but that they have continued in unbelief. The greatest sin of those who have God’s Word is the sin of

unbelief. The world is opposed to Christ – the world, as including the wise, the great, the learned, the noble, and the rich, who are without God, and all who are gracelessly religious. But Christ the Lord will have His own effectually called to Himself, and such He compares to “babes,” who were given Him by the Father from all eternity. The objects of His eternal love, concurring with the Father’s love, were not the wise and the prudent, but those He designates “babes.” The rest were blinded, and the elect of God were called out and saved. The Son, as the Father’s servant on earth, thanks the Father for the order and certainty of the covenant of grace which ensures this. Observe, also, that the Lord Jesus refers to the authority and power which was given Him as Mediator by the Father. The nature of this delegated power is as comprehensive as it is absolute. He wields this mediatorial power over all His creatures in heaven and in earth.

With the blessed consciousness of possessing this absolute power by merit and justice, He issues at the close of the chapter the most wonderful invitation ever issued. It is to, and for all sorts of sinners without distinction. Let us now consider briefly: –

- I. – The invitation: “Come unto me”;
- II. – The condition of those invited: “all ye that labour and are heavy laden”; and,
- III. – The promise: “and I will give you rest.”

I. – The invitation.

The Person who invites is “the Lord from heaven,” the sent of the Father. He came from God, and appeared among us with the full consciousness of the position He occupied, the mission which He had to discharge, and the obligations He had to fulfil. The immediate task that confronted Him was to effect reconciliation, by means of His perfect obedience and expiatory death, between the offended God and offending sinners. Fully assured of His success in this tremendous task, and of the honour and glory that should follow, He issues His invitations to perishing sinners. How often have these invitations fallen on deaf ears, but God will not strive always with man! “Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation;” and “To you, O men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man” (Proverbs 8).

This invitation, then, coming from the lips of the Lord Himself, imports that there is a reconciliation effected between God and men, parties who were formerly at variance, man being the sole guilty party. It is to Himself He invites; to Himself as God-man Redeemer, the one who mediates between God and sinners. For as God He is equal with the Father, and so able to treat with God on our behalf; and as man, perfect man, He is able to treat with us poor, miserable sinners, on the Father’s behalf. There is no coming unto God except through a mediator, and none are invited to come without taking with them the consoling and encouraging truth that Christ is Mediator. Without Him, God is at all times and in all aspects a consuming fire against the sinner. In Christ Jesus, friends, God, while He remains a consuming fire against sin, is reconciled to the sinner. So, let your sins be what they may, let them not, under Satanic subtlety, discourage you from looking to superabounding mercy. “Come unto me,” He saith. What a blessed Saviour Thou art! Whatever burdens and sins are borne by the guilty, Thou holdest forth a bright prospect of relief!

As this invitation imparts a state of variance between God and sinners, so also it implies that there is a great distance between the parties. Sin hath separated us from God. We fell in our common parent, Adam, who in his estate of innocence – and we in him – held constant communion with God. By our sinning in him, the fountain of life, which flowed into man’s soul, imparting light and joy and fellowship, was cut off; the Spirit was withdrawn from man, and he was cast out as never again in such a condition fit for the presence of the Holy One. So, friend, the sinner in this case having his mind darkened, and his heart hardened, through the deceitfulness of sin, bears not the image of God, but that of the father of lies. You, who

are in your natural condition, are in a state of wrath and condemnation. You are “far off” in respect of your soul’s faculties; you are “far off” in respect of your life and conversation. But here the Saviour invites you to come to Himself, far off though you are. O, essay to come, like the prodigal, who, in putting forth an effort to come to his father’s house, was met by his father, “when he was yet a great way off.” So with you, dear fellow-sinner, you can never of yourself come, but put forth the effort and cry, like the Church, “Draw me, and we will run after Thee.” The Spirit of God is effectual in drawing the sinner willingly in obedience to the invitation, and He can draw you, however heavy your burden.

The Lord Jesus invites us to Himself as a Physician who can heal all diseases. He invites us as Prophet to enlighten, as Priest to reconcile, and to intercede for us, as King to subdue and conquer our hearts and all our enemies, as Husband to impart His love, and as Lord and Master to bestow His blessings and enable us to serve Him. He invites us to Himself as an all-willing, all-sufficient, and all-merciful God and Saviour. In what manner does He invite? He invites sinners in the most compassionate language, expressing the greatest desire for, and delight in, their coming. It is a free, full, sovereign, and unmerited invitation. The provision, to which He invites, is inexhaustible. O, the guilt incurred by slighting it! How can you escape?

The Lord Christ will have us to count the cost in coming to Him. What are we to renounce, and what are we to turn our back upon? Like Bunyan’s Christian, you have to quit “the city of destruction,” with its carnal joys and sinful allurements. You are to come as sinners to Christ, but you are not to think that you can live in sin. He saves us *from* our sins, not *with* our sins. You are to come as poor and needy sinners, not thinking you can bring anything in your hand to make you more acceptable. You must renounce your own righteousness as filthy rags, and come as you are, without any acceptable righteousness.

II. – The condition of those invited: “all ye that labour and are heavy laden.”

What is it to labour and be heavy laden? Sin has been, and still is, fruitful in subjugating the creature to labour and in laying on him heavy burdens. We see this even in the conditions of man’s earthly livelihood. Being cast out at the beginning, owing to sin, from the ease and comforts he enjoyed in his holy estate, he became subject to painful toil and labour for his upkeep, and became exposed to all the miseries of this life. And O, what endless and trying exertion day after day is the lot of mankind as the consequence of sin! What a sad spectacle do we witness in “the labour world” to-day! All the wrangling disputes and contentions which agitate and inflame the masses at the present moment have little or no concern with more than what they shall eat, what they shall drink, and wherewithal shall they be clothed. No anxiety is evinced with respect to the soul, eternity, and the salvation of God through Jesus Christ. The Prophet Isaiah, as anticipating the personal invitations of Christ, cries out by the Holy Spirit, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness” (Isaiah 55:1,2). Labour, toil, and spending there are without stint, but not on that which satisfieth the longing soul. The working man the world over has become so intolerant of all divine restraints that he is fast developing dangerous symptoms of infidelity and atheism. And when these restraints are thrown aside, all the well-ordered laws of men will have but scant consideration. The fruit of this the nation as a whole is bound to reap. The cry, in effect, is: “We shall not have this Man to reign over us.”

True, then, though it is, that the creature may have much labour and bear heavy burdens in respect to the securing of common necessities, this description refers more to the moral and spiritual condition of the soul. The Jews were under the heavy burden and yoke of the ceremonial law, and the constant care and strain of this system was a burden too heavy for

them and their fathers to bear. Christ's invitation into the liberty wherewith He makes free, should have been specially sweet and welcome to them; but it was not so.

Again, the moral law, as a covenant of life, demanding perfect conformity of thought, word, and action, during the whole lifetime of the creature, is obviously a load which none can bear. The law requires a perfect righteousness, and it cannot, in the nature of things, accept a defective one: "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Many have tried to reach heaven by their own self-righteous efforts, but they have utterly failed. And let me ask you, friends, "Do any of you make your tears, your prayers, your repentance, and a careful life means of rendering you acceptable to God?" True, you labour and are heavy laden in some sense, but this is not coming to Christ. Again, one may be convinced by the Holy Spirit of his sin, realise it in his conscience as a heavy burden to bear, feel God angry with him, and may labour under this heavy burden to pacify God, and to fulfil his obligations. He resorts to the law as a covenant of works to get relief, for he cannot be at rest, it may be day or night, while he has the awful prospect before him of eternal death and damnation as the wages of sin. He would fain blot out his past, but God's Spirit makes the past stand out more vividly before the eye of his mind. He sighs, he groans under his burden; he labours to get it removed. Sin is become a load to the weary and heavy-laden, which, notwithstanding all their efforts, cannot be removed until there is a coming to Christ. "Come unto me."

Such, then, are those in our text who are invited to come to Christ. Do you realise truly that you are a sinner condemned to die? Have you come to this that you see all your righteousnesses as filthy rags, and that the best you or any other can do is, in point of justification, to be wholly, and whole-heartedly discarded. Such are the comers to Christ. There are many other burdens under which the weary labour – burdens of cares and trials in connection with their lot in providence, in connection with relatives and families, the Church of God and the nation of which they form a part. With them all, you are invited to come. He is able to bear them for us and to solve our difficulties. But now I pass on to consider: –

III. – The promise: "and I will give you rest." Christ is typified by Noah, who was a preacher of righteousness. Noah means "rest." Christ is a rest to those who labour and are heavy laden. To those who come He promises to be a rest. He gives rest from the guilt of sin by planting the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, in the conscience. The conscience is freed from the load of guilt, and is at rest with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is the resting place for an offended God, and the offending sinner. God found infinite satisfaction in the whole of His Son's obedience and sufferings unto death. The sinner also gets no rest to his troubled conscience until he gets it in the obedience and sufferings of Christ. God and the sinner are reconciled to each other in Christ. "Here is my rest; here still I'll stay, for I do like it well." All the faculties of the soul find peace and rest in Christ. The conscience finds rest in His blood and righteousness; the understanding finds rest in His knowledge and wisdom; the will finds rest in His will; and the affections find rest in His excellency and love. Thus Christ as prophet, priest and king, gives rest to the soul.

The Saviour is a refuge and, therefore, rest to those who are pursued by the manslayer. There are two steps by which we come to Christ for rest and salvation:

(1) by *repentance*, which implies a conviction of sin, and turning from sin to God, and an apprehension that there is mercy in Him through His Son; and

(2) by *faith* in the Son as able and willing to give all needed rest and blessing.

By the exercise of these graces, we are led to rest upon Christ and His finished work as the ground of peace. Believing upon Christ is the act of the whole soul, and the believer, conscious of corruption and evil thoughts within, considers his case hopeless apart from

looking to the crucified Saviour. He finds rest only when he is enabled to exercise trust upon Him and His fulness.

The Saviour also gives complete rest at last from the common troubles and trials of this life, and from the temptations of Satan, the workings of sin and corruption, and all the burdens the believer laboured under in the world. This He does when He calls the soul away to the eternal mansions of glory – the rest which He has prepared for His people in heaven. “There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.” This rest is a perfect, glorious, everlasting rest – rest for soul and body. It is a rest which brings with it the most perfect joy and happiness as well as spotless holiness. The rest in grace here is perfected in glory hereafter.

Christ promises this rest to the weary and heavy laden. What shall happen to you who never believed or felt your need of God’s Saviour, who never realised sin as a burden, which, if not removed, will crush the sinner for ever in hell? If you continue as you are, let me warn you that your eternity will not be an eternity of rest. It will, in fact, be an eternity of restless sorrow, pain and woe. Will you seek to flee from this awful prospect now, as *now* is the time to escape it? “Behold, now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.” On the other hand, “all that have heard and learned of the Father shall come unto me,” saith Christ; “and him that cometh unto me, I will in nowise cast out.” They do come who hear and learn of the Father, and they come to the Father only through the Son.

O, then, covet earnestly this rest, the rest in Christ here, through the pardon of sin, the justification of your person, and the sanctification of your soul, and the rest in Christ hereafter through the final and complete redemption of soul and body into an estate of unalloyed purity and happiness, where you shall be made perfectly blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity. May the Lord, by the Spirit, make these things yours, and may He bless His Word. Amen.

[April 1919]