



Lambeth Palace London SE1 7JU

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PREFACE

I am grateful for this opportunity of joining those who write to pay tribute to the distinguished service given by Dr Morris West to the whole Christian Church through the life of the Baptist denomination. I regard him with special affection, gratitude and admiration. When I became a Bishop he was my neighbour in St Albans. There began a friendship which, always to my profit, I have tried to keep in regular repair. This volume of essays embraces a happy sequence of couplets as his fellow Baptists, both lay and ordained, are joined by members of the wider Church in celebrating the life-long service of this eminent Baptist Christian. I use these words advisedly because Dr West is somebody of whom his fellow Baptists may be justly proud, yet I also think of him as a wise and judicious Christian statesman who belongs to all of us. His own commitment articulates the best of the Free Church tradition whilst ever being willing to explore the ecumenical future.

The focus of this tribute is found in the three words of the title, *Faith, Heritage and Witness* each of which embraces a double aspect. Faith at once indicates the evangelical commitment of the individual - that saving faith that Baptist preachers delight to secure - but it also describes the doctrine of the church, probed and explored by the scholarly mind in the search for unity in Faith and Order. Heritage designates the historical inheritance that all Christian families rightly cherish as they remember and treasure their roots: yet it also spells out a continuing obedience which, conscious of the leading of the Spirit in times past, is open to the future in a process of change and development. So the pilgrim church opens itself to that 'more of light and truth' which the Spirit ever and again brings forth from the once-given Word. Witness embraces both proclamation and demonstration: it is the sharing of faith in evangelism, and also the covenant-commitment to search for 'justice, peace and the integrity of creation' to which the World Council of Churches is currently calling all the churches.

Faith, Heritage and Witness represents a very proper summary of these priorities in the ministry that Dr West has exercised in both church and society.

Rosemary Cantuar:

Archbishop of Canterbury