

Here was the enunciation and annunciation of the peculiar law of the new church of Christ. Her gates were to stand forever open as a perpetual invitation to all to come in and share her blessings, and her walls were to stand four-square, facing the cardinal points of the compass, as though to tell us in symbol that her bounds shall ultimately be nothing less than the North and South, the East and West, and that from every quarter believing souls shall approach and enter.

"Into *all the world*" they were to go. Not alone to classic Athens, royal Rome, elegant Ephesus; not to balmy Sicily, queenly Crete, fragrant Cyprus; not to the lovely cities and lonely isles of the Mediterranean, the coasts of Italy or Greece or Syria, but into all the world. East to the farthest Orient, the golden Indies; West to the unsailed seas which laved the sands of Britain and of France. North to the fir forests of Scandinavia, South to the confines of Cush and the Arabian Sea; wherever man had gone Christ bade them go, bearing the news of salvation. There is no possibility of honestly mistaking the breadth of the great commission. It is the first thing we are to learn, as of the love of God—its "*breadth*"—that it reaches even to us and to the farthest off and most hopelessly alienated from God.

"To every creature;" as though even to the dumb beast would accrue some part of the blessing attending upon the spread of the gospel, in the better treatment which might be expected from the prevalence of humane and Christian feeling. The phrase evidently means the whole family of man. Not to the rich, refined and learned only, to the Areopagus or Amphictyonic Council, the Sanhedrim of Judea or the Senate of Rome; but to every man, whatever his class, color, caste or condition, rank or residence, amid the snows of Siberia or the sands of Africa, the stormy waves of the far west or the serener seas of the remote east. They were to pass no human being by without a word of warning, witness and invitation.

The first and fundamental truth which is the broad basis of missions is this: the Gospel is an economy of grace for a ruined race. Man was created in God's image. When the representative man fell, with him fell the whole family of man which he represented. The Hebrew name, Adham, means *man*; Adam's fall was man's fall. By reason of its organic unity, *humanity* went down in that first sin, as the oak is crushed in the acorn; and Redemption is the rescue of that fallen race.

In two senses the fall is universal. First, as a clean thing cometh not forth from an unclean one, as like begets like, a corrupt nature passed from sire to son, exposing to suffering even those who bore no actual part in the first sin; and secondly, as each human being, coming to the age of conscious moral choice and action, falls anew for himself by a voluntary course of sin, he adds to the fall of the race his own personal fall by willful transgression.