

In spite of humiliation, Calvary, and a feeble and scattered following, that life of power multiplies.

Darkness will crush out that life. Hence the apostles must not "teach in the name of Jesus"; Stephen is stoned; Saul breathes out "threatening and slaughter"; Herod vexes the Church; James is beheaded; there is a "great persecution against the Church," till the disciples are "all scattered abroad." But Herod terribly dies; Saul becomes a great missionary to the heathen; the disciples go "everywhere preaching the Word"; and "the Word of God grew and multiplied." And so on goes the power of Jesus.

Another darkness attack. The Gospel has spread through Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, Rome. But now Paul is martyred, and James the Just, and Peter. John is bound on Patmos. Simon, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr are slain. Emperor after emperor devours the Church, till Diocletian's reign is the "era of martyrs," and the death-struggle between Christianity and Paganism. Yet by the blood of the Coliseum, in prison and catacomb, on goes the Nazarene Gospel, in a hundred years entering every Roman province, and in a hundred more "Asia and the North of Europe," the first of the fourth century seeing Constantine its friend, and the Empire and the world nominally Christian. And again has multiplied the power of Jesus.

A new era. State and Church become one; heathenism and heresy must be expelled by the secular arm. Hence within the Church persecution and death, ending under Theodosia the Great and Leo the Great in the antagonism of Romanism. New conflicts! Edict and gibbet would rule conscience. The Inquisition appears; by rack, dungeon, and stake, drinking the blood of a half-million martyrs. Yet by these birth-throes of agony are born an Arnold in Rome, a Peter Waldo in Lyons, a Groot in Holland, a Wyckliffe in England, a Huss and Jerome in Prague, a Savonarola in Florence, a Luther and Zwingle and Calvin in Germany and Switzerland, to burst upon Europe the glory of the Reformation, when the Church breaks from Rome in a victory succeeding ages multiply. And, again, on rolls the power of Jesus.

Once more English formalism drives the Separatists from London up to Scrooby, and then over to Leyden. They cross to America. Persecution follows. Baptists suffer. Roger Williams, for "new and dangerous opinions," is driven through fourteen weeks' wandering to Rhode Island. Obadiah Holmes receives thirty lashes on Lynn Common. The General Court brands Baptists "incendiaries of commonwealths." Henry Dunster, first president of Harvard College, "for disturbing the ordinance of infant baptism," is indicted, publicly admonished, and made to resign. John Mills, and others, of Swansea, are fined. Thomas Gould, of Charlestown, is imprisoned and banished, and the doors of the Boston church are nailed up. Yet the power of Jesus still multiplies; a great Christian nation grows up, in which are 2,100,000 Baptists, with their 25,000 churches and 15,000 ministers.

*Look at Modern Missions.*—In July, 1813, Judson landed in Rangoon. It looked like a forlorn hope. "Only the promises of God for ultimate success," wrote he to Rice. Six years before a convert; twenty before he could give the Bible in Burmese; while Ava saw his tracks of blood. Tides of persecution have rolled over his work, and many a true soldier has bitten the dust. But the power of Jesus has rolled on and over all, till to-day forty thousand Asiatic Baptists bow to Judson's

God! One April night, in 1834, Oncken and six others went down into the Elbe at Hamburg, and put on Christ. Another forlorn hope! for German Rationalism, like a mighty Chinese wall, withstood their progress. Darkness has done its best; still, to-day, more than another forty thousand Baptists in Central Europe adore Christ's blessed name! Less than a century since modern missions began; but from Asia, Europe, the Sandwich Islands, Madagascar, Australia, Southern and Central Africa, and many isles of the sea, over a solid million rescued from heathen darkness!

Thus from first to last Christianity has been *aggressiveness*.

And this power is inherent and inevitable. The historic is the *necessary*. "I am the Light," said Christ. Light must shine. So, wherever the Sun of Righteousness rose, He dispelled darkness and diffused day. "God is love," and "I and My Father are one." Can you hinder love from its purpose? So, every step of the Son of Man among His ~~peoples was a walk of mercy.~~ Like Christ is Christianity. Ignorance, hostility, superstition, could not prevent His love touching and blessing suffering humanity, nor His radiant light shining into dark and lost hearts. Neither could His Church be hid. Left few and weak, the world against her, the darkness of superstition enveloping her, the sword of persecution buried in her to the hilt, yet never has her light gone out or suffered eclipse, but right on has she shone—a power invincible and perennial.

And not only as an historic fact, and from inherent principle and life, but from *Divine command* is Christianity *aggressive*. In eternal councils came the awful question: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And when angels were silent, the Son replied, "Here am I; send Me." And so God SENT His Son. And this Divine Missionary becomes evermore a Divine *aggressiveness* in the world. He is crucified. But left behind are His disciples, His body, filled ever with the same Divine *propulsion of power*. Aggressiveness is their nature, but also their order. Conservation of the eternal *sending*. "As the Father hath sent Me, so SEND I you." "Go into all the world."

Thus the one characteristic of the Church of God is a GO-ing. Never neutral; always must she be spiritual activity against darkness and sin. No more can Christianity cease to be aggressive than the sun to shine.

We hear much of the "rest of faith." But "faith without works is dead." And any church or disciple attaining that rest of confidence and trust that forgets the war-cry of battle has already dragged anchor, and is drifting on the lee-shore of danger and wreck. When General Grant stood before Fort Donelson, he answered Buckner's proposals with, "I propose to move immediately on your works." And he did. Such a spirit must be that of God's Church. Delay is dangerous. Souls are perishing. "Go," says Christ, and "Go" we must—"Go" immediately, "Go" constantly, "Go" in the best way, but "Go" in *some way*.

And this "Go"-ing must outreach to the heathen world. But seven hundred millions, and the labourers few! Christ knew it! Yet He says, "Go," with no condition. When some of the Duke of Wellington's officers objected to a certain stronghold, "It cannot be taken"—"Cannot!" said the Iron Duke; and, turning to his order-book, replied, "It can be taken, for it is in my order-book."

Oh! when will the Church of God realise her magnificent opportunity, and "Go" with the blessed Gospel into all the world and to every creature!—*Missionary Herald*.