

necessary as well for the hearing as for the preaching of the Word, and to this duty I would earnestly direct your attention. I need not say that to this end, it is necessary to implore the divine aid, and diligently to meditate upon the doctrines of scripture. It is the experience of ministers both at home, and in heathen lands that people are interested in religious truth in proportion to their intelligence, and to the knowledge they possess, and to their experience of the power of the Gospel.

Again, it is your duty to assist your minister in organizing the dormant energies of this congregation. A few years ago you numbered 240 families, including town and country districts, and I presume your number is not decreasing. Now, as a divinely inspired prophet like Moses found it an advantage to choose able men, and make them rulers over the people, it behoves you to follow his example; and it is the duty of the ablest amongst you to accept office for the welfare of the congregation. For I have observed that where men of ability refuse to discharge such duties, they will speedily find that incompetent persons with more zeal than knowledge will thrust themselves into offices, and assume functions they are ill adapted to discharge.

It is your duty to take an increasing interest in the schemes of the church. At no time in the history of the Christian Church has the subject of Christian Missions to the heathen appealed to the church with greater interest than at the present time. Your liberality in this cause would be very great if only it were well developed: unfortunately it does not appear to be well developed. This is owing I have no doubt to a lack of organization. Last year the congregation contributed an average of 18 cents a family for the Foreign Mission. Were an opportunity given to each family to contribute by sending a collector to every house, the average would have been five

fold greater. This is a matter often left entirely to the minister. The laity should interest themselves more largely in it.

Some people can see but a little way beyond their own church steeple. Their sympathies are narrow, because their information is limited. If you would succeed in making this congregation an active energetic one, you must endeavor to get each family interested in the work of the church. And to this end, you should encourage the distribution and circulation of our RECORD especially in rural districts. This work is often left to the minister. It should not always be so.

In this country the great difficulty you will meet with in carrying on your affairs as a congregation arises from what is termed euphuistically *individualism*, or as we might express it the tendency which leads every man to do that which is right in his own eyes only, and wrong in the eyes of his neighbour. In cases of this kind, you should not bother the minister, but let the recalcitrant brother go, and let him go in peace. Let others take on them the burden he has thrown off, and say nothing about it. If a self important member finds that a congregation can exist and flourish without him, the discipline will do him good.

Lastly, it behoves you to remember that the object for which a congregation exists is that it may grow in the knowledge of spiritual truth, and be edified therein.

Your welfare as a congregation is to be measured not by your wealth or standing in the community, but by the measure in which your efforts contribute to the advancement of true religion—Jesus Christ came not to build churches however beautiful, not to ordain a ritual or mode of worship however interesting, but to establish his kingdom in the hearts of men, and the success of the relationship this day entered upon by you