

which can be defrayed only by the generous contributions of a saved and loving people.

But just hear the question presses for solution: How can the immense sums required to meet all these demands be realized? Obviously, present methods are unequal to the task; for, after a trial of hundreds of years, it is thought that not more than one-twelfth of the human family have been brought under the power of the gospel. Only, we believe, by the universal adoption of the practice enjoined by the Apostle,—“On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him,”—will the Treasury of the Lord be filled.

Our Synod has expressed a decided conviction that this is the only system of Church finance, for the present dispensation, which can claim the sanction of Scripture. Accordingly, a recommendation has been issued to all the office-bearers, members, and adherents of the Church, to adopt it. You will notice that the Synod bases this recommendation upon the command of the Lord Jesus. Now, that this precept was a command to the Corinthians, is self-evident. The context, however, implies that it reached beyond them. “As I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, so do ye.” But we have not yet reached the limits of the scope of this injunction. The epistle which contains it is addressed “to the Church of God which is at Corinth;” but also to “all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” The proof, then, that the command to which the Synod refers is binding upon all who call themselves Christians, is complete. Nor does it require much study to convince anyone open to conviction that this inspired rule is as replete with wisdom as authority. In ordaining that Christians should present their offerings to God on the first day of every week, the Most High would train His people to *system* in His service. In fixing upon the Sabbath, the day set apart for sacred worship, as the most fitting time for making our appropriations. He would teach us that Christian giving is *worship*, and that to meet with acceptance offerings of substance, just like our prayers and praises, must be the outcome and manifestation of gratitude and love. In requiring “EVERY ONE” to lay by him in store, He impresses the obligation of complete universality. By the intimation that each is to lay by him in store, “AS GOD HATH PROSPERED HIM,” He furnishes an admirable standard by which we ought to regulate the amount of our contributions. In a word, system, devotion, universality, and proportion, as the very element of all Scriptural beneficence, are here enshrined for the Church forever.

Brethren, we would turn your attention

to this sadly-neglected precept. We ask you to think of it; to meditate upon it long and attentively; to ponder it as an isolated text; and to study it under the light of other Scriptures; luminous though it is, as it stands out by itself, yet, when the scattered rays of Scripture light are concentrated upon it as their focus, it gleams with a brilliancy which, in these days of weak vision as to the claims of God, is almost dazzling.

We beseech you, by the mercies of God, to put a generous construction upon the prescribed measure, “As God hath prospered you.” Bear with us while we entreat you to summon gratitude and love to your counsel, and to dismiss sternly the promptings of an icy, selfish, covetousness. Remember that the Patriarchs, under the darkest of all the dispensations, freely devoted a tenth to God,—and that the very minimum of the offerings required from the Jews was one-fifth. Forget not that, while the Jew had to maintain a national religion merely, the Christian has to propagate the gospel throughout the whole world. Keep in mind that our privileges are mightily enhanced. The Jew had the type; we have the antitype. He grasped at the shadow; we hold fast the substance. He had the truths of prophecy; we have the facts of history. He experienced the pleasures of hope; we delight in the joys of fruition.

Let not the lessons of devotion taught by primitive Christians be lost upon you. Remember the poor widow with two mites; Mary, with her alabaster box of precious ointment; and the poor Macedonians, who, in a great trial of affliction, caused the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty to abound unto the riches of their liberality. By your regard to the authority of God; by your love to the Blessed Saviour; by your desire to escape the charge of grieving the Holy Spirit; by your yearning for the salvation of your fellow-men; we entreat you to adopt without delay, this inspired precept as the rule of your conduct. Let each have a treasury for the Lord in his own home. Let him replenish it as God has prospered him every Sabbath-day. Let him draw from it and carry to the House of God, as the various claims upon his beneficence present themselves. Strive together to obtain and disseminate a knowledge of this system, so distinguished alike for its simplicity and effectiveness. Bear with your pastors and others, when, in the face of a carping covetousness, they teach and present this sorely-neglected duty. Organize yourselves into associations for the propagation of this inspired method of Christian giving. Let Bible-Class instructors and Sabbath-School teachers impress the Apostolic pre-