

THE BASIS AND RESULTS OF MEDICAL MISSIONS.

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Though all humanitarian work may meet with the Divine approval, the Christian feels much better satisfied when he has a "Thus saith the Lord" as the basis of his action and a Divine command as the great motive to his work. In speaking of medical missions, I wish, therefore, in the first place, to speak of the place of *healing in the Divine plan for the redemption of our race.*

In creating man, God made him with a soul and a body, and these two have the most intimate relations with each other. Sin in its origin affected and still affects the soul through the body; and body as well as soul suffers from its penalties. In His thoughts of mercy to our race God pities the body as well as the soul of man. Both were created by God, both have felt the curse of sin, and both are to share in God's redemption. As the soul infinitely transcends the body in value and duration, of course this is the chief object of God's solicitude, and still the body is not beneath His notice or His care. In the ministry of the Christ on earth He healed the sick as well as preached the Gospel. His tender heart was touched with pity for the lame, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the palsied, the maimed, and the leper. At the grave of Lazarus, while He wept tears of sympathy for the grief of the broken-hearted sisters, we are told that He was "indignant in Himself" as He thought of the havoc which death had made in the fair form of his friend Lazarus. He saw Satan's work in men's maimed bodies, as well as in their ruined souls, and "went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed by the devil," thus fulfilling His mission to "destroy the works of the devil."

So in sending forth His followers, the healing of the body had a place in the thoughts of our Lord as well as the salvation of the soul. And here let me notice a distinction which is not without significance in showing the place which medical missions should occupy in our scheme for the evangelization of the world. In sending forth the twelve who were His apostles, those to whom were specially entrusted the continuance of His work and the interests of His kingdom, He says: "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons." Their great work was preaching; healing was subsidiary (Matt. 10: 7, 8). In Luke 10 we have an account of His sending out the seventy. Here the commission is, "Go, heal the sick, and say to them, The kingdom of God is come nigh to you." Notice the healing of the sick occupies the first place, and the Gospel message is to be announced to them. Here we have the warrant and the work of the medical missionary—as a physician to heal the suffering body, and as a messenger from God to tell his patient of Jesus. Thus we have two classes of laborers sent out by Christ: ordained preachers, who are to