

What enormous anxieties would be spared us in connection with mission-buildings, and churches, and schools—the dead weight of many existing agencies. All these things would come in time, but they would come independently of those who make it their business to preach the Gospel. Churches would be formed by thousands; but they would be left to their New Testament, and to native pastors, being commended, not selfishly, but from enlightened conviction, “to God and to the word of His grace.” A freer Christian life might be the result of such an arrangement; but the life would be more true, more natural, and, I believe, more abiding.

And what a blessing would it be to the heathen to find hundreds of men in their country all preaching substantially the same Gospel, and all pointing for details of spiritual and ecclesiastical life to the same book!

It can be done. It is our duty to do it, and there will be blessing even in the attempt. Yes, you say, in the attempt; but in anything besides? Can we, without miracles, hope that men will believe? Is a message of human sinfulness, of Divine mercy, and of holiness—in one word, of Christ, and of Christ as crucified for us—likely to win men who have grown old in sin? Must we not rather keep to our schools and be content to elevate men by the gradual training of a few in each generation, till, centuries hence, the whole are trained? I think not. The contempt of the foolishness of preaching has not yet died out. Signs, miracles, are still deemed essential. Wisdom, education, is still sought for as the precursor of the Gospel or its substitute. Yet is the Gospel more than a sign. It is *power* itself, and the power of God; and more than wisdom—the wisdom of God. Miracles have their place in introducing a new revelation, but they are not needed to justify us in preaching the Gospel, nor were they the means of the repentance and faith of the first converts. The truths we have to preach—man’s guilt, God’s free and righteous mercy, the necessity of holiness—still appeal to men’s consciences and hearts, as they did at Jerusalem and at Corinth; the preaching is still followed by “greater things” than Christ Himself wrought; and, in short, the message of the Cross, delivered as it ought to be, with prayer and tears, is still the power of God; and our strength is in proclaiming it. Some will not believe, but multitudes will; and we shall have discharged our conscience and have obeyed our Lord. There will be a blessing in the attempt, and in *much besides*.

This, then, is the conclusion to which I come. If the Christian Church will give itself to this business of preaching the Gospel, it has wealth enough and men enough to preach it, in the next fifteen or twenty years, to every creature. All we need is a “willing mind”—a Pentecostal spirit of prayer, and faith and zeal. Only *expect* what God promises to give, only *attempt* what God bids us to do, and the thing will be done.

The Divine method of missions has been briefly marked out. We are to work to this model; make the preaching of the Gospel to every creature.