

came to seek and to save the lost. The church's mission is to bring the gospel to a world sunk in sin and misery.

Thus to build up the towers of Zion, to close up like Nehemiah the breaches in the broken down walls of Jerusalem, to speak comfortably to her, and to gather to her the outcasts of Israel, is the great task in which the Lord is engaged, and in which Nehemiah and all other faithful souls are employed. This is the all-dominating work of pastor and people, of minister, elder, and communicant, of every one who loves Christ.

The Work is Imperious.

The builder cannot come down. As a true builder he is impressed with the greatness of his work, and cannot be diverted or turned aside. To be thus impressed he must be God-born. God-moulded, God-supported, and God-inspired. The spirit of the living God dwells in him. When this is the case then the Lord and he will be in sympathy with one another; when God provides the bricks and mortar he will build the wall; when God supplies the keystone he will put it on; when God sends a message of comfort to the people he will declare it with unction, with faithfulness, with adaptation; when God stretches forth His hand to save the outcasts, he will lay hold upon them and gather them in.

And how may this work be successful? Only as the worker learns from Jesus Christ, his brother and teacher, the way in which He did His Father's work. Oh, the compassionate heart of Christ! Oh, His infinite nearness to us! Oh, His matchless sorrow in bearing our sins! Oh, His oneness with us as his brethren and co-workers, in giving us the heart, and mind, and soul to do His work! How strenuous Christ was! How strenuous the Christ-bought and Christ-inspired worker will be!

Our great task must be to lead men to hear the gospel. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation. How is it to be preached so that it may reach men? There is no cabalistic, no mesmeric power in the gospel. It appeals to man's intelligence. If you cannot interest men you cannot reach them. A group of men, with its Matthew Arnolds, seeking intellectual impulse, comes saying, "Give us the gospel of culture and we will be satisfied." "Culture!" we answer. "Yes, give us all the culture possible. Paul, Luther, Chalmers, Edwards were versed in the learning of the schools, knew philosophy, theology, letters, but they used these only as feathers for the arrows which they sent flying into the souls of men."

Should preaching be heavy or elaborate? "Yes," was the answer once given, "if it is hot as well as heavy." But if what is wanted is culture with the supernatural eliminated, then perish this suggestion of the Sanballats and Tobiahs, for Christianity with the supernatural left out will die, as it deserves to do. To such solicitation we can only say, "We cannot come down."

The Formalist draws near to us and says, "Service is educative. Have attractive services. Have liturgy and music. Charm with the harmony of sweet sounds." Thus you may reach men with the gospel. We reply, "Yes, poetry and music are the product of inspired genius. Shall we use them? Surely. They are God's gifts. It is right to adopt the highest, purest music with which to praise God. It is right to sing as well as to preach the gospel. It is right to appropriate the highest flights of Shakespeare or Milton to illustrate, explain, or impress the gospel, but then it is not to be forgotten that it is the gospel we are preaching. If it is poetry for its own sake, we say, No! If music for its own sake, No! A service of praise with God left out, and only Handel and Mendelssohn left in, is a vain mockery. We may not so degrade the gospel of the Grace of God."

"Good taste will attract me," says the Aesthete. "I am alienated by the