

Brainerd literally obeyed the ascended Lord. He went forth with the Bible only in his hands. He gave himself to prayer and to the preaching of the Word of God, to catechetical instruction, to direct efforts to convert souls and train them for Christ. He at once began to *preach* to these untutored, uncivilized, degraded barbarians the central truth of Christianity, the cardinal doctrines of the Christian system—the very same doctrines which Jonathan Edwards then preached in Northampton, and which Dr. John Hall preaches to-day on Fifth avenue in New York City—and he preached them with the same distinctness and discrimination and directness and urgency and application; and the same results followed! He had to preach through an interpreter. He labored under a thousand disadvantages. But he honored God's word, God's method of saving sinners, and he preached and prayed with faith in the efficacy of the gospel and the Holy Spirit's power; and the effect, the fruit, was the same at Kaunaumeeck, and Crossweeksung, and at the Forks of the Delaware, as at Northampton, and in New York City, and in primitive times.

Have we not, in these days of weak faith and decay of spiritual life, departed quite too far from the *apostolic idea and practice* in our missionary endeavors? Are we not making organizations, schools, civilizing influences, machinery, and merely human devices, altogether too prominent? Is not the natural, if not the inevitable tendency of such a policy to unduly exalt the *human* element at the expense of the *divine*? And is not the effect to weaken our hold on God, to lessen the felt necessity of prayer and the Holy Spirit's omnipotent energy? Is it not precious time lost? are not energies wasted? and is not the time of harvest delayed?

Christ understood perfectly the conditions and necessities of the case, and the nature and adaptability of the gospel to its end, when he commissioned the disciples to go and teach all nations. And we know how the disciples understood his message, and how they obeyed it; their one uniform and universal method among Jews and Greeks and Romans, alike among barbarians and in civilized communities, was to preach Christ and him crucified, and to organize and gather the converts into Christian churches on the simple basis of the gospel. They knew nothing about our modern theories and accessories. We do not find the slightest trace of any of these modes or machinery in the primitive church's effort to evangelize the world. And human nature is the same to-day as then; and the condition of the heathen world is essentially the same. And yet we have drifted into a totally different method. We have come virtually to put civilization, education, preparation, before and in place of the gospel. It is not "*the foolishness of preaching*" so much as it is the perfection of appliances and constructive agencies and civilizing forces that is the church's main reliance to-day for the evangelization of the world, both nominally Christian and heathen!