

good. This is necessary not merely for the benefit of society, but for the spiritual health of the individual himself. Wherein consists the real health of the soul, but in spiritual sensibility, and in the daily exercise of all appropriate and commanded graces toward our Father in Heaven, toward the Saviour and his kingdom, and towards all our fellow creatures? What is true of individuals is true of communities. A torpid, prayerless, inactive Church, however large or wealthy, cannot be a prosperous Church. Nay, however rich, extended, and outwardly flourishing it may be, if the spirit of active well-doing be extinct in it, it is a dead Church, and cannot fail of speedily becoming a mass of spiritual putrefaction. But on the other hand, that Church which, in her collective capacity is constantly employed in planning and labouring for the promotion of the great interests of knowledge, virtue, evangelical holiness and salvation, is taking the most direct method to secure her own enjoyment, growth and prosperity.

The great design of infinite wisdom in the institution of the Church, was that she might be everywhere instrumental in promoting the reign of truth and holiness amongst men. It was no doubt intended that she should constantly seek the spiritual improvement and welfare of her own members, but also that she should labour to communicate the blessings of salvation to every part of the human family within her reach, with all the zeal and efficacy of united effort. And in all ages, the Church of God has invariably flourished, in regard to her best interests, just in proportion to the degree in which she has devoted herself to the hallowed work of active Christian Benevolence. It ought to be the unceasing care of every Church of Christ, not only to have light and purity and order ever shining in their own dwellings but also to hold forth the word of life for the benefit of those who are without, and to send it forth far and wide to every creature within her reach. If this be so, then every Church ought to consider it as equally her duty and her interest. Not merely to support within her own bosom, all the divinely instituted ordinances of religion, not merely to watch with fidelity over the purity and edification of her own members, but also to be indefatigably active in extending, as widely as possible to others the true religion, with all its blessed concomitants and benefits. She ought to regard it at once as a primary duty and precious privilege, to be constantly employed in spreading the glorious gospel from the rising to the setting sun. Then each Church should pray for and cultivate a missionary spirit. If so, such questions as the following would constantly arise. What can be done to promote the reign of pure and undefiled religion in the midst of us? What to secure the best interests of our children and youth? What to render our Sabbath Schools and Bible Classes more extensive? What to promote the cause of Temperance? What to rouse among the people a spirit of active Christian benevolence? What for contributing our portion of means, according as the Lord has prospered us, towards the evangelizing of the world? — Animated with this spirit, and intent on such objects, every

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