

The Church must have the Spirit's presence and power, and must depend on it. This is especially true of missions. Christ's work and the Spirit's work are correlative and co-ordinate. If the Church is to be full of zeal for the downfall of heathenism and the extension of Christ's kingdom it can only be through the Spirit of God. We now can diagnose the existence and object of the Church. The Church is missionary or nothing. If not so, she belies her existence, and is false to her constitution and founder.

Professor Max Müller in a lecture on missions delivered in Westminster Abbey, said, "Christianity is a missionary religion converting, advancing, aggressive, encompassing the world." The Apostles were missionaries. Their lives and doings are recorded in "the Acts" which is the earliest record of missionary enterprise that we possess. If Christianity is essentially an aggressive and self-propagating religion, the great means of quickening her life and developing her resources must be in the line of her constitution and charter. This is "a natural law in the spiritual world," "Give and it shall be given," "In blessing others we are blessed ourselves."

In the latter part of the last century a motion to establish foreign missions was vetoed in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, by a large majority. Why was this? Spiritual life was nil. The Divine command was ignored. The expansive power of the Church was lost.

It is a difficult problem to decide whether missions are more indebted to the Church than the Church is to missions. The stimulus that the Church has received during the last fifty years from the spirit of missions is phenomenal. They have been its very heart and life. Show us a congregation or a denomination where foreign missions are neglected, and you will everywhere see symptoms of decay. This is the testimony of experience, and our Churches are fully alive to the stern truth of it. As Samson's great strength lay in his hair, so a Church's great strength is in the culture and development of the missionary spirit; and when Samson was shorn of his locks he became an easy prey to the Philistine, so a Church shorn of the Divine afflatus of sending the truth to the uttermost recesses of the earth becomes an easy and sure prey to worldiness, infidelity, and a long concatenation of evils.

What are the principal hindrances to the progress of Christian missions? And first in the impious train we may mention *ignorance*—want of knowledge of the facts of the case. This is the parent of every other form of opposition. To the clear and unprejudiced mind, open to conviction and free from bias, the Divine warrant for missions is so unmistakable, and their success in the amelioration of mankind so patent and wonderful, that opposition is utterly inexcusable except on the ground of ignorance of the facts of the case.

What's the remedy? Diffuse the truth, show the Church and the world what has been done and is being done for the good of mankind by the diffusion of the Gospel. Let the ministers keep their congregations well-informed of the work the Church is doing as well as of the progress of that work, and we are fully assured from what we know of the intelligence and temper of our Christian people that faithful and stirring appeals will not be in vain.