

missioned us to go everywhere and preach his gospel, and leave to him to work his wonders when, and where, and as he will? What if our work be simply to obey his last command—to scatter broadcast, and in every field, the seed of the Word; nay, everywhere to bury ourselves as the good seed of the kingdom, content, if so he wills, to die and so bring forth fruit when we can no longer see it? What if, even in this “evangelistic era,” the church is still making the strange mistake of not yet planning and preparing for that world-wide occupation which he enjoined nearly two millenniums ago?

It is not enough to work, or even to work for God and for souls. Only when we work under his direction, and as he directs, do reward and blessing come. Never was mission or commission more clear and emphatic: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.” “This gospel must first be preached in all the world for a witness among all nations; and then shall the end come.” He who, in his impatience at the “miserable contracting lines of pessimism,” says “there is no ‘preaching the gospel as a witness,’ here,” surely forgets that these are the very words in which our Lord himself announces and defines the work of the present dispensation.

There may be disappointment, even to a disciple, whenever his expectation is based upon an unscriptural foundation. Our wish is often father, not only to our thought but to our hope. Within the limits of our instructions must we find the entire territory of our assured expectancy. When hope plants her feet upon the promises of God, her standing-place is firmer than the eternal hills; and when she plumes her wings with the promises, there is no limit to her upward flight. But only those expectations ripen into fruition which spring from some seed of his word.

VI. *The limits of our commission set the limits of the Spirit's blessing.*

Only in the way of perfect obedience can be found perfect blessedness. The Spirit of God is the Spirit of love, joy, peace, and power. If we find that we lack confidence and courage in God, contentment in our work, passion for souls, and unction in our message, it may be well to ask, are we in the way of duty? God hath given the Holy Ghost “to them that obey him.” To those who “love” him and “keep his words” Christ has promised that mysterious inward revelation of his personal indwelling. It cannot be a matter of little consequence to get a clear, full, exact apprehension of just what our Lord would have us to do.

Both the teaching of the Word and the testimony of the ages unite in this great lesson to the church: that only so far and so fast as the working force is dispersed over the whole field, and the gospel is witnessed unto every nation and every creature, will the last and greatest Pentecost of history be fully realized. The primary question is not