

great need substantially as it has been put by another, "We want in this age above all wants, fire, God's holy fire burning in the hearts of men, stirring their brains, impelling their emotions, thrilling in their tongues, glowing in their countenances, vibrating in their actions and fusing all their gifts and attainments into one burning stream. Every accessory, every instrument of usefulness the church has now in such a degree and of such excellence as was never known in any age before, and now we want but a supreme and glorious baptism of fire to exhibit to the world such a spectacle as would raise ten thousand hallelujahs to the glory of our King."

Appreciating then the colossal magnitude of the work which has been laid upon the church by this commission, realizing that it requires the most diligent, self-denying, sustained and devoted effort on the part of the church and of all her members, and feeling the absolute necessity of exclusive dependence upon forces of superhuman power let us all lay to heart more fully the precept of our text, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

But having thus considered the character and requirements of the great commission let us specify,

II. *Some reasons why it should be executed as speedily as possible.*

And in this connection I observe that we should preach the gospel to every creature.

1. *Because rightful authority demands it.*

Unquestionably this is the will of our exalted Lord. It is His command, clearly, explicitly and repeatedly given. These are his instructions issued in circumstances which are fitted to carry them home with power to every heart. It is the work for which He sought to prepare his immediate followers during the whole period of His personal intercourse with them. His directions with reference to it mingled with those pathetic parting counsels which fell from His lips at the communion table. It is the last command which He addressed to them before He returned to His Father; a command which we might say was upon His lips as He disappeared from the gaze of His disciples. We recognize the pathos and feel the power of the precept, "Do this in remembrance of me," as we study it in view of the fact that it fell from His lips on "the same night on which He was betrayed;" and ought we not for a similar

reason to yield to the force of the consideration that His commission to His church to preach the gospel to every creature was given to His disciples and reiterated in their hearing, after He had finished transgression, made an end of sin and brought in an everlasting righteousness; after the seal of His resurrection had been put upon His completed work and just on the very eve of His departure from the world and His return to His Father. We should therefore be in haste to preach the gospel to every creature because rightful authority demands it.

2. Another reason why we should promptly execute this commission is:

*Because of the extremity of the world's need and of the complete adaptation of the gospel to that need.*

The desperate disease of humanity's sin calls loudly for an adequate remedy, and Infinite wisdom, grace and power have furnished the very remedy which is needed in the gospel of Jesus Christ. That the remedy is thoroughly adapted to every phase of the disease is apparent from a comparison of its provisions with the ills to be treated. Are all mankind out of harmony with a God of Infinite purity and rectitude, and subjected to the strokes of His displeasure? The gospel proclaims reconciliation through the blood of Christ, and redemption through His cross and passion. Are men not only alienated from God but also depraved and wicked? The forces which centre in the gospel are potent enough to effect their renovation and complete transformation. Are the heathen almost every-where infatuated after their vain objects of worship? The gospel makes ample provision for turning them from their dumb idols to serve the living God. Is Pagan society universally infected by these moral and spiritual plagues which the apostle so graphically delineates in the first chapter of the epistle to the Romans? The gospel has power to remedy them all, and it has demonstrations its effectiveness once and again upon the field of human experience. Under its celestial influences the self-indulgent have become self-sacrificing, the unchaste pure, the unrighteous holy, the covetous benevolent, the malicious kindly, the envious charitable, the quarrelsome peaceful, the proud lowly, the disobedient dutiful, and the liar truthful, so that to these in every community where the gospel has really triumphed it may be said as it was said to