

these women's devotion? What led them to consecrate their lives to so noble a cause? The answer is to be found in your motto,

**"The Love of Christ Constraineth us."**

Personal consecration to Christ—that was the dynamic of all their work. No other motive is strong enough. It has wrought all the miracles of missions. Someone has said that "the motives of deeds are the powers of deeds." If this be true then we can understand the tremendous force of the first missionary efforts, because they had their source and origin in **personal love of Christ**.

We hear much to-day of crusades for humanity, of works of charity and philanthropy. Far be it from me to diminish by one jot or tittle all that is said for these heroic undertakings. But let us remember this: There is more strength and endurance in a work that springs out of love for God and goes on to love for man, than that which originates in love for man and afterwards comes to love God.

We begin our tasks at the wrong end. There can be no doubt that a study of Christ's life and speech reveals the important truth. He laid every possible emphasis upon personal love and upon loyalty to His own person. Everywhere He was saying, "Follow Me! Lovest thou Me?" And when He was saying that love and devotion, then, and not till then, He gave His commission. All that the Apostles did, all that the Holy Women did, here is just this one explanation for it: "The Love of Christ Constraineth us."

Let us keep this in mind as we go on now to consider the Four Marys.

### **OUR FIRST MARY IS MARY MAGDALENE.**

She was of the city of Magdala. Some great affliction burdened her life. It is said that the Master cast seven devils of her. Commentators have rushed to the conclusion that she was a notoriously wicked woman. There is not a shred of evidence for it. Possession of devils in the Gospels by no means involves great wickedness. There are few, if any, cases, where gross immorality is suggested. Often these terrible afflictions were mental physical disorders where no hint of grave sensuality or sin is made. However, she had been tortured and tormented by this possession until life was intolerable. The merciful Master delivered her and