

truth that in commissioning the church to preach the gospel to every creature the Redeemer summons her to a work of the very greatest magnitude.

But again in view of the colossal magnitude of the work let it be observed,

2. *That this commission must be regarded as a command requiring the most diligent, self denying and devoted effort on the part of the church and of all her members.*

For in this commission we have as has been said the "marching orders" of the church. Issued by the great Captain of her salvation just as He was about to take His seat upon His exalted throne, they come at once to the great army of christians and to every soldier of the cross with the sanction of the very highest authority, and enforced with considerations of the most impressive character. Clearly this commission makes the evangelization of the world the chief business of the church as a whole, the chief work of each of her members as individuals. There are of course other things which christians may do, many other things which they ought to do, but this is something which they must do. Studying the duty of christians under the light of this commission, we conclude that next to their own illumination conversion and salvation the principal thing for which individual sinners are called into fellowship with Christ is that they may become instruments for the illumination, conversion, and salvation of others; that next to their own personal and mutual edification the principal thing for which christians are required to organize themselves into societies and churches is the uniting of their energies in seeking out, sending forth, and maintaining, qualified agents for the conversion of the world. Hence it is evident that every congregation ought not merely to have a missionary association within its bounds, but better still, it ought itself to be a missionary association, with its eye habitually turned, and its energies systematically directed not only to its own edification and growth, but also to the universal extension of the Kingdom of Christ. Still further every member of every congregation ought so to realize the pressure of the obligation which rests upon him personally to carry out these instructions of his Lord as to prompt him to be at once a ceaseless petitioner for the coming of Christ's Kingdom, and a continuous, regular, systematic and generous contributor to this supreme and

sacred object. In reality he is solemnly and publicly committed to all this by the very fact of his church membership. For the work of evangelizing the world was not designed to be effected by missionaries alone, or by missionaries encouraged and assisted by ministers and a limited number of the members of the church. This work has not been laid upon a few choice spirits in our congregations who in their laudable desire to carry out their Master's will are moved to form themselves into missionary societies for that purpose. It has been imposed upon the great body of the membership, each one of them being required to do what he is able, and all that he is able, to secure the end in view. Missionary Associations of various sorts have unquestionably done good work, they are doing good work still, and no doubt will continue to do good work. No one who has the evangelization of the world at heart can fail to wish all such associations as are properly constituted and wisely conducted, God speed, but is there no need that care should be taken that the members of the church who do not belong to these associations may fall into the mistake of thinking that effort, at all events diligent, sustained, self denying and devoted effort on behalf of missions is the duty chiefly, if not exclusively, of these merely who are connected with such associations? In order to do this most effectively is it not necessary that due prominence should be given to the truth that after all the ideal missionary association is the Divinely instituted and Divinely constituted church of Christ, that the members of this ideal society include at the very least every man and woman whose name is on the Communion roll, and ought it not to be the constant aim of all ministers and elders to bring about that state of matters in which not only every congregation, but every member of every congregation, whether young or old, rich or poor, should as a member of the church so feel the burden of his responsibility for the world's conversion that his conviction of duty should be as a fire within his bones giving him no rest till he sets himself to do what he can to help make known the gospel to every creature? This commission as containing the highest expression of the Master's will should be kept as constantly and as prominently before the minds of the members of the church as the pillar of fire and cloud was kept before