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“WHAT SHOULD BE DONE BY OUR CHURCHES WITH A VIEW TO THEIR GROWTH?”

(*A Paper read before the Central Association*)

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This question may awaken the thought, in some minds, of a comparatively weak and feeble existence. Whatever may have been the growth of our Churches in this country in the past, there is undoubtedly room for expansion, and it is our duty in a manful and Christian spirit to go forward, attempting great things in the name of God. If there exists any particular defect hindering our progress, let us by all means search it out, and cast it from us. That there is a goodly measure of loyalty to our principles is undeniable, yet our surroundings may have been unfortunate, our fidelity may have been limited, and our disappointments have certainly been frequent, all, however, calling loudly for a calm investigation of this question—“What should be done by our Churches with a view to their growth?” There can be no growth without life. Life in, to and for Christ. This is imperative. Churches must walk in the fear of God and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost to be multiplied. The beauty of a growing, living Church is very attractive. Out of Zion the perfection of beauty God hath shined; while the ever-ripening clusters of the fruits of holiness show the mellowing influence of the Sun of Righteousness.

For the purpose of a clear understanding, we will divide our subject into two branches, considering, first, some points requiring prayer and effort in each individual Church; and then asking two questions of a general character as likely to stimulate inquiry regarding what it is best to do in order to the progress of the denomination—or, in other words, of our Churches—throughout the land.

Each individual Church should—*Seek Reviving*. A Church to grow, must exist in the enjoyment of spiritual blessings, or not having that, pray and work for a revival. Spiritual power alone can build up. Take hold of Divine strength. We can do all things through Christ strengthening us. The tree that grows must have its roots deep in the soil; so when rooted and grounded in Christ we may expect to draw nourishment from Him. Walking in Him and with Him will constrain others to know that we have been with Jesus, and that will give influence. Every person has an influence of some sort; a hallowed, Christ-like power will act as a magnet to draw into fellowship those of spiritual insight and impulses. The importance of setting forth the great doctrines of salvation—seeking to save the lost—cannot be over-estimated. All at work, and always at it. The utmost effort should be put forth by the whole available resources of the Church for the purpose of saving souls; and the Lord will add daily of the saved.

Each Church should—*Endeavour to possess such outward appliances as are neces-*