

There has been, too long, a false delicacy in speaking of consecration of means in many quarters; the fear of offending that covetousness which is idolatry, has been a snare to many. But we hold that it is the duty of every minister to give this subject some place in his system of ministrations: to unfold and enforce this and other laws of God bearing upon the subject, on the one hand, and on the other, to point out the various schemes in the church, and world, more especially demanding our sympathy and aid. And we further hold that this systematic giving, enjoined by the Apostle, is absolutely necessary to the very existence of any church which would seek a healthy and permanent existence: for, if the church gives not her sons, time, abilities, and means to bless the world—if her religion does not master the world—then the world must curse and master her. If effort, based on love, be the soul of success, then, to the churches of the age systematic consecration is a question of victory or death.

We have long been thoroughly disgusted with that selfish phase of religion which cannot bear to have money mentioned in the pulpit; for, if our religion is of God, it will have two sides—a Divine and a human—godliness, or due reverence upwards to God—brotherly kindness, or practical love downwards and outwards to man; and if this human side is worth one straw, it will systematically devise and carry out liberal things. Now, we have one word to those who are perpetually grumbling at, what they call, ministerial begging: make this rule of the Apostle's your own, and then, instead of selfish annoyance, you will give largely and liberally,—yea, you will positively thank that man who will point out to you any way in which you can benefit your brother man.

Every congregation has its own plans to raise money for mission and other purposes. Some have collections; some have subscription lists—these monthly, quarterly or yearly. But the plan, which probably would come nearest to the apostolic law, would be to have a mission box in every church, in which every man might place his gathering, weekly or monthly; and these gifts a mission committee could easily distribute to every object according to its importance.

In the present state of things the plan may be Utopian; in most congregations it would likely produce less than the common plans; but, we believe that would be the simplest and the easiest plan; and were all the members of churches truly consecrated to God, it would, no doubt, be the most thoroughly effective plan. At the present moment, to carry the gospel into the most remote backwood settlement, and sustain it there—to equip, send forth, and sustain an effective missionary staff in any foreign mission field—we need consecrated means more than ever—yea, true system in that consecration. With these we will go on and prosper; without these we will sink down into worldliness and death.

Finally, if the members of our church would seek a liberal, progressive and sanctified Christianity, let them deeply and prayerfully ponder the New Testament law of action: "Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."