

source. The missionary life of the church can hardly be expected to reach a higher level than it has attained in the past. Its strength and how and elevation will depend very much on the impulse and illustration it receives from him. The pastor will naturally impress his own spirit on those to whom he ministers; they will readily take the stamp of him whom they have accepted as their guide and example in spiritual things. If the missionary spirit be strong and manifest in him, it will flow to them, and they will be ready to respond to his appeals; but if he be lacking in him, it will be strange indeed if they exhibit much concern in this regard. And just here have we not the true explanation of the indifference which characterizes many churches in this matter? Is it not directly traceable to the indifference of their pastors? to the fact that they have never properly put the subject of missions before their people, nor duly urged their claims upon them? We know how some pastors have been wont to deal with appeals from the different missionary boards. They have probably kept them from the knowledge of their churches, without giving them the opportunity of considering them, or they have introduced them in a way that has killed their force. They have said, perchance, "Well, brethren, here is another of these appeals—another circular asking for a collection. We have a great many calls for money. We should remember, however, that charity begins at home. Besides there is a balance yet due on the pastor's salary, which it might be well to provide for before raising money for other and outside purposes." And so, there and then, the appeal dies. Just as if it might not be expected that a church would be behind with the pastor's salary, whom the pastor should treat in this way! Just as if, in truth, a pastor deserved to have his salary paid regularly, or paid at all, whose pastoral duties are discharged in this way! Just think of a man, taking charge of a Christian church, with apparently no higher object than hereby simply to obtain his bread and butter. What a caricature of the true pastor! of the true ambassador of Jesus Christ!

2. But recently, not only must the pastor have the missionary spirit in himself if he would impart it to his church, but in order to the highest results—in order that the church may be and become in the truest and best sense missionary in its character, he must have a definite conception of the condition of things in the church which answers to this description; he must know what the high results mean, and must clearly discern the path by which alone they can be reached. In other words, he must carry in his mind a correct ideal of the true missionary church, and of the best way of making it such. No man, whatever his calling, ever gets beyond his ideal. To no man is progress any longer possible, after his ideal has been reached. If every man, therefore, who would accomplish anything, an ideal is necessary, for without it, he works at random, and consequently ineffectually. His strength is dissipated—does not gather itself up, and make itself felt along one line of action, and terminate in one issue. Aimless endeavor is ever fruitless endeavor.

But not only is an ideal necessary, it must be of the right kind. As men naturally strive to realize their ideal, hence the importance of having it as nearly perfect as possible. In a certain sense it should be unattainable, that it may thus lure to higher and yet higher endeavor, while yet a point shall never be reached where further endeavor is needless.

Now what is true of men in general touching the necessity of ideals and their inspiring influence on human action, is true of the pastor in particular in his relation to his flock. If he would achieve the grandest results for those to whom he ministers, and through them, for the world, he must distinctly discern the end to be aimed at and the best means of attaining it; his eye must steadily view the splendid ideal which he has proposed to himself, and the best energies of his life must be given to its realization.

It might not be easy to name all the characteristics of the model missionary church, but if the pastor's ideal of the same be perfect, there is one characteristic which it will not include; it will not be a church that looks upon itself as an end, instead of only a means to an end. This is lamentably

true of too many churches. They work only for themselves, they care only for themselves, they exist only for themselves. For the conversion of a perishing world, they seem to feel very little concern. They do not seem to think that the great commission has been addressed to them, that they are in any way responsible for its being carried out. They do indeed sometimes exhibit some anxiety for the conversion of sinners, but it is chiefly that their own church may be strengthened and kept alive. As to the conversion of outside sinners—sinners in the spiritually destitute places of these home lands, or in far off India or Africa—what is that to them! The great primary purpose for which churches should regard themselves as existing, namely, the evangelization of the world to God, is thus ignored. In the apostolic time the evangelist went before and planted the church; then the church, in turn, sent forth the evangelist. But in these times many churches, instead of doing aggressive work for Christ, concentrate their efforts upon themselves; they are too busy in training the saints within their own fold, to look after the sinners outside and beyond it. Just as if, as I have already observed, the very best way, or one of the best ways of accomplishing the former, is not by doing the latter. The true pastor will not fail, indeed, to instruct and guide his flock, but he will not make this the sole end of his ministrations, but rather a means to an end beyond. Every Christian church should feel itself particularly charged, in the first place, with the evangelization of the masses among whom it is located, and second, with the evangelization of those whom it can only reach with its prayers and Christian giving. Yet strange to say, in some of our large cities, there are churches calling themselves Christian, that are actually moving away from the masses, and building for themselves houses of worship in which their devotions will not be disturbed by the presence of the poor and homely clad. It is, in fact, a matter of just aghast, that in this way the gulf, in many instances, is being actually widened between the churches and the neglected, ungodly, and degraded multitudes whom it should be their aim and endeavor to save. Mission churches are doing a good work, but they are failing to meet the demands of the whole case. By the low, neglected classes themselves they are apt to be looked upon as the bones which the old barons threw to their dogs. I believe the Christian church will never fully discharge its duty to the poor and despised who are, destitute of the gospel and gospel privileges, until it plants itself among them, and on equal terms, for their salvation.

3. But admitting that the pastor must himself have the missionary spirit and rightly view the work that is to engage his energies, the question arises: How is he to get this spirit and how is he to communicate it to his church? In other words, how is he to become deeply interested in missionary work, and make his church interested in it also? I answer:

(1) First, as regards the pastor. His interest in missions and missionary work may be deepened and strengthened (a) by personal intercourse with the Lord Jesus. He was the first great missionary—the first great foreign missionary, for he came all the way from his glorious throne to this apostate planet; he came from the bosom of the Father—the object of the Father's ineffable delight, to endure spitting, buffeting and death, that he might save lost sinners from death eternal. He was the first great home missionary, for having come to earth, "he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of disease and all manner of sickness among the people." He came "to seek and save the lost." He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many. No one can truly learn of Jesus,—can truly drink in his spirit, without being stirred with the missionary impulse. (b) By a baptism of the Holy Spirit. This baptism is needed for the largeness of heart spoken of by Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians, "O ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you; our heart is enlarged." This baptism is needed to lift us out of the ruts of our selfishness and lead us into the joy of self-sacrificing service for the spiritual good of others: to make us willing and glad to go anywhere and, if need be, to suffer the bitter