

Yes, for the thousands of workers still needed in the mission-field we must first of all *pray*—pray as Elijah prayed for the rain, fervently, effectually, incessantly till the prayer is answered; pray as the church prayed for the promised Spirit before Pentecost. Such prayer would bring another Pentecost, and we need such a season to-day. We want the world to be evangelized, but we must remember that He who redeemed it and commanded His apostles to evangelize it, forbade them to leave Jerusalem on their glorious mission till they were endued with power from on high. They obeyed Him; the power came, and thousands were converted *by it*. But there never was and never will be any *substitute* for this spiritual power, this holy anointing. Without it evangelistic or missionary work must be in the deepest sense a failure.

With these sacred examples before us we cannot but ask the question whether our mode of *testing* missionary candidates is sufficiently careful and thorough, and whether our plan of *training* them aims, as it should do, at the *development of the moral and spiritual nature* even more than at the invigoration of the mental powers, and the impartation of mere knowledge. Do we *seek and select* in the first place, and *cultivate* in the second, the *type of character* which Christ cultivated? Are we guided in our selection mainly by the *spiritual* stature of the candidate—by his humility, patience, prayerfulness, and faith—by his possession of the Spirit of Christ? In our training, again, is our aim the right one? We educate abundantly, and education is undoubtedly a good thing, but it is a poor substitute for *grace exercised* and *spiritual gifts* strengthened by use, for habits of practical devotion and self-denying labor formed and established. Collegiate study and examinations are not enough. Degrees are no criterion. Men of high scholastic attainments have been sent out in our own day to convert the heathen, who have been converted by the heathen, or rather perverted by them from the truth. As Gideon tested his three hundred, so do we need to test and sift our missionary volunteers, and *the testing should include the Cross*. "Master," said one of old, "I will fencow thee whithersoever thou goest." "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests," was the answer, "but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." That is, Christ intimated to the would-be disciple that to follow Him, he must be *prepared to share His lot*." No training that misses this element is worth much.

The reality of the missionary's devotedness is best proved and developed by hard and humble work among the ignorant, the prejudiced, the poor, the degraded at home. If a man objects to, or slurs labor among *them*, as beneath his dignity or disagreeable to his tastes, it is useless to send him forth as a missionary. Selfishness may make a good student, natural ability an acceptable speaker, but only distasteful service puts to the proof a man's *grace*, his sense of duty and strength of principle. Fifteen years' experience in the training of young men, and personal dealing with more than three thousand volunteers for missionary service, leads me to urge the importance of this test.

Next, perhaps, in value to spirituality may be ranked *evangelistic gift and ability*. How is this to be developed? In the same way that skill in any other line is imparted—by instruction and practice. The preparation for all ordinary work consists in the actual doing of it, not merely in gaining a theoretical knowledge of how it ought to be done. No one would employ a mechanic who had never worked at his trade nor an architect who had never erected a building. No one would employ a doctor who had not treated the