

instruct us on this point. It plainly teaches us that it is the will of Heaven that all should receive the Gospel. "Go preach the Gospel to every creature" was the last command of Christ to his chosen Apostles.

The Bible tells us of two great gifts that God hath made: one the gift of His Son to the world; the other the gift of the world to His Son. We speak much about the first, and it is the greatest; but let us not forget or overlook the second. The world is Christ's by the Father's gift. It is His now *de jure*, and in due time it will be His *de facto*. And does not the issuing of the Commission "Go ye into all the world" &c., proceed upon the assumption that the world is Christ's by right? Could He have charged His Apostles thus, if in some sense or other the world had not been His? And the early Church acted upon the belief that the world is Christ's by right, and addressed herself energetically to the work of evangelizing it. Her preachers began at Jerusalem but they went from Jerusalem to Judea, and from Judea to Samaria, and from Samaria to the ends of the earth. And after the dispersion that was caused by persecution the members of the Church "went everywhere preaching the Word."

Do we of to-day believe that the field to be sown with the good seed of the Gospel is the world? If we do, it behooves us to cherish and cultivate the missionary spirit much more than we are now doing.

Do we not sometimes forget that we ourselves owe much under God to missions? nay, that we owe everything—that we are indeed the fruit of missionary labor. For us therefore to stand aloof from the missionary movement or to give it a half-hearted support is deep ingratitude. "Freely we have received," therefore we should freely give.

Nor can we afford to be illiberal to this cause. Ecclesiastical history teaches us this if it teaches us anything, that missionary churches have been prosperous churches. 'Tis the church that does most for her Lord that receives most from Him. 'Tis the church that gives most that gets most. And any church or congregation that is

self-contained, that labours selfishly for her own good has already reached the limit of her extension and is about to decline.

Nor can it be too often repeated that the Church of Christ is essentially a missionary organization. She has been entrusted with the Gospel not that she may selfishly keep it and enjoy it, but that she may publish it abroad. As binding as ever is the command, "Go ye into all the world," &c. and the church that ceases to respect and obey that command thereby forfeits her charter rights, and has no ground upon which to justify her further existence. Her polity may be scriptural, her ritual may be pleasing, and her ministers may be canonically ordained, but if she has forgotten or is overlooking her Lord's last command she is neither desiring nor endeavouring to fulfil the ends for which she exists.

It is nothing at all to the purpose to tell us that we are weak, very weak in the presence of such a work. Our ability is the measure of our obligation. We are called upon to do no more than we are able to do, and we ought to do no less. Who ever else despises small things Christ despises not. Let each and every one bring his mite and lay it down at Jesus' feet.

To awaken a deeper interest in missionary work, and to lead us to pray more frequently and to give more liberally in connection with it, we need to read a good deal more about it. There are scores of papers in all parts of the church who know a little of the doings of their own missionaries. Some don't take the *Record*, but some who do take it don't read it. And then how few are there who know anything of what is doing in the world's great centers? in India, in China and Japan? We want more missionary intelligence, and more reading of what we have. It is a question if our pulpits do their duty in respect.

If our people generally had the same interest from the mission fields as they ought to have them, then missionary prayer meetings would be profitable and delightful, whereas now they are often neither the one nor the other. And they should be more frequently than they are. We