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UNBELIEF.

There is no unbelief ;
Whoever plants a seed beneath the sod,
And waits to see it push away the clod,
He trusts in God.
Whoever says, when clouds are in the sky,
"Be patient, heart ; light breaketh by-and-by,"
Trusts the Most High,
Whoever sees, 'neath winter's field of snow,
The silent harvest of the future grow,
God's power must know.
Whoever lies down on his couch to sleep,
Content to lock sense in slumber deep,
Knows God will keep,
Whoever says, "To-morrow," "The Unknown,"
"The Future," trusts that Power alone
He dares disown,
The heart that looks on when the eyelids close,
And dares to live when life has only woes,
God's comfort knows.
There is no unbelief ;
And day by day, and night, unconsciously,
The heart lives by that faith the lips deny—
God knoweth why.
—Edward Bulwer Lytton.

BY PERSONAL EFFORT MUST THE GOSPEL BE BROUGHT TO MEN.

The only way by which moral elevation and religious truth can be diffused among men is by individual men giving the price of self-sacrifice and personal effort. If you want to do people good you can but you have got to pay that price for it. You have to render up your own work—your own effort. The example of Jesus Christ is the all-structive one in the case. People talk about Him being their pattern, and they sometimes forget that whatever more there was in Christ's Cross and Passion there was this in it:—the exemplification for

all time of the one law by which any reformation can be wrought—that a man shall give himself to do it, and that by personal influence alone men shall be drawn and won from out of the darkness and filth. The sight of a loving heart and a sympathetic work, the exhibition of a Christian life and conduct, the fact of going down into the midst of evil and trying to lift men out of it, are the old-fashioned and only magnets by which men are drawn to purer and higher life. That is God's way of saving the world—by the action of single souls on single souls. Masses of men can neither save nor be saved. Not in groups, but one by one, particle by particle, soul by soul, Christ draws men to Himself, and He does His work in the world through single souls on fire with His love, and tender with pity learned of Him.

So, dear friends, do not you think that any organization, any corporate activity, any substitution of vicarious service, will solve the problem? It will not. There is only one way of doing it, the old way that Jesus was content to tread, the old way that we must tread if we are going to do anything for God and our fellows: "The priests repaired everyone over against his own house." Nehemiah 3:29.

Now, I will not spend time in pointing out to you some very plain and obvious things which bear upon this matter of personal and individual action, but let me just name one or two that I wanted to have dwelt upon at some length if time had permitted. Let me remind you that if you are a Christian man you have in your possession the thing which will cure the world's woe. And possession involves responsibility. What would you think of a man that had a specific for some pestilence that was raging in a city, and was contented to keep it for his own use, or at most for his family's use, when his brethren were dying by the thousand, and their corpses polluting the air? And what should we say of men and women who call themselves Christians, who have some fair in that great Lord and His mighty sacrifice; who know that the men they meet with every day of their lives are dying for want of it, and who yet themselves do absolutely nothing to spread His name and to heal men's hurts? What shall we say? "God forbid that we should say they are not Christians; but God forbid that anybody should flatter them with the notion that they are anything but most inconsistent Christians."

Still further, need I remind you that if we have found anything in Jesus Christ which has been peace and rest for ourselves, Christ has thereby called us to this work.

He has found and saved us, not only for our own personal good; that, of course, is the prime purpose of our salvation, but not its exclusive purpose. He has saved us, too, in order that the Word may be spread through us to those beyond. "The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal until the whole was leavened." And every little bit of the dough, as it received into itself the leaven, and was transformed, became a medium for transmitting the transformation to the next particle beyond it. And so at last the whole was permeated by the power.

And so it is in this world. We get the grace into our hearts that we may pass it on; and, as the Apostle says: "God hath shined into our hearts that we might give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

And you can do it you Christian men and women, every one of you, and preach Him to somebody. The possession of His love gives the commission; ay! and it gives the power. There is nothing so mighty as the profession of personal experience. Do not you think that when that first of Christian converts, and first of Christian preachers, went to his brother, all full of what he had discovered, his simple saying, "We have found the Messiah," was a better sermon than a far more elaborate proclamation would have been.

My brother! If you have found Him, you can say so; and if you can say so, and your heart and your life confirm the words of your lips, you will have done more to spread His name than much eloquence and many an orator. All can preach: who can say, "We have found Christ?"

The last word I have to say is this: there is no other body that can do it but you. They say:—"What an awful thing it is that there are no churches or chapels in these outcast districts!" If there were they would be what the churches and chapels are now—half empty. Bricks and mortar built up into ecclesiastical forms are not the way to evangelise this or any other country. It is a very easy thing to build churches and chapels. It is not such an easy thing—I believe it is an impossible thing (and that the sooner the Christian Church gives up the attempt the better)—to get the Godless classes into any church or chapel. Conducted on the principles upon which churches and chapels must needs at present be conducted, they are for another work and another class altogether; and we had better recognize it, because then we shall feel that no multiplication of places like this, for instance, is any direct contribution to the evangelization of the waste places of the country, except in so far as from a centre like this there ought to go out much influence which will originate direct missionary action in places and fashions adapted to the outlying community.

Professional work is not all we want. Any man, be he minister, clergyman, Bible-reader, city missionary, who goes amongst our godless population with the suspicion of pay about him is the weaker for that. What is needed besides, is that ladies and gentlemen that are a bit higher up in the social scale than these poor creatures, should go to them yourselves; and excavate and work.

Preach, if you like, in the technical sense; have meetings, I suppose, necessarily; but the personal contact is the thing, the personal contact, the familiar talk, the simple exhibition of a loving Christian heart, and the unconventional proclamation in free conversation of the broad message of the love of God in Jesus Christ. Why, if all the people in this chapel, who can do that would do it, and keep on doing it, who can tell what an influence would come from some hundreds of new workers for Christ. And why should the existence of a church in which the workers are as numerous as the Christians be an Utopian dream? It is simply the dream that perhaps a church might be conceived to exist, all the members of which had found out their plainest, most imperative duty, and were really trying to do it.

No carelessness, no indolence, no plea of timidity or business shifts the obligation from your shoulders if you are a Christian. It is your business, and no paid agents can represent you. You cannot buy yourselves substitutes in Christ's army as they used to do in the militia, by a guinea subscription.

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