

has done more to thaw selfish hearts and draw parents to God and heaven than a long and rugged life. Every human life is a divine plan. Every one has a mission to this world. So fall in line, stand in your place, do not envy another. No place so grand to you and for you as your own, and none you can fill so well. Without this conviction of a personal life mission, your life will be aimless, and consequently a failure; a drift life, tossed by the waves of circumstances and tide of events, driven by the winds of doubt, no anchor, no rudder, no compass. Some day the ship will be wrecked. Aim at the glory of God. Take your bearings carefully. Know where you are going. One mistake may wreck unnumbered barks that follow in your wake. A wrong direction or bias may land you at the gloomy portals of endless despair, instead of the pearly gates of unfading glory.

**Selected.**

**OUR PROGRESS.**

The prime object of the church is the Christianizing of the world. The effectiveness of a body in accomplishing this end is a most favorable symptom of its progress. Many Christians fail to grasp the unprecedented and ever increasing progress of the Christian church from a failure to read our literature.

Our progress during 1880-90 was very encouraging according to the United States Census Report. The New York *Independent* has carefully compiled the statistics for 1890-94, which is still more encouraging.

Considering the Christian church in its age as a Reformation the M. E. is twice as old, the Presbyterian five times, the Baptist and Congregationalist each four times as old. With an equally perfect grasp of the gospel, an equally zealous ministry and membership, and the same great field, it is clear that the growth of either of the denominations should far eclipse the growth of the Christian considering the comparative age of each. Again the old statement, "that large bodies move slowly," can not apply here, since every convert should become so much working force. As the army of Christians increases, the effectiveness should also increase.

In the light of these principles, let us examine the gain in the churches:

	1890.	1894.	Net gain.
M. E.	22,844	23,800	956
Presbyterian	13,478	14,850	872
Congregationalist	4,808	5,400	500
Baptist	43,029	44,797	1,678
Christian	7,246	8,168	1,522

The M. E. (North) had three times as many churches in 1890 as the Christians. They also had three times the number of members. Their increase, therefore, should be more than three times as great. On the contrary, they built a little over half as many churches as the Christians. Neither can they lay claim to more valuable property.

In all twelve branches of the Presbyterian church there were almost double our number of churches with almost double the working force, yet they have a very small margin over one-half as many edifices in the increase.

The Baptist brethren are all taken together that a better appearance may be had. With six times the working force meeting in six times our number of edifices in 1890, they should have established more than six times the number of houses of worship. They have exceeded our number by only 156. While the Regular Baptists (North) show a

decrease of 64 houses of worship, and the Regular Baptists (South), an increase of 586. The Congregationalist church has made a far greater proportionate gain than the Baptist.

We shall now examine the growth in ministers:

	1890.	1894.	Net Gain.
M. E.	15,424	15,530	116
Presbyterian (12)	10,448	10,881	433
Congregationalist	5,008	5,236	178
Baptist	15,642	17,804	2,250
Christian	3,773	4,040	1,167

The M. E. (North) had a working force of ministers in 1890 over four times as great as the Christian church, and a membership three times as great. From this array of material they have a net gain of only 116 preachers. Instead of a gain in ministers, even doubling the Christian church, we find a gain of only one-tenth as many ministers as the Christian church.

As you may make the proper comparison with the Presbyterian and Congregationalist, we will pass to that of our Baptist brethren.

With a working force of ministers over four times that of the Christian church in 1890 and a membership over three times as great, the increase in the number of ministers is not twice as great.

Moreover, there can be no consolation among our neighbors that their gain in ministers has been of educated men when the truth is that the education of the ministers of the Christian church compares most favorably proportionately, with the denominations.

We will now take a survey of the gain of communicants:

	1890.	1894.	Net gain.
Methodist	2,240,854	2,850,720	110,872
Presbyterian (12)	1,278,832	1,416,204	137,872
Congregationalist	512,771	580,000	67,229
Baptist (13)	3,717,969	3,785,740	67,771
Christian	641,051	871,017	229,966

With three times the membership, and over four times the ministry, the M. E. church gained one-half as many communicants.

The Presbyterians in all twelve of their branches, have nearly twice the membership and three times the number of preachers, yet their gain is a small number over one-half.

The Congregationalists with almost double the ministry, and not quite so many communicants, gain some over one-fifth as many.

The thirteen different branches of the Baptist church, from colored to white, Regular to Old-two-Seed-in-the-Spirit, had over five times the membership and near seven times the ministry. Instead of a gain even six times as great as the Christian church they fail to gain one fourth as many members.

It might now be of interest to add the gain of the Methodist Episcopal, Congregationalist, and Baptist of all branches, giving a gain of 245,372, just a small margin over the gain of the Christian church alone, yet it requires thirteen times the ministry, eight times the working force.

There is yet a fairer comparison to be made. It is a simple rule of arithmetic that the net gain divided by the amount upon which the gain is computed (base) will give the per cent. This is really the only fair comparison, as it gives every factor its proper value.

According to this rule, we divide the net gain for four years by the number in 1890, with the following results:

Methodists	5 per cent.
Presbyterian (12 branches)	11 "
Congregationalist	13 "
Baptist (all branches)	1 "
All added together	31 "
Christian (alone)	36 "

During the census decade, from 1880 to 1890, the United States Census Bureau shows a per cent gain in the Christian church equal to the Methodist and Baptist combined. During the last four years, the four leading denominations, Methodist, Episcopal, Baptist, Congregationalist and Presbyterian gain but 31 per cent. in contrast with a gain of 36 per cent. for the Christian church alone. There is food for thought. Let us be thankful and press on.—O. J. Page in *Christian Evangelist*.

**THE RESCUE FROM THE WRECK.**

A thrilling story of German heroism at sea, which goes far to offset some of the reports regarding the loss of the "Elbe," comes from Schleswig-Holstein. One stormy morning a fishing village was awakened by a gunboat off the coast. Hastening to the beach, the people saw a ship wrecked on a reef a mile away. The crew were in the rigging. A life-boat was run out, but Harro, the leader of the crew, was absent.

Eight men, however, rowed out to the wreck. The crew were got into the life-boat with the exception of one who was lashed high up on a mast. He was half frozen, and as the storm was increasing and the life-boat overloaded, it was decided that he could not be taken off. When the life-boat returned to the shore Harro had arrived. He asked if everyone had been saved, and was told that one remained.

"I will fetch him," said Harro. "Will you go with me?"

The men refused, saying that it was impossible.

"Then I will go alone," cried Harro, and sprang into the life-boat. At this moment his mother came running down and begged him not to venture out, reminding him that both his father and brother Uwe had been drowned. Uwe was his youngest brother, and as he had not been heard from for years, he was supposed to be dead.

"For love of me," Harro's mother begged, "don't go!"

"But the man on the mast!" exclaimed Harro. "Are you sure he has no mother to mourn his death?"

Harro's mother said no more, and her son and four other men set out for the wreck, which was now quite under water. The waves were so furious that it was difficult to approach. At last the life-boat reached it, and Harro climbed the mast and fetched the half-frozen man down. He was laid in the bottom of the life-boat, and Harro bent over him and remained so until the boat was so near shore that his voice could be heard. Then he waved his cap and shouted—

"Tell my mother we have saved Uwe!"—*New York Sun.*

**GLADSTONE ON PREACHERS.**

Mr. Gladstone, upon being asked what sort of sermon he liked best, wrote that in his opinion, the clergymen of the day were not as a rule severe enough upon their congregation. They do not, continued Mr. Gladstone, sufficiently lay upon the soul and consciences of their hearers their moral obligations or bring up their lives to the bar of conscience. The sermons most needed are those similar to the one that offended Lord Melbourne, when he complained that he was obliged to listen to a preacher who insisted upon a man's applying his religion to his private life. This, said Mr. Gladstone, is the kind of preaching man needs most and gets the least of.