

sense that it weans us from the world. It tends to make disciples unselfish and spiritual; to loosen the tie by which carnal objects are held, and make all else seem small in comparison with things to come. How can he who consistently studies for his Lord's approval lay up treasure here or plan for an easy life of selfishness? While preparing his soft nest the midnight cry may be heard. If the end of all things is at hand, what have we to do with treasures or pleasures, possessions or pursuits, which Christ's coming could interrupt, condemn, or bring to naught? If, step by step, human enterprise, worldly civilization, scholarly culture, or even churchly progress, can bring on the latter-day glory, we may have a pretext for building as though all we build were to last at least a thousand years; but if all these things are to be dissolved and our best work brought speedily to the fiery ordeal, if only the gracious fruits of the spirit in our walking and working with God are to survive those trial fires, if all superficial success is then to appear as failure, let us spend our force and faculty upon what cannot be turned to ashes. And because, when this aim to be found approved of the Lord at His coming really dominates the soul, we become uncaral, unworldly, unselfish, it proves and approves itself as an aim inspired of God.

Here, then, is another vital link between spiritual life and the work of soul-saving. No form of service demands, for thorough doing, more unworldly, unselfish devotion than missions. Much so-called "Christian work" is leavened with self-love, and may be prosecuted in the energy of the flesh, and perhaps its real incentive may be found in the very worldly hope of rich returns and prompt payments in temporal advantage. The railway magnate may give large sums to build schools and churches in new settlements along the lines, and do it on commercial principles; for the church and school form a nucleus for population, and population means travel and transportation, and so revenue to the railway and larger dividends to stockholders. Much that we call "benevolence" is to God's eyes the cloak hiding the shrewd, calculating Shylock who has an eye to business.

The fact is itself an argument and an appeal that, so soon as the Lord's coming ceased to be felt to be imminent, and was projected indefinitely into the distance, the remarkable evangelism of primitive days which fed on this truth, declined and decayed, and has never been revived. It is but the few who flame with zeal for missions; the great body of professed disciples treat the work with apathetic indifference, or contend that it "does not pay!"

Cut to the core of this apathy, and you find simple selfishness. This carrying the Gospel to those in the far-off regions beyond is a work which in its very nature forbids us to expect any returns. These distant, destitute souls cannot recompense us; we must wait for our recompense at the resurrection of the just, and at no point this side! The most frantic appeals for the perishing millions along the Congo, beneath the shadows of