

the Jewish people; if the blessings which we enjoy at the hand of our glorious Benefactor are richer, freer, and fuller than theirs, if too, the results achieved by our beneficence are higher, nobler, and more lasting; who that is influenced by reason, Scripture, justice, gratitude, or yields indeed to any consideration which is fitted to inform the understanding, sway the heart and shape the life, will at all dispute that Christians are under the most impressive obligations to practice a bounty far more large-hearted and open-handed than that which characterized believers under a former dispensation, even during the seasons of their deepest, truest devotion to the cause of their God and Redeemer.

The truth is that a survey of Scripture teaching on this subject, seems to shut us up to the conclusion that God requires of all, at least a tithe, while from those whom He has blessed with abundance, He looks for free-will offerings larger or smaller as circumstances demand, and love and gratitude dictate.

Oh, if Christians now-a-days would only read the injunction of the Apostle, "On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him," under the light of Divine prescription, patriarchal practice, and Jewish example; if they would think of it under the conviction that they and their property are not their own, but in the strictest, truest sense belong to God; if they would ponder it with the loud cry of perishing millions ringing in their ears; if they would meditate upon it under the dazzling beams shed round it by the life, the passion, the death, the resurrection, and ascension of their Lord; if they would study it under the blissful illumination of the spirit of all grace; then might we expect once more to witness a repetition of those scenes which proved, illustrated, and adorned the piety of the early Christians, when "as many as were possessors of land or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostles' feet, and distribution was made to every man according as he had need," or when during "a great trial

of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality," and spontaneously they came to the Apostle PRAYING HIM WITH MUCH ENTREATY to receive their gifts and to take upon him the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

To secure such a blessed issue, the attention of the Church must be steadily, persistently directed to her duty, and a baptism of the Holy Spirit sought with an earnestness and perseverance worthy of the important object to be gained, and the tremendous issues which it involves.

MISSION CONTRIBUTIONS.

If a Church be alive it must of necessity be aggressive. To let men alone who are in sin or attached to systems of error is not the genius of Christianity, the let well-enough-alone element does not enter into the composition of genuine religion. The gospel of Jesus Christ impels the man who is in possession of it to preach its doctrines, not of course in an obtrusive officious way, but with loving attractiveness, not offensively, putting it forward as casting pearls before swine, but in harmony with the law of gentleness so as to gain some. Christianity is as far removed from selfishness on the one hand as it is from a false sentiment of charity on the other. The disciple of Christ will avail himself of every opportunity to extend the knowledge of the truth, both by personal influence on those who come into contact with him, and by prayer and contributions to missions. To talk about religion and not give of our substance as we can afford to its cause, is as unscriptural as it is unproductive of any result. Men must be taught the scriptural principle of giving, to give not merely because they are asked, but to give because God requires it at their hands on the same ground as he requires worship and a holy life. It is a privilege to give as much as it is a privilege to receive temporal and spiritual benefits.

Here a question of great practical importance arises.—How is the principle of