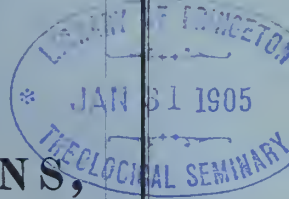


74.
Rev. Chas. W. Shields.

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IMPORTANCE OF
CHRISTIAN MISSIONS,



ESTIMATED BY THE
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL, &C.

BY
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REV. FREDERICK T. BROWN,
OF WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CLEVELAND, O.

A SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE SYNOD OF OHIO, IN ZANESVILLE, OCT. 19, 1856.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST OF SYNOD.

COLUMBUS:
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PASTOR OF WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, CLEVELAND.

‘ But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way ; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and children of Israel.’—Acts, 9 : 15.

This was said to Ananias, in a vision at Damascus, respecting Paul. Paul—or Saul, as he was then called—had just been converted. Three days before, a few miles out from Damascus, while pressing on his tired cavalcade, and breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Jesus, an intensely bright light from heaven suddenly surrounded him ; he was smitten from his horse to the earth, and in the midst of the intolerable brightness he saw one like unto the Son of man, but gloriously transfigured, who spoke to him as follows : “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ?” In sheer overwhelming amazement he asked : “Who art thou, Lord ?” and received the answer, “I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.” Then, trembling and astonished, he asked : “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?” And the Lord said unto him, “Arise and go into the city and it will be told thee what thou must do.” With this the light changed into the common light of day, and the Lord had disappeared. Rising from the earth, blinded, trembling and confounded, too weak, or too fearful, or too humbled, to ride, he was led by the hand into the city. There, for three days, in the silence of his own chamber, he was left without any other visit or communication from the heavenly world, and during that time so intensely were his thoughts engaged in solving the great problem of life, that he did neither eat nor drink. On the third day, the Lord appeared in a vision to Ananias, and bade him go to Paul and give him some needed instruction. Ananias demurred through fear, knowing Paul’s previous character, and not having heard of his conversion. ‘Lord, I have heard by many of this man,’ said he, “how much

evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem : and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name." But the Lord said unto him, "Go thy way ; for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

Dear brethren, I am here at your bidding, to preach the annual sermon before this venerable body on Missions. And I have chosen the text that has been announced to you, for the purpose of obtaining through it, by an investigation of the character of Paul, the great missionary to the Gentile world, chosen in such a remarkable way by Christ himself, some valuable information on the subject of Missions. His character is familiar to us all ; and perhaps I shall not be able to say anything you do not already know, but I cannot doubt that even a familiar grouping together of some of the more prominent of the characteristics of that very remarkable man, will be interesting and instructive to us on this occasion.

The Apostles, all of them—all of the original eleven, I mean—were taken from the ranks of the common people ; but either they were naturally uncommon men, or else their three years' association with Jesus, and the gifts dispensed to them on the day of Pentecost, made them uncommon men ; for certainly as *we* know them they are very far from being common men. The truth I suppose to be that, as they were born into the world, in the spheres of fishermen, publicans, and agriculturalists, they had within them the elements which needed only divine grace to develope them, and the opportunities to exercise them, to make them the uncommon men they afterwards were.

Though God may, and sometimes does work with instruments of great feebleness in accomplishing his great purposes, he does not always ; he does not commonly do so. For great ends, he uses great means. The law of gravitation is just as stupendous as the work it does. The trouble with us is that we can more easily estimate *results* than we can *agencies*. We can see the planets held in their exact places in their swift career through the heavens, and the sight overwhelms us with astonishment ; but we cannot see the law that regulates their time to a moment and their place to a hair's breadth, and are very moderately astonished by *it*. Yet the law of gravitation is as stupendous as the work it does. In the affairs of the universe, under the immediate control of Jehovah, there is the most exact economization of power—nothing too much, nothing too

little for the work to be done ; though to our finite comprehension, making little things big and big things little, it often appears to be otherwise.

These remarks are, I know, in apparent contradiction to what the Scriptures themselves say in sundry places ; but, I am persuaded, in *apparent* contradiction only. Paul speaks of the “foolishness of preaching” for the conversion of sinners ; but it is evident that the “foolishness” was not *in fact*, but in *human estimation* only. Philosophical speculations and deeds of righteousness, in human estimation, were well calculated to regenerate a wicked world, and the preaching of the cross had no adaptation thereto ; hence he speaks of preaching, as the means to that end, as “foolishness.” But Paul did not think it to be *in fact* foolishness. How could he think so, when in his own experience he knew it to be otherwise ? and when before his very eyes he saw it regenerating a wicked world ? Again, he speaks of not many wise men, not many mighty, not many noble being called to become Christians, and goes on to say that God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of the world and things which are despised, and things which are not to bring to naught things which are. But it is evident from what follows that he was not speaking of things that were *in fact* weak, base and naught, but only of things that according to human judgment *seemed so*. He was writing then to the church at Corinth, in which were some heretics who said of him that his bodily presence was weak and his speech contemptible, and in which were some philosophizing errorists who rated as vulgar the preaching of the cross. He accepts what they have to say as exactly portraying the outward appearances of things, and adds : “When I came to you, I came *not* with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ, and *him crucified*. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power ; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.” But no man living had a higher appreciation of the Gospel of Christ as *the very power and wisdom of God* ; and no man knew better than he, or believed more fully, that he was God’s own chosen—and therefore *fit*—instrument for setting

up the kingdom of Christ among the Gentiles. As it seems to me, we are shut up to the conclusion that, for great ends, God, ordinarily at least, uses great means. Adam and Eve, that they might be fit progenitors of their race, were perfect in body and in mind. Noah, that he might build an ark in which the race should be perpetuated, and which should be a type of Christ, had a faith and patience which stretched across the dreary interval of a hundred and twenty years. Moses, that he might be the law-giver of his people and the founder of the Jewish Commonwealth, was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, was an accomplished man of the world, was familiar with the lowly life of humble people, and was generally—beyond question—the most gifted man of his age. David, that he might be the father of a son who should be a type of Christ, and that he might be himself an ancestor of the Messiah, and that he might write divine songs which should be for the edification of God's people to the end of time, was a man "after God's own heart." So Paul, that he might be the great Apostle to the Gentiles, the right arm of Christ in setting up his kingdom in the world, possessed the peculiar gifts which fitted him for his peculiar and great work. And I have thought it might be a profitable employment for us on this occasion, *in order to estimate the importance of the missionary work given the church to do, and to understand the nature of the instruments with which she should, in part at least, do it;* to place before us in detail some of the more prominent characteristics of the Apostle Paul.

For myself, I confess that the study of that man's life, labors and character, has given me the clearest insight I have into the condition of the world that then was out of Christ, and has enabled me best to appreciate the glorious triumphs of the Gospel. And the more I study the man, the more I am filled with admiration of his surprising gifts, and the more I am lost in wonder at the wisdom and might of God in raising up such an Apostle of the faith of Jesus. My experience, brethren, I doubt not is yours also.

If I mistake not, you will agree with me in another thing, viz : that it is a source of sincere satisfaction to believe that we have authentic descriptions of the personal appearance of the Apostle Paul, with such minute details as place him before us with almost the vividness of a man of our own time whom we have seen. Traditions of the personal appearances of the Apostles are not always reliable, I know ; but, in this case there seems to be no occasion for any reasonable doubt. There are still extant early pictures and mosaics of

Paul that correspond with the traditionary descriptions. For Malalas and Nicephorous, Conybeare and Howson depict him a few years later than when the text introduces him to us, "as having the strongly marked and prominent features of a Jew, yet not without some of the finer lines indicative of Greek thought. His stature was diminutive and his body disfigured by some lameness or distortion, (which may have provoked the contemptuous expressions of his enemies.) His beard was long and thin. His head was bald. The characteristics of his face were a transparent complexion, which visibly betrayed the quick changes of his feelings, a bright grey eye under thickly, overhanging, united eyebrows, a cheerful and winning expression of countenance, which invited the approach and inspired the confidence of strangers." Another writer, speaking of him as he appears in the mosaics and pictures, says: "He was a man of small and meagre stature, with aquiline nose and sparkling eyes. In the Greek type, the face is long and oval, the forehead high and bald, the hair brown, the beard long, flowing and pointed." The same writer adds, speaking of the descriptions of Peter and Paul, "We find them most strictly followed in the old Greek mosaics, in the early Christian sculptures, and in the early pictures, in all which the sturdy dignity and broad, rustic features of Peter, and the elegant, contemplative head of Paul, who looks like a Greek philosopher, form a most interesting and suggestive contrast."

From these descriptions, deducting a few years in age, and the changes they may have wrought, we may have a vivid conception of the personal appearance of the man of whom the Lord Jesus said, "He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." He was a young man then, but already famous as the leader of the persecutor of Christ's disciples. His very name chilled the blood of Ananias, and his imagination pictured him as a large, strong, fierce-looking, blood-thirsty man, with a cruel eye and a rough voice, the natural expirations of whose breath would be "threatenings and slaughter." I imagine that he entered his chamber, though assured of his conversion to Christ, with something of the same secret terror with which he would have gone into the den of a Libyan lion. But when he saw before him that small, meagre man, whose thin, sweet face, and noble brow were lined with such anxious cares, and whose sightless eyes were turned to him in such appealing sorrow, his heart melted within him, and putting his hands of gentle love on him, he said,

“ Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou comest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Ghost.” This small, meagre, deformed man, whose face wins the love and admiration of all beholders, has been the leader of the persecutors of Christ’s disciples, and from henceforth will be the leader of the Apostles of Christ in spreading his Gospel over the earth. It was not as man would have had it. Ananias was greatly surprised, I doubt not. And of a verity, it might often be said, as Samuel said to Jesse, when he was seeking among his sons for the one whom he should anoint king of Israel, “ The Lord seeth not as man seeth : for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”

The first characteristic of the Apostle to which I would direct attention is, *the perfect truthfulness of his nature*. This was characteristic of him before he became a Christian, as after also. What he was, he seemed to be; and what he seemed to be, he was. Hypocrisy was, I take it, a term of incomprehensible import to him. His thoughts were true thoughts, and his works and deeds gave them a true expression. As a child at play with other children at Tarsus; as a boy with other boys at school; as a young man striving with other young men for the start of life; as a remorseless persecutor of the Christians; as a Christian apostle, perfect truthfulness was one of his marked characteristics. No one that knew him had any difficulty in knowing where to find him. He was an outspoken friend, and an outspoken enemy. He would have scorned to give a stab in the dark, or to defame any one behind his back. He carried no concealed weapons. He took no undue advantages. He assumed to himself nothing that was not of right his. He was Saul of Tarsus, or Paul the Apostle, and nothing else; whom to see was to know, and whom to know once was to know ever.

In giving to Paul this character of perfect truthfulness, I am not unaware that some of the enemies of the Gospel have spoken of him in other terms, and have denounced him as time-serving intriguer. And the facts they adduce in proof of their assertions are admitted facts in his history, viz.: his bold appeal to the mob at Jerusalem, when he was in danger of being torn in pieces, avowing himself to be a Pharisee, thereby dividing the assembly, and arraying the majority in his own favor; and the avowed governing principle of his life to become all things to all men to win them to Christ. But to these admitted facts, common honesty, as I think, requires us to give

an entirely different interpretation. Reason is lost on a mob. There are but two methods possibly of dealing with it, viz. : to quell it by superior force, or to divert its attention. Paul had not the power to do the first ; he had, however, the skill to do the second. The mob was made up of Pharisees and Sadducees. The subject of frequent contention between the two parties was the doctrine of the resurrection. As it respected that doctrine, Paul was a Pharisee. And the truths involved in that doctrine, connected with the resurrection of Christ, were the grounds of the persecution then raging against him. All this Paul saw at a glance, and with perfect truthfulness, for the purpose of dealing with the mob by creating a diversion, he exclaimed, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee : of the hope and resurrection of the dead am I called in question." As to the matter of "becoming all things to all men," it is sufficient to say that in this he followed in the very footsteps of his Master. A man more tenacious of principles than Paul never lived ; but where no principle was at stake, he felt—as every Christian should—that loyalty to Christ demanded of him to treat trifles as trifles, rather than suffer them to bar the way to Christ, or to hinder the freest and fullest Christian communion.

The next characteristic to which I would direct attention, is his *whole-souled earnestness*. All trifling was foreign to his nature. Of his early childish and boyish life at Tarsus, we know nothing upon positive information, but we may be certain of this that into everything—childish plays, sports, works, and studies—he threw his whole soul. Almost as well as I know that he was the chiefest of the Apostles, and the chiefest of the Christian persecutors, I know that he was the chiefest among the young men, the boys, the children, of his acquaintance, in their works and sports. It was of the man to give himself wholly, body, mind, and spirit, to whatever he undertook to do. It was this spirit that impelled him to leave the polished Greek and free Roman city of Tarsus, to go to Jerusalem. And at Jerusalem to seat himself at the feet of Gamaliel. And from the feet of Gamaliel, to place himself at the head of the persecutors of the disciples of the crucified Nazarene. And from the captaincy of the band of persecutors to step to the captaincy of the band of persecuted. His earnestness was irresistible ; common men could not withstand it. As a consuming fire, it burnt before it its own passage whithersoever it were pleased to go. He seems to have been a gentleman's son, but the son of a poor gentleman, and most proba-

bly fatherless and motherless before leaving Tarsus ; but the force of his own earnest purposes dispensed with the necessity of the helping hands of parents and wealth. Where they might have placed him, he placed himself. There was in him that intense earnestness that said, "Yield" to everything he touched, and "Give way," to everything at which he looked. Whether he slept or waked ; whether he sat, stood, or walked ; whether he rested or worked ; whether he rejoiced or sorrowed ; whether he loved or hated, it was impossible to doubt the whole-souled earnestness of the man. He was a man to be intensely hated and feared by his enemies, and to be as intensely loved and trusted by his friends. To Christ in the Gospel he gave himself wholly, losing Paul in the Son of God ; and thenceforth he knew nothing but Christ, saw nothing but His cross, heard nothing but His voice, was nothing but His apostle ; his very life was hid with Christ in God.

Closely connected with his characteristic earnestness was his characteristic *energy*. Paul's energy was prodigious. It was a bush ever burning, never consumed. His mind never knew a spasm with its consequent contraction. Every drop of blood in his veins was quick with its own individual life. Nothing daunts him, nothing stops him, nothing ever seems to weary him. Day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year, he is the same all-alive Christian preacher, teacher, writer, traveller, sufferer. It is, I take it, a phenomenon among the most marvellous in the world's history. Look at that small, meagre, deformed man, whose bodily health, as appears from his Epistles and the Acts, was often far from good ; look at him, and think of what he accomplished ! Look at him, and think of what he suffered ! Look at him, and listen to this ingenious statement of facts from his own lips, forced from him by the malignant scoffings of his enemies. "Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also. Are they ministers of Christ ? I am more. In labors more abundant ; in stripes above measure ; in prisons frequent ; in deaths oft. Of the Jews, five times received I forty stripes save one, thrice was beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep : in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren ; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often ; in cold and naked-

ness." And, "besides those things that are without, *that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.*" Couple these sufferings and this harassing care with his constant labors, his incessant preaching, his numerous Epistles, and his long and toilsome journeys, and then say if this is not likely to have been the most wonderful exhibition of energy, with earnest fixedness of purpose, which the sun in the heavens has ever looked down upon? I have just been reading the narrative of the latest expedition in search of Sir John Franklin, by Dr. Kane, our countryman, and the son of an Elder in our own church, Judge Kane of Philadelphia. Physically, Dr. Kane might be Paul's brother, being very small, very meagre, and in poor health. As I read of the privations and suffering of the party in those horrid regions of ice and snow with the thermometer more than 50° below zero, through the pitch darkness of the long sunless Arctic nights, disabled by scurvy, frost-bitten limbs and starvation, living as best they could on refuse and raw flesh, and saw the heroic energy of their young commander, the very life of his stricken, disabled, desponding men, my heart leaped to my throat, my eyes filled with tears, and I felt it would be good to take him by the hand and call him "Brother." Need I tell you of whom Dr. Elisha K. Kane constantly reminded me? *His was an energy like Paul's.* But Paul's was more tried, and was longer continued. I have in my mind, too, another small, meagre man, also a countryman of ours—whose name I may not mention here and now, but whom nevertheless my heart delights to honor—who in circumstances of similar suffering and danger, displayed a similar heroic unselfish energy. But these men, remarkable as they are—and I mention them rather than others, because they are of ourselves, and of our own time—seem rather as foils than as rivals to set off the transcendent thirty-years-long-energy of the prince of the Apostles. †

Another characteristic of Paul was his *unselfishness*. Even before his conversion to Christ, when he is introduced as committing havoc of the church, his labors were for others, not for himself. The church of his fathers was in danger, and he flew to the rescue. The God of his fathers was insulted, and instantly his arm was lifted to avenge the insult. Not for Paul, but for the Jewish church, and for his God, it was that he kept the raiment of them that slew Stephen, and haled Christian men and women, and committed them to prison, and was so exceeding mad against them that he persecuted them even unto strange cities. After his conversion to Christ this

trait of his character was still more eminently and beautifully exemplified. There in Damascus he gave himself wholly to that Jesus whom he had persecuted, bowing his will to his will, putting his hand in his hand, his feet following his feet, and his life hiding itself in his life. What things were gain to him those he counted loss for Christ. If Christ were glorified, he cared nothing what became of Paul. And one form in which his love for Christ showed itself was in living for the good and happiness of others. He ever denied himself for others, and lived out himself in others, and gave cheerfully of his time, and toil, and strength for others, and bore sufferings and wrongs for others. His life was one long-continued sacrifice of self, and of all that was most dear to self for the good and happiness of others. To win sinners to Christ, to build up saints in holiness on the foundation of their most holy faith in Christ, he was willing to spend and be spent, even though the more abundantly he loved them the less they loved him in return. This was a most heroic nailing of self to the cross.

A remarkable facility for putting himself into sympathetic relations with others, was another characteristic of the Apostle. The traditional descriptions of his face make particular mention of his power of winning strangers to him, and then attaching them to him by love. This unnamed power was his *sympathy*. His soul seemed to go out of him, as it were, to live in others, thinking with their thoughts, and feeling with their feelings. This, with a profound significance, was one of the ways in which he "became all things to all men." He thought as the rich thought with the rich; he thought as the poor thought with the poor. He thought as the learned thought with the learned; he thought as the unlearned thought with the unlearned. He thought as the high thought with the high; he thought as the low thought with the low. He sorrowed with the sorrowful; he rejoiced with the joyful. And being a true man, he could also put himself into relations of truest sympathy with woman. His noble sympathies were the keys at his girdle with which he unlocked all hearts.

Another characteristic of Paul was his *light-toned gentlemanliness*. He was a true gentleman. He knew not to be rough, rude, coarse, or vulgar. He had seen the world, and knew its ways, and had received its polish. His behavior and speech were those of the accomplished man of the world. His bearing before Felix, and Festus, and Agrippa, is a model of dignified, self-respecting, courtly politeness. Yet he was never stiff and formal. In the company of those

accustomed to forms, he put them on and wore them with the grace of one "to the manner born." But in the company of those unaccustomed to forms, we see him acting with the unconstrained simplicity of nature. His was that true gentlemanliness that was from the heart, that put him at ease himself wherever he might be, and that put all others at ease around him. Truly polite he always was, but it was a politeness suited to all occasions, to all places, and to all classes of people. He never played the courtier among simple-minded people: he never introduced the manners of simple-minded people into courts. His good-heartedness, his sympathy, his tact, taught him to adapt his behavior with ready facility to the persons present, and the circumstances surrounding. And yet, wherever he might be, and whatever he might do, there was about him the unmistakable ease and grace of true courtliness.

One other characteristic that I must mention, was his *dauntless bravery*. Paul knew not what fear was. It was not mere animal courage, but the bravery that springs, first, from a noble native integrity, and second, from the implanted fear of God. Death had no terrors to him. The wrath of man had no terrors to him. Pains had no terrors to him. That he should speak freely, and speak truly; that he should act "ever as in his Great Task-Master's eye;" that he should be superior to all authority and power, that were contrary to God, was more necessary to him than to breathe. His was that calm, unboastful, dauntless bravery, whose only hope and whose only fear God was.

Now, to all these characteristics, add his eminent native gifts of mind—his sterling good sense, his glowing imagination, his penetrating genius, his powers of analysis and synthesis, his breadth and depth of thought, his quick and varying sensibilities, his strength of reasoning, his force and directness—and to these, add his triple education, Grecian, Roman and Jewish—and to all, add the special unction of the Holy Ghost; do they not, all together, give us a man, the like of whom the world never saw before nor since?

This, dear brethren, in outline, and wanting in many perfections, is a picture of Paul the Apostle to the Gentiles—that chosen vessel of the Lord Jesus, to bear His name before the Gentiles, and kings, and children of Israel, as he appears to me. And I have drawn the picture, that in looking at it, we may see reflected the great

work of missions Christ has given His church to do. In looking over the heathen world of that time, we can see the necessity for just such an agent in the work as Paul. But without looking at that heathen world, we can read its condition in the man chosen of God, and endowed so marvellously for carrying to it the Gospel. We are accustomed to prove the dreadful wickedness of the world, and the total depravity of all mankind, from the dignity of Him who undertook our redemption. Had our cause been desperate, some creature of God, not God Himself, might have undertaken our redemption. So here, we may prove the magnitude and importance of the work of missions by the rare abilities and gifts of the man especially chosen to plant among the heathen the Gospel. Had the work been smaller, and less important, some common man, not Paul, might have been chosen of God, and sealed and sent. *The magnitude and importance of the work of missions, I argue, then from the unequalled abilities and extraordinary gifts of the Apostle Paul.*

But, to make my argument worth anything at this late day, I must connect the world as it then was without the Gospel, with the world without the Gospel as it now is. This, in few words, I will endeavor to do.

The heathen world, as it then was, had in it many men of great natural abilities, and high culture. In all the principal cities there were schools of philosophy of distinguished repute. Educated men, and men trained to discuss curious questions in metaphysics abounded everywhere. In the arts, sciences, philosophy, and general literature, it was a proud era in the world's history. And with all, it was an era of excitement and inquiry. The things that were known no longer satisfied the minds of the people. They were outgrowing them. And they were beginning to be conscious that the ground on which they had so long been standing, and which they had thought stable as the everlasting hills, was trembling beneath their feet. Of course, in such a state of things as this, there was needed a power which could meet the world face to face, disorganize it, and reconstruct it according to the principles of eternal truth. Such a power was the Gospel; and the prime minister of this Gospel was Paul. And both minister and power were exactly suited to the work given them to do.

The world, as it now is, differs somewhat in its character, but not materially in its requirements, from the world as it then was. Then

the church's great mission was to the Gentile heathen world, though Paul's commission included also the "children of Israel." Now, the mission of the church is to the Heathen, and to Christians, falsely so called. She has a double work to do, viz: to plant the Gospel among heathens abroad, and in destitute places among nominal Christians at home. Into any lengthy discussion of the characteristics of these two classes of people, it is impossible that I should go. I will only say, then, respecting them, that, as to the heathen world, though it cannot now boast of men of such great natural abilities and high culture as once it could, and though there are not now in its principal cities, schools of philosophy of such distinguished repute as those of Athens, Corinth and Tarsus, our foreign missionaries tell us that they meet constantly in heathen lands with men of much learning, shrewdness and sagacity, in wrestling with whom they are compelled to use all the resources at their command. They tell us, "If you have any weak brethren, do not send them abroad to the heathen, for they will certainly be put to shame." As to the missionary world at home, the simple truth is, that its demands are for Christian ministers of Apostolical abilities. Take the great missionary field of this country—the West, South-west and North-west—whence there is a Macedonian cry for helpers; it is a field more difficult to cultivate successfully in many respects, than any Paul entered within the Roman Empire. There is in this vast region an aggregate of men of fine abilities, fine culture, and consummate skill in the dialectics of skepticism, such as this world has never seen before. Our Eastern churches have no conception of the state of things actually existing; they do not dream of the vast numbers among us who have thrown off all shackles, who read everything, discuss everything, call in question everything, and will not listen to hum-drum inanities from the pulpit. The warning is loud and bitter from the West to the East, "Do not send your weak brethren here to be put to shame." The demand is for *men*—men possessing their own souls and their own tongues—men who will do their own thinking, and be responsible for it—men well educated in the schools, and well read as the world now goes—men who can mingle with other men, and direct and mould their seething forces—men with the conventional starch washed out of them, and possessing a plenty of nature's own sinew, muscle and bone—men of Pauline truthfulness, energy, earnestness, gentlemanliness, unselfishness, and dauntless bravery—men like Paul, filled with the love of Christ,

and the love of immortal souls. These are the men actually now demanded for the missionary fields of the Great West.

Thus it is, dear brethren, that at this late day, I make my argument a good one by connecting the world as it then was without the Gospel, with the world without the Gospel as it now is. If the world then demanded such men as the Apostles, with such a chief as Paul, the world now demands of the church to send forth her very choicest sons to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

It is a very simple deduction from this—an express teaching of the Scriptures also—that *missionary work is the church's great work*. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," is not more the command of Christ to the Church, than it is the voice of the Spirit speaking to us from the simple facts we have had under consideration. The church has a conservative work to do of vast importance, but both in place and importance it is secondary to her aggressive work. *The conquest of the world* is the work before the church. Her duty to maintain the Gospel where it now is, rests mainly on her duty to spread the Gospel where now it is not. Step by step she painfully wins her way in the enemy's country; and as she wins she establishes garrisons; but her garrisons are not so much for themselves as to secure advantages already won, in order thereby to win other advantages, and ultimately to win the whole. When Gen. Scott undertook the conquest of Mexico, he began with Vera Cruz, won it, garrisoned it, and passed on to Cerra Gordo—won it, garrisoned it, and passed on to Puebla—won it, garrisoned it, and passed on to Cherubusco, Chapultepec, the City of Mexico. But Vera Cruz, Cerro Gordo, Puebla, etc., were nothing to him, save as the means to an end—that end was *the conquest of Mexico*. The work before the church, which she has sworn to God to do, is *the conquest of the world*. The places she has already won are valuable to her chiefly—I had almost said only—as a means to the end for winning other advantages, and ultimately of winning the whole world. To conserve what she now has, is nothing, if she looks not beyond this. To conserve what she now has is everything, *if* she looks beyond this. It may thus be seen as was said that "the missionary work is the church's great work." And it may thus further be seen that the church's work at home is secondary to her work abroad—yea, *that she works at home in order that she may work abroad*.

This is not, unless I mistake, the common view of the church; but her missionary work she places last and least, as that thing to which

her superfluous energies only are to be given. It is not so that God's word regards it. To plant the Gospel where it is not, in heathen lands, and at home, and thus extend the conquest of the cross, is her great work. To this she should give her time and toils, her faith and her prayers. For this great and glorious work, the Lord has need of all that He has given His church—her wealth and her works—her sons and her daughters. And nothing less than this full consecration of everything she is and has to Him, will satisfy Christ's claims upon her. Thus far she has in a great measure squandered her wealth, and wasted her energies, on her own selfish aggrandizement, or in futile misdirected works of intense conservatism. Let us hope that the time is coming when she will see, and feel, and obey the truth as it is in Jesus, and as it was exemplified in Paul, and go forth everywhere "Clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and terrible as the army with banners."

One concluding word to you, my friends, from whom the ranks of the ministry must be replenished. It is this: *Hesitate not to give your children to the Lord Jesus Christ.* To you, mothers and fathers, I make the appeal. If you have a choice son among your children, withhold not your hand from giving. True, he might win more wealth and honors, of this world, in some other profession or employment. But that is not the question to you. "The Lord has need of him," is the only voice you should hear. The owners of that ass' colt little thought what they were doing when they permitted the disciples to unloose him for the use of Jesus; but no colt was ever so honored before or since; in meek docility he bore in humble guise the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And my dear friends, you may little know what it is you are doing, when in obedience to the word, "The Lord has need of him," you give your sons to the service of the Lord Jesus. But in no other imaginable way could they be so honored. It is God's burdens they are bearing. It is God's work they are doing. And, if not here, hereafter it shall be seen that in bearing His burdens, and doing His work, they were winning for themselves, *and for you*, imperishable riches and honors in the kingdom of the blessed.

