

N O W
THE MISSIONARY WATCHWORD
FOR EACH GENERATION

OR, THE PRINCIPLE OF IMMEDIACY
IN MISSION WORK

BY

REV. HENRY C. MARIE, D.D.
First Secretary American Board's Missionary Cause



Fleming H. Revell Company
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NOW!

When Augustine, after his long career of carnalism and worldliness, found himself at Milan one day “sick at heart, tormented, turning in his chain,” he threw himself upon the ground beneath a tree in the garden and cried out, “How long, how long? Tomorrow and tomorrow? Why not now? Why is there not this hour an end to my uncleanness?” Returning to the bench in the garden where he had left the writings of the Apostle he had been reading, he caught them up and read the paragraph on which his eyes first fell—“Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying, but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make not provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof.”

The reading of this text settled for him the date of his repentance concerning which he had been so agitated, and he says, “No farther would I read, nor did I need, for instantly as the sentence ended—by a light, as it were, a security infused into my heart—all the gloom of doubt vanished away. How sweet did it suddenly become to me to be without the delight of trifles! And what at one time I feared to lose, it was now a joy to me to put away, sweeter than all pleasure, brighter than all light.” Observe the change came to Augustine the moment he said “NOW!” and refus-

ing to wait till "tomorrow," he put away his uncleanness. Thus has it ever been.

GOD'S DATE FOR SALVATION.

From time immemorial all evangelical truth has been characterized by one note—the sin and danger of procrastinating the claims of the gospel when once heard and known. The Bible basis for this conviction is the passage in Second Corinthians, at the end of the fifth chapter and the beginning of the sixth—a passage in which the Apostle is speaking of the new creating of mankind. The passage in brief is this, "And all things, i. e., all the elements involved in this new creating, are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation"—making us "Ambassadors of Christ"—that we may "pray men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God." The Apostle thus is beseeching men to reciprocate the attitude of God toward them. In the Atonement, He has laid the eternal, and, of course, immediate basis for fellowship with Himself. "Now respond to that," is the thought which the Apostle urges. He has not a doubt of the reasonableness of the appeal. He knows that in principle men will instinctively concede it. But he also knows that just as certainly they will be beset by one temptation, viz., to procrastinate the moment of immediate compliance with the entreaty. Hence, he adds, "We, then, as workers together with Him beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." In vain it will be—all that God has done in laying a basis for man's

salvation—if compliance with its terms be indefinitely postponed.

And then follows that noted quotation from the prophet Isaiah (49:8), "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee." Paul then adds the comment, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." "Behold, now!"—not "today," but "now—this moment" is the accepted time; the time chosen by God. The time of salvation is thus reduced by the Apostle to terms of the present instant. So far as it has certain worth to man this day of salvation is conceived as having no duration—not the sixtieth part of a second; no man can be confident of it the next moment. Immediate acceptance of God's grace is the only security; and such instant acceptance is the only righteousness. God has but one date on which He offers salvation; that is now, *now*, NOW. The declinature to fall in with God's terms immediately when heard, involves but one alternative, and that is postponement, usually indefinite postponement. In either case, postponement is to change God's purpose of salvation in respect to the matter of time; and that is to render nugatory the salvation God has provided. In the vocabulary of probation there is no such term as the future except as fixity of moral state is implied.

Suppose my neighbor owes me an account of a hundred dollars, and the note I hold for the amount is long past due. I go to him for payment, and he is indifferent to my claim. I ask him if he acknowledges the debt. He answers, "Certainly." I inquire if it is not past due, and he replies, "It is." I ask, has he the

ability to pay? And he responds, "I have." I request him to name a time when he will pay, but he declines. He will name no date, and he gives no reason except that he lacks disposition. How would an attitude of that kind be regarded in business circles? Men would call it repudiation—flat, complete repudiation. Such action, were it to become general, would bring on commercial chaos.

This attitude has precisely a similar effect in the moral and spiritual world. God has set a date—one only—and that one date the most gracious possible, for free agents to avail themselves of His saving mercy, viz., NOW! To alter its terms in respect of time is altogether to repudiate God's authority; is to fly in the face of grace itself, and presumptuously to imperil destiny.

As ministers of the gospel, and practical workers among sinful men, eager ever to see the unsaved accepting the gospel and flocking to Christ, where is the point of our greatest difficulty in persuading men to welcome the grace of God and begin to live different lives?

It is not that men do not acknowledge the excellence of the gospel, the worthiness of the claims of Christ; it is not that they do not wish and expect some time to yield to those claims; but the difficulty is ever and everywhere this, to get them to name the date, to name God's only date, when they will do so, viz., *now*, finally and forever.

And what is the reason for this delay? Simply this—that man as a sinner, having set up his own self-government in contravention of God's government for

him, wishes to *have more time* in which to please himself, to gratify his own lusts, to carry out his self-chosen plans of life, of business, of pleasure, or ambitious enterprise, on which he sets so false a value.

Repentance involves the instant subordination of all self-interests to God's interests, to the welfare of one's brother man. And God assures us that having once done this, we shall find our way into the only self-realization worth having. By losing the self-life we shall gain the other and the divine life, possible to all men in Jesus Christ.

SATAN'S MASTER TEMPTATION.

And the master temptation of the Devil is this—to make sure of a man in the matter of time—the present, and all the present, for his uses. Once sure of this, and he cares little for the good intentions his victim may cherish for the indefinite future. Of course, to gain in the life of a free personality the control of the present, and to make that the habit of the personality, is to gain everything. The whole moral gravity of a man thus committed to an evil principle tends to fixity. Give me a man's today, and when tomorrow comes give me that day also, and the day after, and, presumptively, I have pre-empted his entire future; for the probability of one's continuance in a given habit, whether for better or worse, increases with every moment of his life.

A man's repentance is worthless if it rests only in an intention. Not till he says, "I accept God's moment for it, and now, instantly, I commit my present to him," is it a true repentance. Decision to give time to God—all the time there is—not another pulse beat

for Satan and sin—this is the only practical hope there is that God will ever rule any heart or life.

THE PRINCIPLE APPLIED TO MISSIONS.

Now, assuming that within the church there is a body of men and women truly regenerate, who have repented of past committals to sin, and whose present is pledged to Christ for His purposes, let me apply the principle we have been considering to their use of these consecrated powers in their relation to world-evangelization.

The end for which I now plead within the church is the immediacy of the devotement of ourselves to the task of executing the great commission of Him whom we call "Lord." And here, once for all, let it be said, so far as our reasonings with any on the subject of world-evangelization are concerned, that there is no authority for such world-wide effort to anyone who does not acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ. If one is outside that pale, if to him Christ is a mere human teacher whose authority is limited, then I see no basis on which I can hope to lead such to acknowledge the force of His last commission. I have for such no message. If, however, we rank Christ as Lord, both as the second person of the Godhead and as the consummated head of a new race, of which we are members, let us remember that we are committed as absolutely as He is to immediate, whole-hearted and perpetual efforts to evangelize the whole earth. It is not optional with us whether we engage in this work or not. We are committed to it organically; because we are spiritually risen beings.

Our very consecration to Christ in baptism meant

that, once for all, in principle. As the habit of our new being, we then died to our self-life, and ceremonially lived again in newness of life in Him; and the pledge of Christ's perpetual presence with us by the Spirit is assured upon the presupposition that we would perpetually and fearlessly prosecute this task, in the face of any and every peril, trusting to Him that is risen from the dead, and so has authority over both worlds, to sustain us in it.

It is to such as are thus committed, by virtue of their new constitution, to Christ's absolute Lordship that I speak.

Have we been wont to narrow the use of this appeal for the nowness of repentance to the impenitent? But the Apostle makes the application primarily to the church, and he makes the pivot of his whole argument a quotation from the forty-ninth chapter of Isaiah—a chapter having to do with the future evangelization of the heathen.

THE FORECAST OF THE EVANGELICAL PROPHET.

Hear the prophet in a few characteristic passages: "Listen O isles unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far." . . . The Lord hath "said unto me, thou art my servant O Israel, in whom I will be glorified."

But the prophet, remembering how arrogant and rebellious the chosen people had become, cries out, "Then I said, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for naught; yet surely my judgment is with the Lord, and my reward with my God."

Then God answers for him, "And now saith the Lord that formed me . . . though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in

the eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my strength. And He said, it is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; *I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth* . . . Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship because of the Lord that is faithful. . . Thus saith the Lord, "In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people to establish (raise up) the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages. Behold, these shall come from far: and, lo, these from the *north* and from the *west*; and these from the land of Sinim."

Thus, we see, the setting of this quotation concerning "the acceptable time." The language is used to accentuate the fact that when the time should come for heathen evangelization, it would be a time called "acceptable," "favorable," a time of God's peculiar mercy, "a day of salvation"—what the year of Jubilee was in the Jewish Calendar, the redemption year.

Hence, when Jesus arose in the synagogue at Nazareth, and turning to the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, read, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord," and declared: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears," He

had in mind also this forty-ninth chapter of Isaiah and its central assurance to mankind that the epoch of grace for all the world, and not for Israel merely, had dawned.

The Jubilee era, "the acceptable year," the "day of salvation," is peculiarly the *era of missions* with its redemption privileges for all mankind.

PAUL'S INSPIRED COMMENT ON THE PROPHECY.

Now, to recur to Paul's appeal to the Corinthians, He is saying this: The foundation for human salvation having been laid in the Atonement of Christ, and we having been appointed its ambassadors to all men, beseech you, ye men of Corinth, receive not the custody of such a trust in vain; and receive it in vain you will, unless you awake to the need of immediate participation in that divine embassy. Now, now is the most favorable time for it.

Then follows a description of the most extraordinary sort of ideal zeal for promulgating the gospel, concluding with an impassioned outburst of entreaty: "O, ye Corinthians, our mouth is open unto you, our heart is enlarged, ye are not straitened in us, but ye are straitened in your own bowels, now for a recompense in the same (of a like kind), I speak as unto my children, be ye also enlarged." "Reciprocate the compassions of Christ in the gospel; and get to work with us on this world-embassy; and do it now."

Now, so far as the Apostolic Church was concerned, the immediacy of the undertaking to evangelize the then known world, was well performed.

Certain it is that within the lifetime of the last of the apostles the gospel was representatively proclaimed on

universal lines, and potentially to all peoples. Would God it had continued to be promulgated in the same spirit till now. Alas! the departure of the church Fathers, the fatal coalition made by Constantine between the church and the state and the heresies of the dark ages swept the church from its primitive program, and the materialism of modern times has accentuated a persistent paganism which still prevails over vast areas of the globe.

Since the reformation, however, and especially within the past century, the church has made many noble efforts to quicken its pace in the divine enterprise of evangelizing the world.

The rise of the great personages from Carey downward, and of the great missionary societies of the past century, at once occur to our minds. Yet, for the most part, even these movements have dwelt chiefly upon the biblical justification of the enterprise, and its obligation upon Christendom in its principles. It has made less of the need of alertness in the undertaking.

THE STUDENT VOLUNTEER AND OTHER MODERN CALLS FOR ALERTNESS.

A few trumpet blasts blown by men like the Sandwich Islands missionaries, by Alexander Duff, by Joseph Angus, and by the leaders of the Student Volunteer Movement, have from time to time startled the church and in part roused it to the practicalities of speedily making Christ known at least, in the whole world. This latter movement early adopted a striking watchword, viz., "The Evangelization of the World in This Generation." This watchword has been variously received, according to the impressions gathered as to its

import. Some have hailed it as a great incitement to the task, and others have received it with less favor. Its most authoritative exponent, however, Mr. John R. Mott, in his recent book upon the subject, has probably done much to clear the phrase of doubtful meanings by explaining that as used by its more intelligent friends, it does not stand as a prediction of what will probably be done, or of what on a human basis would seem to be within the range of possibility, or as committing those who use it to any special theory of eschatology. He tells us that by himself and others of his way of thinking it is primarily used as a mere watchword, a rallying cry like "On to Richmond!" in the days of our Civil War. It is used to remind the church of this generation of its obligation to the heathen of its time. Of course, as thus used it reminds us of the fact that the resources of the present-day church already in hand are not now even beginning to be used as they might be toward the great end. And, further, the watchword, it is hoped, will serve to convict the church of today of the sin and guilt of relegating to the indefinite future what that church itself is perfectly well able, if it only would, to do now. And perhaps best of all, the watchword is intended to remind the church of the vast resources of omnipotence and grace waiting to be bestowed upon it, when it will once earnestly undertake its God-appointed work. The record of what has actually been accomplished in the past generation, in mission achievement, is as nothing compared with what God would accomplish by His church even in one generation, if it were to cease playing at the task,

even trifling with it, and would get at it with truly apostolic zeal.

Now, my present thought is neither to commend nor criticise as such the exact terms of this watchword. It all depends upon how it is taken. One of our leading missionary societies* has lately so far commended the practical trend and value of Mr. Mott's work, filled as it is with up-to-date facts concerning the stage which missions to the heathen have already reached and the practical resources in the hands of the present-day church, as to present a copy of this book to every pastor in the churches of its constituency.

The element in the argument of Mr. Mott which gives his treatise its higher cogency, an element running throughout the argument, is the principle which is implied, viz., that of the *immediacy of the obligation* on the part of all to attempt the task proposed.

In the judgment of the present writer, the treatise would have had a wider approval if in the line of its argumentation it had staked less on the adequacy of the artificial period "this generation," so constantly iterated and reiterated, as sufficient for the proposed achievement of the world's evangelization, and instead thereof had boldly challenged the generation to which the argument is addressed to undertake immediately the long neglected work. The conviction which the appeal is really meant to awaken and which is emphasized in the closing chapter of the book is this—that each person charged with responsibility for this work ought to say to himself, "Now is the accepted time for me to work and for others to hear. No delay whatever in relating

*The American Baptist Missionary Union.

myself heartily and vitally to the enterprise by any and every present means within reach. I refuse to defer, to relegate to those who may follow me what I myself ought now to do."

THE CARDINAL EVIL TO BE OVERCOME.

The cardinal evil with which Mr. Mott's book deals, and with which we all have to deal, is the Devil's delusion that we shall gain by procrastination. Satan would drive a bargain with us. He first gives us an exaggerated vision of the worth of a thousand temporal and near-by benefits already present to us or just within reach. Then he says, "All these now will I give thee if thou wilt postpone Christ's present claims." As if to say, "For today, you seize and make sure of these present benefits." "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush." "Christ can have tomorrow; later the higher benefits, now deferred, will be yours." And we foolishly think that tomorrow the inducements of the flesh now pressing upon us will be less urgent, while farther on Christ's mind for us will appear more attractive.

In cunning this is Satan's masterpiece; it will not exist in the future life; but here it does exist, and there is the trouble about getting the church to give itself up to the claims of Christ with reference to any duty, and especially to the duty of saving the heathen. We become stricken with near-sightedness as between inclination and duty. If this state of things were reversed, as it is the aim of the gospel to accomplish, we should ever see the present will of Christ to be the most desirable and attractive thing to be chosen and done. If

this could be brought about in the church today, the millennium would be already here, Christ would have fully come.

The principle in Christianity which underlies all our Lord's references to His comings again—and these comings are many and in varied forms—is this, that His appearance on the scene is logically in terms of grace, the next thing. There is to be absolutely no provision made in our mind for anything less than the glory of Christ to crown the next moment of our service. This is the habit of faith; it denies time to the adversary at every point and on every conscious issue. We “make no provision for the flesh” or for the fleshly outcome of anything.

As one has said, “Straight out of today, we are to look across the unknown gulfs of time into the glory and the terror of that day. That is the temper by which all that is serious, strenuous and arduous in Christian life is regulated and sustained. For the true servant of Christ there is no earthly tomorrow.”

IMMINENCY OF ATTITUDE THE MAIN THING.

The question in debate as between the pre-millennial and post-millennial theories of the Lord's second coming is whether or not that coming is to be conceived as *imminent*. However that may be in fact, the practical thing important alike to any school of thought on the subject is this—the *imminency of our own attitude*, our will, our life to the work which conditions His coming in any form.

Are we in the habit of immediate and resolute compliance with the mind of Christ respecting the work

under consideration? Now is the accepted time for us. Foreign missions and home missions will have real and widespread power in the church when this spirit and habit respecting the mind of Christ shall prevail. The principle and habit of immediacy is at the root of all.

There is something entirely fictitious in any proposition which the church may make to herself to accomplish any Christian task in a prolonged period of any sort, simply for the reason that God gives to no man nor body of men any assurance of the continuance of their probation beyond the present moment. If we propose to ourselves the evangelization of the world in a century or a millennium or an aeon or a generation—a period of thirty-three years; in any and all these conceptions we make provision for a time and service that may never be ours; we put ourselves outside God's conception for us. We provide for delays and postponements, the very principle of which is not of faith. If I could know that within the space of the next thirty-three years God has decreed that His church actually should work out the Christianization of mankind, the Devil's first move would be to get me to calculate what portion of that time I could afford to devote to something else, more selfish, nearer to hand, less self-sacrificing. The only remedy for this evil, the only safeguard against that wile of the adversary is to cut the ground from under him and from under all my selfishness by proposing what alone is the thought of God for me, the immediate devotement of myself to the world-triumph of Christ by every means in my power.

**THIS ATTITUDE CONSISTENT WITH TRUE
HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE.**

But I am asked, What about prophecy and history? Do not these conceptions both involve duration, eras of time, even long eras? Has not God a program, with a beginning, a middle and an end? Is there not an order in which the plans of God for mankind are to be fulfilled? Do not some things come first, others second, and yet others last in the working out of the life of even an individual man, and much more of the career of the entire Christian Church? Does God promise the instant perfecting of history, involving the immediate moral renewal of mankind? These are fair questions, and most natural in view of what I have been saying.

But we must distinguish between two things that widely differ, viz., the objective plan of history absolute to God and the subjective attitude which should characterize our relations to that plan only partially known.

God undoubtedly has His plan; has an order of procedure, a purpose of the ages. And He has foreseen that taking man as a fallen being, and His church as a body of imperfect, halting people, a great period of time might elapse before the end would come.

But while this is true on God's part, it is also true that the exact form in which God shall bring on the successive stages in the divine progress is a matter of sovereign determination, and it is also contingent on the co-operation of His people. Our Lord distinctly said, "It is not for you to know the times and seasons which the Father has set in His own authority;" and, therefore, it is no more ours to presume on them,

artificially *extending* them in our imagination on the one hand, or unduly *shortening* them on the other.

But again we are asked, did not Christ Himself live out His life on God's objective plan for Him? Could He do anything before the time? Did He not come "In the fulness" (or ripeness) "of time?" And step by step move to His goal, accomplishing each stage in His Father's hour? All this is true; but mark, Christ's hour was not an hour fixed by His caprice, the caprice of mere human preference. It was an hour appointed by the Father. And wonder of wonders, He was never a *moment late*, nor a *moment ahead of His hour*. Ah me! but one or the other of those errors is always ours. He moved exactly on heavenly time-tables as His Father willed. 'Tis true God has likewise, objectively speaking, an appointed course for us, but the only certainty that we shall progressively find our way into that course, is that on the subjective side we hold ourselves loyal to instant compliance with the duty of each hour; that at the same moment of time we stand in loyal Christly relationship to everything near or far which He has laid upon us.

EVILS OF FIXING TIMES AND SEASONS, LONG OR SHORT.

Much criticism has fallen upon those who take views implying the shortness of time before Christ comes again, even the imminency of that divine appearing. When indeed those holding such views fall to making detailed programs of the coming which afford more play for speculation than for their own true attitude to the practical duties of the hour, the criticism is just. But, on the other hand, those who hold that the divine

plan requires absolutely vast aeons of time in which the world may be expected to drag on its weary, wilful way, while the church is more or less sluggish in preparing to achieve ideal things in the far away future, are just as really in practical error, because whatever the facts may prove to be in the matter of time in the actual outworking of the divine order, the speculations on man's side are vain. Besides, such speculations are adapted to lead those who indulge them presumptuously to neglect present duty. By a most subtle influence the moral attitude becomes false, and the tempter again has his way. It is as mischievous to put off the divine "parousia" *too far* as it is to bring it *too near*. In either case one sets actual bounds, judging of times and seasons, and so violates the divine order.

Christ Himself said, "We must work while the day lasts." It is true that, dispensationally, the Apostolic Church must wait in Jerusalem until Pentecost was fully come for the divine enduement; but even that waiting was not presumptuous dallying and disregard of immediate right attitude before God. It was a reverent, watchful attitude, a filial abiding around the promise of the Father in momentary expectation of some surprise of grace. And we are told that when the Spirit came, it was "suddenly." The manifestations of grace are always sudden; they always have the element of surprise, astonishment, in them. In the parable of the unjust judge we are told that when God redresses the wrongs of His people, though their trials extend through long, dreary ages, "He will avenge them *speedily* though He bear long with them." This is the

announcement of a principle which extends through the whole praying life of the church.

The principle which I am striving to make clear is this, that whatever may be the sovereign plans of God in the order and succession of events in His absolute program, yet, relatively to that program which exists in His mind, we, His disciples, are to be *in the attitude and spirit of imminent, immediate compliance with His present will for us*, having only moment by moment in which to act. It is only as we do thus live and act that God will lead us into the best course for us; thus only can He work out the quickest realization of the ends of His kingdom.

Nor is this saying that we are to live a planless life—a sort of “from hand to mouth” existence, having no regard to futurity. We are to have plans both wise and broad, but they are to be tentative plans, Christian plans, plans always likely in part to be mistaken, plans subject, therefore, to revision, as enlightenment from the ever opening word and providence of God falls upon their secrets. We are, therefore, ever to say, “If the Lord will, we will do this or that.” The future in its possibilities tremendous for good or evil is, of course, to be contemplated. A Christian, living as he ought in the present moment, is sure to have insights, illuminations, casting their rays away ahead; he will often become prophetic, even in some sense predictive; in the divine sense highly optimistic, if you please. When, in the frame of mind for which I am now pleading, one of his days will often become “as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day,” he will meas-

ure things as God does by celestial estimates, and not by the mere running sands of an hour glass.

That state of mind, that habit of soul which is concerned to do instant duty, as Christ was, when He said, "Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God"—more concerned to take each step in the light of faith in its hour, than to build any possible air castles of imaginary achievement, represents the only man whose conceptions of the future, or plans for it, will materialize in the gold, silver and precious stones of God's temple.

There is no intrinsic contradiction between cherishing immediacy of relationship on the subjective side to the will of God for each present moment and proper allowance for a true perspective of futurity, objectively considered.

OUR PRINCIPLE WHOLLY VALID FOR HOME OR FOREIGN MISSIONS.

But some one will ask: "Is not your plea for the immediacy and universality of duty respecting the missionary enterprise just as valid for near-by home interests as it is for foreign?" I answer, undoubtedly; although the functions are different, yet there is no proper antithesis between home and foreign missions. The same God is over all; obligation to one involves duty to the other; both classes of service are to be performed in the same spirit, and, in a profound sense, at the same moment. But it is this matter of simultaneity and immediacy of claim with respect especially to work abroad that is commonly challenged.

IN WHAT SENSE MISSIONS ARE TRULY "ONE."

It is ever being said by those challenging immediate duty to foreign lands that home and

foreign missions are one ; and that is true, provided that missions of both classes are alike Christian in the spirit which governs them ; they are one in Christ's regard ; but they are not one in the regard of him who has lapsed from the Christian view of missions and in lieu thereof has become an exponent of a mere propaganda. Such an one will tell you that either home or foreign missions is to be cared for first while the other waits. He who thus reasons always creates schism between the two ; he rends the seamless robe ; he makes missions two, not one. Home missions and foreign missions are one in the mind of Christ, ideally one ; but they are not one in the mind of him who denies the immediacy of the claim of either ; not one to him who conceives that the one cause, be it home or foreign, is to be prosecuted some time or another, because in the end, confessedly, God's plans involve it, while the other cause is to be brought to the fore, whether or not.

Neither is the cause of so-called missions one to him who raises the question concerning the comparative rank of two or more humanly-organized societies which have different functions and work in different spheres. Such as one's thought of the kingdom is likely to be warped by his partisan view of the relativity of the claims of a particular organization in which he may chance to have personal interests.

Nothing is easier than for zeal for a society to exceed one's regard for the kingdom. This was in kind the precise sin of the religionists of Christ's day, and of all mere sectarianism as such. This in principle was the error involved in the incident in Solomon's time when the two women came before him for judgment, each

claiming to be the mother of a living child, the other child of one of the mothers having been overlain to its death. The King, holding the living son before both claimants, said, "Bring me a sword, and divide the living child in two, and give half to the one and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the King, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her (the other mother) the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the King answered and said: Give her (the one who surrenders all) the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgment which the King had judged; and they feared the King; for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to do judgment."

Was motherhood "one" in the case of these two claimants? Never were two opposites further apart. In the one case there was absolute denial of true motherhood; in the other it rose to a sublime height. Under the sagacious judgment of Solomon, which tore off all masks, in the one case true motherhood stood forth in all its unselfish sweetness, while in the other case there was revealed cruel harlotry, murderous and ghastly. All depends on the spirit in which two forms of mission work are performed, whether or not we can truly say they are "one."

No mechanical adjustment as between partisan covetings, however convenient, will ever suffice for the very life of the kingdom, which is above all partisanship.

The unity of the kingdom is something vastly better

and deeper than a human compact—the result of compromises and bargainings. When Christ prayed “that they all may be one as we are,” he meant *one with Himself*, organically so; and one with one another, only as that human unity is involved in that deeper, diviner unity.

But having in mind our main contention respecting the immediacy of the duty of world-evangelization, I am again asked if certain scriptures do not certainly imply that there is an order of precedence in time in working for that which is near, as opposed to that which is far?

TWO MUCH-ABUSED TEXTS.

The two chief texts usually quoted in justification of the postponement of that which is distant are the one in the first chapter of Acts and the eighth verse, and that found in Luke, the twenty-fourth chapter, the forty-seventh verse.

The former reads, “And ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”

It is supposed that this text warrants delay in time, before the obligation to the outermost circle can have much force. But if one will look beneath the surface and observe that the conjunction translated “both” in the text has the force of *simultaneity*, that it denotes “an internal and logical rather than an external relation,”* he will see the error. The word does not imply so much the idea of *succession* as it does of *compositeness*. Of course, the principle in the text affords no warrant for

* See Winer’s New Testament Greek Grammar on the conjunction τέ.

neglecting the near-by regions. The language simply implies that the Spirit having been given, the divine presence no longer being localized by geographical bounds shall be equally and simultaneously available everywhere. From that moment till now under that primitive and indefeasible charter the church has been privileged and commanded to operate on every spot on the footstool which providence has made it possible to reach. Indeed, the original separations as between the sons of God and the people who became pagan, never would have occurred but for the denial of the principles for which we are contending.

Our principle of immediacy is sustained rather than contravened by this passage in the Acts. And this is no less the case with the passage in Luke. It reads: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, *beginning from Jerusalem.*"

That the church should begin from Jerusalem, where it was inaugurated, rather than somewhere else, goes without saying. Of course, it must begin its work where itself began. But let us not read into the phrase what is not there. The term "beginning" does not warrant the assumption that the rest of the world must wait indefinitely, and especially until the work at Jerusalem is completely successful. If that had been so at the commencement, there would have been a sorry outlook for the rest of the world. It would never have received the gospel at all, for until this hour Jerusalem has never been even representatively Christianized.

That very city, the city peculiarly "His own," rejected its Messiah, hurrying Him out of the world by

the tragedy of the cross; it imprisoned the chief apostles; it beheaded James; it sought to destroy Paul; it was styled by our Lord the city "which killeth the prophets and stoneth them which are sent unto thee;" it scattered the church established to redeem her, and at length it was judicially destroyed by a doom typical of the last judgment. Today it is the habitation of desolation, the gehenna of civilization, the realization of Christ's heart-breaking lament, a house "left to itself desolate."

Nor was Jerusalem, as is often mistakenly supposed, a strategic center for gospel propagandism. It was not until the church extended itself to Samaria and to Gentile Antioch that it became missionary, even Christian, in the truest sense. Later Ephesus and Corinth, Rome and Alexandria, Constantinople and Canterbury, all centers of foreign heathenism, became strategic bases for the extension of the kingdom, as Jerusalem never was. Surely, if it is for a biblical warrant of the current conception of stay-at-home missions we are in search of, this text will never serve.

If, however, we look deeper, we shall find very precious and vital meanings in that much-abused phrase, "beginning from Jerusalem," meanings also which favor alike every form of real mission work far or near. There were inscrutable dispensational reasons why the gospel should first be preached to the chosen people; and since a new dispensation, that of the church, was to be inaugurated, whence else should the gospel proceed but from the bosom of Judaism, the provisional mother city of us all? Beginning there, however, it was not to stay there, nor be there confined. It was to

be a flowing fountain and not a dead sea. The proper Scriptural antithesis is between Jew and Gentile, Hebrew and heathen, and not between *home* and *foreign*, *near* and *far*.

**THE REAL EMPHASIS ON THE ENDUEMENT
OF POWER.**

Then, again, the new church could not rise to its destined power until it awoke to the nature and import of the resurrection and ascension, until it received the quickening of the descending Spirit. Hence the church must tarry at Jerusalem—*simply stay where it was*—till that promised enduement came. Then they could have power, not till then, anywhere, at home or abroad. The promise did not so much *locate the place where* they were to begin, as *hold them in check where they were, until* the requisite power to do anything, anywhere, came.

They were to tarry long enough to receive the power, not a moment longer. Because later they became predisposed to tarry too long, God allowed a storm of persecution to break upon them, in order to scatter them against all mere natural inclination or favoritism for nationality, over the known earth. The true church ever since has been the church of the “diaspora—the church of the dispersion.” When crowned in power with the Spirit the church might commence its invincible witness and limit itself nowhere. Where else, then, could they begin but where they received the coronation. Since then, now that the Jewish dispensation has given place to the Christian, now that the enduement of power, always potentially existing, may be claimed anywhere where the Christian will open

his heart to welcome it, on any spot of earth where stands a disciple, there the divine witnessing may begin afresh. The *place where that empowerment for witnessing begins*, there is the modern analogue to the Jerusalem of the Acts; there is the *Commencement Day* of Christian propagandism. No man need "wait" for it an instant. The word "tarry" which Christ employed with reference to the waiting of the disciples for the event of Pentecost is, in our belief, a *dispensational* word. Its application is confined to that event, to the birthday of the church. The baptism of fire and of power came then once for all. Pentecost is never to be repeated. According to the import of that baptism, however, the church, even every individual, is expected to live his life and manifest its energy. Since Pentecost the word for us is *trust*, instant trust. For the exercise of trust and the availability of the power no man need wait another pulse beat. It is within instant reach of all; and the obligation to reach out for all is correspondingly immediate, urgent and commanding.

SHALL THE POTENTIALITIES BE ACTUALIZED?

Thus, on the divine side, every provision has been made complete for the church immediately to engage in the work of universal human evangelization. One thing and one only is now supremely needed, namely, that the potentiality of the provision shall become actualized by having done forever with procrastination of every sort. Then let the young not say we will wait till we become old, but everywhere, in the family, at the mother's knee, under the father's roof-tree, in the Sunday-school, in the Young People's Society and in

the church, we will do now, what we can, to pity, love and save all other children and youth of this and every land.

Let the poor not say, we will wait till we become rich, but now, the measure of blessing and prosperity already in hand we will divide and share with others, poorer than ourselves.

Let the rich not say, we will wait till we become richer, much less will we wait till death and our worm-eaten hands can no longer grasp our gold, but now in the full measure of what our estate makes possible we will obey the command to disciple all.

Let the patriot say, not after our own country has been surfeited and made fat with bounty and blessing; then will we do for the heathen, but now, filled with gratitude for our birth in a Christian land, and seeing gospel grace trampled like pearls beneath swines' feet on every hand, will we send by every ship and every post, and by wire under all the seas, tokens of our love and grace for the instant relief and redemption of our brothers in pagan realms. "Now," not then, "is the accepted time."

THE APPEAL OF THE NEW CENTURY.

The prophets of the new century have been diligently seeking a fitting motto or cry for the period which the world has now reached. There are many runners in the valley of vision. It is not certain that all their voices are divine. Among the messages to be especially commended is a recent cartoon by Sir John Tenniel, first published in *Punch*. The cartoon is announced as Sir John's valedictory message upon his retirement from the public use of the crayon.

The cartoon represents Father Time standing at rest holding the infant Redeemer on his left arm, his scythe meanwhile fallen disused at his side. Beside him stands an appealing maiden wreathed with a chaplet on which is written "Peace." Before the two figures and at the left is a war chariot drawn by two fateful oblivious steeds with an aspect of destructive power drawn in every line. Within the chariot there rides an erect war-lord with fire in his eye and terror in his *mien*. For a moment only he seems compelled to curb his steeds to observe the appealing figures before him. The cartoon is entitled "The Appeal of Time." It seems to say, "Have not nineteen centuries since the Christ-child, the Prince of Peace, was born into the world sufficed to have wrought the will of Mars in slaughtering the millions of mankind? Will not the war-lord yield? When will the spears be wrought into pruning-hooks and those horses be set to their proper task of plowing the soil?"

Surely, it is a timely voice which Sir John has lifted up in Britain and sent out over the world. But fitting and stirring as Sir John's message to his generation is, it is not adequate; it only presents the negative, humane appeal that wars should cease. The gospel calls for far more than this. Mankind must be renewed by the divine spirit, and the elements of a deep divine peace implanted in the place of unholy antagonisms to both God and man.

Some gifted successor of Sir John Tenniel might well take up his disused pencil and send forth a more positive and far-reaching message. This should represent the appeal, not of "Father Time," but of the divine

Son of Man risen from the dead—Lord of Eternity, as well as Time. He would be rousing his slumbering church to instant and universal effort, such as the world has never yet seen, to disciple the nations. He would be calling, “Now, NOW, is the accepted time!” Such a presentation would voice the church’s task, compass the world’s real need, and hold within it the largest promise for the future, the promise dearest to the heart of our ascended, reigning, coming Lord. Such a cry would most fitly be, for each and every generation, the *true missionary watchword*.

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