



The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

VOL. XXXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., FEBRUARY 15TH, 1952

No. 291

The Unchanged Commission

Rev. Eugene A. Erny

Written for the Pentecostal Herald

Christian missions have their source in the very heart of God. Apart from God in Christ there can be no true missionary movement. In Christ we find the very foundation of the Missionary enterprise. His cross made possible the Gospel message; his commission sends forth his followers on their task and the thought of his return presses in upon us the supreme sense of the urgency of the task before us.

The marching orders of the church were given by Christ ere he left his disciples. The importance of this great commission is emphasized by the fact that it appears in each of the Gospels and again in the first chapter of the book of Acts. The early disciples literally carried out this command and in the first century went out to the uttermost parts of the earth to proclaim the good news. Each new generation of Christians must face up to the implications of this commission and take anew to each oncoming generation the message that alone can redeem men from sin.

Let us go back to this commission and note three factors that have vital relation to us today. Read Matt. 2:19, 20, Mark 16:15, 16, Luke 24:46-49, John 20:22 and Acts 1:8.

Our Mission. It is universal. This message is not to be bottled up in Jerusalem but to be carried to the uttermost part. It is extensive. Also it is to be taken to every creature and is therefore intensive as well. Every race, nation tongue and people are included in this all-inclusive commission.

It is evangelistic. The hub of every missionary program according to Christ's directive is the salvation of souls. The Church is not called primarily to political, economic, social or other miscellaneous activities. Our chief objective is the salvation of souls. While medical, educational and social-uptift programs are good and necessary, we must ever remember that the very center of all such effort must be to evangelize. We are first called to exhort men to be reconciled to God through Christ. Missionaries are not called primarily to promote Christian or western civilization but to preach Christ.

Our Message. It is the Gospel spoken of in the New Testament as the Gospel of God, the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Dr. Zwem-

er reminds us that our Gospel is not the Gospel of good will and human kindness, the Gospel of the Golden Rule, the Gospel of the brotherhood of man. the Gospel of building a new world, the Gospel of racial understanding; all these are not the Gospel of God's grace. The message of the Gospel is "Christ-centric"—it centres in Christ, not the partial Christ, the Christ of Mr. Gandhi, the Christ of Mohammedanism, or the Christ of liberalism, but the Christ of the Scriptures. It is "Crucicentric"—it centres in the Cross. It must proclaim the unfathomable depth of man's sin

"Go" ...

By Annie Johnson Flint

Hear your commission, O Church of the Master;

Friends and disciples of Jesus, take heed.
How are ye doing the work of the Father?
How are ye caring for hunger and need?

Go—to the sheep that are scattered and fainting,

Having no shepherds, and tell them to come;
Go to the highways and tell every creature,
Still the feast waiteth and yet there is room.

Go—the time shortens, the night is approaching,

Harvests are whit'ning and reapers are few.
Somewhere, perhaps, in the darkness are dying
Souls that might enter the Kingdom with you.

Go—Church of Christ, for He goeth before you,

And all the way that ye take He doth know.
On the bright morrow He'll say, "Come, ye
blessed";
But till the dawning the message is "Go!"

and lostness and God's love as revealed in Christ of Calvary. A mutilated gospel that minimizes the importance of the sacrificial death of Christ on Calvary has no power to transform men but leaves them in fear, superstition and sin. This message proclaims a resurrected Christ. We worship not a dead Christ but the risen Lord. Paul's central theme in his letters is the Risen Christ—a message filled with living hope for a world sunk in despair.

Dr. Hugh Thomson Kerr reminds us, "We are sent not to preach sociology but salvation; not economics but evangelism; not reform but redemption; not culture but conversion; not progress but pardon; not the new social order but the new birth; not revolution but regeneration; not renovation but revival; not resuscitation but resurrection; not a new organization but a new creation; not democracy but the Gospel; not civilization but CHRIST. We are ambassadors, not diplomats."

This message will lead men to repentance and faith resulting in new lives, radiant and aglow with the presence of the living Christ within.

Motivating Power. Those going forth on this world-wide mission bearing the living message of the Gospel need a divine preparation. In too many mission boards today our emphasis has been placed upon intellectual preparation, with very little importance attached to spiritual qualifications. Much emphasis has been placed on technique, machinery and methods. Personality and human resources have been magnified and the command of Jesus to tarry until endued with power from on high has been largely forgotten. As a result the mission fields have scores of missionaries today who know little or nothing of the new birth, are devoid of spiritual power and find themselves spiritual pygmies facing a gigantic task.

Adequate provision has been made for the dynamic resources needed in the carrying out of this great commission. Before our Lord's ascension he bequeathed his followers the third Person of the Trinity, the blessed Holy Spirit. Through this baptism there is power available to endue every messenger of the glad news with an empowering from on high. It is sanctifying and cleansing power; it is also the empowering for life service. No missionary should ever start for the mission field without this baptism of God's Holy Spirit. It is the difference between weakness and strength, steadfastness and discouragement, failure and fruitfulness.

We are, therefore, in this our day still face to face with the unchanged, unchangeable commission; also with the fact that nearly one-half of the earth's population still, after nearly two thousand years, is without the first intelligent hearing of the Gospel, and, again, with the fact that the blessed Holy Spirit has not been withdrawn. Let us therefore be sure we have received the promised power of the Spirit, and then that we are not stopping with the saving message of the Gospel in Jerusalem but are reaching out to the uttermost part.