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OPPORTUNITIES IN CHINA

Larger harvests follow thorough harrowing; better fruit is the result of careful pruning; light is increased by trimming the wick; spiritual growth is stimulated by hardships and persecution. This has always been true—in the days of the early Church, during the Reformation, and in the modern missionary enterprise. It is true today in China. In spite of many difficulties and dangers—or because men's hearts are made tender by trials—increased spiritual fruitage is evident among Chinese Christians today in the midst of the horrors and hardships of a foreign invasion. While Japanese soldiers loot, ravish women, commit cruelty and murder, the missionaries befriend the Chinese who find refuge in their mission churches, schools and compounds. A recent dispatch from a Canadian insurance surveyor in Hangchow, at the time of its capture by Japanese soldiers, reports:

Hundreds of women and girls found refuge in the six refugee camps established by thirty American, British and French missionaries throughout the city. Heroic service was rendered by these plucky foreigners. Every Chinese woman and child who appealed for a haven in these camps was taken in, although all were badly overcrowded. . . . Bishop Curtis E. Clayton, of the Methodist Wayland Academy; Dr. K. Vaneverer; Gene Turner, of the Y. M. C. A. refugee camp; Mr. E. Fairclough, of the China Inland Mission, and other Americans risked their lives on many occasions.

The American Protestant Episcopal Mission reports great damage to their mission property, including hospitals, churches, schools and residences in Shanghai, Kiangwan, Woosing, and elsewhere, but the missionaries are still carrying on their work of witnessing and mercy. Many missionaries and Chinese Christians have lost all their possessions in the battle zone. Many have been passing through a baptism of fire and blood but

Christians have not wavered. Out of about six thousand Protestant foreign missionaries in China at the outbreak of hostilities over one-half remain at their posts—many of them in the war-torn areas. Most of the women with children have been evacuated to port cities or to the Philippines and other countries, but the men who could do so are standing by to minister to the Chinese and to encourage the suffering people. Of the American Presbyterian missionaries, 115 remain at their stations and 70 more have been transferred to other points of service in China. The spirit of the missionaries is shown in their disapproval of the Government's "evacuation policy." They are in no mood to withdraw. One missionary writes: "All feel that if it was worth while for us to come to China in time of peace, it is even more important for us to remain here in time of suffering and warfare—to heal the sick, feed the hungry and to preach the Gospel of Christ. Today is the day of challenge to missionaries. Woe betide us if we sound a retreat."

The China Inland Mission reports on several places where God is working; among them there is a revival at Salowu, Yunnan.

The work began in the Bible School. The work spread among church leaders and church members. I have not seen such a deep work among so many people since coming to China. We felt led to form a revival band, planning a visit of several months to various tribes and stations. The revival blessing is still spreading. Considerably more than one hundred church members have come out confessing sins, while fully one hundred unbelievers have come out and made profession of conversion.

Similar reports come from many stations scattered throughout China. Pray for the missions and Chinese Christians particularly.

In the majority of the provinces the missionary work is continuing and all are encouraged by reports of revival movements in the churches and of numbers coming forward for baptism.

Effective Missionary Appeals Today

By the REV. CLELAND B. McAFEE, D.D.
*Secretary Emeritus of the Board of Foreign Missions,
Presbyterian Church, U. S. A.*

TWO definite lines of appeal are always needed at the home end of the missionary enterprise: for the dedication of life and for the dedication of resources; both appeals imply an earlier dedication of spiritual force. Experience shows that the money comes harder than the lives. Young people at this present hour seem to see in Christian missionary work a larger opportunity than their elders count it to be.

But what are the terms of appeal for either or both the youth and their elders? What can make the enterprise look so great and alluring to Christians that both life and money will be forthcoming?

In the recent past the appeal was predominantly double—the command of Christ and the need of mankind throughout the world. Has anything happened to change the force of that double appeal? Have new elements emerged which weaken the old appeal or that can make a stronger call than these? Can both appeals be reworded so that they may fit better into present-day moods?

Certainly nothing has altered the essential purpose of the missionary movement. There was no date nor any particular description of world conditions when the command of Christ was given, nor when at various periods the work was undertaken afresh. Neither the command nor history permits evasion nor compromise.

The methods of work must be suited to the conditions under which it is to be done. The New Testament gives no details as to what methods should be followed. It brings us merely the clear-cut word of our Master in six verbs: Go, preach the Gospel, make disciples, teach, baptize into the triune Name, bear witness to Christ. To make this kind of work effective the continued presence of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit are promised. How it is to be done, and what is to be the general outcome, we are not told. Our part is to do the work, with the promise of God's presence and power.

Recall the illustration of Robert Browning in his *Prince Hohenstiehl Schwangau*. The courier is sent by his master on an errand and is given adequate equipment. He is told to go a thousand miles to a certain destination and to do a definite

errand. Then his own part begins. His master leaves it to him to rise early or late, take long or short cuts in the road, and many other details. But when he arrives he must give account of his faithfulness.

Just so

I have God's bidding to perform; but mind
And body, all of me, though made and meant
For that sole service, must consult, concert
With my own self and nobody beside,
How to effect the same: God helps not else.

It is not strange that from time to time we must stop and ask what are the best ways of doing what remains always as our task.

After all, missions continue to be a Christian movement and not merely a general humane endeavor. It is, to be sure, the most humane endeavor that humanity is now making, but it has its roots in something deeper than kindly impulses toward other people. There is no effective plea for missions which can be addressed to those who do not intend to be accounted Christians. If one really does not care greatly for Christ, he will not greatly care for Christ's call to service. One must "come" before one will "go." There is not enough "drive" in a mere humanitarian movement to carry one overseas on a mission for Christ, nor to keep one there after the first shock of repulse by those whom one means to benefit. Nor is there sufficient force in the social impulse to persuade men in general to maintain persistent and sacrificial giving. The motives for such a work must be powerful and continuous, not intermittent and impulsive. The appeal has to be made to Christians, not to grown-up Boy Scouts who are expected to do "a good deed every day," beautiful as that purpose is and fine as the habit is.

The question keeps recurring whether we ought still to continue to emphasize the dire need of the world and of each individual for Christ and the life He can bring—spiritual, moral, social, economic—or to stress instead the reconstructive programs of international peace, interracial understanding and the social justice. Are we seeking only to bring individuals to Christ for personal redemption or are we trying also to reconstruct the social order under which so many

wrongs are done and so much evil exists? Is it eternal life and Heaven we are offering, or are we seeking to establish the rule of God on earth?

It would be a narrowing of our conception of the Gospel of Christ if we did not answer the question with "both-and" rather than "either-or." The Gospel is adequate both for the individual and for all the world and is needed for both. Yet it is clear that missionary concern continues to be primarily with the earlier half of the question. So many agencies are now at work on general international and interracial programs that they are not in danger of serious neglect by good people, much as they still need to be pressed. Enough ought certainly to be included in the missionary appeal to make it very clear that the temporal earthly needs of men are of deep missionary concern. But the basic necessity for a new spirit in individual men and women is not emphasized as much as is needed, nor is the need of the individual considered today so much as it should be. This is a distinctive missionary task.

Missionary advocates must make room in program and appeal for those who are called to carry forward one phase of Christ's work for men, even though they may feel that the part to which they are called is so important as to cover the whole program. They may not welcome the more distinctly personal element we would emphasize, but we may welcome their part because it is truly part of the whole. One group feels that nothing is really of permanent value but individual surrender to Christ and personal redemption; another group feels that social reconstruction is most important and alone can justify the program. We can welcome both objectives for we can be sure that only spiritually reconstructed individuals can properly reconstruct society, and that when an individual is really reconstructed he will be ready to take his place as a builder of the social order. Our Lord once warned His disciples against too narrow views of fellow-workers (Mark 9:38f), though He recognized also that there is always danger of affiliations which really vitiate His program (2 Cor. 6:17, 18). The issue is really not between the different parts of the program but as to their order—which is primary and which is logical outcome. Too many social developments and reformations have resulted from "preaching the simple Gospel" to allow us to count such work unimportant in the Christian movement. We must not reverse cause and effect; we must not try to produce the fruits of the Christian life while we neglect its roots. The missionary movement is concerned centrally with rootage, with cause, but collaterally it is also deeply concerned with fruits and with effect.

Much may be said about the downright and tragic needs which still mark the "non-Christian"

world. In some factors those lands merely share in these needs with the rest of the world; in some matters, non-Christian lands hold a tragic pre-eminence—in ignorance, in poverty, in social indifference, in callous neglect, in attitude toward women, in superstition, in unworthy and degrading human practices. In such particulars the "sending countries" are far beyond the "receiving lands." If need is to be measured in quantity, in lives affected, in weakness of corrective measures, then the "receiving lands" must be counted far more needy than the "sending lands." If it is insisted that dire needs still exist in all lands, the reply is a sad and unqualified admission of the fact, along with an earnest reminder that in some lands many great agencies are at work for the correction or alleviation of these evils and that in other lands such agencies are lacking or feeble.

Certainly we cannot expect any permanent concern for Christian missions if we do not look upon them as a means of supplying some real need. It is sheer intrusion if those to whom we go do not need what we bring. We do not take gifts of medicine to a family in full health nor offer food and clothing to a family fully supplied against the winter. If the religions of other lands are adequate, we need not present Christ to them. The appeal based on need is not invalidated, but it must be used in humility and love and never in arrogance or contempt. The facts assembled by Dr. Stephen J. Corey in his "Beyond Statistics," are too abundant to leave any serious question of the service of missions to meet existing need, need much too real to be dismissed by occasional or frequent instances of culture and advantage found among the people by these other lands.

Today we recognize the newly arisen need in the world for a unifying and mollifying spirit. When nations and races were safely distant from each other, their underlying defects made little or no difference. Today, when nations and races are in unavoidable contact, there must be either conflict or understanding. Some form of world brotherhood must develop, something that will make men everywhere try to understand each other and to work in fellowship. If it is asked whether there can be a world brotherhood, the reply is that there is one now—the Christian brotherhood. This is weak and ineffective in many places, betrayed over and over again by those who should be its staunchest supporters, but it is always present, checking its own violations, challenging its membership to fuller sympathy, shaming them for their failures. It is no weak plea for missions that it is the largest single agency in forming this world brotherhood, and that every man truly won to Christ automatically becomes a member of it. There is no short cut to its realization and it cannot be framed by legis-

lation nor by treaties or leagues. It must be the outcome of the service of those who now follow Christ in seeking men everywhere to join the ranks of His followers. The process will be just as slow or as rapid as we make it, and its speed is measured by our faithfulness to this principal method of service.

Here is also the true basis for the much used idea of "sharing"—the feeling that we go to other lands to "share" our best with them. Of course we should learn what they can teach us; every missionary learns a vast deal from the land to which he goes. But on his main errand for Christ he does not go as an inquirer, wondering if perhaps he may learn something in the other land which will replace that to which he has given his life and for which he has gone out as a messenger of Good Tidings. If the people to whom he goes know something which he may well learn, much more does he know something which they may well learn and that is his principal errand—to give the knowledge of Christ and to start the vital influences which flow out from Him. We have no successful appeal to young people who are not committed to Christ as their Lord and Saviour, first and foremost. Their knowledge of Him and His truth will grow with the years, but its roots must lie snugly in the life of the missionary before he starts on his errand.

The Appeal That Inspires Volunteers

Let the effort, then, be made to phrase the appeal of today in explicit terms. What have we to urge that will inspire the unreserved gift of lives and possessions?

1. The call to lay out life where many others cannot or do not go to help men. There is need at home—yes, and thousands of people are here concerned for its supply; there is need abroad—yes, and only tens of people, or none at all, are concerned. Where shall the one life be laid out, if one is free to choose?

2. The desire of earnest people in "mission lands" for help in removing hindrances in the way of their own people. The first missionaries went to foreign lands without being asked, simply because they were needed. No one now needs to go without being asked to meet needs, for these are keenly felt in all lands. The "man of Macedonia" has come out of the vision and will meet the right workers at the shore, sometimes alone and without a crowd of supporters, but ready to welcome men who will "help" him in making Christ known.

3. The opportunity in the name of Christ to assert the value of personality against the contempt or low regard of masses of men and even of many rulers. The Christian missionary is the prime believer in the value of men to whom he goes; he is no superior person going to inferiors,

but a messenger of One who claims all men for Himself.

4. Noblesse oblige—making some decent effort to share with those who lack them the undeserved favors of life which we possess. Christ is the great gift of God to us; who are we to let the gift stop with us?

5. The present wide ruin of life can be prevented by the new and renewing Spirit which Christ gives. If anyone doubts the ruin of life, let him look around; if it is ruined here it is ruined yonder, equally or more, and ruin hurts and brings death wherever it occurs. Certainly the ruin is as dire there as here and there are few to bring the remedy there.

6. The call to lay our Christian faith down alongside of world religions, in assurance that it will carry its own argument and its conviction of truth. The missionary movement does not seek to attack, as it does not adopt, these religions. The message and power of Christ merely gives men of this day what many of their fathers once had—some knowledge of God and of another and better Way of Life which they may accept if they will. Vital religions always have traveled, and races of men have accepted and followed new religions many times in history. It is no impertinence to present the Christian faith; if men of today find this faith better than the religion they have had, it is no more than their fathers did in accepting the faith they now have. After hearing an address in which the Christian faith was presented, a young Hindu said: "The speaker did not mention our faith, but if what he says about the Christian faith is true, our faith is not true." One religion does not reform another; it replaces it.

7. The call to advance the whole program of human unity. The human race needs to have all its parts brought into right relationships around the best which any part of the race knows. This lays the chief burden of world unity on the races that know Christ and His vitalizing and unifying power.

8. The call to bring relief to real need in many lines—spiritual primarily, but intellectual, physical and social as well. The first relief is generally brought to individuals, but it often leads to changing a whole social practice and to relieving need in a wide circle. It would not be impertinent to seek to relieve real need in the next street; why should it be impertinent to relieve the need in another land?

All this runs back to the fundamental assurance of Christ's desire as expressed in His commission to His disciples, and to the promise of His abiding presence. There is no successful appeal for life or money for this enterprise to people who do not know Him.