

"Can This World Be Evangelized in Twenty Years?"

By Arthur T. Pierson
from the *Missionary Review*,
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Why not! These are days of giant enterprises in the interests of commerce, science, art, and literature. Why not carry the spirit of sanctified enterprise into our religious life and work! I wish by voice and by the aid of the press to set forth a practicable business proposition, namely, that *before the year 1900, the gospel shall be preached to every living soul!*

The time has fully come for conducting the colossal scheme of the world's evangelization as an enterprise of the united Christian Church, upon business principles, with a definite plan, by a division of the field which is the world, and a distribution of the work among all evangelical denominations.

A careful consideration will show us that it is perfectly feasible, during the remaining years of this century, to put the Word of God into the hands of every living human being, in his own tongue, and to proclaim the good tidings to every creature.

Among the thousand millions of souls in Papal, Pagan, and Moslem lands, there are at least six hundred millions yet wholly unreached. What force have we wherewith to compass this host? We must distinguish between evangelization and conversion. To evangelize, or bring the gospel into contact with souls, is the special commission of the church (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20). For such a contact between the saving gospel and the unsaved we are held responsible. Conversion is God's work, and for that He alone is responsible. But if we preach the gospel to every creature, He will be with us to add the work and power of the Spirit. Let us remember that one hundred and eighteen millions belong to Protestant and evangelical churches. If we could depend on each one of this whole number to do his or her share of this work, how easily it could be done! If personally or by proxy, every such believer should, during these next twenty years, reach six new souls with the gospel, the whole world would be evangelized! Of course we must make a large discount from this gross number

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in estimating our working force. Let us then suppose that out of the one hundred and eighteen millions, only ten millions have real evangelical knowledge, faith, and experience. Could not God use his picked band, like Gideon's, to do the whole work? Let each of those ten millions, during twenty years, reach sixty new souls with the gospel, and the grand result is still reached! Think of it! We may take *one in ten* of the Protestant church members, and with them bring the whole present population of the world to the knowledge of the Gospel, by simply securing this result: that each of that elect number shall in some way bring the gospel into contact with three souls each year for twenty years!

Of course both men and means must be multiplied, if this great work is to be done. We must have at least ten thousand more missionaries; but that is but one of a thousand of the supposed ten million. We must have at least ten million more dollars a year for the support of these missionaries, and another ten million dollars for the various helps and appliances necessary.

But let these ten million disciples give each five dollars a year, and we have fifty millions for the work of missions annually. England gave more than that to carry on the war in Afghanistan.

The enterprise of the world's evangelization is perfectly practicable. We need only a baptism of prayer, systematic effort, and faith in God. If the children of this world had a project before them with as good a prospect of success, although its dimensions were world-wide, they would undertake it with an energy that would girdle the earth with means and means in ten years? Why do we hesitate?

Let us have an Ecumenical Council representing the whole evangelical church, solely to plan a world-wide campaign, with reference to bringing the tidings of salvation into contact with every soul in the shortest time! Let the field be mapped out, and divided, with as little waste of men and means as may be; let there be an universal appeal for workers and for money, a system of gathering offerings so thorough that every giver shall be regularly brought into contact with the Lord's treasury, and the means be increased to millions! The proposition is perhaps startling, and yet, looking at

it with studied calmness and deliberation, tell us what is the best way to prevent its consummation, and what is the best way to prevent it above!

"An Appeal to Disciples Everywhere"

Issued by the Northfield Convention,
1885

To Fellow believers of every name, scattered throughout the world, Greeting:

Assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, with one accord, in one place, we have continued for ten days in prayer and supplication, communing with one another about the common salvation, the blessed hope, and the duty of witnessing to a lost world.

It was near to our place of meeting that, in 1747, at Northampton, Jonathan Edwards sent forth his trumpet-peal, calling upon disciples everywhere to unite the whole habitable globe. That summons to prayer marks a new era and epoch in the history of the church of God. Praying bands began to gather in this and other lands; mighty revivals of religion followed; immorality and infidelity were wonderfully checked; and, after more than fifteen hundred years of apathy and lethargy, the spirit of missions was reawakened. In 1784, the monthly concert was begun, and in 1792, the first missionary society formed in England; in 1793, William Carey, the pioneer missionary, sailed for India. Since then, one hundred missionary boards have been organized, and probably not less than one hundred thousand missionaries, including women, have gone forth into the harvest field. The Pillar has moved before these humble laborers, and the two-leaved gates have opened before them, until the whole world is now accessible. The ports and portals of Pagan, Moslem, and even Papal lands are now unsealed, and the last of the hermit nations welcomes the missionary. Results of missionary labor in the Hawaiian and Fiji Islands, in Madagascar, in Japan, probably have no parallel even in apostolic days; while even Pentecost is surpassed by the ingathering of ten thousand converts in one mission station in India within sixty days, in the year 1878. The missionary bands had scarce compassed the walls

and sounded the gospel trumpet, when those walls fell, and we have but to march straight on and take possession of Satan's strongholds.

God has thus, in answer to prayer, opened the door of access to the nations. Out of the Pillar there comes once more a voice, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward." And yet the church of God is slow to move in response to the providence of God. Nearly a thousand millions of the human race are yet without the gospel; vast districts are wholly unoccupied. So few are the laborers, that, if equally dividing responsibility, each must care for at least one hundred thousand souls. And yet there is abundance of both men and means in the church to give the gospel to every living soul before this century closes. If but ten millions, out of four hundred millions of nominal Christians, would undertake such systematic labor as that each one of that number should, in the course of the next fifteen years, reach one hundred other souls with the gospel message, the whole present population of the globe would have heard the good tidings by the year 1900!

Our Lord's own words are, "Go ye, therefore, and disciple all nations;" and, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come". Peter exhorts us both to "look for and hasten the coming of the day of God;" and what if our inactivity delays His coming? Christ is waiting to "see of the travail of His soul;" and we are impressed that two things are just now of great importance: first, the immediate occupation and evangelization of every destitute district of the earth's population; and, secondly, a new effusion of the Spirit in answer to united prayer.

If at some great centre like London or New York, a great council of evangelical believers could meet, to consider the wonder-working of God's providence and grace in mission fields, and how fields now unoccupied may be insured from further neglect, and to arrange and adjust the work so as to prevent needless waste and friction among workmen, it might greatly further the glorious object of a world's evangelization; and we earnestly commend the suggestion to the prayerful consideration of the various bodies of Christian believers, and the

various missionary organizations. What a spectacle it would present both to angels and men, could believers of every name, forgetting all things in which they differ, meet, by chosen representatives, to enter systematically and harmoniously upon the work of sending forth laborers into every part of the world-field!

But, above all else, our immediate and imperative need is a new spirit of earnest and prevailing prayer. The first Pentecost crowned ten days of united, continued supplication. Every subsequent advance may be directly traced to believing prayer, and upon this must depend a new Pentecost. We therefore earnestly appeal to all fellow-disciples to join us and each other in importunate daily supplication for a new and mighty effusion of the Holy Spirit upon all ministers, missionaries, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and Christian workers, and upon the whole earth; that God would impart to all Christ's witnesses the tongues of fire, and melt hard hearts before the burning message. It is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord, that all true success must be secured. Let us call upon God till He answereth by fire! What we are to do for the salvation of the lost must be done quickly; for the generation is passing away, and we with it. Obedient to our marching orders, let us "go into the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," while from our very hearts we pray, "Thy kingdom come."

Grace, mercy, and peace be with you all.

Done in convention at Northfield, Mass., August 14, 1885, D. L. Moody presiding.

Committee:

Arthur T. Pierson, Philadelphia, Presbyterian, Chairman.

A. J. Gordon, Boston, Baptist.

L. W. Munhall, Indianapolis, Methodist.

George F. Pentecost, Brooklyn, Congregationalist.

William Ashmore, Missionary to Swatow, China, Baptist.

J. E. Studd, London, England, Church of England.

Miss E. Dryer, Chicago Avenue Church, Chicago.

"To Every Creature"

By Hudson Taylor, from
China's Millions, December 1889

We are nearing the close of another year, and of an important decade in the history of missions. In our own Mission the last ten years have been especially important; at their commencement the pioneering journeys of Mr. (now Dr.) Cameron and others of our brethren were not yet completed; work in inland China was barely commenced, and not at all in the western provinces; during this period the number of our stations and out-stations had been about doubled, and the number of missionary workers more than trebled, for in the year 1880 we had but twenty-one missionaries including wives, while now it considerably exceeds 300. This decade has witnessed the outgoing of the eighty missionaries, whom God gave us in response to our prayers for the seventy, and in the following year of forty others, among whom were the well-known Cambridge band; many prophesied the early return of the members of this band, but we are thankful to know that they are all engaged in diligent service in inland China, and that each one has been blessed and made blessing.

Then we have to praise God for the 100 missionaries given us in 1887, and for the more than fifty who followed them last year, including the first American pair. We rejoice in first fruits gathered in many of the more recent stations, and that over 1000 were added to our native churches by baptism during the years 1887 and 1888, with continued additions during the current year. While some converts have undoubtedly been received prematurely, causing subsequent trial and disappointment (a result which the experience of the oldest missionaries cannot always avert), a large proportion are showing by the fruit of the SPIRIT that they have really been born of God. For the eighty little missionary churches now connected with the C.I.M. we give to God unfeigned thanks, as also for all those gathered in other districts by His honored servants, the missionaries of the various European and American societies.

When we turn however from the to the number of Protestant commun-