

[STEM Publishing: The writings of C. H. Mackintosh](#): "The regions beyond." 2 Cor. 10: 16; and "Let us go again" Acts 15: 36.

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C. H. Mackintosh.

"The regions beyond." 2 Cor. 10: 16.

"To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you."

These words, while they set forth the large-heartedness of the self-denying and devoted apostle, do also furnish a fine model for the evangelist, in every age. The gospel is a traveller; and the preacher of the gospel must be a traveller likewise. The divinely-qualified and divinely-sent evangelist will fix his eye upon *"the World."* He will embrace, in his benevolent design, the human family. From house to house; from street to street; from city to city; from province to province; from kingdom to kingdom; from continent to continent; from pole to pole. Such is the range of "the good news," and the publisher thereof "The regions beyond" must ever be the grand gospel motto. No sooner has the gospel lamp cast its cheering beams over a district, than the bearer of that lamp must think of the regions beyond. Thus the work goes on. Thus the mighty tide of grace rolls, in enlightening and saving power, over a dark world which lies in "the region of the shadow of death"

"Waft, waft, ye winds, the story,

And you, ye waters, roll,

Till, like a sea of glory,

It spreads from pole to pole."

Christian reader, are you thinking of "the regions beyond you"? This expression may, in your case, mean the next house, the next street, the next village, the next city, the next kingdom, or the next continent. The application is for your own heart to ponder; but say, are you thinking of "the regions beyond you"? I do not want you to abandon your present post, at all; or, at least, not until you are fully persuaded that your work, at that post, is done. But, remember, the gospel plough should never stand still. *"Onward"* is the motto of every true evangelist. Let the shepherds abide by the flocks; but let the evangelists betake themselves hither and thither, to gather the sheep. Let them sound the gospel trump, far and wide, over the dark mountains of this world, to gather together the elect of God. This is the design of the gospel. This should be the object of the evangelist, as he sighs after "the regions beyond."

[The conversion of the world is not the object of the divinely instructed evangelist, but the gathering out of a people to the Lord's name — a people for the heavens — the body of Christ — the Church of God. (Acts 15: 14.)]

When Caesar beheld, from the coast of Gaul, the white cliffs of Britain, he earnestly longed to carry his arms thither. The evangelist, on the other hand, whose heart beats in unison with the heart of Jesus, as he casts his eye over the map of the world, longs to carry the gospel of peace into regions which have heretofore been wrapped in midnight gloom, covered with the dark mantle of superstition, or blasted beneath the withering influences of "a form of godliness without the power."

It would, I believe, be a profitable question for many of us to put to ourselves, how far we are discharging our holy responsibilities to "the regions beyond." I believe the Christian who is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit, is in a deplorable condition. I believe, too, that the

assembly which is not cultivating and manifesting an evangelistic spirit is in a dead state. One of the truest marks of spiritual growth and prosperity, whether in an individual, or in an assembly, is earnest anxiety after the conversion of souls. This anxiety will swell the bosom with most generous emotions; yea, it will break forth, in copious streams of benevolent exertion, ever flowing toward "the regions beyond." It is hard to believe that "the word of Christ" is "dwelling richly" in any one who is not making some effort to impart that word to his fellow sinners. It matters not what may be the amount of the effort; it may be to drop a few words in the ear of a friend, to give a tract, to pen a note, to breathe a prayer. But one thing is certain, namely, that a healthy vigorous Christian will be an evangelistic Christian — a teller of good news — one whose sympathies, desires, and energies, are ever going forth toward "the regions beyond." "I must preach the gospel to other cities also, for therefore am I sent" Such was the language of the divine Evangelist.

It is very doubtful whether many of the servants of Christ have not erred in allowing themselves, through one influence or another, to become too much localised — too much tied to one place. They have dropped into routine work — into a round of stated preaching, in the same place, and, in many cases, have paralysed themselves and paralysed their hearers also. I speak not, now, of the labours of the pastor, the elder or the teacher, which must, of course, be carried on in the midst of those who are the proper subjects of such labours. I refer more particularly to the evangelist. Such an one should never suffer himself to become localised. The world is his sphere - "the regions beyond," his motto — to gather out God's elect, his object — the current of the Spirit, his line of direction. If the reader should be one whom God has called and fitted to be an evangelist, let him remember these four things, the sphere, the motto, the object, and the line of direction which all must adopt, if they would prove fruitful labourers in the gospel field.

Finally, whether the reader be an evangelist or not, I would earnestly entreat him to examine how far he is seeking to further the gospel of Christ. We really must not stand idle. Time is short! Eternity is rapidly posting on! The Master is most worthy! Souls are most precious! The season for work will soon close! Let us, then, in the name of the Lord, be up and doing. And when we have done what we can, in the regions around, let us carry the precious gospel into "THE REGIONS BEYOND."

Go, labour on, while it is day
The world's dark night is hastening on —
Speed, speed thy work, cast sloth away;
It is not thus that souls are won.
Men die in darkness at thy side
Without a hope to cheer the tomb
Take up the torch and wave it wide,
The torch that lights time's thickest *gloom*.
Go on, faint not, keep watch, and pray
Be wise the erring soul to win
Go forth into the world's highway
Compel the wanderer to come in.
"Let us go again" Acts 15: 36.

C. H. Mackintosh.

"Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." In the preceding paper we presented to the notice of our readers, a motto for the evangelist, in the expression, "To preach the gospel in the regions beyond." This is the grand object of the evangelist, let his gift or sphere of action be what it may.

But, the pastor has his work as well as the evangelist; and we are desirous to furnish a motto for him likewise. Such a motto we have in the words, "*Let us go again.*" We are not merely to regard this expression as the narrative of what was done, but a model of what ought to be done. If the evangelist is responsible to preach the gospel in the regions beyond, so long as there are regions to be evangelised, the pastor is responsible to "go again and visit his brethren," so long as there are brethren to be visited. The evangelist forms the interesting connection; the pastor maintains and strengthens that connection. The one is the instrument of creating that beautiful link, the other of perpetuating it. It is quite possible that the two gifts may exist in the same person, as in Paul's case; but whether this be so or not, each gift has its own specific sphere and object. The business of the evangelist is to call out the brethren; the business of the pastor is to look after them. The evangelist goes, *first*, and preaches the Word of the Lord; the pastor goes *again* and visits those upon whom that Word has taken effect. The former calls out the sheep, the latter feeds and takes care of them.

The order of these things is divinely beautiful. The Lord would not gather out His sheep and leave them to wander uncared for and unfed. This would be wholly unlike His gracious, tender, thoughtful way. Hence, He not only imparts the gift whereby His sheep are to be called into existence, but also that whereby they are to be fed and maintained. He has His own interest in them, and in every stage of their history. He watches over them, with intense solicitude, from the moment in which they hear the first quickening accents, until they are safely folded in the mansions above. His desire to gather the sheep tells itself forth in the large-heartedness of the expression, "the regions beyond"; and His desire for their well-being breathes in the words, "let us go again." The two things are intimately connected. Wherever the Word of the Lord has been preached and received, there you have the formation of mysterious, but real and most precious links between Heaven and earth. The eye of faith can discern the most beautiful link of divine sympathy between the heart of Christ in Heaven, and "every city" where "the Word of the Lord" has been preached and received. This is as true now, as it was eighteen hundred years ago. There may be many things to hinder our spiritual perception of this link; but it is there for all that. God sees it, and faith sees it likewise. Christ has His eye — an eye beaming with intense interest, and radiant with tender love — upon every city, every town, every village, every street, every house in which His Word has been received.

The assurance of this is most comforting to every one who feels that he has, in very deed, received the Word of the Lord. Were we called upon to prove from Scripture, the truth of our assertion, we should do so by the following quotation: "And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise and go into *the street* which is called Straight, and inquire in *the house* of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for behold *he prayeth*" (Acts 9: 10-11). Can aught be more touching than to hear the Lord of glory giving, with such minuteness, the address of His newly-found sheep? He gives the street, the number, so to speak, and the very occupation at the moment. His gracious eye takes in everything connected with each one of those for whom He gave His precious life. There is not a circumstance, however trivial, in the path of the very feeblest of His members, in which the blessed Lord Jesus is not interested. His name be praised for such a comforting assurance. May we be enabled to enter, more fully, into the reality and power of such a truth!

Now, our gracious Shepherd would fill the heart of each one acting under Him with His own tender care for the sheep; and He it was who animated the heart of Paul to express and carry out the design embodied in the words, "let us go again." It was the grace of Christ flowing down into the heart of Paul, and giving character and direction to the zealous service of that most devoted and laborious apostle. "I have taught you publicly and from *house to house*" (Acts 20: 20). What an example! Think of the apostle, with all his gigantic labours, finding time to visit from house to house; and that for three years in one town!

And observe the force of the words "go *again*." It does not matter how often you have been there before. It may be once, twice, or thrice. This is not the question. "Let us go again," is the motto for the pastoral heart, for there is always a demand for the pastoral gift. Matters are ever and anon springing up, in the various places in which "the Word of the Lord" has been preached and received, demanding the labours of the divinely-qualified pastor. No human language could adequately set forth the value and importance of real pastoral work. Would there were more of it amongst us! It often nips in the bud evils which might grow to terrible proportions. This is, in an especial manner, true, in this day of spiritual poverty. There is immense demand — a demand on the evangelist, to think of "the regions beyond" — a demand on the pastor to "go *again* and visit his brethren, in every city" where "the Word of the Lord" has been preached, "and see how they do."

Reader, do you possess aught of pastoral gift? If so, think, I pray you, of those comprehensive words, "let us go again." Have you been acting on them? Have you been thinking of your "brethren" — of those "who have obtained like precious faith" — those who, by receiving "the Word of the Lord," have become spiritual brethren? Are your interests and sympathies engaged on behalf of "every city" in which a spiritual link has been formed with the Head above? Oh, how the heart longs for a greater exhibition of holy zeal and energy, of individual and independent devotedness — independent, I mean, not of the sacred fellowship of the truly spiritual, but of every influence which would tend to clog and hinder that elevated service to which each one is distinctly called, in responsibility to the Master *alone*. Let us beware of the trammels of cumbrous machinery, of religious routine, of false order. Let us beware, too, of indolence, of love of personal ease, of a false economy, which would lead us to attach an undue importance to the matter of expense. The silver and the gold are the Lord's, and His sheep are far more precious to Him than silver and gold. His words are, "Lovest thou Me? feed My sheep." And if only there is the *heart* to do this, the *means* will never be wanting. How often may we detect ourselves spending sums of money, *unnecessarily*, on the table, the wardrobe, and the library, which would be amply sufficient to carry us to "the regions beyond," to preach the gospel, or to "every city," in order to "visit our brethren"!

May the Lord grant unto us an earnest self-denying spirit, a devoted heart to Him and to His most holy service, a true desire for the spread of His gospel, and the prosperity of His people. May the time passed of our lives suffice us to have lived and laboured for self and its interests, and may the time to come be given to Christ and His interests. Let us not allow our treacherous hearts to deceive us by plausible reasonings about domestic, commercial, or other claims. All such should be strictly attended to, no doubt. A well-regulated mind will never offer to God a sacrifice arising out of the neglect of any just claim. If I am at the head of a family, the claims of that family must be duly responded to. If I am at the head of a business, the claims of that business must be duly met. If I am a hired servant, I must attend to my work. To fail in any of these, would be to dishonour the Lord, instead of serving Him.

But, allowing the widest possible margin for all righteous claims, let us ask, are we doing all we can for "the regions beyond," and for "our brethren, in every city where we have preached the Word of the Lord"? Has there not been a culpable abandonment both of evangelistic and pastoral work? Have

we not allowed domestic and commercial ties to act unduly upon us? And what has been the result? What have we gained? Have our children turned out well, and our commercial interests prospered? Has it not often happened that, where the Lord's work has been neglected, the children have grown up in carelessness and worldliness? And as to business, have we not often toiled all the night, and gazed on an empty net in the morning? On the other hand, where the family and the circumstances have been left, with artless confidence, in the hand of Jehovah-jireh, have they not been far better cared for? Let these things be deeply pondered, with an honest heart and a single eye, and we shall be sure to arrive at just conclusions.

I cannot lay down the pen without calling the reader's attention to the fullness of the expression, "see how they do." How very much is involved in these words! "How they do," publicly, socially, privately. "How they do," in doctrine, in association, in walk. "How they do," spiritually, morally, relatively. In a word, "how they do," in every way. And, be it well remembered, that this seeing how our brethren do must never resolve itself into a curious, prying, gossiping, busybody spirit — a spirit that wounds and heals not, that meddles and mends not. To all who would visit us in such a spirit as this, we should, assuredly, say, "be far from hence." But, to all who would carry out Acts 15: 36, we desire to say "our hands, our hearts, our houses, are wide open; come in, ye blessed of the Lord. 'If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide.'"

O Lord, be pleased to raise up evangelists to visit "the regions beyond," and pastors to visit, again and again, "the brethren in every city."

"Lovest thou Me? ... Feed My lambs.... Lovest thou Me? . . . Shepherd My sheep" (John 21: 15-16).

"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away" (1 Peter 5: 4).