

Classics

The Holy Spirit and Missions

By Andrew Murray



It has often been remarked that true mission work has always been born of a revival of religious life in the church. The Holy Spirit's quickening work stirs up new devotion to the Blessed Lord and new concern for the lost.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, and the Presence and Rule of the Lord of Glory which He maintains, must again become the chief mark of the Christian life. The origin, the progress, the success of missions are all His. It is He who wakens in the hearts of believers the jealousy for the honour of their Lord, the compassion to the souls of the perishing, the faith in His promise, the willing obedience to His commands, in which the mission takes its rise.

It is He who draws together to united effort, who calls forth the suitable men to go out, who opens the door, and prepares the hearts of the heathen to desire or to receive the Word. And it is He who at length gives the increase, and even where Satan's seat is, establishes the cross, and gathers round it the redeemed of the Lord.

Holy Spirit Makes Us Fit

Missions are the special work of the Holy Spirit. No one may expect to be filled with the Spirit if he is not willing to be used for missions. No one who wishes to work or pray for missions need fear his feebleness or poverty: the Holy Spirit is the power that can fit him to take his divinely appointed place in the work.

Let everyone who prays for missions, and longs for more of a missionary spirit in the church, pray first and most that in every believer personally, and in the church and all its work and worship, the power of the Indwelling Spirit may have full sway.

Blessed the church and blessed the mission which the Spirit originates, where He is allowed to guide, and where the blessing is waited for from Himself alone. Ten days' praying and waiting on earth, and the Spirit's descent in fire: this was the birth of the church at Jerusalem (Acts 1-2). Ministering and fasting, and then again fasting and praying, and the Spirit sending forth Barnabas and Saul: this was at Antioch the consecration of the church to be a Mission Church (Acts 13:1-4).

May I say to any missionary who reads this in his far-off home: Be of good cheer! The Holy Spirit who is the Mighty Power of God, who is the Presence of Jesus within thee, the Holy Spirit is with thee, is in thee. The work is His: depend on Him, yield to Him, wait for Him; the work is His, He will do it.

May I say to every Christian, be he director, supporter, contributor, helper in prayer or in any other way, in the great work of hastening the coming of the Kingdom: Be of good cheer! From that time of waiting before the Throne, and that baptism there received, the first disciples went forth until

they reached Antioch. There they paused, and prayed, and fasted, and then pressed on to regions beyond. Let us from these our brethren learn the secret of power. Let us call on every Christian who would be a mission friend and mission worker to come with us and be filled with the Spirit whose is the work of missions.

The need of the church and the world is believers who can testify to an indwelling Christ in the Spirit, and prove it too. The Spirit does still come as of old in power. He does still move and send forth; He is still mighty to convince of sin and reveal Jesus, and to make thousands fall at His feet. He waits for us. Let us wait on Him, let us welcome Him.

A Prayer for Missions

O God! Thou didst send Thy Son to be the Savior of the world. Thou didst give Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him. And Thou didst pour out Thy Spirit upon all flesh, commissioning as many as received Him to make known and pass on the wondrous blessing.

O our God! We stand amazed, and abased, at the sloth and neglect of Thy church in not fulfilling her Divine commission; we are humbled at our slowness of heart to perceive and believe what Thy Son did promise, to obey His will and finish His work. We cry to Thee, our God! Visit Thy church, and let Thy Spirit, the Spirit of the Divine Sending, fill all her children.

I humbly plead with Thee, give me and all Thy children to be so mightily strengthened by the Holy Spirit that Christ may possess heart and life, and our one desire be that the whole earth may be filled with glory. Amen.

ANDREW MURRAY (1828–1917) was a South African pastor and writer on prayer and the deeper life. He considered missions to be “the chief end of the church.” Excerpted from *The Spirit of Christ*.

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