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The Missionary Arguement

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THE MISSIONARY ARGUMENT.

(Read Rom. 1:16; 10:13-15.)

I wonder if the average member of the church of God has ever stopped to consider carefully and in detail the serious argument of the apostle Paul in his letter to the Christians in Rome in favor of sending the gospel to all parts of the earth. It is not only one of the strongest and clearest arguments that was ever penned on the subject, but the very form which it assumes, under the masterful stroke of the illustrious apostle, is enough to make serious and thoughtful men pause and think. Yea, more, it will not only make such men pause and think, but it will impel them to action. The fact is, when the matter is fully viewed in the light of this great argument, it leaves room for no choice at all, except to promptly act in sending the gospel to men, or to plainly and positively reject the word of God. Our readers will appreciate this statement when the facts are all before them. These we now present in the order adopted by the apostle:

1. **The gospel is God's power to save.** This proposition will be accepted by all who believe the Bible. In one passage (Rom. 1:16) it is so declared in specific terms; in many passages it is so declared in general terms. The Bible being our guide, the gospel is certainly God's power to save men.

2. **But the gospel cannot save men unless it is believed.** From the very nature of the first proposition, this one is self-evident. Of course the gospel cannot save men unless they receive it, any more than food can sustain the body if the body does not receive it.

3. **But men cannot believe the gospel unless they hear it.** This third proposition is equally self-evident. That men cannot believe what they have never heard is self-evident, not only with reference to the gospel, but also with reference to everything else. The opposite of this would be nothing short of an absurdity.

4. **But men cannot hear the gospel unless it is preached.** Here again, no less than in the preceding cases, the proposition is a self-evident truth. It is as clear as a demonstration in mathematics that

men cannot hear a message unless it is brought to them.

5. But men cannot preach the gospel unless they are sent. It may be already seen that the apostle's argument consists in a series of self-evident propositions after the first one is established by testimony. Unless men are sent in some way and by some means, all must know, of course, that they cannot preach.

6. But, in accordance with the divine arrangement, the churches are to send men to preach the gospel. The gospel has been committed to the church in trust, and the church is, therefore, declared to be "the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15).

How, then, does the case stand? It stands thus: The churches sending men is essential to preaching the gospel; preaching the gospel is essential to hearing it; hearing the gospel is essential to believing it; believing the gospel, which is God's power to save, is essential to being saved by it. Specifically, as stated by Paul in one passage, it stands thus: Sending is essential to preaching; preaching is essential to hearing; hearing is essential to believing; believing is essential to calling upon the Lord; calling upon the Lord is essential to salvation. It all means two things. First, calling upon God through the gospel is the only way of salvation. Secondly, men cannot call upon God through the gospel unless we send it to them. Hence the duty of the churches to send the gospel to men is as plain as a mathematical demonstration.—M. C. Kurfrees.

Here is an argument, but it is God's argument, and therefore there is no answering back on the part of man. It is a final and complete argument.
* * *

1. There is no distinction. All races of mankind are equally entitled to Christ's gospel. God loves the heathen as much as he loves you. * * * God is no respecter of persons, either in judgment or in grace.

2. Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord may be saved. It is a universal, international salvation. He is an international Christ. * * *

3. But they cannot call because they do not be-

lieve. The call that would save them is impossible to them, because they do not believe on the name of the Lord. The call must be one of faith, and they do not believe.

4. The reason they do not believe is because they have never heard about him. The blame for not calling is hardly theirs. They could scarcely be expected to believe on one of whom they had never heard.

5. They have never heard of him because no one has preached his name to them. It is not that they are not willing to hear. They are not given an opportunity. There is no preacher.

6. There is no preacher because none has been sent. The inference is that the preacher might have been willing enough to go, but he is not sent. In the last analysis, the blame seems to be placed at the door of those who should have sent the preacher, but did not do so.

7. The argument is completed by a declaration that even the feet of the preacher who goes forth on the bare mountains of heathendom and preaches Glad Tidings are beautiful. Now according to God's argument to whom is the blame traced for the loss of the soul that might have called on the name of the Lord and been saved? The opportunity is for everybody. "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." They could not call because they did not believe; they could not believe because they had not heard; they had not heard because no one had gone to preach his name to them; and no one had gone to preach to them because no one had been sent. The blame that these souls are not saved lies with God's people at home, who believe on him and yet have not sent their preachers to those distant parts which have never known him.

If they had sent the preacher, the preacher would have gone and preached, some one would have heard, some one would have believed, some one would have called on the name of the Lord, and a soul would have been saved. Because you did not send, no preacher went, the people did not hear, could not believe, could not call on the name of the Lord, and could not be saved.

The missionary comes back from the foreign land

and tells of a soul that has been saved. You ask, Where did the saivation of that soul commence? We reply, Right here at home. Right in the missionary meeting. Right in that collection plate. Some one sent, some one went, some one preached, some one heard, some one believed, some one called on the name of the Lord, and some one was saved. If we do our part in sending and going and preaching, the heathen will be sure to do his part in hearing, believing, and calling on the name of the Lord, and the Lord will be sure to do his blessed part in saving whosoever calls on his name.—R. A. Jaffray.

CHRIST'S COMMAND: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation."—Mark 16:15.

PAUL'S AIM: "Making it my aim so to preach the gospel, not where Christ was already named."—Rom. 16:20.

THE CHURCH'S GLORY: "The gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven."—Col. 1:23.

Jesus died for all and commanded the gospel preached to all. Paul aimed to preach the gospel in new fields and not build upon another man's foundation. In about thirty years, "the Church of the living God" without man-made societies preached the gospel "in all creation under heaven." During the last half of the first century, it is estimated there were not less than three million Christians in the Roman Empire and not fewer than sixty thousand hand-written gospels in circulation. Those glorious days give us a great challenge. Let us arise immediately and respond heartily to the call of our Saviour and the fearful and awful need of our sin-cursed fellowmen for whom Jesus also died. Let there be such diligence and such scriptural effort that all men everywhere may hear the glad tidings of God's unparalleled love and grace.

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