



The Compulsion of the Spirit

A Roland Allen Reader

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The Compulsion of the Spirit


“We have seen that the apostles, inspired by the Holy Ghost, began to preach Christ as the Saviour. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit, not only were their minds illuminated to see that the name of Jesus could be glorified and His claims vindicated in no other way than by the salvation of men in Him; they themselves were filled with a desire for the salvation of men akin to that desire which led Him to take upon Him human flesh.”

Paton & Long, 63.



The Gift of the Spirit the Sole Test of Communion

“Moved by the Holy Spirit given to them, the apostles went forth as missionaries. The Holy Spirit filled them with a desire for the salvation of men in Jesus Christ; He revealed to them the need of men. As they came into contact with different types and orders of men, so the Holy Spirit filled them with desire for the salvation of these and with the sense of their need. They could not but preach.”





The Gift of the Spirit the Sole Test of Communion

“The mere fact that uncircumcised men were admitted into the Church, by whomsoever they might have been admitted and wherever, that mere fact that uncircumcised men were members of the Church of Christ would involve the acceptance of the principle that men could be saved without the law...





The Gift of the Spirit the Sole Test of Communion

...The Church would be a body in which circumcised and uncircumcised members alike hoped for, and received, a like salvation. Then, if some men could be saved without the law, so could all. If the heathen who knew not the law could be saved by Christ in the Church, then the Jew too could be saved by Christ without the law, if he chose to abandon the law.

Paton & Long, 87.





Missionary Spirit

“The Spirit, the missionary Spirit, was given to all. Whosoever received the Holy Ghost received that, and, in some degree, if only by approval and support of the missionary efforts of others, expressed it. Some in the church received special direction to special work in a special way or in particular places...



Missionary Spirit

...So St. Paul and Barnabas were called to evangelize the West. So St. Peter was sent to the circumcision, so Timothy was taken from Lystra to help St. Paul. Simeon and Niger and Manaen, and others like them, received no such special call. Yet they did not fail to manifest the missionary spirit within them.

Paton & Long, 91.





Missionary Spirit

“The Spirit was given to all...The Judaizers protested strongly against the form in which the gospel was preached to the Greeks; they sent out their own emissaries to attack, to undermine, and to destroy, so far as they possibly could, the influence and teaching of St. Paul; but their opposition was directed, not against the conversion of the heathen, not against missionary work as such, but only against a particular form of teaching which they deemed to be dangerous. It was universally agreed that the gospel must be preached to all nations.”

Paton & Long, 92.





Missionary Spirit

“The Spirit of desire for the salvation of the world may be expressed in any form of Christian activity; but that Spirit is not revealed to others with equal clearness by every form of activity. In the Acts, as I have tried to point out, St. Luke makes the revelation of the Spirit clear to us by setting before us the acts of those men in the early Church whose lives were devoted to what we, today, call ‘missionary work’. If he had dwelt upon the labours of those others who were not engaged in this special missionary work the revelation would have been less clear.”

Paton & Long, 92.





Missionary Spirit

- “If we believe in the Holy Spirit as He is revealed in the Acts, we must be missionaries. We cannot accept the teaching of the Acts, we cannot believe that the one thing of importance to our souls is to receive and to know the Spirit, without feeling ourselves driven to missionary action....





Missionary Spirit

... We cannot believe the Holy Spirit reveals our own need and the need of men without beginning to feel that need of men for Christ laid upon us as a serious call to action....



Missionary Spirit


...We cannot believe that the Holy Spirit is given to us that those who so need Christ may be by us brought to find the one way of salvation for their souls and bodies in this world and in the world to come, without feeling impelled to action....





Missionary Spirit

... We cannot believe that men everywhere, whatever their previous education or ignorance, whatever their civilization or barbarism, are capable of receiving Christ and His salvation, without being moved to take a world-wide view of our responsibility....





Missionary Spirit

... We must embrace the world because Christ embraces the world, and Christ has come to us, and Christ in us embraces the world. Activity world-wide in its direction and intention and hope and object is inevitable for us unless we are ready to deny the Holy Spirit of Christ revealed in the Acts.”

Paton & Long, 93.

