

The Modern Crusade

**Addresses and Proceedings of the
First General Convention of the
Laymen's Missionary Movement,
Presbyterian Church in the U. S.,
Birmingham, Ala., Feb. 16-18, 1909**

**Edited by
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UNIVERSITY
OF VIRGINIA

**Laymen's Missionary Movement,
Presbyterian Church in the United States,
Southern Mutual Building,
Athens, Ga.**

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LAYMEN'S MISSIONARY MOVEMENT
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE U. S.,
ATHENS, GA.

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V. MISSIONARY MOTIVES.

Man and Master.

The Biblical Basis of Missions.

The Dynamic that is to Save the World.

The Spiritual Impulse of Missions.

The Reflex Influence of Foreign Missions.

The World's Debt to the Missionary.

MAN AND MASTER.

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I. THE MASTER.

Jesus the Lord of Glory is of right the Master of men. They know this best, who know Him best.

The more we know Him, the more does He become for us "The holiest among the mighty, the mightiest among the holy, lifting with His pierced hands empires off their hinges, turning the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governing the ages."

And this is true from every aspect of His manifold glory.

I. There is the Mastery of Might.

He masters us by His might. Not the might merely to fling out worlds, and bear them on their way, but might in the spiritual realm, which He conquers and holds subject to Himself. This is more elemental and more significant than the power to create worlds.

The most difficult and desperate of all the aspects of spiritual being is its sinfulness. Jesus triumphs over this. It is written of Him: "He shall save His people from their sins." How triumphantly He does this, we know in our knowledge of His Church, in all ages, the fact of His turning many from sin to righteousness in every generation. And His "taking of the scum of the city to make of them the light of the world."

His might triumphs over the power and fury of evil habit. Some of us have been near enough to the destroying flood to hear the swish and swirl of its mad waters. Some of us have been close enough to the confines of despair, to see what that nether world is like, and to know the need of a strong deliverer, and how strong he must be.

Jesus triumphs over heredity, environment, and habit. He is constructive, creative. He leads captive the souls of men. He shakes the empire of hell as a young lion roaring over his prey. When we begin to really understand Him, we stand in His mighty presence hushed, awed, subdued.

2. *There is the Mastery of Majesty.*

It is the majesty of character, not of station. One cannot company far with a great character, without becoming aware of its greatness. It crops out everywhere. In manner, in comment, in conduct, in purpose, and plan; by every avenue it comes out. It cannot be hid. That which is the very essence of the life will show itself always. It is so with Jesus Christ the Lord. The Majesty of His personality is as evident as the light of the sun.

The Pitch of His life. The plane of his life was not earthly. The one full dominant note, to which everything in His life was attuned, was God. "I must be about my Father's business." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God." "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work." "I must work the works of Him that sent Me." These were the great controlling motives of His whole life. They that do the will of the Father are His real brethren. His disciples are to rejoice not that spirits are subject to them, but because their names are written in heaven. The kingdom of heaven was His atmosphere, as well as His endeavor. Careless of the traditions of men, He was jealous for the worship of God, and "valiant for the truth upon the earth."

Forgetful of self, His desire was that the Father's will should be done, and in Gethsemane He would drink the cup to the last bitter drop, facing all the foreseen tragedy of Calvary. His was a life, whose center was the throne of God, and every part in harmony with God, vibrant and responsive.

His philosophy. Jesus walked unflinching through the maze of earthly existence. To Him, life was no problem and the universe no riddle. His philosophy embraced the unseen and the eternal along with the visible and temporal. He knew the Creator in relation to His creation.

The anchor that held secure in every tempest was the one within the veil. For Him the source of all, the explanation of all, the end of all, is God. God is at the center of His thought. He is the Star by which He sets His course, and the Sun in whose warmth and light He lives and moves. He comes from God. He lives for God. He goes to God. All things are subsidiary, even tributary, to this. Here is His metaphysics, and His ethics; His philosophy of being, and His motives in conduct.

Striking, at once because of its simplicity and because of its sublimity, it gathers humanity in its grasp and lifts them out of self into service, and out of this world into the presence of God.

His ideal was a re-adjusted world, all life's forces adjusted and giving out their harmony—a redeemed humanity; we take the loftiest thoughts of men, and with these reach up, but ever we find His ideals tower above them, as the mountain above the boulder at its foot.

His purpose. His purpose was: To release, to unfetter, to cleanse, to purge, to reduce to order, to lead captivity captive, to give gifts to men. The purpose of His life was to save the world. It involved nothing less than destroying the works of the devil, to sweep from the earth the kingdom of sin and shame; to transform, and exalt, and glorify. His purpose was wide as the world, deep as human need, high as human possibility. High, inflexible, all embracing, all consuming.

Christ's universal of purpose is kin to His great universals of truth, sweeping through the whole realm of existence. He gets back of all, urging it all heavenward. He gets beneath all, lifting it all Godward. He weaves a robe of majesty and casts it about our poor humanity, and we are accounted worthy to be called by His name. He pours into barren, earthly waste the living water, and it awakes to flower and fruit. He touches the sightless eyes of blinded men, and we rise with vision, and behold our Lord; and beholding, we worship and adore.

These great purposes subjugate us, and we know Him for Master, from whom they all proceed.

3. *And There is the Mastery of Love.*

Love has her primacy well established in the Scriptures. Her title to the throne is made out for her by Paul in I Cor. xiii. And the last word was spoken on this when John declared, "God is Love."

There is no greatness like greatness in love. He who is supreme here, is greatest everywhere. It is here, where He who is greatest of all, is most Kingly. Measure Him, having in view the Scriptural dimensions of love. Its length, eternal; its breadth, embracing all creatures; its depth, forgiving all sins, all depravities; its height, reaching up to the great white throne. Judged by these infinities, He is Lord of all. Love sent Him to Bethlehem to enter

upon His humiliation. Love sent Him to Calvary to pour out His life on the tree. Love sends Him to every fiery furnace prepared for His people, by His and their enemies. Love forgives our sin. Love covers our heads in the day of battle. Love bears unflinchingly with our faults and failures. Unfailing, unwasting, unwearied, unchiding Love.

This love moves us, sways us, masters us. It made Livingstone, in the heart of Africa, write, "Jesus, my Lord, my Life, my All—I again dedicate my whole life to Thee." It made Zinzendorf cry out, "I have one passion. It is He. It is He." It drew from Paul the surrendering cry, "The love of Christ constraineth us, that we should not live unto ourselves, but unto Him which died for us," and to acknowledge himself the bond-servant of Christ. "Whose I am, and Whom I serve."

Love can triumph in itself, where there is neither might nor majesty to re-inforce it; but when the three are gathered into one, it is the three-fold cord, unbreakable, leading us all in his captive train, and Love's captives are held most fast.

"But Thee, but Thee, O Sovereign, seer of time
 But Thee, O poet's poet, wisdom's tongue,
 But Thee, O man's best man, O love's best love,
 O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
 O all men's comrade, servant, king or priest—
 * * * * *
 Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
 Jesus, good Paragon, thou crystal Christ?"

II. THE MASTER'S COMMAND.

The King speaks, and he speaks authoritatively, plainly, characteristically, saying, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature."

1. *This is His Unmistakable Command.*

The imparting of truth is a slow and difficult process. But in this process the elementary and the structural emerges with most prominence. The great things are made plain. The more important the truth, the more distinctly is it set forth. This rule applies uniformly. That which is made unmistakably clear is therefore immeasurably important. The way of salvation is not made plainer than the way of service. The "great Commission" is the gathering

up of a mighty truth in words so plain, so distinctly clear, that not even a child can mistake their meaning.

2. *It is the Command Characteristic.*

That for which He laid down His life must be the supreme purpose of His life. This is not some new or strange thing he has introduced. It is the Christ behind the command, who gives the significance to the words. The command fairly glows in His personality. These great, unselfish, purposeful words came from a compassionate ministering, suffering, forgiving Christ. His body had been slain on the tree for this same world which He bids us save. If Christ had never given this command, it would have been a plain inference from His life.

We treat this command as if it were a mere incident in the life of Christ, forgetting that all His life was lived, and His cross endured that He might make a Gospel which He could command His Church to preach to the whole world. No man can be a real follower of Jesus Christ who does not follow Him in the most characteristic aspects of His life, that of loving service to His needy fellows.

3. *It is His Unchanging Will.*

It has to do with eternal issues. It is a question of what the world is to know about God, and of what it is to possess of eternal life.

The world is held under the power of three kinds of religion. There are the religions of *infamy*, like some of those of Africa and India, where gods and goddesses of revolting character are worshipped and sin is fostered by the so-called religion. There are the religions of *impotence*, as those of China and Japan, which are powerless morally because dead spiritually. And there is the religion of *inspiration*, which knows and worships a God of infinite holiness and love, which preaches a Saviour of infinite power and grace.

The religious teachers of the first mentioned class could tell no one anything about God, for they know nothing of Him. They could not tell one how to serve and worship God, being themselves ignorant of this. They lead the people through the maze of idolatry and superstition to immorality and eternal death.

The teachers of the second class could not tell you how to achieve the moral ideals of their own religion, nor how to be saved from sin. They guess at, and answer these questions in varied and incongruous ways.

The religion of inspiration alone has the true knowledge of God and eternal life, and for that reason it has a message for the whole world. It was Jesus, the Christ, the Logos, who gave us this truth. He commands us to give it to the whole world, even as He gave it to us.

It is His unchanging will. It is a question of the place He holds in this world of men. Until He is preached to the whole world, He can not become King of this world. And that keeps the world unfinished, imperfect. This prodigal world must return to God. This is part of the increasing purpose which through the ages runs. Until Jesus Christ is made King of the world, it is not in its true position before God, and He is not in His rightful place before the whole universe. The crown which He has won is this world. Something will be ever imperfect until this crown is placed on His brow.

III. THE DEMAND FOR OBEDIENCE.

I. *The Moral Obligation.*

We build our hope on the Solid Rock, mountain high. We look again at that foundation. It is Jesus the Lord, His might, His authority, His power and dominion. Nothing less can avail. "Who can forgive sins but God only?"

It is the voice of Infinite Majesty which says "Thy sins be forgiven." But it is that same voice which says, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," and by every process of consistent thought each of us is forced to say: "His power to save me is not greater than His authority to command me."

There is an impregnable validity in a true, rational process. You cannot break the links which bind together authoritative command and personal obligation. Christ welds these together in the great commission, saying: "All *authority* is mine, go ye *therefore*." Only an infinite authority could give such a command as this one; but when that authority has spoken, it is a categorical imperative for those who believe.

The question of unfulfilled duty to a lost world is a question between us and Christ Jesus the Lord; not between us and the needy world. The disobedient servant must answer, not to the unfinished task, but to the Master whom his disobedience has dishonored. Not only must we face a world of need, we must face the enthroned and sovereign Christ. His truth is kept bound; His love is kept back; His authority is set at naught by our disobedience. We stand face to face with Him, in direct and conscious personal relation to Him. He speaks with all His exalted authority, with all possible plainness. He speaks directly to our consciences.

There is an eternal moral order. Its sanctions are found in God's sovereign right to command, and our conscious obligation to obey. Objectively, the rights of Christ are sovereign rights; subjectively, the rights of conscience are sovereign rights. If once the conscience gets clearly before it what Christ commands, it must give itself up in obedience, or give itself over to destruction. Let us strive to get a clear idea of what Jesus, the King, wants done, then let us deal very faithfully with ourselves, with our convictions of conscience. Let us not be led away from the point. Let us not obscure it, or weaken it, or evade it. He has shown us His glory, He has given us His word of command. What wait we for? The King has spoken. "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it."

2. *The Spiritual Necessity.*

The most important aspect of our religion is that of personal fellowship with God. The most significant aspect of conduct is that of personal obedience to God. A human life is at its sublimest reach when it is in conscious communion with the Eternal Spirit, and acts from the loftiest motives in its subjection of self to His revealed will. This is the most powerful sanction of our highest morality, as well as the vital breath of our spiritual life. One of the effects of this fellowship is the deep and settled conviction of the necessity of such meetings, that a continuity of spiritual experience is essential to our soul's sustenance. If you try to labor outwardly, without communing inwardly with Christ, you will find it impossible. Your strength will fail; your inspiration will die. The living water is to be dispensed without, hence it must be multiplied within.

Fellowship and obedience. But the reverse of this is just as true. If you try to hold high fellowship with Christ, and not do His will, you will find it impossible.

Fellowship and disobedience cannot dwell together. If we set His authority at naught, we will not seek His presence. When the father, returning to his home, is met half way down the walk by his child, who rushes to his arms, then you may be sure there is nothing of disobedience on the part of the child, which would keep him from his father's presence. But if when he leaves home another day, he seriously lays a command on the child, which all day long is disregarded and his authority defied, then there is no joyous welcome from the child, when he returns, but a shrinking from his presence in fear and unrest.

Fellowship in place and purpose. We cannot hold full fellowship with Christ, unless we enter with Him into His great plans. There is such a thing as an outgrown friend. Two may grow up in childhood together and are comrades during that period. In young manhood they separate; one to grow in thought and plan, in courage and achievement, to follow and find the really great things. The other, to loiter and play, and be disobedient to visions, and to be content with small things. They come together again in mature life, and after the first rush of pleasure at sight of the old friend, each seeks in the other that which is not there, and uneasy and dissatisfied with each other, they part company for all time, and are content to have it so.

The little, the worldly, the selfish, the unloving—these will not enjoy Christ's companionship. He is so different from them in vision and ideal, and plan and purpose, in the spirit of His life. How can one who takes his eyes off the larger part of humanity, and feels no compassion for a helpless world, enjoy communion with Him whose thought and compassion are so powerfully aroused for these same despised ones? Fellowship in spirit, and co-operation in work are bound together inevitably, vitally, essentially.

The Church cannot come into her own in spiritual things until she does God's will.

This is not an arbitrary arrangement. It is the eternal, spiritual law. It is true because of what God is, and of what we are. It grounds itself in the very nature of spiritual being. The missionary enterprise is not just one of the high degrees in religion. It

is elemental, it is vital. It is a matter of obedience, of fellowship, of religion in its most vital aspects.

Exaltation and subjugation. The facts of these Convention addresses may fade from your memory, but the spirit of them ought to be your lasting possession. Two principal lines of thought will be developed in the program, viz., the exaltation of Christ, and the subjugation of self.

If our delight in Christ as Saviour is the one great joy of our life, our obedience to Him as Master should be the one supreme devotion of our life. God becomes dominant in our human life by the mastery of the individual life. The complete mastery of any one life means the triumph of Christ in many more. For Him whose hand doth hourly guide the whirling suns, it were a small thing to master me; but to me whose life were otherwise a loss, His mastery of me is life and power.

"Make me thy captive, Lord,
And then I shall be free;
Force me to render up my sword,
And I shall conqueror be."

Who among this company of men would become a benefactor of all mankind, a world force, let him subject his whole life to the thought, and ideal, and purpose of Jesus Christ. Let him make the irrevocable commitment, then he will undertake with the recklessness of faith, daring all; then he will offer with the heedlessness of love, devoting all; then he will achieve in the power of Christ, conquering all.

This convention is only an opportunity. It may be worthless to you. It may be even an injury to you. But it may, if you are willing, be the beginning of larger things in your life. How much of "the serving love which is our life's fine gold" are you pouring forth? How much of your being is responsive to God? Here let us learn how to devote ourselves. Let us yield to our Lord Jesus as well as acknowledge Him. Let us surrender to Him, as well as confess that He is Lord. Let Him sway you. Let the authoritative Teacher teach you. We point to Him, and we can only do this. We have no love like His love; and no vision like His vision; and no purpose like His purpose. Let the King speak to you. Hearken to Him.

Go home enriched, treasure laden. Take back with you the increase of spiritual power which comes from entire surrender to God. He gives Himself to those who yield themselves to Him.

“Thou art the King of glory, O Christ;
Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father;
Thou sittest at the right hand of God,
In the glory of the Father:
Help thy servants whom thou hast
Redeemed with thy precious blood—
Govern them and lift them up forever.”

If we will bow before the throne of the Majesty on High, abiding there until we are filled with the knowledge of His glory and power, until our whole spiritual nature is alive and responsive to His word of command, till we can cry out sincerely, “Thy will be done; Thy will be done in us, and in all the earth, as it is in heaven;” then we can arise and gird us for the toil, and go straight in the path of duty, unselfishly, unceasingly, and undauntedly.