

There were seven fishers with nets in their hands, And they walked and talked by the sea-side sands.

Yet sweet as the sweet dew fall The words they spoke, though they spoke so low.

Across the long, dim centuries flow, And we know them, one and all—

Seven men in the days of old, And one was gentle and one was bold.

And they walked with downward eyes, The bold was Peter, the gentle was John,

And they all were sad, for the Lord was gone, And they knew not if he would rise—

Know not if this dead would rise— Know not if this dead would rise.

The living light, the light that went out in the drowning waters, the light that went out in the fog of their way;

And the sails dropped down with wringing woe, And no man drew but an empty net.

And the break of day, The great glad break, as a bird's cry—

"Cast in your nets on the other side!" ("Was Jesus speaking across the tide?")

And they cast out, and were dragging hard— But the simple fishermen loved

Cried straightaway out, for his heart was moved, "Our Master, and our Lord!"

Then Simon girding his father's coat, Went over the nets and out of the boat.

And he feared no longer his heart to cast— Down deep in the sea—

And the other through the mists so dim In a little ship came after him.

They saw a fire of coals on the sand, And with a small fire of coals on the sand,

They long and long and long ago Since the lights began to flow

And with eager eyes and lifted hands The seven fishers saw on the sands

The Sabbath Recorder

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as a laborer among men for the propagation of truth, let us, as did the apostles, choose from among our own numbers men who have the spirit of the gospel in them, and who can leave their homes, and send them forth with the divine commission in their hands, and the divine message in their hearts.

Let us, upon whom rests the same divine commission, and in whose hearts should burn the same living message, let us remain in our stores, in our shops, in our mills, and on our farms, and out of the abundance which, through these channels, flows into our hands, let us sustain those whom we have thus sent out, and then as we are able let us send another messenger, and then another, and another, until the waste places shall shout for joy, until the thirsty land shall become pools of water, until "the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose."

Can we do that? Certainly we can. How? That is just what we desire to show in this discourse.

"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." In this command or advice, there are three essential elements—

I. Something is to be regularly laid aside for the object in view. Nothing is to be laid aside. No system has ever been devised, or ever can be, by which money is raised, in which somebody does not put his hand into his pocket, and from thence put money into the treasury.

II. Regularity. "Let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." The requirements of God are, "According to that which a man hath, and not according to that which he hath not." And Jesus, when he spoke forth the twelve apostles, together with other instructions, gave this solemn and significant charge, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

These instructions forbid us, in determining our duty, to ask whether the amount is more or less than we have been accustomed to give, or whether it is more or less than somebody else is doing. The only questions by which we should be guided are those which point us to the magnitude of the work, and our ability to meet its demands for labor. Do I need to tell you, my brethren, that "the fields are white already to the harvest?"

That every year the fields are multiplying and broadening? That every year precious sheaves lie ungathered? It is no exaggeration to say that for every field now occupied by the missionaries and agents of the Seventh-day Baptist churches, there are ten open, inviting, totally unoccupied fields, lying all the way from sea-girt New England to California's golden shores.

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Now, let us suppose that those who can do so give their hundreds and thousands of dollars; that we all dispense with our expensive luxuries; that we deny ourselves some innocent pleasures which cost us money; that we actually make sacrifices for the cause of Christ until we feel it. I dare not attempt to state in figures what would be the result to the treasuries of our denominational enterprises; while God only knows how much richer in the spiritual life of our people we would be for the sacrifice, and therefore unjustifiable in the Christian? How much of luxury, taste, convenience, comfort, or the essentials of life, ought a man to sacrifice in order to do his duty as a Christian? Where shall we draw the line so that we may know just what is the measure of our prosperity, and therefore the measure of our duty? Precisely this is the question which no man can answer for another, and which each man must answer to his own conscience before God.

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We can do it, and because we are one of our denominational treasuries the handsome sum of \$140,000 every year! These figures, startling they are, are, in several particulars, under rather than over-estimated, as any one may see who will take the trouble to run them through.

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Now, let us suppose that those who can do so give their hundreds and thousands of dollars; that we all dispense with our expensive luxuries; that we deny ourselves some innocent pleasures which cost us money; that we actually make sacrifices for the cause of Christ until we feel it. I dare not attempt to state in figures what would be the result to the treasuries of our denominational enterprises; while God only knows how much richer in the spiritual life of our people we would be for the sacrifice, and therefore unjustifiable in the Christian? How much of luxury, taste, convenience, comfort, or the essentials of life, ought a man to sacrifice in order to do his duty as a Christian? Where shall we draw the line so that we may know just what is the measure of our prosperity, and therefore the measure of our duty? Precisely this is the question which no man can answer for another, and which each man must answer to his own conscience before God.

We lose, then, that gain, when we attempt to legislate or dogmatize upon this matter. One man may be profited in the formalty of his judgment by the con-

clusions or conclusions at which another has arrived on the same subject; but at the last his judgment must be his own.

I may say in passing it is my opinion that our actual necessities, even though in some individual cases the contribution seems exceedingly small, the aggregate sum will be greatly augmented, and its work force proportionately increased.

As to the second named result: A certain well-known evangelist gives it as the result of his observation and experience in evangelistic labor, that what people need is not better preaching than they are accustomed to hearing, nor more of it, but an opportunity to do so.

