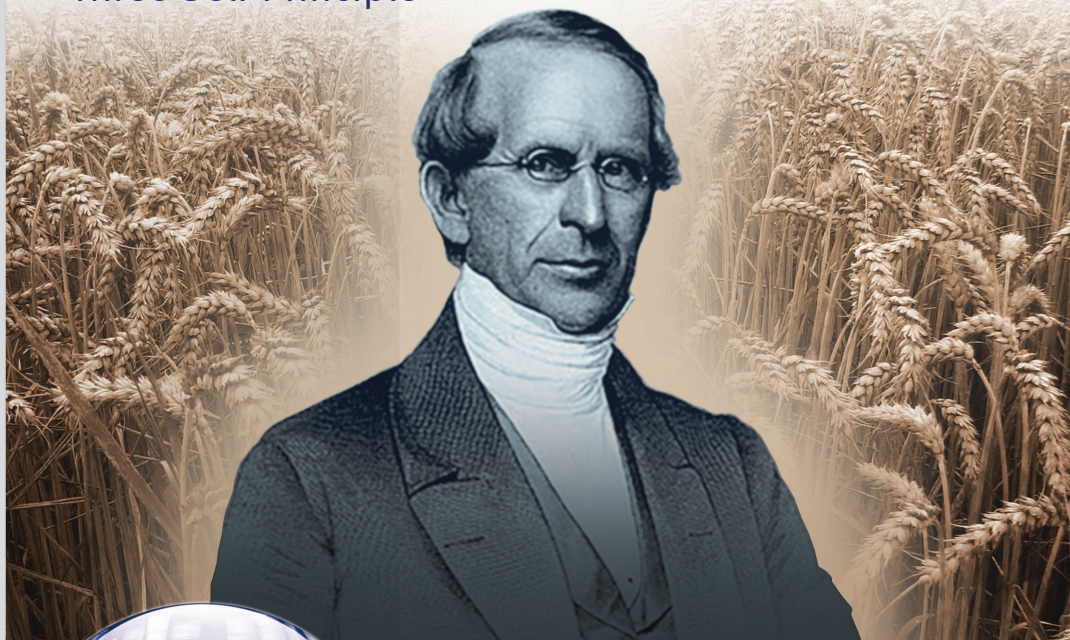


Thomas Paul Schirrmacher (ed.)

The World is Ripe for Conversion:

**Rufus Anderson and the Self-Reliance
of the Church as the Goal of Mission**

A Contribution to the History of the
Three-Self-Principle



WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

Theological Commission

World of Theology Series 27

Thomas Schirrmacher (Ed.)

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Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft
Culture and Science Publ.
Bonn 2024

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available on the Internet at <http://dnb.d-nb.de>

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Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft Prof. Schirmmacher
UG (haftungsbeschränkt)
Amtsgericht Bonn HRB 20699 / Börsenverein 97356
Geschäftsführer: Prof. Dr. theol. Dr. phil. Thomas Schirmmacher
Friedrichstraße 38, D-53111 Bonn
Fax +49 / 228 / 9650389
www.vkwonline.com / info@vkwonline.com

ISSN 2197-9057

ISBN 978-3-86269-268-2

Covermotiv: Rufus Anderson (1796–1880)
Engraving by J. C. Buttre: public domain / Wikimedia

Printed in Germany

Cover design:
HCB Verlagsservice Beese, Hamburg

Production:
CPI Books / www.cpi-print.de

Complete directory for the book trade: www.vkwonline.com
Publishing distribution: info@vkwonline.com or Fax +49 / 228 / 9650389

Private customers: in any book store or at www.vkwonline.com

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**I. RUFUS ANDERSON TODAY
(BY THOMAS SCHIRRMACHER)**

I. Rufus Anderson and the Self-reliance of the Indigenous Church: Including an Article on the Relationship Between Faith Missions and Reformational Confession

(1990/1991)

Thomas Schirmmacher

Translation of a German article in 'Evangelical Missiology', which led to an extensive discussion¹ and has been expanded through reacting to this discussion over time.

In 1866, Rufus Anderson (1796–1880), after decades as head of the oldest and largest American missionary society, became professor of missiology at Andover Theological Seminary, one of the first chairs of missiology in the world.² The Encyclopedia of World Mission calls him “the most influential figure in American missions.”³ R. Pierce Beaver writes that until World War II all American Protestant missions at least paid lip service to Anderson’s goals.⁴ His influence on other great individuals in world missions such as Roland Allen, Robert E. Speer, John L. Nevius,⁵ Abraham Kuyper,⁶ and others can hardly be measured. His suc-

¹ A first version of this article appeared in *Evangelikale Missiologie* 2/1990. A critique by Dieter Kuhl appeared in *Evangelikale Missiologie* 4/1990. Under the heading “Glaubensmissionen und reformatorisches Bekenntnis,” my response to it appeared in *Evangelikale Missiologie* 2/1991: 26-27, along with an article agreeing with the first essay by Prof. Marc Spindler (*ibid.*, p. 27) and a historical note by Klaus Fiedler (*ibid.*, p. 27).

² Cf. Thomas Schirmmacher. *Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie*. Verlag der Evangelischen Gesellschaft für Deutschland: Wuppertal, 1985. 301 pp., p. 14-15.

³ R. Pierce Beaver. “Rufus Anderson,” p. 27 in: Stephen Neill et al. (eds.). *Lexikon zur Weltmission*. Brockhaus/Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission: Wuppertal/Erlangen, 1975.

⁴ R. Pierce Biber. *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967. 225 pp., pp. 9-10.

⁵ On the influence on Speer and Nevius, see R. Pierce Beaver. “The Legacy of Rufus Anderson.” *Occasional Bulletin of Missionary Research* 3 (1979) 94-97, pp. 96-97.

⁶ On the influence on Kuyper and the Netherlands, see Jan Verkuyl. *Contemporary Mission: An Introduction*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (USA), 1978. 414 pp., p. 187.

cessor, N. G. Clark said the following at Anderson's grave—and this is certainly not an exaggeration:

There is no reason to hesitate in saying that the world owes its gratitude to Dr. Anderson for the revival of real missionary efforts as most clearly illustrated to us by Paul in the Acts of the Apostles. . . . This method and the principles embraced in it are today the common property of all missionary societies throughout the world. They are recognized . . . in this country, in Great Britain, in Germany, and wherever mission is known.⁷

Rufus Anderson's most important call was for the self-reliance of young churches. He coined the so-called "three-self formula": Churches should be *self-propagating, self-sustaining and self-governing*.⁸

*This essay will show that the doctrine of mission and especially the call for self-reliance in Rufus Anderson finds a necessary corrective in his strictly Reformed Calvinist confession. Without this classification of his demands, the "three-self formula" would have led to a completely different result, as was the case with the so-called post-classical missions, i.e., faith missions and the missions of Brethren and Pentecostal churches, as well as in the field of liberal and ecumenical theology (as the example of China, for instance, shows).*⁹ *The following report comes from an attempt by the Institute for World Mission and Church Building (Institut für*

⁷ N. G. Clark in his funeral oration in: A. C. Thompson. *Discourse Commemorative of Rev. Rufus Anderson, D.D., LL.D.* ABCFM: Boston, 1880. pp. 57-58.

⁸ On the formula in general and its English and German versions, see Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem.* Verlag der Rheinischen Missions-Gesellschaft: Wuppertal, 1956. 397 pp.; Peter Beyerhaus. "The Three Selves Formula: Is it built on biblical foundations?" *International Review of Missions* 53 (1964): 393-407; Jan Verkuyl. *Contemporary Mission*, pp. 184-188 and Thomas Schirmacher. *Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie*, op. cit., pp. 176-177. An excellent short exposition of the question of the self-reliance of young churches based on New Testament data is offered by Emmanuel Kellerhals, "Nicht Herren eures Glaubens, sondern Gehilfen eurer Freude! Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen in biblischer Sicht." *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* (1941) 161-169.

⁹ The best Anderson expert R. Pierce Beaver ("The Legacy of Rufus Anderson" op. cit., p. 96) calls the Chinese "Three-Self-Movement," supported by communists, a "caricature" of Anderson's thoughts and holds the development in China primarily responsible for the fact that "Three-Self-Thought" came into disrepute (ibid.). However, today China's Three-Self Movement has become much more independent of the communist government. A much more positive view is taken by Wilbert R. Shenk. ("The Origins and Evolution of the Three-Selfs in Reaction to China." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 14 (1990): 28-35) regarding Anderson's development toward the Chinese "Three-Self Movement." He rightly draws attention to the fact that the independence movement was first started by indigenous Christians and was only later taken up by the Communists.

Weltmission und Gemeindebau), Bonn, to clarify the relationship between a Reformation understanding of mission and evangelical faith missions.

Rufus Anderson

Before that, however, the life and work of Rufus Anderson will be briefly discussed. A detailed study of Anderson has to date not been available.¹⁰ Theodor Christlieb dedicated a detailed and excellent obituary to Anderson in 1881 in the *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* (*General Mission Journal*),¹¹ which for a long time remained the only account of Anderson's theology.¹² In German, Peter Beyerhaus¹³ and Thomas Schirmacher¹⁴ have treated Anderson in the context of the self-reliance of young churches. There is an excellent essay by R. Pierce Beaver in English,¹⁵ which in an amended form also serves as the introduction to a selection of Anderson's writings¹⁶ by the same missiologist, Beaver.¹⁷ In addition, several shorter essays have

¹⁰ Most recently lamented by Charles J. Mellis. "Voluntary Societies as Communities: In-sights from Rufus Anderson." *Missiology* 6 (1978): 91 (as voice of the editor).

¹¹ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Dr. theol. Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift* 8 (1881): 451-471. A summary is found in: Thomas Schirmacher. *Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie*, op. cit. pp. 176-177. Christlieb's text is reproduced in full in Chapter 3 below.

¹² So, too, Peter Kawerau. *Amerika und die orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang der amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens. Arbeiten zur Kirchengeschichte Bd. 31*. Walter de Gruyter: Berlin 1958. 772 pp., p. 125, note 169.

¹³ Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*, op. cit. (English, abridged and revised version: Peter Beyerhaus, Henry Leferver. *The Responsible Church and the Foreign Mission*. World Dominion Press: London, 1964. 200 pp.) and Peter Beyerhaus. "The Three Selves Formula: Is it built on biblical foundations?" Op. cit.

¹⁴ Thomas Schirmacher. *Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie*, op. cit., p. 176-177+209-210+223-226.

¹⁵ R. Pierce Beaver. "Rufus Anderson's Missionary Principles," pp. 43-62 in: *Christusprediking in de Wereld*. FS J. H. Bavinck. Kok: Kampen, 1964; parts of the essay are also found in the following articles by the same author: R. Pierce Beaver. "Rufus Anderson," p. 27 in: Stephen Neill et al. (eds.). *Lexikon zur Weltmission*. Brockhaus/ Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission: Wuppertal/Erlangen, 1975; R. Pierce Beaver. "The Legacy of Rufus Anderson," op. cit.

¹⁶ R. Pierce Beaver. *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson*, op. cit. On pp. 5-6, various obituaries are mentioned that do not yield particularly much, the most important of which is A. C. Thompson. *Discourse Commemorative of Rev. Rufus Anderson, D.D., LL.D.* ABCFM: Boston, 1880.

¹⁷ On Beaver and his other publications, see F. Dean Lueking. "The Legacy of R. Pierce Beaver." *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 14 (1990) 2-6; Charles J. Mellis. "Voluntary Societies as Communities: Insights from Rufus Anderson." Op. cit.

appeared.¹⁸ The most detailed account of Anderson's life and individual decisions is found scattered in Peter Kawerau's work on American missionary work in the Orient.¹⁹

In 1810, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was founded as the first American missionary society,²⁰ having previously worked largely among the Indians of North America.²¹ The rea-

¹⁸ Wilbert R. Shenk. "Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?" *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 5 (1981): 168-172; Wilbert R. Shenk. "The Origins and Evolution of the Three-Selfs in Relation to China." Op. cit.; Jan Verkuyl. *Contemporary Mission: An Introduction*. Op. cit., pp. 186-187; J. Leslie Dustan. "To Advance the Gospel: By R. Pierce Beaver" in: *Church History* 37 (1968) 232.

¹⁹ Peter Kawerau. *America and the Oriental Churches: Origin and Beginning of the American Mission among the National Churches of West Asia*. Op. cit. (see index), especially pp. 124-125 +160 +211-213 +217-220 +265-270 +277-279 +292-294 +305 +310 +322-329 +362-364 +405-406 +500 +604 +625-629.

²⁰ The best German language account of the formation of the ABCFM is found in Peter Kawerau. *America and the Oriental Churches: Origins and Beginnings of the American Mission among the National Churches of West Asia*. Op. cit., pp. 90-176. See also Clifton Jackson Phillips. *Protestant America and the Pagan World: The First Half Century of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, 1810-1860*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge (Massachusetts, USA), 1969. 370 pp.; Peter G. Gowing. "American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM)," pp. 22-23 in: Stephen Neill et al. (eds.). *Lexikon zur Weltmission*. Brockhaus/ Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission: Wuppertal/Erlangen, 1975. In English, mention should be made of, first, standard works by Anderson himself: Rufus Anderson. *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*. Boston, 1860 and Rufus Anderson. *History of The Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in India*. Congregational Publ. Society: Boston, 1875. 438 pp., pp. 1-7; then more recently: Fred Field Goodsell. *You Shall Be My Witnesses*. ABCFM: Boston, 1959. 300 pp.

²¹ Rufus Anderson's first and much-used book, published shortly after he finished his studies, deals not coincidentally with missions among Indians: Rufus Anderson (ed.). *Memoir of Catherine Brown, a Christian Indian of the Cherokee Nation*. Crocker & Brewster: Boston, 1824¹, 1825²; American Sunday School Union: Philadelphia, 1832³. Regarding the first Calvinist missionaries among the Indians, see R. Pierce Beaver. "Missionary Motivation Before the Revolution." *Church History* 31 (1962) 216-226 (and the literature cited there), and Iain Murray. *The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy*. Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, 1971. 301 pp.; Norman Pettit. "Editor's Introduction," pp. 1-83 in: Jonathan Edwards. *The Life of David Brainerd*. Norman Pettit, ed. Yale University Press: New Haven/London, 1985. 615 pp. here esp. pp. 24-70. (Brainerd was a missionary to Indians.) It is often overlooked that modern world missions began largely with the work of Calvinist, post-millennialist pastors who had emigrated from England to America to preach the gospel to the Indians. William Carey, among others, was also among the Calvinist Baptists.

son for the foundation was the desire of students of Andover Theological Seminary, a newly founded Calvinist college belonging to the revival tradition of Jonathan Edwards,²² to go into missions. At the first ordination and sending forth in 1812, Rufus Anderson was taken along by his father. He was deeply impressed by this, studied at the same college beginning in 1819, and entered the service of the ABCFM in 1822, initially as editor of the missionary magazine, in 1826 as assistant to the executive secretary, and from 1832 onward as executive secretary. He held this position until 1866. He then served as honorary secretary of the ABCFM and professor of missiology at Andover Theological Seminary until his death. He thus held a leadership position within the ABCFM for a total of 58 years.

During his time as secretary of the ABCFM, Anderson wrote countless sermons, pamphlets, and expert assessments.²³ Hardly a mission leader might be considered to have reflected the work of its mission society in such a way in writing as Anderson. Anderson was often accused of having led the board of the ABCFM dictatorially. If the board found him to be right after long negotiations, it was often because of the thorough and detailed opinions he wrote after a defeat in a vote. His instructions to the missionaries and mission stations are also extensive missiological analyses. The ABCFM had 1,200 missionaries at the time of Anderson's retirement in 1866, only 6 of whom had been admitted independently of Anderson's involvement, while all the others were his students or had been suggested or appointed by him.²⁴ When the aforementioned is considered, one can

²² The Calvinist revivalist preacher Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) called for a world-wide chain of prayer for world mission in his paper "A Humble Attempt to Promote Explicit Agreement and Visible Union Among God's People in Extraordinary Prayer for the Revival of Religion and the Advancement of Christ's Kingdom on Earth" (Boston, 1748) (now as *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, vol. 2, Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, 1992 (reprint of 1834/1974), pp. 278-315). The missionary understanding of Jonathan Edwards, the revival movement he defined, and the ABCFM are excellently described in Peter Kawerau. *Amerika und die orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang der amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens*. Op. cit., pp. 1-176. The divergences of this revival movement from classical Calvinism are described by Peter J. Leithart. "Revivalism and American Protestantism," pp. 46-84 in: James B. Jordan (ed.). *The Reconstruction of the Church. Christianity and Civilization*, vol. 4. Geneva Ministries: Tyler, Texas, 1985; similarly Peter J. Leithart. *The Great Awakening and American Nationalism. Biblical Horizons Occasional Papers* 7. Biblical Horizons: Tyler, Texas, 1990 (copied).

²³ Anderson's unpublished and published writings are in part mentioned in R. Pierce Beaver. *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson*, pp. 39-44.

²⁴ R. Pierce Beaver. "Rufus Anderson's Missionary Principles." Op. cit., p. 61.

imagine the extent of the correspondence of this man who disliked leaving questions unanswered and who liked to commit himself in expert opinions and instructions to ensure that the work was not simply worked on but constantly reflected upon in the light of set principles. Especially during his famous month-long inspection trips to the mission fields (Mediterranean: 1828, 1829, 1844, 1845; India: 1844, 1845; Sandwich Islands: 1863), he drew up plans for the work and discussed them with the missionaries. During his visit to India in 1855, for example, he restructured the entire work in a very short time by dissolving the central stations, establishing village churches, and ordaining native pastors.

In addition to this difficult-to-access material, Anderson wrote several extensive works after 1866 on the history of his missionary society in general, in the Orient, in India, and on the Sandwich Islands,²⁵ now called Hawaii. The latter book was published in German by the Basel Mission in 1872.²⁶ Therefore, there is hardly a mission society that has as detailed history from the beginning as the ABCFM. In 1869, Anderson's lectures on missiology, which he had given at six American universities, appeared in book form under the title *Foreign Missions*.²⁷

Probably no other missiologist put his thoughts down on paper in such detail, had such a great influence on mission practice, and was willing and

²⁵ Rufus Anderson. *Memorial Volume of the First Fifty Years of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*. Boston, 1860; Rufus Anderson. *History of The Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Oriental Churches*. 2 vols. Congregational Publ. Society: Boston, 1872, pp. 438 and 485 (see regarding this work Mary A. Walker. "The American Board and the Oriental Churches." *International Review of Missions*. 56 (1967): 214-223; and Julius Richter. *Mission und Evangelisation im Orient*. *Allgemeine Evangelische Missionsgeschichte*, vol. 2, 2nd edition. *Der Rufer* (Werner): Gütersloh, 1930, pp. 42-44); Rufus Anderson. *History of The Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in India*. Congregational Publ. Society: Boston, 1875. 438 pp.; Rufus Anderson. *Geschichte der Missionen des American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Sandwich Islands*. Congregational Publ. Gesellschaft: Boston, 1870. For the various editions of these works by Anderson, see National Union Catalog Pre-1956 Imprints, Vol. 15. Mansell, 1969, pp. 630-633. Articles on the history of Anderson's ABCFM are cited by R. Pierce Beaver. *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson*. Op. cit., pp. 39-40.

²⁶ Rufus Anderson. *Geschichte der Mission auf den Sandwich-Inseln* (English title: *History of the Mission to the Sandwich Islands*). Verlag des Missionskomptoirs: Basel, 1872. 208 pp. The translation is slightly abridged and quite freely translated (cf. *ibid.*, p. iii); cf. the preface by inspector Josenhans pp. iii-v, reprinted as Chapter 4 of this book.

²⁷ Rufus Anderson. *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*. Charles Scribner: New York, 1869. 366 pp.

able to put his theoretical demands into practice to such a high degree. R. Pierce Beaver summarizes, “This most influential figure in American mission was both a theorist and a practical leader.”²⁸

Self-Reliance as the Goal of Mission

The independence of the local church as the goal of mission and the struggle against the loss of the indigenous nature of mission by Western culture did not comprise an additional principle for Anderson or the answer to specific problems on the mission field. Rather, they were the epitome of New Testament mission itself. His model and exemplar is Paul and his mission with co-workers. Paul was able to plant so many churches only because he made the nascent churches self-reliant as quickly as possible, leaving them to do actual evangelism in the surrounding area (1 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Romans 15:14-32). By focusing on training indigenous workers and elders, Paul was able to leave for the next mission site in the shortest possible time. At the same time, he involved all the churches he had planted in his missionary work, especially by including workers from these churches (referred to as “apostles of the church”) on his missionary team.

For Anderson, this approach was inseparable from the gospel.

“The apostolic idea of the local, self-governing church, which had been lost to the world for a long time, was rediscovered, it was one of the greatest results of the Reformation.”²⁹

It has been much debated whether the famous formula “self-supporting, self-governing, self-propagating” goes back to Rufus Anderson or to his British colleague Henry Venn.³⁰

Wilbert R. Shenk has pointed out that the idea of the self-reliance of mission churches has already been able to be proved since William Carey (1761-1834), with whom, so to speak, modern world mission begins. Already in his famous mission call of 1792, with which the modern mission

²⁸ R. Pierce Beaver. “Rufus Anderson,” p. 27 in: Stephen Neill et al. (ed.). *Lexikon zur Weltmission*, op. cit.

²⁹ Rufus Anderson. *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*, op. cit., pp. 16-17.

³⁰ See on Venn a selection from his writings: Max Warren (ed.). *To Apply the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Henry Venn*. Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (USA), 1971, and the appreciation for Venn by an African historian cited and discussed there on pp. 15-16. See also generally C. Peter Williams. *The Ideal of the Self-Governing Church: A Study in Victorian Missionary Strategy. Studies in Christian Mission 1*. E. J. Brill: Leiden/Cologne, 1990. 310 pp.

and the so-called Protestant mission century (1792–1914) began,³¹ Carey called for indigenous Christians to be made part of the clergy as soon as possible. He wrote:

It might be equally significant that, if God blessed their work, they encouraged every gift that manifested itself among the people entrusted to their care. If such people were educated, many benefits could be derived from their knowledge of the language and customs of their countrymen, and the change in their way of life would give great weight to their ministry.³²

And it was self-evident to Carey that indigenous Christians could become good theologians:

And if similar efforts were made in other parts of the world, and were accompanied by divine blessings (which we have every reason to expect), might we not expect, even among those who at present seem scarcely human, to find able theologians, or to find skillful treatises to read in defense of the truth?³³

Shenk, however, overlooks the fact that before Anderson and Venn, what actually constituted this self-reliance was never really concretized and catalogued. Therefore, the question of which of the two is the actual starting point for this concretization may well be asked.

Peter Beyerhaus, who gives Anderson a certain temporal precedence over Venn, points out the startling parallels between the two.³⁴ Born in the same year, both became leaders of their country's oldest and largest missionary society and both shaped Protestant missionary work for decades to come.³⁵

³¹ Wilbert R. Shenk. "The Origins and Evolution of the Three-Selfs in Relation to China." Op. cit., p. 28.

³² William Carey. *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens* . . . Ann Ireland: Leicester, 1792 (Reprints 1818, 1892, 1934, 1961), p. 76.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 69–70.

³⁴ Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*. Op. cit., p. 45 inter alia; generally on Anderson, pp. 45–56.

³⁵ These parallels were arguably first pointed out by A. C. Thompson. *Discourse Commemorative of Rev. Rufus Anderson* . . . Op. cit., p. 39. See also Wilbert R. Shenk. "Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?" Op. cit., p. 168; Max Warren. "Foreword." in Max Warren (ed.). *To Apply the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Venn*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (USA), 1971. pp. 11–12, here p. 11.

Wilbert R. Shenk has devoted a separate article to the relationship between Anderson and Venn.³⁶ Anderson and Venn occasionally exchanged official letters from the two missionary societies and met in London in 1854 and 1855.³⁷ Both expressed great respect for each other, as when Anderson wrote of Venn, “No one is better informed on mission matters than he is.”³⁸ Overall, Shenk’s investigation yields little in the form of tangible results. It seems significant to me, however, that Anderson, in a letter dated August 18, 1952 to Venn, proposes that the CMS could take over the work done by the ABCFM among Greeks in Constantinople, although other American mission societies locally present were interested.³⁹ Here, in fact, I think the theological affinity of spirit between the Reformed confessions of the two mission societies is evident: here the Westminster Confession of Reformed Americans, there the 39 Articles of the Anglican English. Moreover, Shenk has shown that Anderson and Venn already frequently used the three elements of the call for self-reliance individually in the years 1841–1855, even if they are not explicitly mentioned in a single sentence until later.⁴⁰ It must therefore remain an open question as to which of the two first viewed the three elements together.

Beyond this, however, Peter Beyerhaus has also pointed out the great difference between Anderson and Venn, which resulted from their different understanding of the church.⁴¹ Venn was Anglican and always thought of the “church” as a national, Episcopal church. Anderson, on the other hand, had a different understanding of church:

When the value of local, indigenous churches as an excellent instrument for the renewal of the Gentile world is most emphatically stressed, the word church is used only in the sense of a united, local body of Christians, whether governed by general election, by elders chosen for the task, or in any other way.⁴²

Elsewhere Beyerhaus has also written:

³⁶ Wilbert R. Shenk. “Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?” Op. cit.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

³⁸ Rufus Anderson. *Foreign Mission: Their Relations and Claims*, op. cit., p. 111, Note 1.

³⁹ Wilbert R. Shenk. “Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn: A Special Relationship?” Op. cit., 169.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 170–171.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* and Peter Beyerhaus. “The Three Selves Formula: is it built on biblical foundations?” Op. cit., pp. 394f.

⁴² Rufus Anderson. *Foreign Missions*, Op. cit., p. 23.

It must be remembered that Anderson was a Congregationalist, and that he applied this formula to the local church, for which he desired complete autonomy. It is also worth noting that in formulating the missionary goal, his real interest lay with the third ingredient (the preaching of the gospel). The independent churches were not a goal in themselves, but they were responsible for the spread of missionary work.⁴³

The understanding of the church has far-reaching consequences for the importance of self-reliance:

Here lies the crucial difference between Venn's and Anderson's use of the formula. For Venn, the self-reliance thus described stands at the end of the church development process; for Anderson, it forms the basis of organizing the (local) churches as soon as possible. Most important of all is the third link (namely, self-propagation, added by TS), initially missing for Venn but which for Anderson can sometimes stand at the beginning.⁴⁴

This difference also sheds light on the question of the origin of the self-propagation formula. Wilbert R. Shenk reduces this to a small common denominator:

Whereas Rufus Anderson's first pronouncements on the indigenous church came from the question of bringing up indigenous leadership, Henry Venn was at that time concerned with another question, financial self-perpetuation.⁴⁵

However, while he had a stronger focus on the local church and its leadership, Anderson did not lose sight of people groups as a whole. On the contrary, the self-propagation of the local churches is, after all, aimed at the missionization of entire people groups. This becomes clear, for example, in Anderson's theoretical reflections at the end of his history of mission on the Sandwich Islands:⁴⁶

A foreign missionary society may regard its work among a heathen people as complete when, through its labors, a popular Christian congregation has

⁴³ Peter Beyerhaus. "The Three Selves Formula: Is it built on biblical foundations?" Op. cit., p. 394.

⁴⁴ Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*, op. cit., p. 52.

⁴⁵ Wilbert R. Shenk. "The Origins and Evolution of the Three-Selves in Relation to China." Op. cit., p. 29.

⁴⁶ See the judgment of Inspector Josenhans in the preface by Rufus Anderson. *History of the Sandwich Islands Mission*, p. iv, which is reprinted in this book as Chapter 4.

arisen which governs and sustains itself, and demonstrates so much spiritual life that it does not merely continue after the mission society has receded but proves itself to be a leaven which in the end leavens the whole mass. From this point of view, it is not always necessary that the whole country and people everywhere be Christianized beforehand. Yes, experience has shown that indigenous churches, for their full development, must not only be self-sustaining but also themselves have to be effective; they must, so to speak, also do external missionary work. The effort to drag mission churches through a long series of years and make them self-reliant and a vital community will always prove fruitless without such activity. Inner mission will flourish all the more vigorously alongside external mission but will be insufficient without it. If no heathens are accessible outside one's own country, the mission should, whenever possible, withdraw before the whole territory has been won, so that the indigenous church may find itself compelled not only to unify, but also to move offensively.⁴⁷

A little later, he explains this using a concrete example:

As it seems to us that in conducting mission work in general, too little attention has been paid to the fact that it should be brought to a conclusion as soon as possible. The mission to the Sandwich Islands has already been 50 years in the making, and yet it would have been dragged on even longer if the governing authority had not insisted on its completion. The error lay in the underestimation of the spiritual viability of the indigenous church and the indigenous pastorate and the overestimation of long continued instruction and training of the indigenous clergy in newly formed Christian congregations. It has also not been sufficiently considered what an enlightening influence the Holy Spirit exerts everywhere, and that among a hundred converts there will surely be found a man who, with a proper knowledge of the Bible, has the necessary gifts to take over the care of a congregation gathered from the Gentiles. If the American missionaries and mission leaders had acted resolutely on this principle from the beginning, the work might have reached its goal 20 years earlier.⁴⁸

In the introduction to the German edition of this work, the Inspector of the Basel Mission Josef Josenhans briefly summarized as follows:

The history of the Sandwich mission further makes it clear to us that the aim of missionary work in a country and among a people must not be merely

⁴⁷ Rufus Anderson. *History of the Sandwich Islands Mission*, op. cit., pp. 192-193.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 193-194.

he conversion of individual souls. Rather, it is a question of the formation of self-reliant national churches, for which mission is only the means.⁴⁹

This is not the place to go into detail about Anderson's criticism of the spread of Western culture on the mission fields. He was quite prepared to take drastic measures here and saw far in advance the disastrous consequences that coupling missions with Western education and culture was bound to have.⁵⁰

Anderson, despite the emphasis on the local church, also related mission to whole people groups because, as a *postmillennialist*, he concretely expected the conversion of whole people groups. While it is true, as R. Pierce Beaver rightly emphasizes in the Festschrift for Walter Freytag,⁵¹ that Anderson wanted to lead the main motivation for mission again more strongly from the postmillennialist expectations "back to the great motive of love for Christ,"⁵² this was conceivable only because at that time postmillennialism was common in the USA⁵³ and Anderson shared it as a mat-

⁴⁹ Josef Josenhans. "Foreword," pp. iii-v in: Rufus Anderson. *History of the Sandwich Islands Mission*. Verlag des Missionskomptoires: Basel, 1872. Here p. iv. See the full text of the foreword in Chapter 4 of this book.

⁵⁰ See also criticism in R. Pierce Beaver. "The Legacy of Rufus Anderson," op. cit., p. 96, that Anderson indeed saw the problem of linking evangelism and civilization but solved it too one-sidedly by excluding "civilization" and thus also all social and cultural questions. *Here revenge was taken in that the great revival in the USA associated with the name of Jonathan Edwards, of which Anderson is one of the greatest representatives, arose from Calvinism. However, it was strongly reduced to personal issues and thus abandoned the breadth of the Reformation and Calvinism, both of which wanted to embrace and change the entirety of life and culture.* See the comments above on Peter J. Leithart. "Revivalism and American Protestantism." Op. cit. and Peter J. Leithart. *The Great Awakening and American Nationalism*. Op. cit. R. Pierce Beaver. "Rufus Anderson's Missionary Principles." Op. cit., p. 60 also points out that the question of independence in Anderson's work and in general at that time was not yet connected with the question of cultural adaptation.

⁵¹ R. Pierce Beaver. "Eschatology in American Missions," pp. 60-75 in: Jan Heremlink, Hans Jochen Margull. Basileia: *Walter Freytag zum 60. Geburtstag*. Evangelischer Missionsverlag: Stuttgart, 1959, p. 70.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ See *ibid.*, pp. 60-75; Peter Kawerau. *Amerika und die orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang der amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens*. Op. cit., pp. 624-629 (chapter entitled "Weltmission und Millennium").

W. O. Carver. *Mission in the Plan of the Ages*. Revell: New York, 1909, pp. 213-282 chapter entitled "The Missionary Consummation—Prophecy of Missions") still notes that this view is the most widespread missionary motivation. Those who see postmillennialism as a mere aberration are at the same time distancing themselves from most of Protestant mission history.

ter of course, as especially two smaller writings, “Promised Advent of the Spirit” and “Time for the World’s Conversion Come,”⁵⁴ demonstrate.⁵⁵

It is often overlooked that modern world missions largely began with the work of Calvinist, postmillennialist pastors who had emigrated from England to America to preach the gospel to the Indians. Postmillennialism was the mother of Anglo-Saxon missions,⁵⁶ as was true not only of proper Calvinists but also of Calvinistic Baptists, such as William Carey.⁵⁷ The close connection between postmillennialism and mission goes back to the Reformation via the Puritans of America and England.⁵⁸ Incidentally, the same is true of German-speaking missions, for Philipp Jakob Spener, August Her-

⁵⁴ Reproduced in chapter 9 of this book. Our book owes its title to this sermon by Anderson.

⁵⁵ Peter Kawerau. *Amerika und die orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang der amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens*. Op. cit., pp. 624-629; Details and excerpts ibid. 70-72 and the complete text in R. Pierce Beaver. *To Advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson*, Op. cit., pp. 45-70. For a detailed account of Anderson’s postmillennialism, see Peter Kawerau. *Amerika und die orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang der amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens*. Op. cit., pp. 626-629.

⁵⁶ All research on the subject confirms this, such as Iain Murray. *The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy*. Banner of Truth Trust: Edinburgh, 1971, 301 pp.; Norman Pettit. “Editor’s Introduction,” pp. 1-83 in: Jonathan Edwards. *The Life of David Brainerd*. Ed. Norman Pettit. Yale University Press: New Haven/London, 1985, 615 pp. Here in particular pp. 24-70; R. Pierce Beaver. “Missionary Motivation Before the Revolution”. *Church History* 31 (1962) 216-226 (and the literature cited there); R. Pierce Beaver (ed.). *Pioneers in Mission: . . . A Source Book on the Rise of American Missions to the Heathen*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (MI), 1966; Peter Toon (ed.). *Puritans, the Millennium and the Future of Israel: Puritan Eschatology 1600 to 1660*. James Clarke: Cambridge, 1970. 145 pp. and the following, excellent dissertations: J. A. de Jong. *As the Waters Cover the Sea: Millennial Expectations in the Rise of Anglo-American Missions 1640-1810*. J. H. Kok: Kampen, 1970. 250 pp.; Charles L. Chaney. *The Birth of Missions in America*. William Carey Library: South Pasadena (CA), 1976. 338 pp.; Peter Kawerau. *Amerika und die orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang der amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens*. Op. cit.; Johannes van den Berg. *Constrained by Jesus Love: An Inquiry into the Motives of the Missionary Awakening in Great Britain in the Period between 1698 and 1815*. J. H. Kok: Kampen, 1956. 238 pp.

⁵⁷ See William Carey. *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens . . .* Op. cit., part. pp. 12 + 77 + 79.

⁵⁸ See Allen Carden. *Puritan Christianity in America*. Baker Book House: Grand Rapids (Michigan, USA), 1990, pp. 94-95, 108-110. Cf. Carey’s positive mention of the “Puritans” in William Carey. *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens . . .* Op. cit., 85 (like the Puritans, he advocates tithing there even in New Testament times).

mann Francke, and other Pietist fathers of missions were also postmillennialists.⁵⁹ Those who dismiss postmillennialism merely as a historical aberration in the history of theology are distancing themselves, intentionally or unintentionally, from all the early history of Protestant mission and practically all the first great Protestant missionaries.

Self-Reliance and Reformed Confession

Anderson wanted to derive the content, goal, and method of mission exclusively from God's Word. Hermann Gundert summarizes this succinctly:

The Doctor had learned that that mission theory is best which strives to follow the great Apostle to the Gentiles most closely. At the same time, he still

⁵⁹ The postmillennial orientation of Carey's programmatic writing on world mission (*ibid*) is often overlooked, as is the postmillennial orientation of the programmatic writing on Pietism, Philipp Jacob Spener's *Pia Desideria* (Philipp Jacob Spener. (Philipp Jacob Spener. *Umkehr in die Zukunft: Reformprogramm des Pietismus: Pia desideria*. Ed. Erich Beyreuther. Brunnen: Giessen, 1975²), which—especially via August Hermann Francke—also initially gave the German Pietist mission a postmillennialist character. Spener formulates postmillennialism as follows: "that before the end of the world the Roman Babylon and the papacy would be overthrown from the ground up / whereas the Jewish people will be converted again by divine grace / and thereby the knowledge of God will be gloriously increased in all places / the Christian Church being transformed into a much more glorious church. and in such the fulfillment of all other divine promises / that belong to this time / should take place, / to which I also refer the thousand years of the Revelation of John. Against this doctrine / which after all is so stately grounded in the Scriptures / and also according to most of its parts has to oblige not only ancient, but also our church teachers" (German: "daß noch vor dem ende der welt das Römische Babel und Pabstthum von grund auf gestürztet / hingegen das Jüdische volck durch göttliche gnade wiederum bekehret / darmit aber die erkenntniß Gottes aller orten herrlich gemehret / die Christliche kirche in einen viel herrlichern und heiligern stand gesetzt / und in solchem die erfüllung aller übrigen göttlichen verheissungen / die in diese zeit gehören / erfolgen solle / wohin ich auch die tausend jahr der Offenbarung Johannis ziehe. Gegen diese lehr / die doch so stattlich in der schrift gegründet / und auch nach meisten ihren stücken nicht nur alte, sondern auch unsrer kirchen lehrer zu beypflichten hat") (Philipp Jacob Spener. *Theologische Bedencken*. 4 parts in 2 vols. Publication of Waysen-Haus: Halle 1712-1715., Vol. 3, pp. 965-966); see Martin Greschat. "Die 'Hoffnung besserer Zeiten' für die Kirche," pp. 224-239 in: Martin Greschat (ed.). *Zur neueren Pietismusforschung. Wege der Forschung CDXL*. Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft: Darmstadt, 1977 (with many source texts as evidence); Gerhard Maier. *Die Johannesoffenbarung und die Kirche. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 25*. J. C. B. Mohr: Tübingen, 1981, pp. 354-355 (see generally on Spener's eschatology pp. 353-366).

finds difficult problems in many details. In part, he attempts to lead somewhat closer to solving them and partly only modestly hints at the solutions. That we have in him a sober, insightful guide for this field will also become sufficiently palpable to doubting or critically oriented readers when they accompany him to those mission fields about which he can bear witness from his own visual inspection.⁶⁰

Anderson was at the same time—and for him this was actually the same as following Paul—an “orthodox Calvinist,”⁶¹ as evidenced by his belief in double predestination and in the special providence of God relating to all good and evil events. His Calvinism was the driving force of mission. He wrote the following, for example: “No intelligent missionary⁶² would go on working hopefully and joyfully after abandoning faith⁶³ in particular providence.”⁶⁴

Like William Carey,⁶⁵ Anderson precisely did not conclude from the divine providence of all events (“providence”) that mission need not take place. Rather, he concluded that God wills and enables mission, especially in his day through the many open doors that were available.

I will now show briefly that the “three-self formula” in Rufus Anderson is inseparably connected to his Calvinist confession. This is not only true for the understanding of the church, even though it is always particularly clear that Anderson led a missionary society of Congregationalist and Presbyterian congregations and thus proceeded from the Reformed understanding of the church. It was very early on that the differences to Henry Venn became clear. Venn, however, also came from a church with a Reformation confession, partly even strongly influenced by the Reformed side, the 39 Articles.

A brief example may illustrate the problem. Anderson held with virtually all Protestant missionary societies that missionary work in the area of

⁶⁰ (Hermann Gundert). “Zur Missionswissenschaft.” *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin NF14* (1871): 412-413, here p. 413. The full review is reproduced in Chapter 5 of this book.

⁶¹ R. Pierce Beaver. “Rufus Anderson’s Missionary Principles.” Op. cit., p. 52.

⁶² Alternatives in the footnote of the German version are “nachdenkender” and “vernünftiger” at the point where “intelligent” is used in this English translation.

⁶³ Rufus Anderson. *History of The Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Oriental Churches. Vol. 1.* Congregational Publ. Society: Boston, 1872, p. VI.

⁶⁴ The German version refers here to the English Calvinist technical term “particular providence.”

⁶⁵ See William Carey. *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens . . .* Op. cit. above all pp. 10-12, 67-68, 80.

Oriental churches should result in revivals in those churches but not in new church planting.⁶⁶ Missionaries and new indigenous converts should be given a free hand. Anderson's Calvinist confession, however, dictated that no image ministry of any kind was allowed.⁶⁷ In the end, this had to lead to a break with Oriental churches, which, however, was not paternalistically enforced but took place almost by itself through the imparting of Calvinist doctrine to new converts.

At this point, however, the difference to so-called post-classical missions should above all be addressed. The term comes from Klaus Fiedler.⁶⁸ In referring to classical missions he means the denominational mission societies, which mostly arose out of the Reformation tradition. By post-classical missions he means (in order of emergence) the missions of the Brethren movement including the Free Missionaries, the Faith Missions (which he traces back to Hudson Taylor and equates with today's evangelical missions), and the missions of the Pentecostal movement. One could then also call the missions of the first and second re-

⁶⁶ On Rufus Anderson: Rufus Anderson, *History of The Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to the Oriental Churches*. 2 vols. Congregational Publ. Society: Boston, 1872. 438 und 485 pp. (1875²); see Peter Kawerau, *Amerika und die orientalischen Kirchen: Ursprung und Anfang der amerikanischen Mission unter den Nationalkirchen Westasiens*. Op. cit. On other missionary societies: *ibid.* and Julius Richter, *Mission und Evangelisation im Orient. Allgemeine Evangelische Missionsgeschichte Vol. 2. 2. Der Rufer* (Werner): Gütersloh, 1930², p. 42; Mary A. Walker, "The American Board and the Oriental Churches." *International Review of Missions*. 56 (1967): 214-223.

⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, p. 218 the corresponding document of the ABCFM of 1844 from Anderson's pen.

⁶⁸ See among others Klaus Fiedler, "Der deutsche Beitrag zu den interdenominationalen Missionen," pp. 187-197 in: Hans Kasdorf, Klaus W. Müller (eds.), *Bilanz und Plan: Mission an der Schwelle zum Dritten Jahrtausend. FS George W. Peters. Evangelische Missionslehre Bd. C2*. VLM: Bad Liebenzell, 1988. and the comments on it in Thomas Schirrmacher, "Hans Kasdorf/ Klaus W. Müller (eds.) Bilanz und Plan . . ." (review). *Jahrbuch Mission 21* (1989): 190-192; additionally Klaus Fiedler, "125 Jahre Glaubensmissionen: Die Anfänge." *Evangelikale Missiologie 2/1989*: 19-25. The article "Die Bedeutung der Einzigartigkeit Jesu Christi für die Theologie der Glaubensmissionen" by Klaus Fiedler is expected to appear in a report on a joint AfeM and AfeT conference in Tübingen (edited by Rolf Hille, Brockhaus Verlag). In addition, his dissertation on the early history of faith missions, especially in Africa, which I was kindly allowed to use for this article, is forthcoming (Klaus Fiedler, *Ganz auf Vertrauen: Geschichte und Kirchenverständnis der Glaubensmissionen*. TVG, Brunnen: Gießen, 1992). [Later addition: Meanwhile also published in English as *The Story of Faith Missions*. Regnum Books: London 1995, republished as *International Faith Missions in Africa: History and Ecclesiology*: Mzuni Press: Malawi, 2018.]

vivals (Pietism, etc.) classical missions and the faith missions the missions of the third revival (Holiness Movement, etc.).

The difference between today's evangelical and ecumenical mission work is therefore already over a century old. Generally speaking, ecumenical missions are Reformation missions that have become "liberal." Faith missions are missions that have differed from Reformation theology to a greater or lesser extent and on a differentiated and large number of points. Neither can claim a strictly Reformational (e.g., Lutheran or Calvinist) confession any longer, which should be understood whether one considers this a welcome or a regrettable development.

The example of eschatology makes this clear. The amillennialism and postmillennialism of the Reformation churches and their missions are contrasted with the humanistic-ecumenical eschatology of ecumenical missions and the premillennialism and dispensationalism of postclassical missions, although this is of course only a rough grid. This corresponds precisely to the currents of the Reformation period, in which, besides Lutherans and Reformed, there were also humanists (Erasmus advocated missions!⁶⁹) and Anabaptists or so-called "enthusiasts." Humanists and Anabaptists were nevertheless often at pains to demonstrate their agreement with the Reformers.

Today, however, this development has largely led to true Reformation mission theology and practice drying up, even if both still exist. This must be noted, whether one welcomes it or not. In Rufus Anderson, we encounter a theologian with a strictly Calvinistic confession (the Westminster Confession). His confession had already been somewhat modified by the revival under Jonathan Edwards, so that it no longer fully corresponded to the mission theology of the Puritan tradition from which he came,⁷⁰ but one can also learn from Anderson how today's missions differ from the classical position. It is almost ironic that such a strong expression of Reformation theology in missions should be found in the USA, since Hans Ehrenberg could claim in connection with missions that most churches in North America are "descendants of the enthusiasts of the 16th century." It is easy to overlook the fact that there are still a number of Reformed churches and missions that adhere to the infallibility of the Bible, which see themselves neither as ecumenical nor as evangelical or enthusiastic

⁶⁹ See Dr. Schmidlin. "Erasmus von Rotterdam über die Heidenmission." *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 4 (1914): 1-12.

⁷⁰ See Iain Murray. *The Puritan Hope: Revival and the Interpretation of Prophecy*. Op. cit. and Peter J. Leithart. "Revivalism and American Protestantism." Op. cit.; Peter J. Leithart. *The Great Awakening and American Nationalism*. Op. cit.

and therefore make few headlines (e.g., Reformed Episcopal Church, Orthodox Presbyterian Church).

The moment the post-classical missions adopted Rufus Anderson's formula, it took on a different meaning and became a kind of prism in which the individualism of the Brethren, Holiness, and Pentecostal movements, but also the practical cooperation of evangelical communities, were bundled. Today, those who make arguments against the self-reliance formula usually do not direct their accusations against Rufus Anderson. Rather, they direct their accusations against the understanding of post-classical missions. Moreover, Anderson's confession was a corrective that pointed out the limits of the cultural accommodation he had repeatedly called for. Without such detailed dogmatic and ethical limitation, many postclassical missions found it difficult to accommodate such adaptation theologically and often caught up in confession formation only after indigenous churches were founded.

In postclassical missions, the call to missions is initially an entirely personal, mystical event. To be sure, Anderson was in a position to write the following, albeit about the particular case of missionaries to the Sandwich Islands:

The missionary is not, strictly speaking, the employee of society and of the churches. Rather, a missionary is a servant of Christ working for his Lord. Society can only enable him to do this work under the most favorable conditions possible.⁷¹

But for Anderson, within the framework of the Westminster Confession, vocation is always a church matter. The missionary is ordained by the

⁷¹ Rufus Anderson. *Geschichte der Mission auf den Sandwich-Inseln*. Op. cit., pp. 194-195. J. Leslie Dustan. "To Advance the Gospel: By R. Pierce Beaver." Op. cit., p. 232 is a typical example of how Anderson today is unilaterally claimed for personal reputation, without even hinting at the denominational or creedal question. It must be admitted, however, that Anderson himself nowhere defined exactly what he actually understood by this reputation and therefore himself made later misunderstandings possible. Anderson, however, demanded a very far-reaching autonomy on the part of the missionary towards his missionary society, as Charles J. Mellis emphasizes in "Voluntary Societies as Communities: Insights from Rufus Anderson," op. cit. p. 92. At the same time, however, Mellis makes clear that Anderson arrived at this view because he paralleled the missionary with the pastor, who (at least in congregationalist churches) also has extensive local freedom in going about the work at hand. Again, it must not be overlooked that this, however, at the same time again subordinated the missionary to creedal issues and church discipline.

churches and is subject to the church confession. The Reformed confession of predestination, which is foreign to most faith missions, makes personal guidance by signs difficult since, after all, *everything* that happens comes from God. Only in retrospect can the Reformed recognize God's miraculous guidance. Before that, however, the individual only has the word of God, the ecclesiastical community, and reason to make decisions.⁷² Surely this is the reason why such comprehensive opinions as Anderson wrote were often lacking in faith missions in the beginning. (This is no longer true, however, of more recent times and the present).

The role of the Westminster Confession in Anderson's work is similar. It was an indispensable link between all the emerging mission churches. The fact that self-reliance can drive churches apart only became a major problem when the intentionally interdenominational faith missions were unwilling and unable to commit to a detailed, denominational confession. While this made the practice of recruiting new missionaries and many other things easier, and this was also entirely in keeping with the basic theological position that personal experience and guidance from God was more important than a "dry" confession, it was bound to lead to new tensions and divisions on the mission field, previously known only from the divisions between the various denominations. In the end, of course, every missionary had his confession, but in theory it did not matter. The result was and is often that one's own confession remains unconscious and is only activated when someone else suddenly says something "wrong". As a result, however, a confession can hardly be questioned, and secondary matters quickly move into the foreground. For example, if for Anderson as a Calvinist the Trinity, predestination, the rejection of a free will with Luther and the doctrine of sin irrevocably inherited from Adam were in the center, in faith missions it is often other questions, for example coming from the area of eschatology.

I conclude with a quotation from Peter Beyerhaus on the "three-self formula" that points in a similar direction:

Protestant mission is rooted in Pietism, and this accounts for both its initial strength and its weakness. Its strength lay in its earnest and self-sacrificing zeal to win souls for the Lamb, its weakness lay in its spiritual understanding

⁷² See Barbara Donagan. "Godly Choice: Puritan Decision-Making in Seventeenth-Century England." *Harvard Theological Review* 76 (1983) 3: 307-334. The Puritans sought to know the will of God through "prayer, providence, casuistry, and conference" (ibid. p. 334), that is, through prayer for wisdom, acceptance of circumstances sovereignly wrought by God, application of biblical case commandments, and through extensive consultation.

of the church and the little importance it attached to visible form and service. As a result of this failure to build up the church, indigenous Christians became both spiritually and materially dependent on European and American missionaries.⁷³

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⁷³ Peter Beyerhaus. "The Three Selves Formula: Is it built on biblical foundations?" Op. cit., p. 393.

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2. Rufus Anderson and Theodor Christlieb

(1985)

Thomas Schirmmacher

This chapter is a translation of all sections related to Rufus Anderson from the work entitled Theodor Christlieb and His Mission Theology (original German title Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie).¹ This chapter is intended to provide background to the obituary of Rufus Anderson by Theodor Christlieb (Chapter 3), as this obituary is, in my opinion, the best account of Anderson's concerns. Thus this chapter is about how Christlieb knew Anderson, what they had in common, and how Christlieb conveyed Anderson's cause in Germany.

New York 1873

Originally, the 6th International Alliance Conference was to be held in New York in 1870.² . . . However, due to the Franco-Prussian War, the conference was postponed and rescheduled for 1873.³ It finally took place from October 2 to October 10, 1873. Christlieb, together with other German theologians, had already traveled to the United States in September and became acquainted with as many works and people as possible on a tour. Especially decisive was the meeting with the greatest American mission leader and missiologist Rufus Anderson (1796–1880), who had been retired since 1866 but was still actively involved in the American Board of Commissioners for

¹ This is an excerpt from section “2.7.8.1.1. New York 1873” (excerpt: pp. 109-111), the entire section 2.7.12.4.12. (pp. 176-177; the heading has been retained), and section “4.2.6. Rufus Anderson” (pp. 223-226) from Thomas Schirmmacher. *Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie*. Verlag der Evangelischen Gesellschaft für Deutschland: Wuppertal, 1985. 301 pp. The text is printed unchanged. The bibliographical references in the notes have been shortened and adapted to the citation style of the introductory essay and, apart from a few additionally mentioned works, refer to its bibliography. In brackets one finds summarized references that would be a mere repetition of the information given in the introductory essay.

² *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung* 11 (1869): 7-8; see Edmund Spieß. *Die Evangelische Allianz und ihre Generalversammlung in New York*. Jena, 1874, p. 51, and the following notes.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 50.

Foreign Missions (ABC FM) in Boston.⁴ Christlieb adopted the emphasis on the self-reliance of the native church from Anderson.⁵ Christlieb told him about the planned *Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift*, or AMZ (translation of the title: *General Missionary Magazine*), and thus established a lasting AMZ connection with Anderson.⁶ He was impressed by Anderson's emphasis on theological training for missionaries.⁷ The personal connection continued at joint events during the conference.⁸ It continued until Anderson's death in 1880. Christlieb wrote an obituary for him in the AMZ, in which he introduced all of Anderson's writings.⁹ Christlieb devoted himself intensively to American missiology, opening the newly established missiology lecture of the practical theologian Prentiff at Union Theological Seminary in New York with an impromptu lecture.¹⁰ Although Christlieb was to become the formative figure at the conference, he himself was greatly influenced by his encounters with the American Inner¹¹ and Outer Missions.¹²

⁴ On Anderson, see his major works (Anderson's major works are listed here); additionally (the most important articles on Anderson are listed here; including ones that go beyond those mentioned above) Albert Ostertag, "Die Universitäten und ihre Stellung zur Mission." *Evangelical Missionary Magazine NF 2* (1858): July, pp. 298-304, 309, 311, 318.

⁵ See Theodor Christlieb. *Reich Gottes, Gemeinde, Kirche nach biblischem Begriff*. Mühlheim, 1882; Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Op. cit.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 452.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 451-452; Theodor Christlieb. "Die Mission auf der evangelischen Allianz in New York 1873." *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift 1* (1874): 71-82, 113-123, here p. 74.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 73ff, 77; Edmund Spieß. *Die Evangelische Allianz und ihre Generalversammlung in New York*. Op. cit., p. 99.

⁹ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Op. cit.; on the personal connection especially p. 452. Anderson participated as a speaker at the 1879 conference in Basel as did Christlieb, *Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung 21* (1879): 629; see Christlieb's quote in Theodor Christlieb. "Der Missionsberuf des evangelischen Deutschlands." *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift 2* (1875): 193-210, 289-302, 337-354, here p. 337.

¹⁰ Gustav Warneck. "Das Studium der Mission auf der Universität." *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift 4* (1877): 144-164, 209-230, here p. 160; the same as a book: Gustav Warneck. *Das Studium der Mission auf der Universität*. Bertelsmann: Gütersloh, 1877, p. 16. The fact that this incident is reported by Warneck demonstrates, among other things, that there were conversations between Christlieb and Warneck about Christlieb's trip to the USA (see mention of Christlieb's mission lecture in Bonn, *ibid.*).

¹¹ Edmund Spieß. *Die Evangelische Allianz und ihre Generalversammlung in New York*. Op. cit., p. 61 on Christlieb's statements on home mission.

¹² Theodor Christlieb. "Die Mission auf der evangelischen Allianz in New York 1873." Op. cit., p. 74: "Wer, wie Schreiber dieses, Gelegenheit hatte, in die gewaltige Ma-

One can become extraordinarily well informed about the New York conference and Christlieb's greatest triumph through the official report, a detailed report of Christlieb in the AMZ, and a book by Edmund Spiess¹³ of Jena. Right at the opening night, Christlieb spoke in fluent English after delegation leader Dorner and spontaneously shook hands with his predecessor, Fisch, a Frenchman, in front of thousands of spectators in a demonstration of reconciliation. "It cannot be imagined what this scene of phrenetic enthusiasm, of a storm of applause, called forth."¹⁴

"In Memory of Dr. Theol. Rufus Anderson and His Missionary Principles," 1881¹⁵

The meeting between Christlieb and Anderson before and at the International Alliance Conference in 1873 has already been mentioned, as has their conversation about the AMZ and the theological education of missionaries.¹⁶ In his article, Christlieb first follows the description of these events with a curriculum vitae of Anderson,¹⁷ in which he primarily de-

schinerie der hauptsächlichsten Missionsgesellschaften Amerikas an Ort und Stelle etwas einzublicken . . ." (translation of the quotation: "Who, like Schreiber, had the opportunity to look on site into the enormous machinery of the most important missionary societies of America . . ."). He thereby specifically mentions the ABCFM's 6000-volume mission library; see the tremendously accurate and varied coverage throughout the article.

¹³ Philipp Schaff. *History, Essays, Orations, and other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance*. New York, 1874; Theodor Christlieb. "Die Mission auf der evangelischen Allianz in New York 1873." Op. cit.; Edmund Spieß. *Die Evangelische Allianz und ihre Generalsversammlung in New York*. Op. cit.

¹⁴ On the opening: *ibid.*, pp. 60-62; on Fisch *ibid.*, p. 62; the words when shaking hands in G. F. Nagel. *Eine heilige, christliche Kirche*. Bad Blankenburg, 1931, pp. 134-135; see Philipp Schaff. *History, Essays, Orations, and other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance*. Op. cit., p. 9; J. F. G. Goeters. "Theodor Christlieb." *Bonner Gelehrte, Band Evangelische Theologie, 150 Jahre Universität Bonn*. Bouvier: Bonn, 1968, pp. 103-120, here p. 118.

¹⁵ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Dr. theol. Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Op. cit.

¹⁶ See the other two sections just reprinted from "Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie."

¹⁷ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur die anderen beiden soeben abgedruckten Abschnitte aus der Arbeit „Theodor Christlieb und seine Missionstheologie.“ "Erinnerung an Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Op. cit.; see additionally on Anderson (following is a list of works about Anderson; among them, in addition:) Horbach. *Repertorium zu Warnecks Allgemeiner Missions-Zeitschrift*, Vols. 1-25, 1874-1898. Bertelsmann: Gütersloh, 1903, on the key word 'Anderson'; Seppo A. Teionen. *Gus-*

scribes his time as long-time director of the ABCFM. In the next part of the work he introduces all of Anderson's missionary writings.¹⁸ Considering him the most important¹⁹ mission historian, he begins with the three major works on the history of the ABCFM on the Sandwich Islands, in the Orient, and in India. Anderson also collected historical material in order to assess it comprehensively and to derive principles from it. This is followed by Anderson's missionary lectures, which appeared in three book editions, and additionally in countless shorter pieces.

In the last part,²⁰ Christlieb summarizes his mission views and principles,²¹ which probably coincide completely with his own, so that in places it is not possible to tell whether Christlieb is representing Anderson or commenting on him in a supplementary way. The essential points will therefore be reproduced.²²

1. The missionary is not first of all subject to a home church or missionary society but to Christ.²³
2. Within the mission field, missionaries form a self-governing republic in which all are equal.²⁴
3. The goal of every missionary is to bring as many pagans as possible to the gospel.
4. In Anderson's words, this means:²⁵ "The mere spread of civilization for civilization's sake does not belong de jure to the evangelist's chief task."

tav Warneck in *Varhaisen Lähetzsteorian Teologisest Perustee: The Theological Basis of Gustav Warneck's Early Theory of Missions*. Suomalaisen Teologisen Kirjallisuusseuran Julkaisuja LXVI. Helsinki, 1959, pp. 28-30+61+152+160-169+180+195-198; Johannes Verkuyl. *Inleiding in de nieuwere Zendingwetenschap*. Kok: Kampen 1975., pp. 93-95; Olav Guttorm Myklebust. *The Study of Mission in Theological Education*. Vol. 1. Avhandlingar utgitt av Egede Institutt: Studies of Egede Institute 6. Oslo, 1951, pp. 25, 145-146, 297, 308+, 61f, 384-388; Hans-Werner Gensichen. *Glaube für die Welt*. Gütersloh, 1971, p. 38.

¹⁸ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Op. cit., pp. 458-461.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 451.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 461-470.

²¹ Ibid., p. 461.

²² The count is not original.

²³ Ibid., pp. 461-462.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 462.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 463.

Christlieb then elaborates on this point:²⁶

We are in danger, through the superiority of our education over that of the pagan world, to cloud the merely spiritual missionary purpose by adding too many civilizing intentions and means, education in agriculture, all kinds of crafts, and so on. This admixture has weakened the faith of our present-day missionaries in the conversion and transformation power of a very simple Gospel proclamation, has weakened their trust in the divine power of the Word. In this they are essentially lagging behind the apostolic mission.

To this end, he cites negative examples from Anderson's experience and criticizes the too-close connection between colonization policy and mission. He does not spare sharp words against governments and wants to prevent the mission from perishing when the colonizers' political power crumbles locally.

5. The indigenous are not to be denationalized. Their culture and language must develop. Therefore, the language of instruction should be that of the people, not that of the conquerors.²⁷
6. It is necessary that missionary communities are quickly led to self-governance.²⁸ Therefore, it is better if the missionary never becomes a pastor.²⁹ Christlieb expressly takes his stand behind the "three-self formula" coined by Anderson: *self-government, self-support, and self-propagation*.³⁰
7. No means of catholic power politics and financial politics are to be used. Instead, spiritual means are to be used and the poor are not to be alienated.³¹
8. The Pauline principles of mission³² are, in brief: (a) save souls; (b) use spiritual means in the gospel; (c) work only by the power of the

²⁶ Ibid., p. 463.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 463.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 466; see pp. 466-469.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 469.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 468-469. Anderson developed the formula at the same time as Henry Venn, Hans-Werner Gensichen. *Glaube für die Welt*. Op. cit., p. 38. The best work on this is by Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*. Op. cit., especially pp. 31-55; see the abridged version by Peter Beyerhaus. "Selbständige Kirchen," p. 489 in: Stephen Neill inter alia. (eds.). *Lexikon zur Weltmission*. Brockhaus/Verlag der Ev.-Luth. Mission: Wuppertal/Erlangen, 1975.

³¹ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze," Op. cit., pp. 469-470.

³² Ibid., p. 468.

Spirit; (d) begin success with the poorest and then have it rise from there; e. use presbyters as quickly as possible to make congregations self-reliant.

Rufus Anderson, Theodor Christlieb, and Gustav Warneck

Christlieb's influence on Gustav Warneck is thus very strong, but certainly not all-encompassing. Warneck's concentration on missiology and his immense writing activity in the AMZ led to Warneck becoming more secure and mature in his views. When he presents his program right at the beginning of the AMZ on the basis of the Great Commission, he basically agrees with Christlieb but systematically summarizes what was common in their thinking. Especially as a result of the growing independence, the further close cooperation³³ and lasting agreement are astonishing.

The question of the independence of the mission church proves to be particularly fruitful for the early period of the relationship between Christlieb and Warneck. On one hand, one gains a better overview through their writings than in the case of other questions; on the other hand, Beyershaus created a good starting point with his work on *The Self-Reliance of Young Churches as a Missionary Problem* (translation of the original German title *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*),³⁴ which only Christlieb does not take into account.³⁵ It has already become clear that the self-reliance of mission churches since Graul in 1864 has been advocated by many German mission leaders and emerged as a certain pragmatic necessity. Christlieb counts the willingness to let the newly emerged churches become self-reliant among the German gifts to world mission. The issue was also of interest in Germany insofar as, for example, independence from the state or church leaders, was also at stake.

Beyershaus assumes that Warneck took over the idea of independence from Rufus Anderson and Henry Venn, i.e., from the USA and England, but he merged it with the German idea of the *Volkskirche* (German state people's church). It seems that the real originator of this synthesis was Christlieb.

From London, Christlieb was familiar with the principles of English missionary societies. With the Church Missionary Society, of which

³³ See Hans von Saubertzweig, *Er der Meister, wir die Brüder: Geschichte der Gnadauer Gemeinschaftsbewegung*. Gnadauer Zentrale: Denkendorf, 1977, pp. 91-92.

³⁴ Op. cit.

³⁵ Op. cit.; see the mentioned abridged version. On Warneck in particular see also Johannes Dürr, *Sendende und werdende Kirche in der Missionstheologie Gustav Warnecks*. Basel, 1947, pp. 179-239.

Henry Venn was secretary from 1841 to 1871, there was even family affinity through the Weitbrechts. Venn's calls, for example for the self-reliance of the Anglican dioceses on the mission field or the use of ordained laymen, which was also recommended to him by Schrenk, were known to him. In addition, he had good experiences with his London parish, which was completely independent.

In 1873, the year of Venn's death, Christlieb met Rufus Anderson, the great American representative of the self-reliance of mission churches. Christlieb states in his obituary for Anderson in 1881 that through his visit in 1873 a close connection was established between the AMZ and Anderson with his missionary society.³⁶

Beyerhaus has explained in detail the views of Venn and Anderson and worked out the differences.³⁷ Which of the two is the actual originator of the famous "three-self-formula" can therefore no longer be determined. Venn seems to have demanded self-reliance first, Anderson explicitly self-propagation. The differences arise directly from their denominational background. Whereas Venn, as an Anglican, had in mind above all the independence of the Anglican diocese with several local congregations and pastors, Anderson, as a Congregationalist, was concerned with the independence of the local congregation and its elders.

In his approach, Christlieb was surprisingly able to take up both directions. For him, the self-reliance of the local congregation was just as necessary for self-building up and self-perpetuation as the self-reliance of the church federation for self-ordering and self-expansion. The fact that Christlieb repeatedly uses composites with "self-" in the context of the kingdom of God shows how much self-reliance arises organically from his thinking. Again and again Christlieb urges self-reliance³⁸ and recommends

³⁶ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Op. cit., p. 452.

³⁷ Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*. Op. cit., pp. 31-55. Beyerhaus also discusses Roland Allen and J. Merle Davis and the Germans Warneck, Bruno Gutmann, and Christian Keysser. He then works through the history of three mission churches and offers a theological opinion. See on Venn the dissertation by Timothy E. Yates. *Venn and Victorian Bishops Abroad*. Studia Missionalia Upsaliensia XXXIII. Uppsala, 1978.

³⁸ In addition to what is mentioned above and documented, see Theodor Christlieb. "Theologie, praktisch." *Realenzyklopädie für Theologie und Kirche*. Band 15. Leipzig, 1885², pp. 504-533, here pp. 507, 517, 520, 522; Theodor Christlieb. "Der Missionsberuf des evangelischen Deutschlands." Op. cit., p. 196 inter alia; Theodor Christlieb. *Zur methodistischen Frage in Deutschland*. Halle/Bonn, 1882², pp. 39ff (for the local church); *Theodor Christlieb in Verhandlungen der Gnadauer Pfingstkonferenz*. Band

concrete steps toward it. If one reads his article on Anderson³⁹ and Anderson's *Foreign Missions*,⁴⁰ Anderson's tremendous influence becomes clear through the similarity. Here, too, pragmatic biblicism comes to the fore. It is no accident that most of Anderson's works belong to the field of mission history. Anderson justifies his going back to Paul as follows:⁴¹ "Experience has led me to the conclusion that the apostolic mission should be regarded substantially as the model for Christian mission to the Gentiles in all succeeding ages."

Zahn, wrongly, with his 1890 article entitled "Self-Reliant Churches, the Goal of Evangelical Missionary Work" (original German title: "Selbständige Kirchen, das Ziel evangelischer Missionsarbeit"),⁴² has been called the first important representative of self-reliance.⁴³ Already in 1896, Carl Mirbt wrote, "All our missionary societies now view the formation of self-reliant national churches as a goal, and one is in the midst of the effort."⁴⁴ This process must have started much earlier, already at the beginning of the AMZ. Christlieb is at this point the bridge to the Anglo-Saxon mission world.

If one considers Beyerhaus' remarks on the idea of self-reliance in Warneck, Christlieb's influence becomes even more likely. Already in 1874 self-reliance is expressed in Warneck's remarks on the Great Commis-

2. Kassel, 1890, pp. 8-9 und *Verhandlungen der Westfälischen Provinzialsynode. Band 16. Schwerte*, 1880, p. 34.

³⁹ Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Op. cit. as well (the already mentioned works about Anderson follow).

⁴⁰ Rufus Anderson. *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*. Op. cit. The book is an attempt to apply the Pauline mission strategy to modern missions. This attempt has been especially taken up by Roland Allen, most notably in Roland Allen. *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*. London, 1912¹; 1953³; Grand Rapids 1962; 1979¹⁰; see Roland Allen. *The Spontaneous Expansion of the Church*. London, 1927; Grand Rapids 1962; 1982; Roland Allen. *The Revelation of the Holy Spirit in the Acts of the Apostle*. Oxford 1917; Roland Allen. *Missionary Principles*. London, 1913; see. Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*. Op. cit., pp. 56-68 and H. W. Metzner. Roland Allen: *Leben und Werk*. Gütersloh, 1970; C. I. van Heerden. *Die spontane uitbreiding van de kerk bij R. Allen*. Kampen, 1957.

⁴¹ Rufus Anderson. *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*. Op. cit., p. 29.

⁴² M. Zahn. "Selbständige Kirchen, das Ziel evangelischer Missionsarbeit." *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift* 16 (1890): 289ff.

⁴³ Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*, Op. cit., p. 78.

⁴⁴ Carl Mirbt. *Der deutsche Protestantismus und die Heidenmission im 19. Jahrhundert. Vorträge der theologischen Konferenz zu Gießen. XI. Folge*. Gießen, 1896, p. 36. See regarding this p. 53, Note 2 with bibliographical references, above all reports from the Bremen Mission Conferences.

sion.⁴⁵ Then in 1876, in his essay on the biblical office of elders, he clearly spoke about it.⁴⁶ Here the ideas of Anderson are clearly the inspiration, since Warneck refers self-reliance directly to the local elders and ties in with Paul. Nevertheless, the synthesis with popular Christianization is noted. In the following, Warneck repeatedly defends the self-reliance of the national churches and rejects Büttner's criticism of it in a note in about 1880.⁴⁷ In 1896, however, he then expressed sharp criticism of Anderson. The idea of self-reliance stems from his independentism. For years he himself had been one of the blind admirers, but then in more recent years he had been taught by the facts.⁴⁸ In the last part of his monumental *Missionslehre* (translation of the title: *Missionary Doctrine*), the self-reliance of indigenous churches remained a fundamental theme.⁴⁹ However, the local church and its elders were not affected. Instead, the concern was for the pastorate and church leadership. In addition to self-direction, which Warneck put first instead of self-preservation, self-propagation is missing. It is probably a given for Warneck in the indigenous pastorate.

Warneck's change of course after Christlieb's death seems to be further evidence of his influence. Christlieb develops self-reliance from his theology and relates it to the local and national church. Thus, the self-reliance of individual believers is a prerequisite for it. In addition, self-propagation and self-expansion are unconditional goals. Warneck initially adopted the meaning of self-reliance "blindly," as he himself referred to it. However, since he did not know of German free churches or Anglo-Saxon churches and thought entirely within the framework of the German national church,⁵⁰ the self-reliance of the local church did not come into his field of vision. The importance of the elders is not organically connected with his thinking. Later—without the mediating contact of Christlieb—he noticed

⁴⁵ Gustav Warneck. "Der Missionsbefehl als Missionsinstruktion." *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift* 1 (1874): 41-49, 89-92, 137-151, 185-194, 223-239, 281-290, 377-392.

⁴⁶ Gustav Warneck. "Das biblische Ältestenamnt." *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift* 3 (1876): 435ff.

⁴⁷ *Allgemeine Missionszeitschrift* 7 (1880): 256, Note by Gustav Warneck on the article by C. G. Büttner. "Vom Erfolg in der Mission." *Ibid.*, pp. 193-210, 241-261.

⁴⁸ Quoted in detail in Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*. Op. cit., p. 82.

⁴⁹ Gustav Warneck. *Evangelische Missionslehre: Ein missionstheoretischer Versuch*. 3. Abteilung, 3 vols. Gotha: 1897-1903. Cf. Johannes Dürr. *Sendende und werdende Kirche in der Missionstheologie Gustav Warnecks*. Op. cit., p. 179-239; Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*. Op. cit. pp. 78-87.

⁵⁰ See the account of Warneck's difficulties with Anglo-Saxons in Martin Kähler and Johannes Warneck. *Gustav Warnecks Sendung*. Verlag Martin Warneck: Berlin, 1911. p. 13f.

the independentist tendency of the concept. At the same time, he brought up the concept of maturity and called for connections with other churches. All this was self-evident for Christlieb, since independence begins with the individual and ends in self-propagation, which in turn is possible only in cooperation with other peoples. Since Warneck, who left Germany only once, did not know of an ecumenical dependence of individual churches on each other and could not imagine a situation without a *Volkskirche* (people's church), he had to modify Anderson's concept, even at the cost of losing the decisive moment of self-propagation. It is regrettable that Christlieb's early death set back the question of the self-reliance of young churches for decades.⁵¹

⁵¹ See additionally on this Hans-Werner Gensichen. *Glaube für die Welt*, Op. cit., pp. 38-42; J. C. Hoekendijk. *Kerk en Volk in de Duitse Zendingwetenschap*. Utrecht, 1948 (German adaptation: J. C. Hoekendijk. *Die Zukunft der Kirche und die Kirche der Zukunft*. Stuttgart/ Berlin, 1964); Peter Beyerhaus. *Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen als missionarisches Problem*, Op. cit.; Peter Beyerhaus. "Selbständige Kirchen." Op. cit.; Theo Sundermeier. *Mission, Bekenntnis, Kirche. Missionstheologische Probleme des 19. Jahrhunderts bei C. H. Hahn*. Wuppertal, 1962, pp. 134ff; W. Keller. "Die jungen Kirchen im Ringen um ihre Eigenständigkeit." *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* 1935: 117ff; W. Keller. "Der innere Aufbau der jungen Kirchen auf den deutschen Missionsfeldern." *EMM* 1939: 99ff; Emmanuel Kellerhals. "Nicht Herren eures Glaubens, sondern Gehilfen Eurer Freude: Die Selbständigkeit der jungen Kirchen in biblischer Sicht." *Evangelisches Missions-Magazin* 1941: 161-168. In all works disregarding Christlieb, it becomes clear how later modifications of the idea of self-reliance were laboriously worked out and which are already found in Christlieb. See additionally the above-mentioned literature on Anderson, Venn, and Allen, especially Johannes Verkuyl. *Inleiding in de nieuwere Zendingwetenschap*. Op. cit., pp. 80ff, 93ff.

II. ON RUFUS ANDERSON IN THE 19TH CENTURY: GERMAN VOICES

3. Theodor Christlieb on Rufus Anderson

(1881)

Unabridged translation from the German original: Theodor Christlieb. "Zur Erinnerung an Dr. theol. Rufus Anderson und seine Missionsgrundsätze." Allgemeine Missions-Zeitschrift 8 (1881): 451-471 (unabridged). Annotation numbers of the original annotations have been adapted.

Prof. Dr. Theodor Christlieb (1833-1889) was professor of practical theology at the University of Bonn and co-founder of the Community Movement of the West German Evangelical Alliance. He was among the first German theologians to lecture on missiology.

On May 30, 1880, a man passed away in Boston without any particular illness, gently and painlessly, at age 84. This man was indisputably among the first promoters of the Gentile mission cause in America, and among mission historians of the English tongue, he may well be the first and most eminent: Dr. theol. Rufus Anderson.

Anderson was for many years secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the well-known oldest and largest American missionary society. Competent missionary friends used to say of him, with reason, that "he knew more about missions than any man living"; the highly respected rector of a university once declared of him, "Anderson is the wisest man in America"; the head of the Supreme Court wrote of him to a friend, "I consider Dr. Anderson a very good and very great man."¹²⁷ He was a missionary leader of high distinction, who, on several inspection tours, had become personally acquainted with all the principal areas of effort of his society in the South Seas and in Asia. He had also recorded the missionary history of the most important of these in voluminous writings of permanent value. In other writings of perhaps even greater importance for the Protestant missionary world, he carefully recorded the results of his observations from his many years of experience as secretary (= inspector) and correspondent of a large society, and the results included his his-

¹²⁷ See especially the memorial addresses by Rev. Dr. A. C. Thompson and Dr. Clark regarding their colleague, *Discourse Commemorative of Rev. Ruf. Anderson, D. D., L. L. D.*, Boston 1880, pp. 18. 19. 35, from which we also take the following notes on his personal living circumstances.

torical studies of old and newer missionary methods. He has thus given both leaders and workers in mission noteworthy hints and directives for proper Protestant missionary principles. He indeed also deserves a certificate of honorable remembrance in this journal, and this all the more, the more unknown his work seems to have remained to most of our German readers.

There is another special occasion for us to mention. When I visited Boston in fall 1873—this metropolitan area in New England, which is the richest in terms of financial strength and intellectual advancement—the leading lights that particularly attracted me were, next to the university, the American Board and Dr. Rufus Anderson. It was a glorious September day when, after visiting the rooms of the Board, I drove through the splendid but often noisy streets of the city out into the lovely hillside suburb of the "Boston Highlands" to visit A., who was then no longer an active secretary but was still so mentally alert that he would always spend the entire morning writing. I can still see the tall imposing figure, the finely cut face of this noble old man with the calmly scrutinizing but at the same time deeply probing eagle eye standing before me. And now, this joy of the old man when he saw our intentions from the English program of our general missionary magazine planned some time before! He saw nothing less than a "revival of the missionary spirit" in Germany. And when he described to me the principles of his society in the management of the mission and his own experiences, how without a missionary seminary candidates in theology are always fetched from the university, how he once succeeded in winning *twelve* young theologians for missionary service in the theological seminary at Andover after an enthusiastic speech, when he explained to me how much it had become apparent that the same amount of theological education was required for missionaries as for the pastors at home; how the Board left the choice of mission field to each individual candidate; how everyone would be sent out by them, possibly married, and so on—how quickly the unforgettable evening passed. However, a bond was also forged, which has continued ever since in very friendly and manifold fruitful relationships between the leaders of the Board and our journal.

A. was born in North Yarmouth, Maine on August 17, 1796, the same year in which his eminent colleague, the last secretary of the Church Missionary Society in London, Rev. Henry Venn, saw the light of day. His ancestors belonged to those brave Scottish Covenanters who moved to Ireland under James II and so heroically defended Londonderry against the King's great army in 1689. About 160 years ago, A.'s great-grandfather emigrated with a small band of Irish Scots to New England, where they founded Londonderry in New Hampshire. His father was an accomplished

Congregationalist minister and true friend of the Board's first Secretary, Dr. S. Worchesters. Among the clergy of Massachusetts, he was among those who first began to share the missionary interest in the non-Christian world that had just begun burgeoning. In 1812 he took his son to Salem for the first ordination of missionaries, which made a lasting impression on young Rufus. Before his death in 1814, he made serious preparations to write a history of the heathen mission and had his son copy all kinds of documents for this purpose. Through this as well, his thoughts were directed more and more to missionary service, and this completely so since he, as a student at Bowdoin College in 1816-1818, had completely surrendered himself to the Lord and dedicated himself to his service. Here he distinguished himself among his fellow students so soon that they elected him president of their literary society. At the end of this course, he graduated with honors on the basis of a treatise on "the probable progress of the world," which was already quite indicative of his school of thought and future career.

After a trip to South America to strengthen his fragile health, from which a description of the social and religious condition of Rio de Janeiro appeared in the *Panoplist* and *Missionary Herald* (May 1819), he entered the theological seminary at Andover (Massachusetts) in 1819, where nine years earlier the insurmountable missionary drive of some students, Mills, Newell, Judson, and Hall, had become the reason for the formation of the Board as the first American Gentile mission society. The spirit of these noble missionary pioneers was still alive there, and it was not long before Anderson, with his friends Goodell and Temple, joined the student missionary society *Sol oriens* (Rising Sun), or as it was now called. "*the Brethren*,"¹²⁸ and thus consecrated himself to the cause of missions. He showed even then an unusual maturity of character and so much practical skill that the secretary of the Board, Jer. Evarts, was able to use him repeatedly as an assistant during his vacations at the Mission House in Boston in correspondence affairs and in the publication of *The Missionary Herald*.

After completing his studies, the 26-year-old candidate was permanently employed in the Board's bureau, first as editor of the *Herald*, which had branched off from *The Panoplist* the year before. From then on, his as-

¹²⁸ This society was founded on September 7 at Williams College; its purpose was "to accomplish in the person of its individual members a mission or missions among the heathen"; each member must have served a home or foreign missionary society. In 1880 the society was moved to Andover and continued from then on under the name The Brethren; see Thompson op. cit., p. 9 and *Memorial Volume of the first 50 years of the A. B. C. F. M.*, pp. 39 ff.

sociation with the Board continued uninterrupted, and he attended, first for eight years as assistant secretary and then from 1832 onward as secretary, the meetings of the Prudential Committee regularly until 1875 and occasionally until 1879. As a result of his failing health, Evarts had to leave foreign correspondence more and more in A.'s hands, long before he was elected secretary.

When A. moved to Boston in August 1822, fresh enthusiasm for the missionary cause was still visibly on the rise. The life of Mrs. Harriet Newell,¹²⁹ that restless missionary who died at age 19 on the *Île de France* in 1812 since she was not allowed to settle in India, caused a tremendous sensation and had to be reprinted eight or ten times in quick succession—a promising omen that America was soon to also achieve excellence in missions through female teachers. The Board's young mission among the Cherokee Indians, who 40 years later were a Christian people, had just shown its beautiful first fruits and supplied A.'s pen with the material for some mission biographies that were received with applause.¹³⁰ From the mission to the Hawaiian (Sandwich) Islands, the uplifting news had just arrived that the spell of the taboo system had been broken, the idols destroyed, the temples demolished, and the joy of this burst forth in new mission songs, as in the hymn "Wake, Isles of the South! Your Redemption Is Near." It first rang out at New Haven, Connecticut, in November 1822, when new missionaries embarked for these islands. It was clear, under the prudent and energetic leadership of Dr. Sam. Worchester, the first secretary of the board, who had entered into his rest two years earlier, that the mission fields had been chosen correctly; the beginnings showed promise.

Nevertheless, it was not a post of honor. Rather, it was a very modest, quiet, and yet busy office, with a small salary, which A. took up in a small first floor room of Evarts' house. It was not by brilliant performances on the oratorical stage of great annual meetings but rather by quiet diligence, by persevering, and by unpretentious fidelity in all the duties of his profession that he began to rise higher and higher in the eyes of missionary friends and of his (Congregationalist) church in general, until he was appointed Doctor of Theology by Dartmouth College in 1836 and Doctor of Law by Bowdoin College in 1866.

It soon became apparent that he united the various qualities necessary for a missionary inspector to a rare degree: constant personal devotion to

¹²⁹ *Memoirs of Mrs. Harriet Newell: Wife of the Rev. Samuel Newell, American Missionary to India*, by Dr. L. Woods, Boston 1818.

¹³⁰ *Memoir of Catherine Brown* by Anderson, 3rd edition, Boston 1818; *Memoir of John Arch, a Cherokee Young Man*, 2nd edition, Boston 1832.

God and self-denial in matters of this world; the gift of testing the spirits in the selection of mission candidates, which was all the more necessary here because the Board always took them from the universities and did not train them in special seminaries; the mission-political eye for wise consultation of the work for the purpose of the fortification and expansion of the individual missions; the necessary prudence and insight into the details of the individual areas in questions of the proper division of time between station work and traveling preaching, in consideration of various missionary methods for the needs of the urban and rural population, in setting up principles for the establishment of lower and higher missionary schools, for the employment of native assistants, for translation of the Holy Scriptures, for the use of the press, for the raising up of congregations for the maintenance of the mission, and so on. The talent for building, so indispensable for the founding of a Gentile mission, and the combining gift, which foresees coming difficulties and entanglements from the beginning and weighs them against existing or expected forces, a gift which, of course, only sharpens and develops with experience, but which is nevertheless rooted in an innate talent—he demonstrated its possession more and more clearly and in many ways as time passed.

And how systematically he knew how to spread and strengthen missionary interest in the homeland is sufficiently shown by the fact that as early as 1823 he drafted and implemented an organizational plan for the gathering of male and female missionary friends, through which 50 aid societies and 1,000 branch associations were gradually brought into being. A. was not a man of rapid plans and vivid imagination, but of calm deliberation and diplomatic acumen. He proposed only carefully thought-out measures to his committee, but then knew how to recommend them with such weighty reasons that he usually got his way, even though members such as Judge Hubbard, Governor Armstrong, the Honorable Mr. Reed, K. Stoddard, and other important people, men of thoroughly independent judgment, were not easily taken in tow by anyone. If he was outvoted, as he often was, with his plan of operation, he not infrequently came back after some time with the same matter a second time, and then at the same time presented the committee with a treatise on the whole question, which he had written in the meantime, so complete, clear and convincing that there was no reason left for further opposition.

What was exemplary about A., however, was the constant, unwavering concentration of all his energy and time on the work of his profession. The presence of a simple-minded eye, which does not look right or left at other things but always straight ahead and undividedly at his duty, distinguished him to a very rare degree. Hence the constant prudence of his judgment

and the inner balance of his mind and spirit, which never allowed itself to be carried away to any excess, even by the excesses of others, stood out particularly impressively among his character traits. When the sad aberration of spiritualism infected wider and wider circles, he did not even take time to express his displeasure about it. When he passed by the pyramids in Egypt on one of his four great inspection trips, they could not stop him for a moment. Yes, when in India he came within a few hours of the famous rock temples at Ellora, the most marvelous structure of man's hand in all India, if not in the world, they could not divert him from his work path even for half a day! How faithfully and perseveringly he used his time even under a tropical sun! One can look, for example, at the nearly 1½-year inspection trip to India and Ceylon that he made in 1854-1855 together with the above-mentioned Dr. Thompson, to whom we owe these notes, and how he held three three-week conferences during this time and two long meetings daily (except Sundays), then traveled through the night again—as the climate there makes it necessary—to rest during the day in a lonely hut that offered no comfort whatsoever, and then not to rest, but to set his pen in motion almost uninterruptedly, and this as a man already approaching age 60.

And how calm he could remain on those voyages in the apparent danger of death! During a terrible whirlwind on the Pacific Ocean on August 20, 1863, almost everyone on board expected the sinking of the steamer. He alone showed no restlessness, in the firm belief that God would give him further work to do on earth, so that the nervous passengers gathered around him as if they would find greater safety where such calm composure was displayed. However, even in situations where it is difficult for many to keep calm and display equanimity, he never lost his composure: neither the most brilliant success could intoxicate him, nor serious misfortune bend him, nor foolish contradiction or unreasonable criticism annoy him. Even in the case of serious financial crises of his society; in the case of suddenly necessary restrictions of the work outside, as in 1837; in the case of differences of opinion on difficult questions, such as the education of native boys in American or foreign institutes, or the position of the Board on the slavery question (before the American Civil War), etc., he remained stubbornly full of calm, confident hope that everything would soon get back on track. He never felt the slightest despair about the missionary cause, because God's Word gave him no right to do so. He always remained in a uniformly joyful mood and made it a strict rule never to write an official letter if he could not feel in an elevated mood due to illness or other circumstances.

However, instead of mere testimonials of friendship, let us let his works themselves and the missionary principles laid down in them speak for him. To say nothing of the approximately 100 quarto and folio volumes (of 550 pages each) in the Board's archives, which contain countless letters from his hand, as well as of A.'s shorter publications, sermons, addresses, lectures, mission tracts, and many official publications of the Board written by him, I will mention only the extensive report prepared by A. and Dr. Thompson on their inspection trip to India (1854-1855),¹³¹ which together with the audit report of the special commission of the Board¹³² related thereto gives interesting insights into the wise missionary technique of the Board. We will therefore share some of it below. Even more comprehensive insight into A.'s views and principles can be found in the third edition of his document *On the Conditions and Requirements of Missions to the Gentiles*,¹³³ published in 1870, which arguably belongs among the most valuable aspects of his legacy. It originated from mission lectures at the theological seminary in Andover, where a permanent lectureship on Gentile missions had been founded in 1866. It sketches with a sure pen the origin of thought on mission and the sense of mission beginning with the earliest times, expressing what is apostolically characteristic, then the character of old Irish missions, then especially the historical development, principles, and methods of modern missions (see below) describing the value of indigenous congregations and preachers, the life of the missionary, obstacles in the homeland, the preparation and successes of missions, their demands on young clergy, the oppositional power of Roman missions, and so on. All this was placed against a general (not specifically American) background history of mission.

A.'s *History of the Sandwich Islands Mission*¹³⁴ shows the same calmness and prudence of an always well-considered judgment. It found a no less strong circulation and had to be published three or four times over the course of a few years. It gives us a complete picture of the conditions of this small island world from its discovery and the beginning of the mission (1820) until its mission anniversary in 1870. The mission, although promising from the beginning, at first made only moderate progress, as in its wake civilization also did. We see how this occurred with the rapid change of regents. Then, through a sudden hunger for the gospel and a general

¹³¹ *Report of the Deputation to the India Missions*, Boston 1856.

¹³² *Report of the Special Committee on the Deputation to India*, 2nd edition, New York 1856.

¹³³ *Foreign Missions: Their Relations and Claims*, 3rd edition, New York 1870.

¹³⁴ *History of the Missions of the A. B. C. F. M. to the Sandwich Islands*, 3rd ed., Boston 1872. In the 1875 edition, the title was changed to Hawaiian Islands.

revival among Gentiles in 1836-1838, an upsurge occurred that decided for the Christian future of the islands, and there was a continuation of the gospel despite papal and especially outrageous French attacks. Also, as a consequence, Christian legislative and administrative reforms came, until the islands were gradually considered evangelized and their church system became increasingly independent of the foreign mission and had to learn to stand on its own feet. It is strange that just at the point of making the Hawaiian church self-reliant (1850), the conviction broke through generally that the Hawaiians could not become an independent Christian nation if they would not at the same time vigorously develop the missionary spirit and make themselves the Evangelical mother church for other island groups.¹³⁵ Hence then the beginning of the Micronesian mission and the acquisition of the mission ship *Morning Star* for the mission purpose. Also, individual blunders of the mission leadership become openly known. That a mass influx to Evangelical mission, as we recently experienced in Madagascar and South India, also occurred earlier is shown by the interesting compilation of results of that general revival (chapters 19 and 21), from which it emerges that in 1839-1841 no fewer than 20,297 members were admitted to the then existing 18 congregations.

Far more difficult than the mission history of this relatively small and manageable area was the task that A. took up immediately after the completion of the latter, which was the history of the missions of the Board among oriental churches. A. did this no less happily. In 1873, it appeared in two strong volumes, which were reprinted in 1875.¹³⁶ It was a matter of the development of Boston missionary enterprises among seven to eight different people groups and churches, for the most part simultaneously, which lightly impaired the clarity of the account. Once area had to with missions in Palestine and Syria, which covered a period of 51 years. Then there were mission efforts among the Nestorians, which covered a period of 37 years until 1870, when these two areas were turned over to the direction of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions.¹³⁷ Furthermore, there was the 43-year mission among the Greeks (especially Athens), the 10-year

¹³⁵ "This year," Anderson says on p. 247, "was signaled by the development of a practical conviction that the Islands could not rise to an independent existence as a Christian nation, without developing the spirit of foreign missions," a hint also worth taking to heart on the question regarding the self-reliance of indigenous churches in other mission areas! See also *Foreign Missions*, pp. 106 ff.

¹³⁶ *History of the Missions of the A. B. C. F. M. to the Oriental Churches* – in two volumes, Boston 1873, 1875.

¹³⁷ Until then, Congregationalists and the New School Presbyterians had maintained these missions evenly (the Old School Presbyterians only until 1837).

mission in Assyria (Diyarbakir, Mardin, Mosul, Baghdad, etc.) which was united in 1860 with the Board's eastern Turkish mission, the 40-year mission among the Armenians (the highlight of these missions), the 12-year efforts among the Bulgarians of European Turkey (Samokor, Eski-Zagra, Banskó), the 30-year mission among Jews in Turkey (Constantinople, Salonika, Smyrna), societies left to the English and Scottish societies in 1856 at their request, and finally the influence of a 50-year mission among Mohammedans. A. solves the difficulties related to presenting these missions by neither covering them all together in one continuous narrative, nor following the history of each separately from the beginning to the present. Rather, he takes a suitable middle path, keeping the development of mission in individual areas clearly separated by specific chapters, passing from one area to the other according to the time periods of inner development, whereby the character of simultaneity is preserved and yet it is made easy to follow the history of each individual mission area separately.

It is not the place here to call attention to even the most significant of the rich canvas of these missions, which the Board continues today among Armenians, Greeks, Bulgarians, Mohammedans, and the Arabic-speaking Christians of eastern Turkey. However, a common misunderstanding may be removed in passing. One often encounters the opinion that the Board's original intention in its oriental mission was to Christianize the peoples of Islam, as if it had only gradually realized the impossibility of doing so without first reviving the dead Christian churches of the Orient, and that it was only now, as a result of this realization, that it concentrated its operations on the latter. This is not correct. The instructions to Fisk and Parsons, the very first men whom the Board sent to Palestine in September 1818, already contained this passage: "The two great questions which should always be before your souls are: What good can be done? And by what means? What can happen for the Jews? What can happen for the Gentiles? What can happen for the Mohammedans? What can happen for the Christians? What can happen for the people in Palestine? What can happen for the peoples of Egypt, Syria, Persia, Armenia?" and so on. From the very beginning, the Board's attention was thus directed to all parts of the population. The history of the development of the Armenian mission, its steady growth through many persecutions, its recent rapid increase through various revivals,¹³⁸ and its beautiful successes, in particular

¹³⁸ According to vol. 2, p. 486, in 1871 the number of Armenian Protestants in 17 main stations and 197 outposts was already 19,471, including over 4,000 communicants, 47 indigenous ordained pastors, 59 indigenous ordained preachers, 96 other assistants, 80 parishes, 222 elementary schools with 6,391 pupils; 153 pupils and 241

through many excellent educational institutions and seminaries for young men and women (vol. 2, chapter 44), is highly recommended to the reader.

A.'s last major historical work was the *History of the American Board's Missions in India*.¹³⁹ It was published in 1875. Due to the fact that the Indian missions were the very first, it should stand foremost in his series of mission histories. Entirely in the manner of the earlier histories and after a glance at the first missionaries of the Board (of whom, as is well known, Judson and Rice went over to the Baptists, who then started the Baptist mission in Burma and among the Karenes) and the opening of India to the gospel, it then gives the development of the American Mahratta Mission (1815-1873), and then it addresses the Board's mission to Ceylon, Madura, Madras and Arkot, the last of which was turned over to the Dutch Reformed Church of America in 1857 at its request.

But this is enough of the content of A.'s primary writings, as far as they have become accessible to us. One and the same trait runs through all of them, as through his work in general, and that is that they are always directed towards pure *spirituality of purpose* and *the simplest possible methods*. A look at his missionary views and principles may well confirm this in particular.

According to A., everyone who enters the service of mission to the Gentiles has to derive his authority not so much from the society or its secretary, nor from home churches, but essentially from Christ. He fulfills only a personal obligation toward his Lord without relieving the home churches of their missionary duty; it remains as binding on them as on him. The procedure is always a cooperative one, based on a contract between them and the missionary.¹⁴⁰ Each worker in the mission must be given due responsibility, and significant discretionary authority must be given to the individual missions. The missionary is due the same ecclesiastical freedom as pastors at home, principles by which the Congregationalist and descendant of the Puritans already clearly betrays himself, and by which, let the reader not forget, the Board sends out only studied missionaries. "The work of a missionary society, like the Board, which has to distribute half a million dollars annually in its budget *before* it has received them, is no less a work of faith than, for example, that of G. Muller in Bristol. The promise of regular support to the missionary on the part of the Mission Board is, after all, rooted in the faith of the latter in the promises of our great Lord.

girls in higher educational institutions and theological seminaries; 8,790 children and catechumens, etc. in 128 Sunday schools.

¹³⁹ *History of the Missions of the A. B. C. F. M. in India*, vol. 1, Boston 1875.

¹⁴⁰ See *Foreign Missions*, 3rd edition, pp. 154 ff.; Thompson, *Discourse*, pp. 28 ff.

And no case has yet occurred, nor will such ever occur, where the missionary will not have received his full salary.”

“Within his missionary territory, the missionary belongs to a self-governing ecclesiastical republic, in which each full member has equal voting rights and consequently the majority rules, but with the right (very rarely exercised) of appeal left to the governing committee and finally to the board.” “Already accustoming missionaries by their education to feel perfectly the moral weight of a majority vote, assigning to each one a measure of work which fully engages him under personal responsibility, this method of organization have proven itself admirably. This is the case, even while here and there quarrels will arise if the missionaries do not feel a proper weight of individual responsibility upon them by suitable division of labor man for man. The policy of the Board is always to place all possible responsibility on a mission which has so organized itself.” “In 60 years of experience, we have learned that the particular forms of church life, because they work quite well in the homeland, are therefore by no means those orders which correspond to the needs of young Christian congregations in pagan countries. However, which modifications should occur at that point is still an open question, the decision of which—according to our experience—should be left essentially to the discretion of the missionaries in the field.” The constitution of ecclesiastical bodies for indigenous congregations including indigenous pastors should be exclusively their business, and the missionaries should only take the position of fatherly advisors.¹⁴¹

The primary purpose for all missionary workers, both outside and at home, should always be “to bring the truthful gospel of Christ to the greatest possible number of Gentiles in the shortest possible time, and to lead them out of darkness into light.” This was the guiding thought that animated A. in all his plans and counsels. To this end the press, literary work, and the whole system of schooling and education must be subordinated and made subservient to mission. “*The mere propagation of civilization for civilization’s sake does not by right belong to the evangelists’ chief task.* The general education of a barbarous people merely with a view to their civilization is not our first duty.” As the apostles needed time to solve the question of the relation of the Gentile Christians to the Jewish law, “i.e. to secure and bring to recognition the purely spiritual basis for their outward missions, so now, by the question of the relation of our higher Christian culture in comparison with that of the present Gentiles, we have a similar difficulty, and we need still longer to overcome it and finally to recognize and strictly

¹⁴¹ *Foreign Missions*, pp. 157-159.

carry out the purely spiritual nature of our missionary work."¹⁴² We are in danger, through the superiority of our education over that of the heathen world, of somewhat clouding the merely spiritual missionary purpose by an admixture of too much civilizing intentions and means, education in agriculture, all sorts of trades, and so forth. This admixture has weakened the faith of our present-day missionaries in the conversion and transformational power of a very simple gospel proclamation, and it has weakened their trust in the divine power of the Word. In this they lie essentially behind the apostolic mission.

It is therefore not the duty of our home churches to spread higher education among any people at their expense, except as far as the direct purpose of spreading the gospel requires it.¹⁴³ As soon as possible, indigenous churches must be gathered and provided with indigenous pastors. "These must be educated beyond the average culture of their people to an appropriate, but indeed not excessive, level of education." A.'s primary endeavor was to draw up the right principles for their education, whereby he was more concerned with education to pure piety than higher academic education.

Under A.'s guidance, the board had gradually found out these principles by what were in part their own difficult experiences. Thus, he had also tried at the beginning the industrial and arable farming propagation method, e.g. in his Indian mission since 1816. But what was the result? In 1823, A. tells us¹⁴⁴ that the Board had on its Indian stations, in addition to the missionaries, 15 farmers and artisans; in 1842 only 9, in 1852 not a single one. We finally found that "a simpler, cheaper, and more effective means of civilizing the savages is the gospel alone." One missionary farmer sent to the Sandwich Islands remained there only a short time; after that, the Board did not attempt to use a second missionary farmer.

Connected with this is another missionary principle, discovered only gradually by the Board and then asserted more and more emphatically by A.: *the maintenance of the language of the indigenous as a means of instruction* instead of English, with which, as a result of that same overestimation of our Western culture as an aid for awakening spiritual life, had been attempted for a time and unfortunately has been attempted again and again today by the English side (especially in Africa). In 1835, the board founded a high school in Beirut, where, in addition to the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, Western culture was also taught by means of English. Food, ac-

¹⁴² Op. cit., pp. 94 ff.; Thompson, op. cit., pp. 28-29.

¹⁴³ This truth has also been recognized by some English missionary societies by closing their purely academic institutes in Calcutta, etc.

¹⁴⁴ *Foreign Missions*, pp. 97 ff.

commodation, clothing—everything had a Western touch in the institution. After a few years, it was found that the success of this method of education was that the pupils became more and more “foreigners in their manners, their customs, their likings, i.e., de-nationalized” and thus alienated from their own people. Therefore, in 1842, this seminary was dissolved and another was founded in Lebanon according to a simpler plan. The main intention was rigorous Bible instruction, with Arabic as the language of instruction and with an Arabic touch to everything external, thus discouraging forever all desires for the acquisition of foreign customs.¹⁴⁵

There is, A. adds, a stage of progress, e.g., in Calcutta, Constantinople, Beirut and the Sandwich Islands, where a portion of the indigenous people desire a more comprehensive and higher culture than the mission can give them. But here, wisdom requires that they be provided with such culture by means of a university, separate from the mission. Sometimes the indigenous preachers were instructed in secular sciences more deeply than was good for the early stages of the missionary work. The natural missionary order was overlooked; “first the grass, then the ears, then the full wheat in the ears!” What was the consequence? Raised too high above the average level of intelligence of their people, they craved more cultivated hearers than they found in their villages, higher salaries than they could obtain; they did not accept preaching positions in obscure places, among an ignorant people of lower caste, and often could no longer bear advice and admonition from their missionary fathers. In some places they succumbed to the temptation to engage in worldly business, and thus the effort and money expended on their education was largely lost with respect to the missionary cause.¹⁴⁶

Already on the above-mentioned inspection trip to India, the wrongness of the use of English as a medium of instruction for the Eastern cultured peoples had become quite clear to A. He therefore advised the board to abandon its English academy in Bombay as soon as possible. “English has been made the medium of instruction on far too large a scale. Experience has shown that such costly schools are by no means the most effective means of spreading the gospel and saving souls. The vernacular is the most appropriate channel for communicating the truth, for impacting the heart. Schools in which the vernacular is the chief means of instruction, and where English is taught only as a subject among other classics, rest on the soundest foundation and promise the best results.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ *Foreign Missions*, pp. 99–100.

¹⁴⁶ Just there, pp. 100–101.

¹⁴⁷ *Report of the Deputation to India*, 34, 44 ff.

Thus also in the Battikotta Seminary in Ceylon, when A. went there, English language and English studies had completely overrun Tamil. For the three classes of the seminary, there were 12 Tamil subjects and textbooks over against 35 English and 14 mixed. The students acquired knowledge mainly to be able to enter government service or otherwise gain prestige and wealth. Thus, of 96 individuals, only 11 were parishioners.¹⁴⁸ It was then necessary to make a strict distinction between English as a branch of study for individuals and as a medium of instruction for all, and to transform the seminary into an essentially theological one with devout Christian students and a Tamil language of instruction. The board's instructions to these visitors to India already contained the sentence that it was the firm conviction of the leading committee that no school could be maintained with the funds of the Board which was not essentially taught in the vernacular.¹⁴⁹

We are passing over A.'s observations concerning the self-supporting power of indigenous congregations, how he deplored their too great dependence on mission, since they mostly came from boarding schools, "those warm houses in a cold zone," and also afterwards drew their support completely or partially from the mission and to a strikingly large extent as preachers, catechists, teachers, etc. We are also passing over how he considered a congregation incapable that did not stand on its own feet enough to develop the right testimonial power among its people.¹⁵⁰ A.'s judgment on the caste *question* is also touched on only in passing. "We found that the caste was not tolerated in Ceylon in mission churches, but it was in existence in the social life of the community. And we felt that more should be done to drive it out of that also. Like intemperance among our own people, it is an evil that needs constant vigilance and constant effort, and so it will be for some time to come. Many confirmed Christians seem only too desirous of retaining their connections with heathen kindred and too fearful of the consequences of a complete break with the world." Therefore, 90 of the most respected members of the churches in Ceylon signed a declaration during A.'s presence, in which they pledged to abandon for themselves all caste distinctions and social customs and also to disapprove of them in others, because they served only to nourish pride, impair affection, and prevent manifestations of Christian kindness and love.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁸ *Report*, pp. 38-39.

¹⁴⁹ *Report*, p. 6; *Report of the Special Committee*, p. 21.

¹⁵⁰ *Report*, pp. 13, 42 ff.

¹⁵¹ *Report*, pp. 47-48.

However, one thing should be pointed out, namely how emphatically A. emphasizes that today's missionary leaders often have too little confidence for so long in the self-government of their missionary congregations by indigenous forces, and therefore often release them too late into a more self-reliant position. "Missionaries and directors," he said, "have for too long hesitated to apply to today's missions the method by which Paul treated his Gentile Christian churches. Paul left Titus in Crete, 'that he may fully establish it where he himself left it, and occupy the cities back and forth with elders,' and in spite of this comprehensive task he called the same to come to him at Nicopolis before winter. He confidently left these churches, so rapidly organized, to be self-administered for the time being. As a result of our overestimation of culture as an indispensable aid to spiritual life this apostolic example has not gained enough validity among us. For so long we have not been able to decide to believe that indigenous congregations and pastors with their lower or different civilization can stand on their own feet without external help. Hence the long-continued overall management of widely scattered indigenous congregations by a missionary from a central station. Forty years after the board's Indian mission began, that is, until its inspection by our deputation (1854), not one of our missions there had an indigenous pastor or ordained preacher. A similar situation is the Sandwich Islands, where as late as 1863 there were only a few, and in the American Indian Mission, where our board never had more than one or two indigenous pastors. And in other societies it has probably been likewise."¹⁵²

This "unscriptural policy" has often received a rebuke through God's providence. In 1842, the French took possession of Tahiti and sent away the English missionaries. Thirty years after the evangelization of this island nation, there was still no ordained indigenous pastor anywhere. The exigency of circumstances compelled the appointment of such. The excellent Dr. Tidman, former secretary of the London Missionary Society,¹⁵³ to whom A. refers in this connection, stated that "once the English had been driven out, the indigenous brethren were providentially called to the work, they showed themselves fully equal to the task. And after 20 years of French misgovernment, notwithstanding all the influences of popery on the one hand, and brandy and vice on the other, a greater number of church members now live there under the influence and instruction of these indigenous pastors than ever before." A few decades ago, when all the missionaries had been driven from Madagascar, only a few poor, timid

¹⁵² *Foreign Missions*, pp. 101-103.

¹⁵³ *Conference on Missions at Liverpool*, p. 225.

lambs of their flock remained in the midst of wolves. But what took place? God raised up among them men who took care of the little flock; and instead of the dozens of Christians under the care of European missionaries, thousands later appeared who had grown under the word of those men.¹⁵⁴

Thus, the *necessity of an indigenous pastorate* for the healthy development of an independent, influential Gentile Christian congregation is a recent discovery. In 1867, Henry Venn, secretary of the Church Mission Society, a missionary expert like few others, wrote to the Bishop of Jamaica: "It has only been lately that the discovery has been made in misiology that if the missionary is of a different and higher race than his converts, he need never attempt to be their pastor. Even if they may be attached to him by personal affection and out of gratitude for the benefits received from him, if he continually acts as their pastor, they will not form a vigorous indigenous congregation but will generally remain in a dependent position and make but little progress in spiritual maturity. Under competent indigenous pastors, the same congregation would become more self-confident and its religiosity would acquire a more manly, distinct character."¹⁵⁵

Where Anderson, Tidman, and Venn, i.e., the most experienced leaders of the largest missionary societies, agree on a missionary principle, it can fairly be considered proven. All the less can we get past this last truth without the silent question of why, especially in our German missions, a missionary is allowed to become the pastor of an indigenous congregation for such a long time and to remain so for so long.¹⁵⁶

According to Anderson, the Pauline missionary principles were simply these: "1. the end—to save souls; 2. the means for this purely spiritual end, the gospel of Christ; 3. The power which should make these means effective—a divine one, the promised help of the Holy Spirit; 4. the success—chiefly among the middle and poorer classes, from whom Christian influence first gradually rises upward; 5. after forming local churches, the apostle does not hesitate to ordain as presbyters over them the best he was able to find, and then to place upon these churches thus organized all the responsibilities of *self-rule*, *self-support*, and *self-expansion*. With the installation of indigenous pastors, the mission church must be given these respon-

¹⁵⁴ Tidman, op. cit., pp. 225-226; Anderson, *Foreign Missions*, p. 104.

¹⁵⁵ *Foreign Missions*, p. 111.

¹⁵⁶ See also on this my "Gegenw. Stand d. ev. Heidenmiss," p. 85. For example, in the Basel Mission, the Württemberg church and school administration system, with all its cumbersome requirements, believed for a long time that it had to be transferred to West Africa and India. Hence the long hesitation with the ordination of indigenous individuals.

sibilities. Mistakes, perplexities, perhaps even annoyances may occur; but how often are salutary experiences gained in this way, even in the home churches! The salary of the indigenous pastor should be based on the concept of a Christianized way of life, as his people have attained it. As early as possible, the church must be self-sustaining and from the beginning it must also be self-expanding. Only such churches are the life, strength and glory of missions! And *that is why a foreign missionary should never become the pastor of an indigenous church*. It is true that this idea of a mission church has only recently gained ground and is slowly gaining ground in Protestant mission circles; however, its general acceptance can no longer be far off, and it will contribute immensely to the reduction of expenses as well as to the development of the strength of mission.”¹⁵⁷

Great simplification in the use of means, with greater reliance on those of a purely spiritual nature, is one main reason why even today the allocation of a particular fund here and there sustains a much more extensive and rapidly developing mission than before. The main purpose and means are the same; however, as the process of operation becomes more spiritual, its influence on heart and conscience becomes more effective. “The true test of success in a mission is not progress in the form of civilization but clear evidence of religious life.”¹⁵⁸

If the Roman mission invades ours, “above all, do not use its weapons. If we do, we will be beaten with them. When decades ago some missionaries from Constantinople reported that the Jesuits had schools of great attraction with instruction in modern languages, fine arts, etc., and that they could thereby easily turn away the best students of the Protestant mission if the latter did not establish similar institutions, our answer was that Protestants can never enter into this way of operation. Such schools are the strength of the Jesuits, and in this they would always surpass us. We must do precisely what Roman mission does not do and does not want to do. Otherwise we will never succeed in accustoming the minds of the youth and of the people in general to independent thinking, research, examination, and awakening moral feeling ever more deeply. We must begin at this gap and teach the people the right intellectual, moral and Christian discipline through simple gospel preaching, which is better than all those demanding methods of education. The same was also essentially our answer to the request for beautification of church buildings due to the attractiveness of magnificent Jesuit churches. Expensive church buildings are indeed a great obstacle in our evangelical missions to heathen and act as a

¹⁵⁷ *Foreign Missions*, pp. 107-113.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

deterrent. It is not by shining buildings or pompous ceremony that the world is conquered; rather, it is by the simple preaching of the Crucified One and spreading the worship of God in spirit and in truth. Giving the Scriptures to people, organizing converts into congregations under indigenous self-government, uniting congregations into confederations over the course of time as a desideratum and as progress in Christian culture requires—by this apostolic method, upon which God's blessing rests, it is necessary to continue quietly given the invasion of the Catholics, and to labor on as we would if they did not face us."¹⁵⁹

If these principles may be felt to have in part a congregationalist origin, we must consider them essentially sound and genuinely evangelical, and we must not doubt that they will become more and more established as experience will more and more universally justify them. They have, as some official tracts show, become more and more established in the main guiding principles of the American Board.

Even after Anderson had resigned under the burden of advanced age (in 1866, if I am not mistaken) from the office of active secretary, he continued restlessly as honorary secretary, as an unceasing advisor to the board and the individual missionaries, as well as in writing. Continuously his house at Cedar Square remained a center of the association for mission friends; annually, three larger association evenings were held there. At one of them (in October 1860), no fewer than 20 different languages were spoken by the 78 guests. In 1877 the well-known dogmatist, Professor Charles Hodge of Princeton, wrote on the occasion of his golden wedding anniversary, "Our dear friend Dr. Anderson has had a golden life. It is fair that he should also have a golden wedding anniversary before he receives his golden crown."

In the last weeks of his life, as the 84-year-old man's strength waned, his constant longing was to go home to "the dear, the glorious Father's house." "Fetch a carriage!" he was able to shout, half in a dream. And the carriage was not far away. One Sunday morning, May 30, 1880, it quietly fetched him for the springs of life, where his previous friends, Lyman Beecher, Joel Hawes, Nehemiah Adams, William Stearns, one President Wayland, Professor Edwards, and Hodge were waiting for him. And what a cloud of other witnesses!

At Siroor in Marattaland, his friend and traveling companion, Dr. Thompson,¹⁶⁰ recounted that an indigenous Christian, upon beholding for the first time Anderson's tall slender figure and fine benevolent face, made

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 292-295.

¹⁶⁰ *Discourse*, pp. 40-42.

the overwhelmed exclamation, "Just like Jesus!" And in South India, when groups of converted Tamils came to meet the Board's deputation with their solemn salaams and all manner of welcomes, showing their gratitude toward the American guests, some of them brought sweet-smelling flowers and twigs, a fresh wreath of chrysanthemums and jasmine, and hung it quite gracefully on A.'s neck. On that Sunday morning, a similar scene may have taken place upstairs. Leang Afa of China, Gabriel Tissera, the firstborn of Ceylon, Babajee and Haripunt, once proud Brahmins of Bombay, Pastor John of Nicomedia, Mar Elias, the venerable Nestorian bishop Meshakah, the scholar of Damascus Asaad Shidiak, the martyr of Lebanon Kaahumann, the queen of the Sandwich Islands, and how many others probably floated gratefully towards him, while the new citizen laid down all the wreaths of their praise and his own crown before the one whom serving here was his life, his bliss. Let us also look at him gratefully with a HAVE, PIA ANIMA (rest well, pious soul)!

4. Joseph Josenhans on Rufus Anderson

(1872)

Translation of the original preface of the German translation of the German translation of Rufus Anderson's History of the Sandwich Islands Mission: Josef Josenhans. "Vorwort," pp. Iii-v in: Rufus Anderson. Geschichte der Mission auf den Sandwich-Inseln. Verlag des Missionskomptoirs: Basel, 1872.

Joseph Friedrich Josenhans (1812-1884) was head of the Basel Mission from 1850 to 1880.

The venerable and deserving Secretary for the Foreign Department of the Boston Missionary Society (American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions), Dr. Rufus Anderson, at the request of his committee, published a history of the Sandwich Islands Mission in 1870. The title of the book is *History of the Sandwich Islands Missions* by Rufus Anderson, D.D., LL.D., late Foreign Secretary of the Board. Boston: Congregational Publishing Society, 1870. No one was more qualified to give a clear and thorough account of this history than Anderson, given that he did not merely carry on the official correspondence with the missionaries of the said society in the Sandwich Islands for four decades, but was seconded by his committee to the islands in 1863 to bring to a close the mission, which had completed its task. The book closes with the description of the fiftieth anniversary in the Sandwich Islands in 1870, and thus the mission-historical canvas unrolled before our eyes receives its firm framing.

In the present paper we offer Dr. Anderson's book, with the omission of some sections which seemed to us less essential to the whole, in a free German translation to the Christian public of German tongue, and we believe that thereby we are making a contribution worth reading to our German mission literature. The content is not only attractive and interesting but also instructive; also, we would like to emphasize the following three points in particular.

1. In our days, from different sides, partly out of hostility, partly out of lack of knowledge of mission, the extremely small, hardly noteworthy successes of mission are pointed out again and again. The history of mission on the Sandwich Islands, however, as it is pre-

sented to us here in its development and in its conclusion, is an incontrovertible proof of the power of the gospel, because it is based on historical facts, through which a heathen population became a Christian nation within fifty years. The friend of missions may also use this example to reaffirm the conviction that missionary work, which is carried out in faith, love, and patience, comes to a successful end in ways determined by the Lord and in his time.

2. The history of the Sandwich Mission shows us clearly that the goal of missionary work in a country and among a people must not be merely the conversion of individual souls but the formation of self-reliant national churches, for which mission is only the means. When a people, through the work of missionaries, has been brought so far internally and externally that indigenous clergymen are available who can take over the leadership and care of the congregations independently and responsibly, and that the indigenous congregations are able to provide for their preachers and teachers independently of outside gifts, then the task of the mission has been fulfilled; offering assistance in organizing an indigenous church will be the last service rendered by the missionaries. We learn from this paper through what difficulties this goal has been achieved in the Sandwich Islands.
3. In this respect, this book may be instructive, especially for missionaries themselves. If the formation of self-reliant churches, large or small, is the goal of missionary work, then this must be strived for at all times in the various branches of missionary practice and, if possible, vigorously initiated by making the indigenous self-reliant as soon as possible and as much as possible. This is done by encouraging the members of the congregation to participate actively in the fulfillment of the obligation incumbent upon every Christian congregation, and especially by training capable indigenous preachers and teachers. If we do not work towards this goal in time, the difficulties will accumulate for the future.

May this book now, under the blessing of the Lord, also be conducive to the understanding of the grand tasks of mission in German mission circles, and may it awaken and keep warm the zeal and love for mission. History is also an indispensable teacher in mission.

Basel, November 1872
Josenhans, Inspector

5. Hermann Gundert on Rufus Anderson

(1871)

Translation of the German article by Hermann Gundert. "Zur Missionswissenschaft." Evangelisches Missions Magazin NF14 (1871): 412-413.

Hermann Gundert (1814–1893) was a missionary for the Basel Mission in India from 1838 to 1850, and thereafter the director of the Calwer Verlag (a publishing house) and co-founder of the Württembergischen Bibelanstalt (Württemberg Bible Institute).

A few years ago (*Evangelisches Missionsmagazin / Evangelical Mission Magazine*, 1869, p. 413), we tried to give an overview of the various efforts that have already been made in Great Britain and Germany to initiate representation of missiology in universities. At that time, only Scotland was able to report a fruitful realization of this justified but difficult to implement idea. From *America* we now have a complete course of lectures on missions, given successively in six theological seminaries by Dr. R. Anderson, the aged secretary of the first missionary society in New England.¹⁶¹ We see from this that in 1866 a resolution was carried by Andover Seminary to have a missions college giving at least ten lectures of three by three years, or annually; and that a Boston citizen, H. Hyde, undertook to supply the necessary funds. Dr. Anderson, who for a full 40 years had conducted correspondence with the missionaries of his society but is now retired, was induced to undertake this lecture (sic!). He brought to it his wide experience of men and things, strengthened by repeated travels to the most varied missionary areas, and the view thus gained of both the task itself and the execution of it. The doctor had learned that the best mission theory is the one that strives to follow the great apostle of the Gentiles most closely. At the same time, he still finds difficult problems in many details, which he partly tries to bring closer to their solution, and partly only hints at. The fact that we have in him a sober, insightful guide for this area will also become sufficiently perceptible to doubting or critically oriented readers, if they accompany him to those mission fields about which he can testify based on his own eyewitness experience.

¹⁶¹ *Foreign Missions, Their Relations and Claims*. By Rufus Anderson, D.D., New York 1869 (Anmerkung von Hermann Gundert).

III. FROM RUFUS ANDERSON

6. Ought I to Become a Missionary to the Heathen?

(1851)

Unabridged text of Missionary Tract No. 8 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) "Ought I to Become a Missionary to the Heathen?". Boston: The Board, 1851. The page numbers in square brackets follow the reprint in R. Pierce Beaver (ed.). To Advance the Gospel: Selections from Writings of Rufus Anderson. Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (MI), 1967. Pp. 175-184.

[175] The principal means of deciding the important question, 'Ought I to become a missionary to the heathen?' are obvious; viz., the ward of God — the providence of God — and the indications of the Spirit of God. The first is, of course, very general, and counsels all alike. The second is more particular, and if narrowly observed, the finger of Providence may often be very clearly discovered, pointing out the path of duty. Frequently, however, there are no data discoverable, from which to draw any conclusion on this ground, as when providential circumstances are very general in their character.

In case both these fail of being sufficiently definite, recourse may be had to the third means mentioned above — the counsel and guidance of the Spirit of God. This cannot fail, if sought aright. And it ought to be a source of unfeigned gratitude to God, that we have the sure promise of his unerring Spirit, to guide us in the way of truth and duty, provided we inquire for it with humble docility. Thanks to our Father in heaven, that he has said, "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."

But as the Holy Spirit, in this matter, makes use of the natural faculties and desires of the human mind, it will readily occur, that here again we fallible mortals are liable to err — liable to mistake the in- [176] clinations of our own hearts for the suggestions of the Spirit of God: or to neglect the real drawings of the Spirit, as the fanciful products of an adventurous or romantic mind. It may not, therefore, be improper to suggest a few thoughts for the purpose of guarding against mistakes on this important topic.

And, first: We are not, generally, to expect *any extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit*, taking occasion, suddenly, or from some circumstance ap-

parently trivial, to infuse into us an ardent desire for the work of missions. This, it is true, may happen in some rare cases, when even the individual himself cannot give any satisfactory account of his convictions: as in the case of the person irresistibly led to the determination to devote himself to the cause, by reading the passage: "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

And such rare and manifestly extraordinary cases should no more teach us, to wait for a similar call, than the occasional awakening of a careless sinner, by some trivial circumstance, amidst all his gaiety and folly, should teach others to give themselves no trouble, but pursue the same giddy course, until they are arrested by a similar interposition of the Spirit of God.

This suggests a second remark: that, in guiding us by his influence into the path of duty, the Holy Spirit operates on the heart, as in other cases, *by means of the truth*. There is a constant tendency in the human mind, when looking for divine direction, to expect it in some remarkable manner. So it was in the case of Naaman the Syrian, so it is with impenitent sinners in every age: and Christians themselves are liable to fall into the same error: and the more so, in proportion to the magnitude and responsibility of the case under consideration. Now in relation to the question of duty to the heathen, are there not many who deem it amply sufficient, simply to ask the Lord to guide them by his Spirit, believing that if it be their duty to go, it will then be made known to them somehow, without further trouble on their part? Thus many think it unnecessary, or at least neglect entirely to make a full investigation of the subject, because they do not feel a strong desire, or any premonition that duty leads that way: and others, who once had some anxiety, and, it may be, prayed frequently over the subject, are discouraged, because their desires for the work grow weaker, or at least, are stationary; and their views do not grow clearer, as they expected. Now it is not enough occasionally to pray for divine direction, and then fold our arms in half careless expectation. No; we must read much upon the subject — we must investigate it deeply and thoroughly, just as though we were at last dependent on our own resources; and then, with humble prayer that God would aid us by his Spirit, would [177] bless the truth we have acquired, and through it influence our hearts to choose the way of duty, we may, almost infallibly, determine what that duty is.

A third remark is, that we should not take the absence of a *strong desire* for the work of missions, as conclusive evidence that it is not the mind of the Spirit that we should go to the heathen. This indeed flows necessarily from the preceding remarks; for a man cannot know what the will of God

respecting him is, unless he is diligent in the use of all the means by which he may arrive at that knowledge. Interest is excited and desire awakened, only in view of the truth; and to look and pray for a missionary spirit, while we are not employing the appropriate and only means of exciting it, is both unphilosophical and sinful. It was when Nehemiah and his companions went out by night "and viewed the walls of Jerusalem which were broken down," that their hearts were moved, and their purpose was formed to repair the desolation. It was when Paul entered Athens, and "saw the city wholly given to idolatry," that "his spirit was stirred in him." And when we have carefully surveyed the foreign field, when we have made ourselves familiar with the miseries, prospects, and wants of the heathen, then, and not till then, can we expect to feel deeply in their behalf. Till we have done this, our want of interest in missions, so far from being the fruit of the Spirit, and an indication, therefore, that we should remain at home, is the fruit of our own willful blindness, and an indication of our infitness for acceptable service either at home or abroad.

Even a decided *aversion* to a self-denying service, when it is first contemplated, is no proof that we are not required to engage in it. Moses and Jonah were unwilling, at first, to discharge the commission with which they were intrusted by the Lord of Hosts. But they were not, for this reason, excused. The former, meek and submissive as he was, held back until "the anger of the Lord was kindled against him;" and the latter, by his presumptuous disobedience, drew upon himself the severe judgments of the Almighty.

Again: that the church has failed in the discharge of her high responsibilities must be evident to every one who inspects for a moment the broad command of the Saviour; and yet, doubtless, she has acted according to her inclinations. Surely, in her case, the want of a desire to do her duty to the heathen cannot be construed into an expression of the mind of the Spirit of God. In Scotland alone there were, a few years ago, not less than one thousand educated ministers without charges, — many of them employed as farmers, and many of them as common parish schoolmasters, — waiting for the removal of the present incumbents, that they might succeed to their livings. Can it be possible that not a single one of this vast number of useless ministers [178] should have gone to point the heathen to the way which leads to ever-lasting life and glory? And though one stirring appeal after another was made by the Scottish Missionary Society for laborers in the Lord's vineyard, yet not one of this class volunteered. Let no one, therefore, conclude, simply because he has not an ardent desire for the work, that the question is settled that it cannot be his duty to go. It may, or it may not be so. There is very great danger in making our feelings and our desires a test

of our duty, especially in a service which requires much self-denial. This must be perfectly obvious to every one who is experimentally acquainted with the deceitful workings of the human heart. It is demonstrated by the history of the church ever since the days of the Apostles.

By far the most obvious reason of this failure in duty, on the part of Christians, is that they have approached the examination of the subject, if they examined it at all, with a strong bias in favor of *home*. Indeed this is notoriously the fact. Now if there has been actual error in this point heretofore, is there not at least great danger of error at present?

It is admitted, indeed, that no man ought ever to enter the foreign field, without an ardent desire for the work. But it is a desire springing from supreme love to the Saviour — burning zeal for the salvation of sinners, and an earnest wish to labor where there is the widest prospect of usefulness. Now it is plain that this desire — the only one necessary — is consequent upon a decided conviction of the judgment, after a thorough, impartial, and prayerful examination, that the wants of the foreign are more urgent than those of the domestic field, and the call from abroad louder than at home. But what *Christian*, in these circumstances, would not have this desire? It is nothing mysterious or uncommon — nothing but the feelings common to every pious heart, directed by a judgment under the influence of truth, and the Spirit of God, strongly drawn out toward the heathen by their wretched, helpless, perishing condition. This is the true, much talked of, but much mistaken, *missionary spirit*.

We contend, moreover, that a similar desire springing from the same course, and the result of an equally firm conviction of the judgment, that the *domestic* field most needs our labors, is equally important, before we determine to remain at home. Let every one, therefore, who intends to remain, examine and see if his determination springs from supreme love to the Redeemer, and an ardent wish to do the greatest possible amount of good. If so, well: but if not, let him examine anew the whole question of duty.

In order to a correct decision, therefore, a thorough examination is absolutely necessary: and previous to this, no bias either way ought [179] generally to be expected. And indeed, if it do exist, it ought to be narrowly examined, lest it may have originated from some unworthy source — either from adventurous or romantic feelings, on the one hand; or a love of ease, distinction, and influence, on the other. And this close scrutiny manifestly becomes the more necessary, if the desire or inclination be to a course of conduct requiring little or no self-denial. Do we thus jealously analyze our motives: or do we not often think it unnecessary rigidly to investigate the subject, taking it for granted, that as a matter of course, we are to labor at home, unless we have some *special call* to go to the heathen?

But why should we require all the evidence on one side? Who does not see, that, with these views and feelings, it is impossible to investigate and decide the question with entire impartiality; because, when the mind has once adopted an opinion, it requires far more evidence to change it, if erroneous, than to direct it to the truth, had the judgment been suspended. But why, we ask again, is it necessary to have a special call to India, or Burmah, or the Sandwich Islands, or any foreign station, rather than to the West of our own country? "The field is the world." The foreign and domestic are but departments of the same grand field. Then why this distinction? If the paramount claims of either portion of the field are to be presumed, should not the presumption be in favor of the foreign department? For, to say nothing of its greater extent and destitution, the fact that so many who would gladly preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, are prevented by providential circumstances beyond their control, gives the foreign field a peculiar claim upon all who are at liberty to enter it.

It is true, the missionary is exposed to peculiar trials, and needs patience, and perseverance, and a spirit of self-denial. But our blessed Master has told us, that if a man have not these, he is not worthy to be his disciple at all. It is true, also, that there are missionary stations of very great difficulty. But all are not equally so. Such is their diversity, that persons of nearly every variety of disposition, and every grade of intellect, may find stations suited to their capacities. In some places are required men, with all the piety, learning, and talents of Martyn;¹⁶² while in others, men whose acquirements little exceed those of a common Sabbath school teacher, united with ardent piety and untiring zeal, would be eminently useful. Therefore, no man who may be desirous to obey the last command of his ascending Saviour, by lending his aid to this glorious cause, need object that his abilities are too small. "It is not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." [180]

A want of talent for acquiring languages, is a serious difficulty with many. But it is a fact worthy of notice, that however great this difficulty may have appeared in prospect, no one has ever complained of incompetency, after being awhile in the field. Among the Moravian missionaries there must be many of quite ordinary talents; yet they all easily acquire the language of the people among whom they labor. So it is with foreigners who come into our own country; though a vast majority of them are men of very inferior intellect, yet they soon acquire a tolerable acquaintance with our language, which is said to be peculiarly difficult to foreigners.

¹⁶² Henry Martyn, 1781–1812, famous chaplain of the East India Company, missionary, and Bible translator. —Ed

These facts clearly demonstrate, that the difficulty so much dreaded in prospect, will be very much diminished in the experiment. It is no hard thing to acquire the language of those with whom we have daily and hourly intercourse on the ordinary business and interesting incidents of real life. And if men of the world encounter such difficulties when impelled by motives of worldly convenience or profit, shall Christians be appalled by them, when called to execute the Saviour's commission, and to save the souls of men from eternal death? Besides, many of the languages which our missionaries are required to learn, are exceedingly simple and easily acquired, as that of the Hawaiian Islands, and those spoken by the native tribes of Africa and our own country; and the facilities for learning these and other languages, are constantly increasing.

Some, however, throw this difficulty into a different form. They object to go abroad, because they would thereby require the funds which ought to support abler men. This would indeed be a real difficulty, were there a sufficient number of men better qualified for the work; or were the church's resources limited, and now nearly exhausted. But this is not — never will be the case. Should there ever be a temporary deficiency, let it be told the churches, that on them rests the responsibility of refusing to send men, who desire to go forth and join the few scattered soldiers of the Prince of life and glory, now grappling with the powers of darkness, and endeavoring to rescue from their grasp the souls of dying heathens; and they will rise in the majesty of the true missionary spirit, and pour of their substance into the treasury of the Lord, and dismiss with their benediction every one who is willing to go bearing the wide commission of the gospel,

“Signed by God's own signature.”

We are not, then, to expect any extraordinary interposition of the Spirit of God, telling us, as by an audible voice, what duty is — we are not to wait for a strong desire for the work of missions to be implanted in our minds, before we think it worth while to investigate the claims of the heathen — we are not to expect any peculiar call, [181] or possess any extraordinary qualifications, before we can determine to devote our lives to the work of foreign missions. Let each one, then, divested of all these feelings and expectations, having thoroughly investigated the subject, and remembering that “the field is the world,” permit his judgment — feelings and taste and preference all aside for the present — calmly to decide what portion of this field opens the widest prospect of usefulness; or rather, where is the most urgent demand for his labors; and then determine to go there, if circumstances will at all permit. Thus may this important question, freed of all its

embarrassing accompaniments, be reduced to a single point; and that too, in most cases, probably not very difficult of solution.

To those whose circumstances would permit, and who profess a willingness to go where duty calls, but object that the field is wide enough at home, and the prospect of superior usefulness abroad at least doubtful, — it might be answered, that since the way of salvation may be known to all, and mercy is within the reach of all in this country, so as to render them altogether inexcusable, it is extremely doubtful, whether — expediency aside — it is consistent with the duty imposed by our unconditional commission, for us to remain and urge upon our countrymen those offers, for which they manifest entire disregard, or obstinately refuse, while the hundreds of millions of heathen are perishing for *Lack of vision*, to whom the offers of salvation have never been made. While this is the case, is it for us to sit down and coldly calculate whether we might not, probably, be the means of saving some souls at home; or does not the command of Christ bind us to go, if we can? This view receives additional sanction from the conduct of the Apostles. They were indeed required to *begin* at Jerusalem, but by the very terms of their commission they were forbidden to remain there, and when they were inclined to linger, a storm of persecution scattered them, and they then “went every where preaching the Word.” In like manner Paul commenced his missionary labors among his own countrymen, but he was not permitted to tarry there till all were supplied with the gospel. But as he was pursuing his second missionary tour, in company with Timothy, “they were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia,” and when they would have turned homeward, “the Spirit suffered them not.” They were instructed to pass over into Europe, and preach the gospel in Macedonia. Is not our duty the same? Many of our own countrymen, it is true, will perish; but, it is because they will not take the trouble to hear; or if they hear, they disregard the voice of mercy. The heathen must perish; but it is because they never heard the voice of mercy. Which of them should most awaken our sympathies, and call forth our efforts? Judge ye. Suppose, as a test of your views, you had been born and brought up among the [182] idolatrous, degraded, and perishing population of the dark continent of Asia or Africa; but by some wonderful change of circumstances you had been brought to a knowledge of Jesus. With your present views, feelings and sympathies, could you ever have dreamed of coming to America to labor for Christ? And now is not your duty to preach to the heathen just as imperative as though this had been literally the case? A voyage of a few months will place you on those same benighted shores, and amidst that same degraded, dying population.

But to the objection stated above, it might be answered further, that, granting for a moment all it asks, that the need of laborers at home is as great as abroad, (and it surely is not greater; for what destitution can be greater than that which is total?) — then the utmost that can be fairly inferred is, that an equal number should be distributed to both fields. Now, until this be the case, on your own principles you are bound to go. You contend that the need at home is as great as abroad, and therefore one-half ought conscientiously to remain. It may be answered that the destitution abroad is at least as great as at home, and therefore one-half ought conscientiously to go. And this obligation obviously becomes the more pressing, since very far from the proportion of one-half usually go. Now it manifestly falls upon those whose circumstances will permit, and who profess a willingness to go wherever duty calls, to furnish this quota; since there are enough and, as yet, more than enough, to supply the other proportion, whose physical qualifications and domestic relations will compel them to remain. They ought, therefore, to feel themselves peculiarly called upon to examine their duty in this matter.

It is objected, however, that a man, by remaining at home, may awaken a missionary spirit in the churches, and may raise up several missionaries, who will do more good than he alone could have done, by going himself to the heathen. But how does any one know that he is to do this? The probability is against him, should it so happen, which is surely possible, that he has mistaken his duty. But granting this, and suppose every one of them to reason in the same manner, which they might do with equal justice, when would the heathen be converted? We must remember that it is the present generation alone with whom we have to do. The question is, Shall *they* have the gospel? Shall *they* be told of Jesus? Now it is manifest that such a system of means as that just mentioned, would, to say the least, suffer most of the present generation to perish without an effort for their rescue. This manifestly is not the spirit of the gospel. This is not — cannot be the true method of proceeding.

One grand end of the organization of the church is, that it may distribute to every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation under [183] the whole heavens, the bread of eternal life. Now suppose there was a famine in all Asia, and we wished to supply them with the means of sustaining natural life; should we send off immediately all we could for seed, and let them raise it for themselves, when in a fertile soil it would multiply fifty fold; or should we suffer many of them to starve, while we attempted to raise, in our limited territory, what we could with difficulty transport to them, but which would still be insufficient for their sustenance? So, to continue the figure, let us send seed to the heathen *immediately*; though it be

but a handful now, it will soon increase, and let them raise, in their own soil, the bread of eternal life.

It is true, indeed, that the spirit of missions must be sustained at home. But this will be done by those who are compelled to remain, and it will be done much more *effectually* by those who go themselves. The pastor speaks only to a single congregation; the missionary, from the eminence of his missionary field, is heard throughout Christendom, and his words receive peculiar force from his own example of self-denial. The history of missions, we think, has clearly proved that the reflex influence of those who go to the foreign field, in awakening a missionary spirit, is ordinarily greater than the direct influence of the pastor at home. And what is the spirit of missions, but the spirit of Christ? Every increase of the one is an equal increase of the other. So far then from doing less for the cause of Christ at home, we may do more than by remaining; and this, so far from robbing the churches, awakens their zeal, elevates their piety, and multiplies ministers both for home and abroad.

Now, taking this in connection with the fact, that so large a proportion are absolutely prohibited by circumstances from going; and with our Savior's unconditional commission in our band, and the number, condition, and destiny of the heathen before us, — let us, who are untrammelled by circumstances, feel that we are particularly called; and let us ponder it well, before we dismiss it with a negative.

There has been — *there is* guilt somewhere. Let us see to it, that it rest not on our heads. And let us do so immediately. We stop not now to point out the advantages — the immense advantages of an early decision, both as it regards our own enjoyment, and our preparation for the field of our future labors. We would urge it as a present, imperious duty; because delay, longer than is necessary to investigate the merits of the case, is not only useless, but positively unfriendly to the impartial decision of the question. It lulls the voice of conscience, and early impressions of duty are thus gradually erased.

Motives, when not yielded to, it is well known, lose their force; the mind only becomes more involved, and the judgment more liable to be warped by circumstances; and the Spirit of God may be pro- [184] voked, by simple delay, to withdraw his influences; and leave us to follow our own inclinations. Of this result, there are many mournful examples. There are many, who, if they would speak, would tell us, that so far from gaining light, and removing difficulties by delay, they are only involved in greater darkness, and are now further from a decision than they were one year ago.

And as you value, therefore, the correct decision of this momentous question, trifle not with the dictates of conscience and the Spirit of God. Yield immediately to rational motives; and in proportion to their weight, let them draw you just so much nearer to your decision. Carry with you constantly, in devotion, in studying the word of God, in reading missionary and domestic intelligence, a feeling that a most important duty remains undischarged, until you have decided this question. And let that decision be made as soon as practicable, subject of course to revision, and even reversal, if circumstances seem to require it.

And never forget what interests are involved in your decision. It involves your own comfort and peace of mind, for where else can you expect to escape the lashing of conscience, when you discover your mistake, as you one day must, especially if it has proceeded from carelessness on your part: where else than in that path, can you expect that joy which sweetens every toil, flowing from the delightful consciousness of being in the discharge of duty: and above all, where else can you expect the reward of an hundred fold in the present life the sustaining grace, and the approving smile of your Father in Heaven? Your usefulness, and therefore the interests of Christ's kingdom, are involved. For where else can you expect to accomplish so much for him and for your fellow men, as in that sphere for which God has fitted and designed you? As, therefore, you value the testimony of a good conscience, and the approbation of God; as you love the cause and kingdom of your Savior, and the souls for whom he died, examine this question promptly, carefully, candidly, in the spirit and with the prayer of the great Apostle, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

7. On Deciding Early to Become a Missionary to the Heathen

(1834)

Unabridged text of Missionary Tract No. 7 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) "On Deciding Early to Become a Missionary to the Heathen". Boston: The Board, 1851. Originally published in 1831. The page numbers in square brackets follow the reprint in R. Pierce Beaver (ed.). To Advance the Gospel: Selections from Writings of Rufus Anderson. Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (MI), 1967. Pp. 185-196.

[185] The object of this Tract is, to assign reasons in favor of the following proposition, viz.: That every student, looking forward to the sacred ministry, should decide EARLY, in view of existing circumstances, whether duty requires him to become a missionary to the heathen.

I have my mind upon a current maxim, which has deprived the heathen world, I fear, of many excellent missionaries. The maxim is this — “That it is better to delay deciding on our personal duty to the heathen, till near the close of our studies preparatory to the ministry.” The reasons for such a delay are plausible. The student will be older — his judgment more matured — his mind better informed the whole case more completely before him. My appeal, however, is to facts. For many years I have watched the operation of this maxim, and I am sure that its influence is, to prevent a thorough and impartial examination. The procrastination which it requires, becomes a habit, and is usually too long persisted in. The “more convenient season” for investigation, is generally allowed to pass by. Engagements are formed, rendering the case more complicated; solicitations and inducements to remain at home multiply; the natural love of one’s own country grows stronger and stronger; the early predilection for the missionary life, if there had been one, wears away; the cries of the heathen, and their distress, move with less and less power; and the man remains at home: — not as the result of any vigorous exercise of the understanding upon the question of duty, but because he decided [186] to postpone consideration upon it till he was about to launch into the world, and then surrendered himself *passively* to the control of circumstances.

This is not the way to learn our duty on the momentous question, *Where is the field and the work, to which the Holy Ghost hath called me?* And what inquiry is there, which can be more important than this to our growth in grace, and to our happiness and usefulness in future life? And what more directly connected with the sentence to be passed upon us, at the great day, as the stewards of Christ? Next to the relation which we sustain to the Lord Jesus, there is nothing we are more interested to know, as his ministers, than where he would have us spend our lives; where the field is, which he commands us to cultivate; and where the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, will complacently regard our residence, and delight to bless our exertions and alleviate our trials. Is there not a foundation for solicitude on this point? Can it be a matter of perfect indifference to the Head of the church, *where* we preach, provided only we are diligent, and preach the truth? It was not so in respect to the Apostles;¹⁶³ nor is it so now. Mistakes on this subject, when committed needlessly, much more when committed because we *will* not consider, must have a very serious bearing upon us as ministers of the gospel.

The proposition is, that we should begin to look *early* at this question, with reference to the claims of the heathen world upon us, and that we should decide it *early*, in view of existing circumstances. An unconditional decision is not desired. Such an one is indeed forbidden by the word of God, in reference to *all* our future measures. We must say, "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that." The decision should be in view of things as they now appear, and with an understanding that the grounds of it shall be occasionally revised — certainly as often as there is a manifest change in our circumstances. And is it not true, that however late the decision is made, it must still be conditional?

It is not necessary that the resolution to spend life among the heathen should be unconditional, in order to insure the advantages to be mentioned in the sequel, as resulting from its being made early. It is formed with reference to the Lord's will. As that will is now indicated, the determination is unreserved and decisive. No sooner is it formed, than a mission to the heathen world stands up before the mind as the great, paramount duty of life. The command to "preach the gospel to every creature," comes to us with a distinct specification of the unevangelized world as our field; and we rest in this decision, till [187] unanticipated, unsought-for events change the grounds of our decision, and call for reconsideration, and perhaps a reversal.

¹⁶³ Acts xiii. 2; xvi. 10.

Some may ask, 'Why decide early upon the claims of the heathen world, and not also decide early upon the relative claims of the different parts of our own country?' And truly I see no objection to deciding upon them, too, whenever the duty can be made clear. This latter question, however, is not one of so easy solution at an early period of our preparatory studies, as the other. The relative necessities, and of course the claims, of some parts of our country, are rapidly changing; and there is not such a broad distinction existing between any of them, as is found on comparing our own country with the heathen world. Moreover, the difference between parochial life in our northern and middle States, and that of a missionary in our western settlements, is not of so serious a nature, as that which distinguishes a foreign missionary, and his exposures and hardships, may not be greater than those of a missionary in our new settlements; and, in many instances, there may be less of travel, and more of the conveniences of life. But the sorest trials of a missionary, whether he be foreign or domestic, are those which chiefly concern the spirit; and this is pre-eminently true of him, whose dwelling and labors are in the midst of a heathen people. He is peculiarly insulated from the religious world — from society congenial to a man who has been nurtured in a civilized community — from that sympathetic, companionable intercourse, which ministers in this country may soon find almost every where. And even when God blesses the labors of a foreign missionary, and multiplies converts among the heathen around him, though this must be a source of unspeakable joy, those converts do not rise so high on the scale of intelligence, but that they are still far below him in almost all that constitutes a foundation for free and familiar intercourse between mind and mind. They are children — emphatically babes in Christ.

The limits of this article do not allow me to illustrate the numerous other points of difference. Some of them are sufficiently obvious. It is a serious matter to leave one's friends and country for life, and spend that life amid the darkness and pollution of heathenism. The question whether we shall remove far to the west, and preach the gospel there, and raise up families there, *where the wave of civilization will inevitably overtake us in a few years*, is nothing, in comparison with the other; — much less is that, whether we shall build up waste places surrounded by the institutions and privileges of our older States.

The way is now prepared for stating some of the principal reasons in favor of an early decision of the question, whether we ought to become missionaries to the heathen. [188]

1. *In college, and sometimes in the academy, the student may enjoy nearly or quite all the helps in forming a decision, that he will find in the theological semi-*

nary. With a little pains he may have access to all the important books, and to intelligent and discreet advisers, and may gain all the essential information respecting the moral condition of the world. There is not a principle, and there is scarcely a fact bearing on the case, of which he may not obtain as full possession before, as after he enters the theological seminary. What need, then, of delay? Is the student competent to decide the momentous question, whether he ought to be a minister of Christ, and yet, with the data all before him, can he not determine whether it be lawful for him to de- vote himself to the service of Christ in heathen lands?

Indeed, I believe the student may not only ascertain his personal duty to the heathen at an early period of his education, but that he may then ascertain it with comparative ease, — being, in some respects, more favorably situated for deciding correctly, than at the more advanced periods. The subject is really very simple; and it is most apt to appear so to the student while his position is remote from the world. He, too, is then more entirely uncommitted; and his views of the comparative claims of the heathen world upon himself, will be more likely to accord with what is the actual fact, than in the later stages. Hence the reason why you find a greater proportion of pious students beginning to prepare for the ministry with some special reference to a mission in heathen lands, than you see entering the field of foreign missions.

2. *An early decision is desirable in reference to its bearing on the mind and conscience of the Student.* Whether he desires to make advances in learning, or grace, he should aim to preserve a tranquil mind. He should have as few unsettled and perplexing questions of duty as possible. He should endeavor always to preserve peace of conscience, that he may have joy in the Holy Ghost. When cases of conscience arise and demand a settlement, he should endeavor to settle them thoroughly and speedily. He must either do this, or else do violence to his moral nature; and if the case be one of importance and of frequent recurrence, he must either determine it, or submit to the alternative of suffering much inquietude, and of weakening his conscience, if not all his mental powers. Now it is true of some institutions of learning, with which I am acquainted, that duty to the heathen early becomes in them a serious question of conscience. In several theological seminaries, it is among the first and most solemn inquiries, of a prospective nature, excited in the minds of students newly entered. And as the cause of missions advances, the members of all our seminaries will find it more and more difficult to avoid coming to a speedy [189] decision; and their interest, as well as duty, in such cases, will obviously be to make up their minds with as little delay as possible. The only way in which they will be able to avoid meeting the subject, will be to place themselves in the

attitude of resistance to the light, and to be less active in promoting the cause of Christ than they otherwise might be — and thus greatly retard their growth in grace, and their preparation for usefulness. The wisest course for them will be that described in the proposition I am endeavoring to establish. Let the inquiry come up early in the seminary, if it has not been settled before; or, what is better still, let it come up in the college; let it be met with a cheerful determination to examine into its merits; let the only question be, “Where will the Lord have me go, when my preparations for the ministry are completed?” and let the decision be formed in view of the existing indications of Providence. Whenever these indications materially change, or when the mind is led to regard them in new lights, then let the student inquire how his relations to the heathen world are affected by the change. Thus the mind will be preserved from useless and worse than useless agitation, and will always be cheerfully advancing with a definite object in view.

3. *A student, who decides early to devote himself to the cause of foreign missions, will be more useful to that cause during his studies preparatory to the ministry, than he otherwise would be.* Indeed, should he, after a conscientious examination of the subject, decide that it is his duty to go on a domestic mission, or to settle near his paternal home, I should expect him to be more active and efficient in the cause of foreign missions, than while he holds his mind in suspense. What I wish to see is, an early investigation and decision — no halting between two opinions — no shrinking from this great question of duty. But, if a man is led by his views of duty heartily to consecrate himself to the work of evangelizing the heathen, such a man begins immediately to think, with a special interest, how he may increase the number of missionaries, and the means of sending them forth, and how the deep intellectual and moral gloom resting upon the heathen world may be dispelled. There is no estimating how desirable it is that every college and seminary in the land have such men among its students. What may not a man devoted to missions do in the seven or eight years of his preparatory studies? The greater part of the influence, which Samuel J. Mills exerted directly upon foreign missions, and which has given him an imperishable name in our churches, he exerted while in the college and seminary. He decided on his duty to the heathen before entering college — imparted the noble design, which the Spirit of God had implanted in his own bosom, to the kindred minds of Hall and [190] Richards, whose dust now rests beneath the sods of India — and, after seeking divine direction many times on the banks of the Hoosack, formed a society, in which the members pledged themselves to effect, in their own persons, a mission among the heathen. Here was the germ of our foreign missions, and it was

the fruit of an early decision. Had Mills, and Hall, and Richards, and Fisk, and others who might be named, deferred all consideration of the subject till they were on the point of entering the ministry, what a loss would the cause have sustained! And what good will be prevented, if the maxim, controverted in this Tract, becomes a common law of duty to our pious students! Every man has a circle of friends of greater or less extent, and an early decision to be a missionary gives him time and power to exert a salutary influence upon them. If he is a man of the right character and spirit, his influence will increase from year to year, and he may often effect as much for the cause, during the last two years of his residence in his own country, as in the first three or four of his labors among the heathen. Where we especially need the influence of such men, however, is in our public institutions of learning. Men in these institutions, who are not themselves decided to be missionaries, will rarely make vigorous attempts to persuade others to devote themselves to a foreign mission; and if they do make an effort, in public addresses to their fellow-students, while they are themselves generally supposed not to have given the subject a thorough investigation in regard to their own duty, (as I have sometimes known to be the case,) the effect is any thing but that which they aim to produce. But a man, who has given himself to this work, and is sincerely devoted, heartily interested, discreetly zealous, and properly qualified, may almost certainly increase the number of missionaries. And those, to whose direction missions among the heathen are especially committed, need such co-workers in all our colleges and religious seminaries.

4. *An early decision in favor of becoming a missionary to the heathen, makes a man more courageous and cheerful when in the field of missions.* I believe this is the general experience of those missionaries, who came to their decision early, of whom the number is considerable. By long anticipation, they had become in a manner familiarized with the missionary life before they entered upon it. Its peculiar trials were in some good degree understood, and the mind and heart acquires a sort of assimilation to the missionary work. This lightened the shock, which must always be felt on transferring our residence from a civilized and Christian land to one that is heathen and barbarous. The disgusting manners of the people, their sottish ignorance, their deep degradation, and their horrid rites, had been contemplated for years, and again and [191] again bad the work been chosen with these things all in view. And when, after long and laborious toil, the obstinacy of the heathen still seemed unbroken, and success delayed, causing the spirits to flag, and faith sometimes to tremble; the mind was not invaded and harassed by misgivings on the subject of duty, as might have been the case had not the subject, for a course of years before entering the heathen

world, often been carried to the throne of grace, and considered in all its bearings in the light of God's word. These seasons are recollected in days of adversity, and are as anchors to the soul. "It looks dark," the missionary says to himself, "but *here* is the field of my duty. I am where I ought to be, and God will not forsake me." He had long before taken time to lay a broad and deep foundation, and his superstructure stands. He went to the heathen from no sudden impulse of passion, but from a long resolved conviction of duty, to which the feelings of his heart and the habits of his mind gradually came into sweet subserviency. Till that conviction is destroyed, he will find delight in his work, and, on the whole, will be contented and happy. To have this conviction of duty well rooted in the mind, when the missionary is in the midst of disheartening trials with few outward supports, is of itself a sufficient reason for beginning early to look seriously at the subject, and, indeed, for looking at it with reference to a speedy decision; — for, whoever commences an inquiry with a determination to hold his mind in suspense whatever may be the merits of the case, will certainly be superficial in his examination.

5. *An early consecration to the missionary work will render a man more efficient and useful as a missionary.* It will do this for the reasons mentioned under the preceding head; and also, by the attainments it will lead him to make with particular reference to a mission, while acquiring his education, and by the effect it will be likely to exert on his intellectual and moral character. Whatever increases a man's courage and cheerfulness in the performance of the missionary work, increases his usefulness. The fact of having come to an early decision, and of having had the work long before the mind, may sometimes be the very thing which God employs to sustain a missionary under sharp adversity, and prevent his sinking in despondency and leaving the field. Besides, he who has had the missionary life in view through nearly the whole course of his education, will necessarily acquire a great number of principles and facts and considerations, which would probably be overlooked by scholars having in view only the common circumstances and duties of pastoral life, and which, in thousands of instances, will be of use to him. These peculiar acquisitions are such as may be made, and ought to be made, without neglecting any of the studies required in the collegiate and [192] theological course. So far as I have yet learned, all those studies are as important for the missionary, as they are for the minister at home; and there is this additional reason why the candidate for a mission should give them thorough attention, that it is almost certain he will have little opportunity to revise them after he has entered the field of his labors.

In addition to the peculiar acquisitions just now mentioned — which will bear some proportion to the length of time between the forming of the decision and the departure on a mission — there will be an important influence exerted upon all the other acquisitions, with direct reference to the missionary work. The degree of this influence must of course vary in different men. Where there is that intense interest in the cause of missions, which is desirable in all who aspire to a mission among the heathen, the mind will make all its acquisitions under the influence of this ruling passion. It is easy to find illustrations of this principle. The student who has given his soul to medicine, or the law, digests and secretes his learning (so to speak) according to the laws of the profession he has taken. The mere divine makes every thing bear upon natural and revealed religion. He who, like Payson, has consecrated every faculty to the high endeavor of drawing sinners to Christ, converts every thing into argument to flee from the wrath to come. So he, who has devoted himself to the enterprise of imparting the knowledge and blessings of the gospel to the heathen world, makes his acquisitions, and associates and stores them in the mind, with reference to that object. Ideas of all sorts, as they enter his mind, are marshalled and trained for the spiritual and holy wars of foreign conquest. I cannot conceive of a more desirable influence; nor can I help regretting that it cannot *always* be felt through the whole course of that man's education, who is destined to become a missionary in pagan lands.

I shall not do justice to this subject, unless I mention the influence, which an early decision to be a missionary may be expected to have upon the *heart*. Let it be remembered, that I am not speaking of a devotion to the cause in which the affections of the heart are imperfectly enlisted; but of a devotion in which they are all active. The decision, which is the ground of all my illustrations, is formed no less by the heart than by the judgment. The whole soul chooses, and chooses cordially and joyfully. I wish not to speak of this particular exercise of Christian duty so as to excite spiritual pride in those, who have determined to be missionaries. Let such as have been led to resolve on proclaiming their Savior's love to nations that never heard the glad tidings, give Him the glory, and wonder that *they* should be sent on an errand, which angels from heaven would rejoice to perform. It is obvious, however, that next to the determination which gave the soul to God, the decision to devote one's life to preaching the gospel to the heathen, must be the most [193] important of those voluntary acts, which the grace of God employs to set the soul at liberty from the enchantments of the world. At God's command, the man resolves, like Abraham, to go out from his own country, probably without knowing where, and to become a stranger and pilgrim on the earth. He chooses a course of living for his

whole earthly existence, which, if he has just notions of it, can appear desirable and tolerable only as the soul is animated and sustained by the faith that “overcometh the world.” Such a choice, sincerely and understandingly made, must exert a great influence on the heart; for the influence of it must reach every earthly thing, and tend strongly to shut the world out from the affections, and to open the soul to the afflations of the Spirit. From the moment, too, in which a man forms this decision, he realizes, more affectingly than perhaps he otherwise could do, the relations he sustains as a disciple of Christ, to the world of souls in pagan darkness. They are brought nearer, and seem more like neighbors and kinsmen. The motives, which act on his benevolent regards, are increased prodigiously in magnitude and power. Numbers, extension, variety, all lay siege to his heart with mighty force. Six hundred millions of men, living in a moral gloom as dark as midnight; and this vast multitude spread over three-fourths of the world — found in all climes — exhibiting every painful variety of human condition and character — going from this state of probation at the rate of a million and a half a month, and in thirty years all gone! What affecting, what overwhelming objects of contemplation to any pious man; but peculiarly so to him, who has chosen his earthly home among those very millions. Let the decision, then, be formed early, that such contemplations may exert their influence on the heart for a longer time, rousing its sensibilities into habitual activity, and imparting comprehensiveness and efficiency to its desires. This will be a qualification of a high order for a mission to the unevangelized world.

6. *An early decision to be a missionary, will be no disadvantage to a man, who is providentially preverted from becoming one.* It will rather be an advantage. Some of the most devoted ministers in our churches, once had a foreign mission in view for a considerable period of time. They did not go, because unforeseen and unavoidable occurrences prevented, making it necessary for them to remain in their own country. They lost no character by so doing, because it was manifestly their duty to relinquish their purpose. Neither did the “God of all grace” forsake them. They were enabled to carry their missionary fervor into their parishes. They remembered the heathen themselves, and suffered not their people to forget them. The acquisitions they had made in missionary history, while looking forward to a mission, and the habits they then acquired of reading, remembering, and communicating missionary intelligence, laid a foundation for their usefulness as pastors in a most important, but much neglected, department of ministerial duty. Their monthly concerts were not suffered to become lifeless and unedifying. Those occasions were embraced for opening *the volume of God’s providence*, which is full of matter. At any rate, the habits acquired,

and the attainments commonly made, by persons who, for several years, have a mission constantly in view, must be exceedingly favorable to the performance of this and other kindred duties of a parish minister.

Nor will it be any disadvantage to the parish minister to have cherished for years a spirit of self-denying enterprise, with reference to a mission in remote and barbarous countries. He will be none the less faithful as a preacher; none the less active and enterprising as a pastor; none the less alive to the calls of Christian charity; none the less "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing" to every one, and to every object of pastoral duty, "the word of truth."

7. *An early and serious consideration of this subject, with a view to a speedy decision, either that it is or is not our duty to become missionaries, with an occasional reconsideration of the subject, is the most likely way of avoiding mistakes in regard to our proper sphere of labor.* I repeat what I have already said, that it is of the greatest importance to us to be in that field, in which God would have us be. And there will be many seasons, in the course of our lives, when it will support us exceedingly to be in possession of ample and clear evidence, that such is the fact. How, then, shall we avoid mistakes in the selection of this field, and how shall we acquire this evidence? Shall we do it, by delaying all serious thought on the subject, till we have so little time left us, and so many applications from different quarters, as to create a feverish anxiety in the mind? Shall we do it, when, immediately after our decision is made, we are under the necessity of *committing* ourselves, either by accepting or refusing an appointment from some church or benevolent society? And can we do it, if we postpone all thorough investigation till the close of our preparatory studies, and then, at the last, yield without much reflection, to the force of any current that happens to strike us? Certain it is, that not so many have gone to the heathen, as ought to have gone, and therefore *some* must have mistaken the field of their duty! How desirable that *they* had examined more thoroughly, and reflected more profoundly! Had they pursued the course recommended in this article, they could scarcely have fallen into such an error. And whoever comes to the question early, with a sincere desire to know and do his duty, and with fervent prayer for divine guidance; and decides early, with an humble reference to the divine will; and occasionally reconsiders the grounds of his decision; and habitually cherishes a [195] benevolent and obedient spirit — will be likely to understand where the Head of the church requires him to exercise his ministry.

In concluding this article, I ask, Whether there are not many, well qualified to be missionaries, who have more fear lest they should go without being sent, than they have lest they shall stay at home when they are com-

manded to go? To them I would put the question, Whether the greatest danger is not the other way? Does not the tide of feeling, in the great body of our pious students, set against the life of a foreign missionary? Far be it from me to intimate, that there is no danger of a man's mistaking the field of his duty when he decides to become a missionary. Such mistakes have been committed, and have had a most unhappy influence; and the inquiry should be approached with a godly jealousy of our motives, and with humble prayer for the illuminations of the Spirit. But I must insist that, taking into view the whole body of young men preparing for the ministry, the paramount danger is, that a man will give undue force to the reasons in favor of spending his life in his own country.

And now, what is it that I ask? Not that a man should become a foreign missionary; not that he should decide in favor of becoming one; but that he should look the question of his duty in the face, and look at it early in his education, and look at it with the determination to discover his duty if possible, and to do his duty. Is there any danger in this course? And is there any man, so destitute of *moral* courage and of the spirit of obedience to Christ, that he shrinks from this inquiry? Are you afraid that you shall be told to proclaim to the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ? Consider well what you do. You have consecrated yourself to the Lord Jesus, and have solemnly engaged to do his will, and you will gain nothing by a neglect of your duty. No path will be so good for you as that — wherever it may lead — which your Divine Master shall prescribe. Nowhere else will you be so respectable, and happy, and useful; nowhere else will you find so much joy in God — a hope so full of immortality. Stray from that path, and you are on forbidden ground. You may avoid the wilderness and many a rugged steep, but must not expect God to accompany you, unless it be with the rod of rebuke.

You need have no fear whatever of this question. If it shall be your duty to leave your country and the charms of cultivated and Christian society, and you resolve to do so, you will have grace imparted to make the sacrifice with cheerfulness. He who commands you to go, engages to go with you; and he will go with you, and will give you “manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.”

Should friends object to a man's devoting himself to a foreign mission, let him bring all their objections to the light of God's ward, and if [196] they will not bear that light, he must not allow them to have any weight in determining the merits of the case; but if they will bear the light, they are among the facts which he is seriously to consider.

The probability or improbability that the churches will furnish the requisite means of sending him forth, need not come into the inquiry. I am

not aware that any man, well qualified for missionary service, has ever yet been rejected because there were not the pecuniary means for supporting him among the heathen. I trust this never will be necessary. The disposition of the churches to make pecuniary contributions to the missionary cause, will generally be greater or less, very much in proportion to the number of suitable men, who are pressing into the field.

When a decision is formed to become a missionary, the proper course to pursue in relation to it is, neither to take pains to conceal it, nor to make it known. If a man is under the guidance of humble benevolence, with his selfish desires subdued by love to Christ and to souls redeemed by the blood of Christ, he will be in little danger of ostentation, and need not fear the consequences of having it known, that he is aspiring to the missionary office, even should he afterwards find that his duty requires him to remain at home. A sincere regard for duty, and a resolute pursuit of it, are far less apt to be injurious to a man's usefulness, than is a timorous shrinking from responsibility, when duty calls.

8. Characteristics of the Apostolic Missions

(1869)

Unabridged text of Missionary Tract No. 7 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) "On Deciding Early to Become a Missionary to the Heathen". Boston: The Board, 1851. Originally published in 1831. The page numbers in square brackets follow the reprint in R. Pierce Beaver (ed.), To Advance the Gospel: Selections from Writings of Rufus Anderson. Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (MI), 1967. Pp. 175-184.

[44] Silence of Inspired History as to Apostolic Missions. — Small Credit given to Uninspired Accounts. — Why the Mission of St. Paul is alone considered. — His Relation to the Lord Jesus. — His Understanding of Christ's Commission. — His Use of Local Churches, and Care for them. — His Confidence in them. — The Idea of the Local Church afterwards lost. — Its Importance. — How the Apostolic Missionaries appeared to their Contemporaries. — How supported. What Classes composed their Churches. — Influence of Pious Females. — Character of Primitive Churches. — Apostolic Success. — Summary.

It is among the mysteries of Providence, that the book of Acts gives no account of the closing labors of the Apostle Paul, and none of the labors of the other apostles bearing directly on the heathen world; if we except the mission of Peter to the Roman centurion, and of Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch. From a remark in the First Epistle of Peter it has been inferred, that he preached the gospel to the Jews eastward as far as Babylon; and from the superscription to the same Epistle it has been supposed, that his labors may have extended into Asia Minor. The zealous efforts of the Judaizers at Corinth suffice to account for the party formed in that church bearing Peter's name, without supposing that he [45] was ever there. The evidence that Peter was never at Rome, preponderates over the evidence that he was. The reference in the Apocalypse to the seven churches of Asia gives support to the early tradition, that the Apostle John resided among them in his old age. Little credit is given, however, by the best ecclesiastical historians, to the uninspired accounts of the missions of the twelve apostles into distant regions of the unevangelized world, or to the stories of the martyrdom of any of them, except Peter, Paul, and James.

Of course in treating of the missions to the heathen after the year 50, our chief attention must be given to the Apostle Paul and his immediate associates. What I have to say concerning his mission, will be under distinct heads.

1. The Apostle Paul claimed to sustain a very high and intimate relation to the Lord Jesus, the foundation doubtless of his great courage and spiritual strength. It was nothing less than that he was Christ's ambassador, authorized to speak in his name when calling upon men to be reconciled to God.¹⁶⁴

2. We learn what were the apostle's views of his responsibilities under Christ's commission, from the following emphatic declaration: "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase; so neither is he that planted anything, neither he [46] that watereth, but God that giveth the increase."¹⁶⁵ His responsibility was for the faithful use of the prescribed means. In the spiritual culture of the world, it was for planting and watering. Then with respect to his views as to how far those means were to be employed, we learn that opportunity was to be given to all, so far as possible, to hear the gospel. This having been done in Pisidia, the sacred historian affirms, that "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."¹⁶⁶ It was of course necessary for them to have opportunity to hear the gospel in order that they might believe, and herein lay the duty of the apostle and his fellow-laborers. This general publication of the gospel, with the gathering of the converts into churches (of which I shall speak under the next head), illustrates St. Paul's understanding of the import and obligation of Christ's command.

3. The kind. of — instrumentality, on which the apostle depended for success in his mission, clearly appears in his description of his ministrations at Corinth. He says, that when he came from Athens to Corinth, there to declare the testimony of God, it was not with any surpassing skill of eloquence, or philosophy. For it was no earthly knowledge, which he desired to display among them, but the knowledge of Jesus Christ alone, and him crucified. And in proclaiming this message, he had not used the [47] persuasive arguments of human wisdom, but set forth the proofs of the might of the Holy Spirit, so that their faith might not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ 2 Cor. v. 20.

¹⁶⁵ 1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.

¹⁶⁶ Acts xiii. 48.

¹⁶⁷ *Lift of St. Paul*, vol. ii. p. 36; 1 Cor. ii. 1-5.

Such was the eminently spiritual nature of the instrumentality employed by the apostle, in his personal ministry among the Gentiles.

But his stay in most places was generally and necessarily short. At Corinth it was indeed extended to nearly two years, and at Ephesus to nearly three. But in most places he could have spent only a few weeks, or months, though he may often have left behind him Silas, Timothy, or Titus, "to set in order the things which were wanting."

His grand means, as a missionary, was the gathering and forming of local churches. These appear to have been formed wherever there was a sufficient number of converts, each with its own presbyters, to whom must have been committed the pastoral oversight of the church, whatever may have been their other duties. In every church there appears to have been more than one, — an idea apparently borrowed from the Jewish synagogue, — and thus was formed the early pastorate. Such would seem to have been his practice; for it is expressly declared that, in his first recorded missionary tour, presbyters were ordained in every church; and in the great island of Crete, where he had not [48] time to do it himself, he left Titus, and required him to ordain them in every city.¹⁶⁸

Such was the apostle's custom. He thus in each place put in requisition the power of association, organization, combination, of a self-governed Christian community; and the churches must necessarily have been self-supporting. They were formed for standing without foreign aid; and that they possessed a singular vitality, that they were self-propagating, as well as self-governing and self-supporting, is evident from the tenor of the Epistles addressed to them by their founder. Indeed, Christian churches are among the most vital of organizations. They are spiritual agencies, deriving their nature and motive power from the spiritual world. They are among the most indestructible of agencies. When the apostle had fully organized a church, he boldly left it. If he could, he visited it, and he wrote to it. To the larger churches, as I believe, he wrote repeatedly. How else could he have "daily" exercised, as he claims to have done, "the care of all the churches?"¹⁶⁹ Looking at the subject in the light of experience, and at the Apostle Paul as a man, with eminent epistolary powers, and freely acting out his nature, I come to no other conclusion, than that he wrote many letters; though Divine Providence was pleased to allow only certain of them to come down to us. Perhaps St. [49] Paul's short Epistles to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon, and St. John's to "the Elect Lady," and "the well-beloved Gaius," are specimens of their ordinary missionary correspondence.

¹⁶⁸ Titus i. 5.

¹⁶⁹ 2 Cor. xi. 28.

Added to all, was a constant habit of commending his churches to God in his prayers. It appears to have been a settled point with him, that a church once fairly planted and organized, with a proper arrangement for the pastoral care, might be safely left to itself, under the supervising grace of God. This, as will readily be seen, is a point of vital importance in the missionary work. Had not the apostolic idea of self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating churches dropped out of the Christian mind so soon after the age of the apostles, not to be fully regained until modern times, how very different had been the history of Christendom, and of the world!

4. The apostolic missions belonging to a remote antiquity, and to an age of miracles and inspiration, we almost instinctively clothe the apostles, in our conceptions of them, with somewhat of the supernatural, or at least with the extraordinary. Let us then briefly consider the manner in which they must have appeared to their contemporaries.

For some years the name of Paul is mentioned in the Acts after that of his senior, Barnabas. The hold, dashing persecutor must have been singularly transformed by his conversion. He is modest and retiring; and, until he entered fully upon the great [50] purpose of his life, was probably regarded as no more than a zealous, eloquent, promising young preacher, and, by the Judaizing Christians, as of decidedly radical tendencies. By many of the Jewish converts, if not for a time even by some of the apostles, he was looked upon with more or less of distrust. In his last ten or twelve years, he may be supposed to have moved among the churches he had gathered from the Gentiles much as Wesley did among the churches of his connection; and sometimes — as at Ephesus, where his miraculous powers were marvelously exercised — the enthusiasm he awakened may have more resembled that which attended the apostolic Whitfield.¹⁷⁰ His miraculous powers were of course less appreciated in that age, than such powers would be in our own. Unconverted Jews and heathens did not at all recognize the signs of his apostleship, and they generally looked upon him with aversion. In short, I suppose that the first Christian missionaries to the heathen were regarded very much as Christian missionaries are now; and that even the apostles, beyond a limited circle, inspired but little of the reverence which we so justly award to them.

5. It is interesting to inquire as to the manner in which the apostles and their missionary associates were supported in their travels and labors. The Information we have on this subject is mostly inci- [51] dental. Their voy-

¹⁷⁰ Acts xix. 11, 12.

ages in ships owned by heathen, their food and clothing, the animals on which they rode, — how were these and other expenses met during St. Paul's long and active career? No missionary society existed, to raise and remit funds. The churches of Judea were so poor, that they looked for relief in their poverty to churches gathered among the heathen. The apostle, in his letters, insists upon a principle, which he says was propounded by the Lord; "that they who preach the gospel should live by the gospel;" and he intimates that Peter and the other apostles acted on this principle in their mission to the Jews. But it was among the characteristics of this wonderful man, that he, in his mission to the Gentiles, declined doing so, and preferred laboring with his own hands to being dependent on his converts. He also intimated, that the other apostles having their field of labor especially among the Jews, and so being differently situated from himself, and more at home, had wives, who travelled with them; and he claimed the right to do the same thing. Nevertheless, in his peculiar circumstances and relations, he had not used that liberty, lest he "should hinder the gospel of Christ."¹⁷¹ He doubtless refers to his itinerant life, and to the necessity of not deriving his support from churches gathered among the heathen. At Ephesus he claims to have labored not only for his own support, but also for the support of his assistants.¹⁷²

[52] St. Paul's liberal education, and his high social position in early life, warrant the supposition that he inherited property to some extent; and this was doubtless used by him in defraying his early expenses. Then Barnabas, a native of Cyprus, who had contributed largely to the church-fund at Jerusalem, was probably able to defray the united cost of their first mission. The history states, that when the Apostle Paul started from Antioch, on his second grand missionary tour, the church of that city had made such progress in the missionary spirit, that they "recommended him unto the grace of God."¹⁷³ Having done so much, they could hardly have sent him away empty. But whatever were his means, they seem to have been exhausted soon after entering Europe. At Philippi, he and his companions enjoyed the hospitality of that noble woman, Lydia.¹⁷⁴ At Thessalonica, for some unexplained reason, he declined receiving anything from his converts there, and labored "night and day," because, as he says, he would not be chargeable to them;¹⁷⁵ while, at the same time, he allowed the Philippian

¹⁷¹ 1 Cor. ix. 4, 5, 14.

¹⁷² Acts xx. 34.

¹⁷³ Acts xv. 40.

¹⁷⁴ Acts xvi. 15.

¹⁷⁵ Thess. ii. 9.

church to supply his necessities. That church did this "once and again," while he was at Thessalonica; and afterwards at Corinth; and again, when he was a prisoner at Rome.¹⁷⁶ At Athens, after his speech on Mars' Hill, he would be joyfully entertained by his patrician convert, Dionysius the Areopagite; who, I cannot doubt, afterwards took pleasure in seeing him over the Isthmus to Corinth. During the year and a half of his abode in Corinth, he declares to the church in that city, that he "was chargeable to no man;" for what was lacking to him the messengers from the distant Philipian church supplied, and he meant to keep himself from being burdensome to them. It must have been a matter of notoriety at Corinth, that he labored for his own support in the tent-factory of Aquila and Priscilla, having learned the craft at Tarsus, as a part of his Jewish education; though I imagine that one object he had in view, both there and at Ephesus, was to set an example of self-support to the native presbyters.

It is due, however, to the primitive Gentile churches to presume, that the Christian community, which was growing up under the self-denying labors of this holy apostle, became at length alive to the duty and privilege of carefully looking after his wants; and that while, for special reasons in the infancy of the churches, he refused to receive aid from certain of them, he was not ordinarily accustomed to refuse the hospitalities and kindly proffered benefactions of personal friends, as he passed from place to place. That love, which hung on his lips at Troas "even till break of day;" which received him in Galatia "as an angel of God, as Jesus Christ;" which fell weeping on his neck at Miletus, [54] because they should see his face no more; and which wept at Cesarea over his approaching sufferings so as to break his heart, — would not have permitted him to want, when there was the power to prevent it.

Yet there is a passage in the Apostle John's brief letter to the "well-beloved Gaius," which seems to intimate the general usage, not only of St. Paul, but also of his associates, not to depend for their support on mission churches among the Gentiles. St. John expressly declares, that, for Christ's sake, "they went forth, taking nothing from the Gentiles."¹⁷⁷

6. It is important, in a missionary point of view, to observe what classes of persons were gathered into the apostolic churches. Our Saviour evidently sought, in his private instructions, to guard his disciples against expecting great success among the rich and noble of the earth. The foundations of his spiritual kingdom were not to be laid among such. "Verily I say unto

¹⁷⁶ Phil. ii. 25; iv. 15, 16; 2 Cor. xi. 9.

¹⁷⁷ 3 John v. 7. See 2 Cor. xii. 13.

you,” was his emphatic declaration, “that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.” That this declaration made a strong impression at the time, is evident from its being recorded, with the addition of its more emphatic reduplication by three of the Evangelists.¹⁷⁸ There are indeed names of rich and noble converts on the pages of the New Testament; but the great [55] body was from the middle and poorer classes. It was eminently so among the Greeks at Corinth. “Ye see your calling, brethren,” the apostle wrote to them, “how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are; that no flesh should glory in his presence.”¹⁷⁹ One of the ancient historians of the church,¹⁸⁰ speaking of the early Christians, says, — “They were neither rich nor learned, but workers in brass, builders, house-slaves, laborers, tree-fellers, and women.” In an age of the world when wealth and power were never held in higher estimation, the leaven of the gospel was cast into the lower and middle strata of society, and worked upwards, till the whole was leavened. It is interesting to notice, —

7. That the influence of pious females is a conspicuous fact in the Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistles. There is no need that I illustrate this. Pious women, as is well known, have a noble record in the missionary life of the great apostle, as they also have in that of our blessed Lord.

8. The tardy development of the *Ecclesia*, the [56] church, in the apostolic age, has been already illustrated. Not till after nearly a score of years was it fully settled, that Gentile churches should not be required to conform to Jewish customs and prejudices. While we nowhere find distinct traces in the New Testament of the associated, organized denominationalism of our times, it is not on that account to be condemned, when not opposed to the spirit of the gospel. It is obvious, that neither Presbyteries, Consociations, Associations, or Conferences could be formed, until there were churches enough of which to form them, churches sufficiently trained and near together to be advantageously associated. It may be that the sacred history closed before there was a full ecclesiastical development in any direc-

¹⁷⁸ Matt. xix. 23, 24; Mark x. 23...27; Luke xviii. 24–27.

¹⁷⁹ 1 Cor. i. 26–29.

¹⁸⁰ Theodoret, A. D. 420.

tion.¹⁸¹ But the local church in its principles and outline is there; and modern missionaries from the several evangelical communities are at no loss for an example as regards such churches. [57]

It is more to my purpose to inquire into the character of the apostolic churches, than into their method of organization and government. The common opinion, that those churches excelled the churches of modern times in their Christian development, is not sustained by a thoughtful reading of the inspired documents, nor could such a thing be reasonably expected. The work of the Holy Spirit, in its permanent results on the hearts and minds and lives of men, appears not to have differed materially then, from what it is in our day. St. Paul seems to have had as many and as great trials with his mission churches, as do modern missionaries with theirs. In the church of Corinth, on which the apostle had bestowed so much labor, he had to lament the many carried away by false teachers, disorders in their worship, irregularities at the Lord's Supper, neglect of discipline, party divisions, litigations, "debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings."¹⁸² And how soon were the Galatians seduced from their loyalty to the truth, even to what seemed "another gospel;" so that the apostle feared he had labored among them in vain.¹⁸³ He thought it needful to exhort the Ephesian church to put away lying, to steal no more, and to have no more to do with fornication and covetousness.¹⁸⁴ He also exhorts the Colossians not to lie one to another;¹⁸⁵ and [58] the Thessalonians to withdraw from such of their brethren as walked disorderly.¹⁸⁶ He cautions Timothy against fables, endless genealogies, and profane and vain babblings, as if such were prevalent in some of the churches; and speaks of preachers who, after making shipwreck of their faith, added blasphemies to their

¹⁸¹ "Neither in the New Testament, nor in any ancient document whatever, do we find anything recorded, from whence it might be inferred, that any of the minor churches were at all dependent on, or looked up for direction to those of greater magnitude or consequence; on the contrary, several things occurred therein, which put it out of all doubt that every one of them enjoyed the same rights, and was considered as being on a footing of the most perfect equality with the rest. Indeed it cannot, — I will not say be proved, but even be made to appear probable, from any estimony divine or human, — that in this age it was the practice for several churches to enter into and maintain amongst themselves that sort of association, which afterwards came to subsist amongst the churches of almost every province." — Mosheim, *Commentaries*, vol. i. p. 196.

¹⁸² 2 Cor. xii. 20.

¹⁸³ Gal i. 6; iv. 11.

¹⁸⁴ Eph. iv. 25, 28; v. 3.

¹⁸⁵ Col. iii. 9.

¹⁸⁶ 2 Thess. iii. 6.

heresies.¹⁸⁷ And the Apostle John declares, somewhat later, that many “antichrists” had gone out from the church.¹⁸⁸

As there were great defects, so there were also great excellences coexisting in the churches gathered by the apostles. At the very time of St. Paul’s censures of the Corinthians, he declares that church to be “enriched by Jesus Christ in all utterance and in all knowledge,” so that it came behind in no gift.¹⁸⁹ While he so seriously cautions the Ephesians, he ceases not to give thanks for “their faith in the Lord Jesus, and their love unto all the saints.”¹⁹⁰ He thanked God upon every remembrance of the Philippians;¹⁹¹ and when he wrote to the Colossians, he gave thanks for their faith in Christ Jesus, and their love to all the saints.¹⁹² And how abundant his commendations of the Thessalonians, whom he declares to be “ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.”¹⁹³

[59] We come to this result as to the character of the apostolic churches: that while the primitive converts were remarkable, as a class, for the high tone of their religious feelings, and the simplicity and strength of their faith, they were deficient in a clear, practical apprehension of the ethical code of the gospel. All things considered, this was not strange; and we should always remember this, when we contemplate the character of modern mission churches.

9. Finally, I must make some estimate of the amount of success, on the whole, which resulted from the apostolic missions; though the materials for this are imperfect, owing to the brevity of the sacred narrative.

The Jews had synagogues, the pagans had temples; but there is no reason to suppose that church-buildings were erected anywhere in connection with the apostolic missions. The religious assemblies were private. No separate and distinguished edifice attracted attention; and ecclesiastical history affirms, that there were no Christian houses of worship erected before the third century.¹⁹⁴

There is no reason to suppose that the Apostle Paul was privileged to see any one district, or even any one city, so much as nominally Christianized. Antioch was not for at least two centuries. The people in Lesser Asia,

¹⁸⁷ 1 Tim. i. 19, 20; vi. 3–5.

¹⁸⁸ 1 John ii 18, 19.

¹⁸⁹ 1 Cor. i. 5, 7.

¹⁹⁰ Eph. i. 15, 16.

¹⁹¹ Phil. i. 3.

¹⁹² Col. i. 3, 4.

¹⁹³ 1 Thess. i. 3, 7.

¹⁹⁴ Neander, vol. i. p. 291; Mosheim, vol. i. p. 134.

both Jews and Greeks, are said all to have heard the word of the Lord Jesus; [60] but though the worship of Diana is declared to have suffered much decline in consequence, the mob at Ephesus drove the apostle away at last, and showed that paganism was still the dominant power.

The most that can be said — and that is saying very much — is that self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating churches had been planted in all the principal cities of the Roman Empire; as far West, certainly, as Rome, and as far East as Mesopotamia; each under the instruction and care of its own presbyters. Fabricius has collected from the New Testament the names of more than fifty places, which must have had churches.¹⁹⁵ Doubtless the whole number was greater. Judea, Samaria, Syria, Asia Minor, Macedonia, Greece and its Islands, and perhaps a portion of Western Italy, had churches. The great apostle planted them "from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum."

These churches were lights shining amid a general and deep spiritual gloom. We may compare the whole process to the lighting up of some great metropolis. Night is not thereby converted into day. A distant observer would not perceive that any impression was made upon the darkness. Yet the wayfarer in the street, or crossing a public square, would find his path illuminated, and go on his way rejoicing.¹⁹⁶ But this illustration, however [61] expressive, is inadequate. For each one of those churches, scattered over the empire, was a growing influence, and growing the more rapidly for the frequent and cruel persecutions, and was constantly extending its illumination; until, through the divine blessing, under the combined influence of the whole, the Roman Empire bowed to the supremacy of the gospel, and assumed the Christian name.

Such were the apostolic missions. Such were the efforts made for propagating the gospel among the heathen by missionaries under a special divine guidance. It was by gathering converts into churches at the centres of influence, and putting them under native pastoral inspection and care. The means employed were spiritual; namely, the gospel of Christ. The power relied upon for giving efficacy to these means was divine; namely, the promised aid of the Holy Spirit. The main success was among the middle and lower classes of society; and the responsibilities for self-govern-

¹⁹⁵ *Salutaris Lux Evangelii*, etc., p. 83.

¹⁹⁶ This illustration first occurred to me at Calcutta, while looking out one dark night upon the large, gas-lighted public square. I thought, this dark yet illuminated space is India, and the lights are her missions.

ment, self-support, and self-propagation were thrown at once upon the several churches.

Another chapter will show how far the apostolic missions to the heathen reappear in missions of the present day.

9. The Time For the World's Conversion Come

(1837/1838)

Unabridged text of Missionary Tract No. 10 of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission (ABCFM) "The Time For the World's Conversion Come". Boston: The Board, 1851. Originally published in The Religious Magazine, Boston, 1837/38; republished as The Missionary Age: A Half-Century Discourse; Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1851. The page numbers in square brackets follow the reprint in R. Pierce Beaver (ed.). To Advance the Gospel: Selections from Writings of Rufus Anderson. Wm. B. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids (MI), 1967. Pp. 59-70.

When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his son.

—Galatians iv. 4.

[59] The "time" was that appointed for the advent of the Messiah. When the preliminaries and preparations were completed, and every thing was ready in the world and in the Jewish church, and all indicated the period for the coming of the Messiah, then he came, and made the long-promised atonement for the sins of mankind. The time was fully come.

This was the most important of three grand prophetic epochs. The liberation of the enslaved church from Egypt was one. The return of the captive church from Babylon was another. But the coming of the Messiah formed an epoch of far greater interest. All the ceremonial institutions, types and shadows looked to his advent and death, and there found their meaning and termination; and so did the whole Levitical priesthood. The old dispensation of the law ended, and the new dispensation of the gospel commenced. And it was this grand epoch, this "fullness of the time," that prophets and kings so earnestly desired to see.

But there is another predicted epoch, another "fullness of the time," yet to come, of the highest possible interest, when the Spirit shall be poured out upon all flesh, with a universal and overpowering influence, and "the kingdoms of this world" shall become "the kingdoms of our [60] Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever." To this fourth grand epoch the Christian church is now looking forward with the same

earnest desire and expectation that the ancient church did to the coming of the Messiah. As there was a "fullness of the time" for the one, so is there for the other; and the latter has its preliminaries, preparations, and appropriate signs, equally with the former. The probable ends, moreover, to be answered by a delay during so many centuries, would be found remarkably alike in both cases; and we should come to the conclusion that if there were signs to justify that general expectation of the Messiah which seems to have pervaded the civilized world just before his advent, then the Christian world is now justified in expecting the universal extension of the gospel, as an event near at hand.

Instead, however, of tracing this analogy through eighteen hundred years, (which would require a volume,) I shall confine myself to the half of the present century lately completed.

At the opening of the present century, our nation was mourning the death of Washington, and Europe was entering that terrible tempest of fire and blood, in which the genius of Napoleon was so conspicuous. The spirit of infidelity was every where abroad, creating alarm; and little did good men, even of the strongest faith, imagine what was really to be the grand characteristic of the century.

But it often happens, that the stirring up and agitation of men's minds by such causes, though fearful at the time, is the providential preparation for spiritual reformation, intellectual progress, and great social improvement. It was so in the early part of the present century. An impulse was given to the human mind, that has been greatly felt in all the departments of science and art, in all the forms and conditions of social life, and perhaps most of all in the Christian church. Is it not remarkable what an influence this has had in stimulating and organizing the churches for religious effort? At all events, it is certain that a great change has come over the spirit and habits of God's people as a body. Practical piety is now a very different thing from what it once was, — more comprehensive in its views and feelings, more active, more benevolent and aggressive, more alive to its individual and social responsibilities, and a thousand times more influential, in the aggregate, than it was fifty years ago. Somehow, the denominational and social conscience can no longer sleep amid the groans of a perishing world. Somehow, the churches have been led into extensive systematic organizations for propagating the gospel at home and abroad, and these are gaining strength and momentum in every free Protestant community; and somehow, missionary institutions have been planted over a large [61] portion of the heathen world, with the declared purpose of taking possession of the whole for Christ.

Such facts as these may well awaken our curiosity to look more deeply into the matter, and to learn more of the position in which we, as Christians, and the churches of our day, are placed by God's providence and grace; and my object is to illustrate this point, and to bring it out distinctly to view.

The Way Not Opened for the Universal Propagation of the Gospel Until Now

I. *It was not until the present century that the way was actually opened, by God's providence, for Christians to reach and evangelize all nations.*

This truth, if it be one, has of course a momentous bearing on the responsibilities of the present generation. Christ's command to "go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," does not prove that his immediate disciples, or the whole body of Christians in their day, were able themselves actually to publish the gospel to all mankind. In fact they did not. They did what they could. They are not open to reproach. They were faithful. Theirs was preeminently an enterprising, missionary age. It may well be presumed that they proclaimed the gospel as far as they could. Though their number was so small, they preached it through a considerable portion of the then civilized world. But it is almost certain that they went scarcely beyond. Our Lord intended his injunction not merely for them nor merely for their age, but for the whole church, in all ages, till the gospel should, be literally preached to every creature, — nay, till the end of the world; for in the millennium the gospel will need to be preached every where, as really as now. It will then be, as it is now, the duty of the Christian church to see that it is so preached; and this injunction of our Lord presents, and was intended to present, *the great standing work* of the Christian church for all ages of the world.

As the apostolic missions were nearly all within the limits of the civilized world, so were they doubtless restrained by the most formidable obstacles to their going farther. We have certain knowledge, indeed, that at that time the Romans had almost no acquaintance with countries beyond their own empire. India was to them the farthest east, and the British Isles the farthest west. The immense regions of Northern and Eastern Asia had scarcely more existence in their minds than the continents and islands of this western hemisphere. This ignorance, and much more the nature of its causes, made it impossible, as the primitive churches were situated, and as society and navigation then were, [62] for the apostles and their associates to publish the gospel to all the world.

This profound ignorance of the existence and condition of distant nations continued for many centuries, and was to a great extent invincible. And so far as it was invincible, it was an insuperable obstacle to the universal preaching of the gospel. If not so, how came *commerce*, the insatiable greediness of commerce, to be restricted, all the while, within precisely the same limits? How came the reckless, indomitable *avarice* of the world not to break forth over all the earth, as it has done in our age even in advance of the gospel? It did not, only because it could not. Its progress was barred, in respect to the greater portion of the world, as it now is in respect to the kingdom of Japan; only the obstacles were far more numerous and insuperable.

It was, indeed, most obviously the divine will, — for all-wise reasons not fully revealed to us, — that the nations of the world should long remain in great measure isolated in respect to each other; and that the visible Christian church should pass, meanwhile, through a period of trial, and through a series of great errors, apostasies, and reformations, before it spread itself and the religion it professed over all the earth. These were probably needful to the full working out of the great plan of redemption, and to the full preparation of the church for this great work.

I by no means intend to affirm that the true church of Christ has not, in every age since the apostles, been culpable for not having done more than it actually did for extending the gospel. I speak, however, of the *true spiritual church*, and not of the mere nominal church, which early began to apostatize from the spirit and truth of the gospel, and the more as it rose in power and influence. And the question I raise concerning the *true church*, is not whether it could have done more in the way of missions than it did, but whether it could have diffused the gospel, in past ages, through the entire world.

There is the strongest historical proof that the ignorance of the true Christian church in past ages, with respect to the great portion of the heathen world, admitted of but a partial removal. For many ages, the whole frontier of pagan Africa and Asia was occupied by Saracens and Turks, then forming together the most powerful of all the nations, in armed and fierce defiance of Christian Europe. Goths, Huns, Vandals, and Saracens also disturbed for centuries the security and peace of Christendom. So did the Crusaders. Moreover, the true church of Christ necessarily participated in the ignorance, mental imbecility, and superstition of Christendom from the seventh century onward, which rendered impossible any such rational, scriptural, and extended missions as are necessary to evangelize the whole heathen world. The pope [63] and his cardinals were also in great power, and arrogated to themselves all the functions and privileges of the church

of God, and allowed no religious freedom of mind, speech, or action; and the few scattered and feeble disciples of the Lord Jesus had more than they could do to stay the progress of superstition in the visible church. And oft-times they were compelled to wander in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, and to purchase a mere existence by silence and obscurity. In such circumstances, which in fact lasted for ages, down even to the Reformation, the true church *could* do but little for the benefit of remote countries. Then what scanty facilities were there for traveling! For twelve centuries after the apostles, men continued to regard the earth as an extended plain, and to sail by the stars and cling to the shores; and not till long after that did the mariner boldly venture across the ocean. Mind, too, had no such mighty instruments to work with as now, for exerting influence on mind near or remote. The invention of the printing press preceded but a few years the discovery of America; and the use of machinery in working the press, or that wonderful machine called the power press, which can print fifteen hundred or two thousand copies of the New Testament in a day, is a device of our own age. I need not add, that associations on a large scale for propagating the gospel, except in the form of monkish institutions, are all of recent date — the result of that intelligence and large intercommunity of thought, and feeling, and freedom of action, which belong to the age of printing, and distinguish the Protestant world of modern times. So far as the apostolical and later ancient churches were able to act together for the propagating of the gospel, it was by platoons and companies, while the evangelical churches of our day act by divisions and armies, with the momentum of great masses.

The Way Now Opened

But nothing is more certain than that *now* almost every heathen nation is entirely accessible, and that this amazing result has been brought about chiefly within the past half century, — in that silent, scarcely observed manner which characterizes the great operations of God's providential government. Those who remember (as some of us do) the embarrassments with which our own Board of Foreign Missions commenced its operations, forty years ago, will bear witness that I do not exaggerate. It was then thought difficult to find a field of labor even for four or five missionaries. Little did our pious fathers think what God purposed to do for this work, even before some of them should have gone to their everlasting rest. Little did they imagine, for instance, how soon the world would be explored, and its condition made [64] known to God's people; — how soon the intolerant secular power of idolatry would be overthrown in India; — how soon the

gates of China would be forced open; — how soon Protestant governments, then all indifferent and some even hostile to missions, would find it for their interest, as they have, to act the part of protectors; — how soon railroads would bind the earth together, and send men over it by day and night with the swiftness of the winds; — how soon thought would dart across continents and oceans with lightning's speed; — and how soon the currents of all the rivers and the storms of all the oceans would be overcome by steam, and commerce fill and pervade every sea; thus giving to the people of God a free and easy access to every land.

These astonishing events have all become so familiar as scarcely to excite our wonder. But they are all events of our own age. They belong to the nineteenth century. For the first time since the opening of the Christian dispensation, for the first time since the dispersion at Babel, God has made a large portion of the world to cease from the strange isolation of its several parts, and to become known and accessible to his people. With our railroads, our steamships, our telegraphic wires, our power presses, our commerce and commercial exchanges, our sciences and arts, our geography, our personal security; with no more Gothic or Vandal invasions to drive back the tide of civilization; nor False Prophet, nor Man of Sin, as we may hope, again to deceive on the large scale of nations; — who can doubt, that the "fullness of the time;" for blessing the earth with the gospel has come, and that this great work forms the grand mission and business of the churches and Christians of our day?

This conviction will be strengthened by the illustrations under our second proposition.

The Churches Never Before Organized for the Conversion of the World

II. *It was not until the present century that the evangelical churches of Christendom were ever really organized with a view to the conversion of the world.*

What are called *voluntary associations* for religious purposes, in distinction from local churches, are not indeed a new thing on the earth. They have existed, in some form, from an early period of the Christian church. It was probably through such that the gospel has ever been propagated by the church beyond the voices of its own immediate pastors. *Monasteries* were voluntary societies; and so were all the different orders of *monks*. It was by means of associations such as these that the gospel was originally propagated among our ancestors, [65] and over Europe. These are the *Papal* forms of missionary societies and missions.

The *Protestant* form is what we see in Missionary, Bible, Tract, and other kindred societies; not restricted to ecclesiastics, nor to any one profession, but combining all classes, embracing the masses of the people; and all free, open, and responsible. They are voluntary associations in reality, whether their executive officers be appointed by associations of Christians formed expressly for the purpose, or by means of particular ecclesiastical bodies; for it is *the contributors of the funds*, who are the real association; not the American Board, not the General Assembly's Board, nor any other, but the individuals, churches, congregations, who freely act together, *through such agencies*, for an object of common interest. The Board, or whatever be the executive body, is an agency, and stands so related to the donors on the one band, and to the missionaries on the other. Those who employ it are all alike voluntary in so doing, in all the Protestant societies of benevolent organization. No compulsory taxation, no taxation whatever, is allowable in Christian benevolence. None are to be *taxed* for the *spread* of the gospel. All must needs be voluntary and free to give, and to determine what they shall give and for what objects, in order to be cheerful and accepted givers. Our age is singular and remarkable for its disposition to *associate* in action. It associates for the accomplishment of almost every object; and this disposition *may* be so extended, for an object of great interest, that the society shall embrace even thousands of churches, belonging to several kindred denominations. We see such wonders in our times, in Bible and Tract societies, and even in Missionary societies. The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions is itself an instance. But whatever the name, constitution, or religious object of the association, the action put forth is as much that of *churches* as it can be on so large a scale, or perhaps as it ought to be when involving the receipt and disbursement of large sums of money.

This Protestant form of association — free, open, responsible, embracing all classes, both sexes, all ages, the masses of the people — is peculiar to modern times, and almost to our age. Like our own form of government, working with perfect freedom over a broad continent, it is among the great results of the progress of Christian civilization in this “fullness of the time” for the world's conversion. Such great and extended associations could not possibly have been worked, they could not have been created, or kept in existence, without the present degree of civil and religious liberty and social security, or without the present extended habits of reading and the consequent wide-spread intelligence among the people; nor could they exist on a sufficiently broad scale, nor act with sufficient energy for the conversion of the world, [66] under despotic governments, or without the present amazing facilities for communication on the land, and the world-wide commerce

on the seas. Never, until now, did the social condition of mankind render it possible to organize the armies requisite for the world's spiritual conquest.

The Churches Now Organizing for the Entire Work

Such new forms of association as have been described arose with the opening of the unevangelized world to the gospel, and with the consequent rise of the missionary spirit; and I believe that every evangelical denomination in Protestant America and Europe now has them. They belong almost exclusively to this century. In our own country indeed, fifty years ago, there was not one foreign Missionary society, properly so called; nor a Bible, Tract, Education, or Seamen's society; and the Horne Missionary societies were mere local institutions working on the smallest scale. But now our system of organization for propagating the gospel, at home and abroad, receives contributions to the amount of a million and a half of dollars annually, besides half a million more for the sale of Bibles and other religious books at cost. In the evangelical churches of Great Britain and America, the aggregate of the receipts is about five millions of dollars; or at least *a hundred times* more than was contributed, by the same bodies of Christians, fifty years ago.

Foreign Missions Now Forming on the Broad Scale of the World

III. *Till the present century, the evangelical churches of Christendom had no commanding system of missions abroad, designed expressly for the conversion of the world.*

At the opening of the century, a few missions, most of them of recent origin, might be seen faintly twinkling out from the depths of pagan darkness. But they were feebly sustained, had gained no strong hold on the heathen world, and awakened no general interest among the churches. Never did any age, not even the apostolical, behold such a system of missions as we are now permitted to see. They are not indeed universal; for some portions of the world are as yet scarcely accessible. But the Christian traveler would find them on nearly all the more important points along two thousand miles of the African coast; in nearly every important centre of influence in Western Asia; on the upper waters of the Indus; along the Ganges; around nearly the whole sea-coast of India, and over nearly the length and breadth of its great peninsula. He would find them in Ceylon, in Assam, in Siam, in the [67] Indian Archipelago, and in the

five chief ports of the Chinese empire. Launching abroad on the Pacific, he might venture to cast anchor in almost any of the groups of islands, in the confidence that missionaries of the cross are there to protect him from savage men; and already do Christian missions afford a more effectual and better protection to the mariner in that "Island World" than could be furnished by all the navies of Christendom. And along the great rivers of our western wilds, after crossing the Rocky Mountains, how often would the traveler be gladdened at evening by the songs of Zion, when fearing he should hear the war-cry of the savage!

Though all this be but the *beginning* of the enterprise for the world's conversion, (and it is nothing more,) yet how great is that beginning! — how wide! — in how many places! — how extended over the earth! You find the heralds of the cross alike in the burning and temperate zones, in every climate; encountering every form of barbarism, every language, every religion; and laboring, with equal cheerfulness, in every part of the unevangelized world.

No Other Great Enterprise More Successful

Nor are these missionaries laboring in vain. Theirs, through God's blessing, is one of the most successful great enterprises that was ever undertaken by man. Look at the Sandwich Islands. Look at the long line of island groups in the South Pacific. Look at New Zealand. Behold, in the Cherokee and Choctaw nations, the "wild Indian" both civilized and Christianized. Behold in Western Asia the two religious reformations now in progress, among the Armenians and the Nestorians. Behold in Africa, West and South, the many thousands gathered into churches. Behold the increasing number of Christian villages in India — germs of coming Christian provinces, and of a Christian empire. Behold the multitude of schools, the seminaries, the native preachers, the printing establishments. Behold the hundred and twenty languages of the pagan world lately reduced to writing, and beginning to be enriched with the Scriptures, and with school books and religious tracts. Behold at least a thousand churches, with two or three hundred thousand members, enjoying the ministrations of some fifteen hundred foreign missionaries and thousands of native Christian helpers. Behold, in Christian lands, thousands of feeble churches edified by nearly as many home missionaries. Behold near forty millions of Scriptures issued by Bible societies, — a greater number than ever before since the Law was given on Sinai; and thousands of millions of tracts and religious books issued by Tract and Sabbath school societies.

Did time permit, I might speak of the impulse that has thus been [68] given to our religious education, to our religious literature, to our devotional and practical piety, to our churches and ecclesiastical bodies, and to all our evangelical denominations. I might show how this vastly-extended benevolent enterprise has raised the character of the Christian church, and secured for it a consideration among men such as it never had before. But there is not time, and what has been adduced is sufficient for my purpose. Enough for me that the world is so far opened, and that the churches are beginning in earnest to gird themselves for the great spiritual conflict in every land.

The Call of Providence

Now, how do you account for all this? What does it mean? Why, within the memory of many now living, has the world been thus strangely opened and made accessible, as by a stupendous miracle? And why has such a vast systematic organization grown up as in a day, of associations at home and missions abroad, with the specific and declared design of publishing the gospel to every creature? Was there ever such a thing before? *Why* has the great and blessed God crowded so many of such stupendous results into our day?

I am unable to answer these inquiries, except on the supposition that the "*fullness of the time*" has actually come for the predicted publication and spread of the gospel through the world. I am sure that they cannot be answered on any other supposition. There never has been an age like the present. Never did churches, or individual Christians, or any man with the gospel in his hands, stand in such a relation to the heathen world as we now do. Not only is that world accessible, but it even lies on our very borders. We cannot sympathize with Richard Baxter,¹⁹⁷ in his almost despairing hope that the time might come when the gospel should have access to the Orient; for with us, hope has given place to certainty, and every man, woman, and child may now operate, with the greatest ease, upon the most distant nations. Men sometimes complain of the frequency and urgency of the calls that are made on their religious benevolence. But do they not see, that the most urgent of these calls result necessarily from the character which God has impressed on our age, and from the relation we stand in to the surrounding world? Our fathers of the last century had no such calls upon them as we have from nations beyond the bounds of Christendom; and they had not, because those nations were then comparatively un-

¹⁹⁷ Richard Baxter, 1615–1691, English Puritan divine. –Ed.

known, or unapproachable. But God has been pleased, in our day, to lift the pall of death from off the heathen world, and to bring it near, and to fill our eyes with the sight and our ears with [69] the cry of their distress. He has leveled the mountains and bridged the oceans which separated the benighted nations from us, and has made for us highways to every land. To us he says, "Go!" — with an emphasis and a meaning such as this command never had to ministers and Christians in former ages.

No Escaping from the Duty

Should we take the wings of the morning, and fly millions of leagues beyond our globe, we could by no means thus escape from the responsibility that has come upon us; for we know our duty, and we can never be as though we had not known it. We should be held and treated, wherever found by ministering angels, as deserters from the army of the Lord of hosts. God's Word, and Spirit, and Providence now all concur in the command to publish the gospel to all the nations; and if we refuse, the blood of perishing nations will cry against us. This is the age for the work, and we are the people to do it. From this warfare Christ will give us no discharge. It by no means follows, that we shall be saved in the neglect of this work, because our fathers were. Our circumstances differ wholly from theirs. Western Asia, India, China were shut to them, but are open to us. Neither had God been pleased to teach them, as he has us, to associate and combine their strength, and act in masses for the accomplishment of great religious enterprises.

The Work to go on to Its Completion

Verily it is no transient opinion, nor mere popular sentiment, accidentally arisen and liable to pass away, that has put forth and sustains the missionary work. It is the onward, almost fearful progress of God's gracious providence. As long as there is liberty of thought, speech, and action, a free press, an advancing civilization, and an unshackled, universal commerce, we may be sure that the motives to prosecute the missionary work will continue to increase in their manifold power upon the hearts, consciences, and conduct of the Christian church. No one can doubt this, who knows the circumstances that marked the rise, progress, and decline of all past missions of the church, or who takes a comprehensive view of this "fulness of the time" for the grand spiritual renovation of the world. These mighty beginnings of the past half century will have glorious develop-

ments in the half century to come; and the children will have far more to do, and will do far more, than their fathers did or supposed they could do.

The idea that the ability of the churches to give is already fully tasked, comes from a profound ignorance of the statistics of our religious charities. Nearly one half of the three millions of professedly [70] evangelical church members in our country are believed yet to give nothing at all for missions, foreign or domestic. Nearly a third, even in New England, are believed to give nothing; and very many, even in our own denomination, contribute not more than *half a dollar* a year for propagating the gospel; which is at the rate of *twenty-five dollars* in half a century! Or, if twice this sum, it would be but *fifty dollars* during a lang, lang lifetime! — and for the object that brought the Son of God on his mission from heaven to earth! Are these *faithful* stewards? Will *they* hear the heaven-creating words, "*Well done!*" addressed to them on the great day, by the Judge on the throne?

The Appeal

I am not pleading specially for any one missionary society, nor for any one class of missions, nor for the millions of any one nation or continent. I stand on higher, broader ground. I am pleading for the *general cause* of missions and of the gospel. I am pleading for the *world*; in view of the length, breadth, depth, and height of the love of Christ, and of our obligations to him. *Is this* a work we may do, or not do? Is it to be reckoned among mere human enterprises? *Can* we neglect it, and think calmly of our neglect in our dying day?

Let us get the full impress of our duty. Let us awake to its great reality. Nothing is more truly binding upon us than the obligation to impart the gospel to those whom we can reach, and who will perish if they do not receive it. That surely is the most destructive immorality which withholds from immortal man the only gospel of salvation. The most pernicious infidelity is surely that which cares not for a world perishing in sin. And that must be the most high-handed disregard of Heaven's authority, and must reflect most dishonor upon the Son of God, which refuses, in the face of his most explicit command, to publish his gospel to every creature. Let us remember, that He who requires this is our God, in whose hands are our possessions, our lives, and our immortal souls, and that our opportunities are rushing by us, and fast passing away forever.

NOTE — As a few readers may perceive a resemblance, in some portions of the foregoing discussion, to an anonymous article in the "Religious Magazine," published some years ago, it is proper to say that both originated from the same source.

10. The Sandwich Islands Evangelized

(1870)

Reprint of Rufus Anderson. History of the Sandwich Islands Mission. Congregational Publishing Society: Boston, 1870. Chapter XXXVII, pp. 333-342. The original page numbers are to be found in square brackets. The original is available online at: <https://archive.org/details/historyofsandwic00andeiala/page/333/mode/2up>

[333] A FOREIGN Missionary Society may be said to have completed its appropriate work among a heathen people, when a Christian community has resulted from its labors, that is self-governing, self-sustaining, and imbued so with spiritual life as to give promise, not only of living after the Society has withdrawn from the field, but of being a leaven that may be expected ultimately to leaven the whole lump. In this view, it will not always be needful that the people of the entire national territory shall have been first Christianized. Indeed, experience has shown, that native churches must be aggressive, as well as self-sustaining, in order to their full development. They must have the benefit of what to them will be a foreign mission. The effort to carry mission churches through a long series of years, and to create a self-reliant and efficient Christian community, without the help of such an agency, must generally prove unsuccessful. Home missions will be the stronger for the foreign missions, but alone will not suffice. If there be no accessible heathen outside the national territory, then the mission should be withdrawn, if that be practicable, before that territory has all come under [334] the power of the gospel; while there is land yet to be possessed, while something like a stern necessity exists for acting on the defensive, and pressing the war of conquest.

Some may think that, in missions like the one at the Sandwich Islands, the presence of Romish missionaries ought to keep the Protestant missionaries in the field. There is of course discretion to be used in respect to this matter, especially when Rome can command the armed support of some one of the great Catholic powers. But experience at the Islands has shown the wonderful vitality of spiritual forces even under such assaults, as well as the animating reason we have to look for providential interpositions. Besides, such is the inherent weakness of Romish missions, that they are obliged always to keep missionaries in fields they would retain for their Church. In all their great missions of past ages, these have been just as in-

dispensable after the lapse of a century, as they were at any previous time, and the missions perished on the failure of the foreign supply. We need not wait for them to retire, as indeed we cannot, nor should we greatly dread their presence. All things considered, the mission churches at the Sandwich Islands are perhaps the better for the proximity and the assaults of their uncompromising foes. The wrath of man has been made to praise God, and the remainder he has restrained. Indeed the presence of an opposing if not a persecuting power, is almost a necessity in the early stages of missionary success. Witness Madagascar.

A more mischievous form of interference, is a rival mission from some Protestant Church, acting under the same banner, but with different doctrines, different forms of worship, and conflicting interests, — such as the late mission of Bishop Staley at the Sandwich Islands.

We cannot help believing, that missions have not been prosecuted with enough positive reference to an early termination. The mission to the Sandwich Islands has had a duration of half a century; and would have been protracted much longer, but for the counsels of the directing body. The error was in underestimating the spiritual vitality of the native church and pastorate, and in overestimating the importance of a prolonged discipline and training for the native ministry, in a newly formed Christian community. There was, also, too little thought of the enlightening and elevating influence that must attend the all-pervading agency of the Holy Spirit; warranting the belief, that at least in every hundred converts a man might be found with sufficient natural endowments, under Biblical instruction, to take the charge of one of the early churches gathered among a heathen people. Had the American missionaries at the Islands and their directors been prepared, from the outset, to act decidedly on this assumption, the work of the Missionary Board might have been shortened, possibly a score of years.

The relations at present sustained by the Sandwich Islands missionaries to the Board, and to the native Christian community, are somewhat peculiar. Their official connection with the Board, as missionaries, terminated in the manner and for reasons elsewhere stated, in the years immediately following 1818; but [336] was so far renewed in 1863, that a reasonable support was guaranteed to them, while remaining on the Islands with the purpose of doing what they could for the advancement of Christ's kingdom. Their present relation to the island churches is that of missionary fathers. They are members of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association, with the right of voting, and with all the influence in that Association, and in the native community, which their characters and the remembrance of their services will command. They are Hawaiian citizens, as are

their children, and have a deep personal interest in all that concerns the welfare of the nation.

The matter of support for the missionary families subsequent to the year 1863, was virtually decided by the missionaries themselves, at their general meeting in that year, in free conferences with the Foreign Secretary of the Board; and this is their account of the settlement.

“It is plain that the salary cannot be based on the principle of paying for services rendered. Missionary salaries have never been based on this principle. The missionary is not strictly the employé of the Board, or of the churches, but a servant of Christ engaged in doing the work of his Master. The Board only enables him to do this work to the best advantage. For this purpose a salary is granted, regulated according to the various wants and circumstances of the individual. It is obvious that, in returning to this missionary salary, the houses, lands, etc., placed at the disposal of the missionary in 1848, must be taken into account. And as one design of that arrangement was to place missionaries in a position to secure a support for [337] themselves and families at the Islands, it is reasonable that some regard should now be had to the means and advantages which this change may have placed in their possession. It is also understood, that these means and advantages, whatever they may be, may now be employed toward the support of the families in such way as will not interfere with missionary usefulness, so that we are not in fact placed on the same basis as before the change in 1848, with the same claims to a full support from the Board. These principles will aid us in coming to a just estimate of the various salaries.

“The salary now to be fixed upon, is to be regarded as a permanent arrangement, not to be revised from year to year, and not to be altered, unless some obvious reason shall make it necessary: the individual to be at liberty to receive the whole, or a part, or nothing, as his own sense of duty shall dictate. No grants are to be made for repairs of houses, or for ordinary medical aid. Applications for extraordinary medial aid should be considered as they shall occur. Aid will be granted to widows and superannuated missionaries as heretofore, according to the actual necessities of the case.”

The Micronesian and Marquesan missions are the foreign missions of the Hawaiian churches. The eight Hawaiian missionaries and four assistant missionaries, with their wives, all derive their support from the Hawaiian churches, through the Hawaiian Board, and have no direct connection with the American Board. But it has been necessary that the support of the American laborers in Micronesia, and the expenses of the *Morning Star*, should be borne by the Board. [338]

The number of ordained missionaries employed on the Sandwich Islands from the beginning, is fifty-two; of lay teachers and helpers, twenty-one; of female missionaries, chiefly married, eighty-three; making a total of one hundred and fifty-six. Ten of the ordained missionaries died in the field, six of them past the age of fifty. Fourteen of the clerical missionaries returned for various reasons to their native land, where six of them have since died. The average duration of service performed by the ordained missionaries who died at the Islands, was twenty-seven years. The sixteen who are now living at the Islands have been there from twenty-six to forty-seven years, and their average service is thirty-seven years. These remarkable facts speak well for the Hawaiian climate.

That so large a number of clerical missionaries is still resident at the Islands, at what may be regarded as the close of the mission, is owing in part to the salubrity of the climate already noticed, and in part to the peculiar constitution of the Hawaiian nation. Incorporating the mission families into the civil community which the mission had been mainly instrumental in forming, was part of the process, for reasons almost peculiar to those Islands, in losing the work of the mission; and the lay members are now all in the discharge of duties as citizens, as also are many children of the mission. Most of the missionaries being far advanced in years, some of them beyond the period for active service, they generally feel, that they have a claim for such grants in aid from the Board, as in addition to their private means will make them comfortable; and this aid [339] can be rendered far more economically at the Islands, than it could be in the United States. Their residence, too, among the churches they have planted, now that those churches form an independent religious community, may perhaps be necessary to the ultimate success of those churches, and cannot fail to be useful. It seems at least to be obviously a part of the Divine plan, and the future historian will doubtless have pleasure in tracing its results. The Sandwich Islands lie on one of the great pathways of the world's commerce, and modern civilization is flowing in upon them quite fast enough for the religious interests of the nation, and for the temporal welfare of the native population. The presence of the religious fathers of the nation, for a few more years, as counselors and aids, will be among the best safeguards of the national welfare.

The missionaries and their directors have always favored the independence of the Islands. The present king, misled at one time by the representations of unfriendly persons, publicly expressed an opinion, that the missionaries were in favor of annexing the Islands to the United States. But this was wholly a misapprehension. If the Islands were thus annexed, an emigration would flow there from the United States, which, while it might

enrich a few large native landholders high in rank, would at one impoverish the mass of the native people, and lead to their speedy extinction. The existence of the Hawaiian nation is inseparably connected with the religion to which it owes all its prosperity. Nor are the Protestant religious institutions now existing there for the native inhabitants alone; and these institutions will doubtless remain, and give character to the long future, whatever form the civil government shall assume. But the native element must rapidly disappear with the loss of independence; and the prospect of such an event is exceedingly painful to an observer from the missionary stand-point.

The cost of the Sandwich Islands mission, up to the year 1869, was one million two hundred and twenty thousand dollars; and that of the Micronesian mission, one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Should we compare this cost of an enterprise extending through half a century, with that of railroads, steamships, iron-clad vessels, naval expeditions, or a single active week in our late civil war, the sum total would not appear large. The actual value of the results of this expenditure indeed is inestimable. It is vain for an objector to state the good this money might have done, if expended in some other quarters, or for other purposes. It could not have been obtained for other purposes. Its contribution was the result of the interest awakened by this very mission. And the mission, by its reacting influence on the sympathies and faith of the Christian community, has far more than supported itself. The Isles of the Pacific have been a productive working capital, both in this country and Great Britain, by reason of the early and great success of missions among them at the outset of the mighty enterprise for the world's conversion. They were missions to the more accessible and plastic portions of the heathen world, — pioneer, and in some sense tentative, missions; and we may well doubt whether, without them, missions would have been soon prosecuted on a large scale among the less accessible people of India and China, whatever may be the popular estimate as to the relative importance of those countries. The providential call to the churches has been most distinctly heard from the Pacific isles, from the wilds of Southern Africa, from the Karens of Burmah, from the Pariahs of India, and recently from the island of Madagascar.

The value of the work of God's grace at the Islands through the gospel of his Son, as set forth in the pages of this volume, is beyond the reach of human calculation. The salvation of a single soul is declared by the Divine Saviour to be worth more than the world; and the gathering of hopeful converts into the churches of those Islands, for the space of fifty years, has averaged more than a thousand a year; and among these converts have been some of the highest and best exhibitions of true piety.

Nor will it be any the less true, that the Hawaiian nation has been evangelized, and that the foreign mission work has therefore been completed, should the nation cease to exist at no distant day. The transfer of the arable lands on the Islands into the hands of foreigners, carried much farther, would insure this result. To God's blessing on the Christian mission is it mainly owing, that such a result has not been reached already, and the conserving power of the future will mainly exist in the evangelical churches and the schools. Recent events encourage the hope, that the king and his ministers will see, that the national life depends on the same causes which originally gave it vitality and force. Yet it may ultimately appear, that the national constitution was so fatally impaired by vices before the arrival of the mission, that not even Christianity will prevent the continually recurring fact, that the number of deaths exceeds the number of births.

The nation may, and probably will, fade away. But the facts will remain concerning the success of the gospel. It will be forever true, that the Sandwich Islands were Christianized by evangelical missionaries from the United States; and that, as a consequence of this, the people were recognized, by the leading powers of Christendom, as entitled to the rank and privileges of a Christianized and civilized nation. There is inestimable worth in such a work, with such results. It is not for the present time only, but for all time. Nor will it stand alone. But taking its place beside other missionary efforts in the north and west Pacific, resulting in like wondrous triumphs of the gospel, it will still rank as among the most successful, when all the myriad isles of that ocean shall be won over, as they will be at no distant day, to the kingdom of our blessed Lord.

"Already," says Dr. Mullens, "in more than three hundred islands of eastern and southern Polynesia, the gospel has swept heathenism entirely away. The missionaries of the four great Societies have gathered four hundred thousand people under Christian influences, of whom a quarter of a million are living still, and fifty thousand of these are communicants."

APPENDIX

On the trails of the first missionaries in Hawaii

(2020)

Release published 2020 by the World Evangelical Alliance (<https://www.thomasschirmacher.net/blog/auf-den-spuren-der-ersten-missionare-auf-hawaii/>)

Christine and Thomas Schirmacher from the leadership team of the World Evangelical Alliance (WEA) visited the Hawaiian islands of O'ahu and Hawaii/Big Island on the trails of the first Christian missionaries.



The oldest church in Hawaii, on the island of Kailua-Kona, Hawaii, the Mokuaikaua Church, from 1837, which replaced the first church of missionaries from 1820

"Since my work on my dissertation about Theodor Christlieb (1833–1899) and his role model, Rufus Anderson (1796–1880), whose main work was a historiography of the beginnings of the mission on Hawaii, at that time still called the Sandwich Islands, it has been a dream of mine to visit the places of the beginnings of Christianity on Hawaii one day," says Thomas Schirrmacher.

Rufus Anderson was director of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). Schirrmacher published some writings by and about him in German in 1993.

On Hawaii/Big Island, the German visitors visited the oldest church in Hawaii in the coastal town of Kailua-Kona, the Mokuauikaua Church, built by local Christians between 1835 and 1837, whose preceding building was built in 1820 by the first missionaries on the Sandwich Islands.



The oldest church in Honolulu, the Kawaiahaʻo Church, on Oʻahu Island, built 1836–1842 from coral reefs

In Honolulu, they visited the Kawaiaha‘o Church, O‘ahu, built in 1836–1842 by the first Christians with 14,000 slabs of coral rock from an offshore reef, surfaced by divers.

They also visited the third oldest church of Hawaii, the catholic cathedral built in 1840–1843.

The headquarters of the first Sandwich Islands Mission 1821–1863, whose three houses were built in 1821, 1831 and 1841, are now known as the Hawaiian Mission Houses (Historic Site and Archives) Museum. The journey of the missionaries by boat took 165 days in 1819/1820.



The first mission station on Honolulu, Hawaii, is now a museum



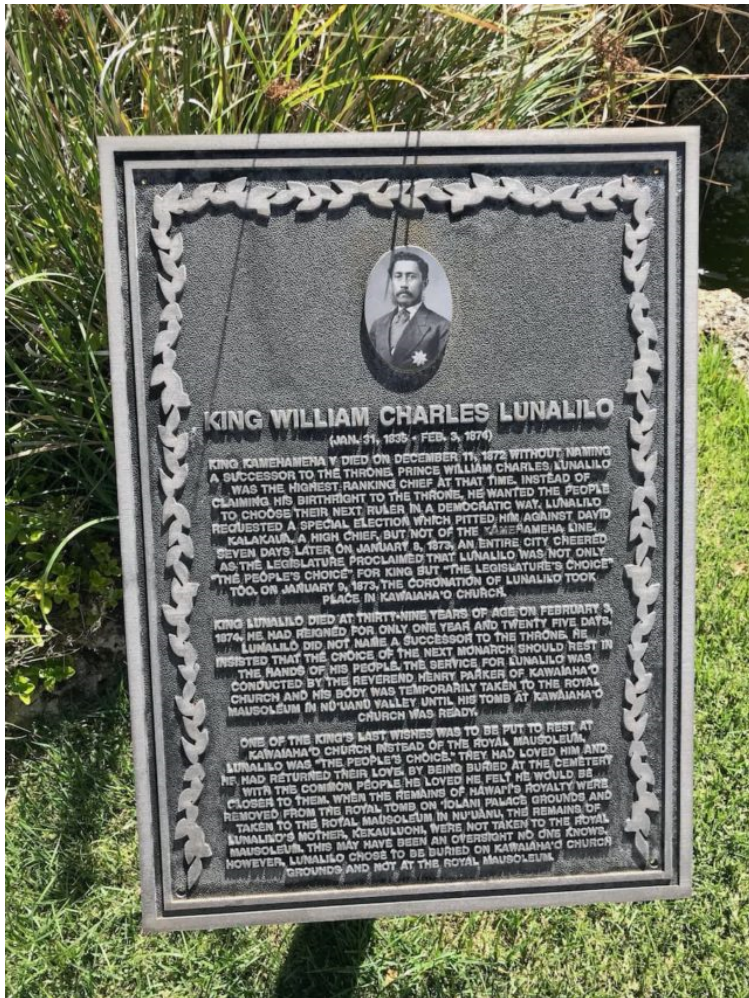
The old printing press of the mission station on Honolulu, Hawaii

“Most impressive to me,” said Schirmmacher, “was the old printing press on which the first Bible translation was printed.”

Today about three quarters of the inhabitants of Hawaii are Christians, roughly one quarter are Catholics, one quarter Evangelical Protestants, one quarter other Protestants.

Literature on Rufus Anderson and Theodor Christlieb:

- Rufus Anderson. *A Heathen Nation Evangelized: History of the Sandwich Islands Mission*. Congregational Publishing Society: Boston, 1872.
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- Thomas Schirmmacher (ed.). “Die Zeit für die Bekehrung der Welt ist reif”: Rufus Anderson und die Selbständigkeit der Kirche als Ziel der Mission. Mit Beiträgen von Rufus Anderson, Theodor Christlieb, Josef Josenhans, Hermann Gundert. VKW: Bonn, 1993 (reprint 1996).



Plaque in memory of the first Christian king of Hawaii

Rufus Anderson (1796–1880) for decades was head of the oldest and largest American missionary society and since 1866 professor of missiology at Andover Theological Seminary, one of the first chairs of missiology in the world. The Encyclopedia of World Mission calls him “the most influential figure in American missions.” Rufus Anderson’s most important call was for the self-reliance of young churches. He coined the “three-self formula”: Churches should be self-propagating, self-sustaining and self-governing. This book gathers articles about Rufus Anderson from the 19th and 20th century and presents a selection of his major tracts and articles.

ISBN 978-3-86269-268-2
ISSN 2197-9057 (World of Theology Series)



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Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft
(Culture and Science Publ.)