

Messages of Missionaries

by Anna R. Atwater

The sermon emphasizes the call to missionary work and the need for more missionaries to serve in India and other parts of the world.

Scripture: Psalm 96:3, Isaiah 6:8, Matthew 28:19, Acts 1:8, Romans 10:14

Topics: "Missions Work", "Spreading Gospel"

Description

Anna R. Atwater leads a powerful sermon at Bellefield Church, emphasizing the dedication and sacrifice of missionaries in various parts of the world, particularly in India, Mexico, and South America. The missionaries share their heartfelt experiences, challenges, and the urgent need for more workers in the field. They highlight the importance of unity, spreading the gospel, and the overwhelming need for spiritual guidance in regions with limited resources and support.

Transcript

Bellefield Church, Tuesday Morning, October 12.

Mrs. Harrison: If anybody ever can be said to have trod the way of the cross, surely it is that noble army of missionaries in our church and in all churches. I think the most interesting item in any service on any program is that in which the missionaries are introduced and give a brief message to the waiting people. We will have that message at this time, and I trust that all the missionaries who are present will come up on the platform and stand in line in front of the organ. And we want not only those who have been at the battlefield, but those who are going.

We will first introduce the missionaries from India. Miss Zonetta Vance, who has been in this country on her furlough, and who served us on the Deogarh Mission. She goes back very shortly to the beloved work in India.

Miss Vance: My greatest wish just now is that I can go back. For two years I have had to be at home playing sick, although nobody believed me when they saw me. But now I am glad to say I may go back.

So many people say to me, "Do you really want to go?" I would not go if I did not want to go. Nobody compels me to go. That is why I am going, because I want to go. I am going to India. There is not one of our missionary stations in which I could not find more than enough to do. There is not a station that does not need another missionary. Some of them need more than one. I know there are people needing to be

taught. I know that work of [70] many kinds needs to be done, and that is what I hope to do.

Mrs. Harrison: Miss Bertha Mills has also served us at Deogarh. You know about her beautiful work there, and she is home now. I will ask her to give you a message from Deogarh.

Miss Mills: May God give to you the vision of that multitude who continually, day after day, month after month, are passing our mission schoolhouse in Deogarh going up to the temple of Vaginot, and as they come to that elevation of ground very near to our schoolhouse and catch the first glimpse of the temple spires, that multitude fronting the door seeking for peace and for health, from that multitude there goes up this cry over and over again, "Victory, victory to Vigiha Jai." And our missionaries are trying to teach them the shout, "Victory, victory to Jesus Christ." May he give us that vision, and may he help us all to be worthy of the call into this great world-wide service.

Mrs. Harrison: We have also a representative, or two representatives, from our work at Maudha in India, Mr. E. C. Davis and Mrs. Isabella Davis.

Mr. E. C. Davis: I will let Motilal speak to you just a moment. Here is an idol [exhibiting to the audience an Indian idol] which Motilal, one of the orphan boys, brought with him to the Maudha Orphanage, and which he actually worshiped after he arrived in the orphanage. He erected his shrine in the corner of his room and placed in it the idol. He had this and others which we have in our possession and he worshiped them.

Mrs. Harrison: We have a representative here from our mission at Bina, Bro. Elsam, and we will be most happy indeed to hear from him.

Mr. C. G. Elsam: I suppose, dear friends, that you know of our movement for Christian unity. Probably that is more to the front than any other thing we can think about, and I would like to say that we are going ahead and doing a great deal towards Christian unity in India as well as in other mission fields. We feel the importance of being united in the fields, if we do not realize it here.

The native Christians are few in number, and they find themselves surrounded by worshipers of idols, by Hindus and Mohammedans and Buddhists and others, who hate them and would exterminate them if they had the power, and they are driven closer to each other. And all over India you will find the people emphasizing the fact of Christian unity, and not the fact that they belong to the Presbyterian or Methodist or any other sect.

If I sent any message from the field to the churches in America, it would be to conserve our forces and use them to the very best possible advantage in the evangelization of the world.

I would like to give you just in a moment an idea of the terrible need which we have there in the field. In India we have something like one missionary to nearly a hundred thousand people. A little while ago I was attending a convention in which a great address was made by a brother, who said that a single man could not look after the spiritual welfare of more than five hundred people. Five hundred people who are Christians, mind you--five hundred people who have the Bible--five hundred people who are mostly intelligent, educated people, and who, if not actually Christians, are nominally such. Only five hundred of them. Then think of a man or a woman--one man or one woman--having to take charge of nearly one hundred thousand people. We appeal to you--we appeal to you to send more missionaries into the field.

Mrs. Harrison: It gives me pleasure, then, to present to you Miss Emma Ennis.

Miss Emma Ennis: I am very glad indeed to see you this morning. It is indeed an untried field to which I am going, and I assure you I know very little of the life which I am to live in India. But it was a great pleasure to me. I was glad when Mrs. Atwater wrote to me that she needed to send me to India, and I do hope that I may be worthy of the esteem and of the confidence which the people of America and of Canada in our Christian Woman's Board of Missions have placed in me. I want to do your work and my work for the Master in far-away India. And when you have your meetings from time to time I hope you will [71] remember me in your prayers, that I am doing your work and our Master's work in his dark land.

Mrs. Harrison: We have also a volunteer from the far western coast for India, Dr. Ghormley and his wife and baby.

Dr. Ghormley: The missionaries from India have expressed what I hope to bodily accomplish. My wife and I leave for India with Sister Vance and these other missionaries along in November. We are just starting out, and we have a mission to talk about and we have a gospel to talk about. We realize that gospel and realize that mission.

We deem it an honor. And we feel, right in starting, we have both love for the mission and for our home land, and we ask your prayers for comfort and for health and for assistance and for thanksgiving in our work in the future.

Mrs. Harrison: Now we have one whom we are proud to call a citizen of Kentucky, Mrs. E. L. Powell, of Louisville, Ky., who is in the truest sense a citizen of India. She served four years there under the Foreign Christian Missionary Society.

Mrs. E. L. Powell: The thing that appeals to my heart most is the unconscious need of the people there. You know what that need is, reading about them. But they do not know what they need. There are hundreds of thousands who are suffering every day that are waiting for the gospel to be preached to them. They do not know what they want, but you know, and we appeal to you and ask you to send out the gospel to those who are in heathen lands.

Mrs. Harrison: Mrs. Davis has come in, and I know you will want to see her and have her say a word to you. She has labored at Maudha with her husband, who has just spoken to you.

Mrs. Isabella M. Davis: It was a very happy day when we were privileged to go to India, and it is a very happy day when we can return to India to our beloved work.

Mrs. Harrison: We have in far-off South America a mission which always touches my heart--in Argentina. It gives me pleasure to introduce Mrs. Ford, who will now speak to you.

Mrs. M. R. Ford: If we hold a map that we so often see of South America before us, the little map that may be all black, with just here and there the dot of white, the blackness to represent the spread of Roman Catholicism and the pin-points of white dots are Protestant missions, friends, that is the picture we would lay before you. Then another thing. We have called attention to South America, our next-door neighbor or twin sister, the twin sister of our North American land, and it has been seen and has been pitied and her conditions have been bewailed deeply, but we have stood far off and let our religious neighbors of Europe take in the little work that has been done.

Naturally, we have studied much in the last two months about Argentina. We turn to her capital city, Buenos Ayres, that great cosmopolitan city of the globe, one of the most cosmopolitan on the whole globe;

it has hundreds of thousands of Italians and Spaniards; tens of thousands of Germans and English and coolies from the Orient; thousands of Norwegians and Russians and Americans there in this great city of Buenos Ayres. Our work there will not be alone in the Spanish language, but in the Italian language. Go with us in thought and see those million and a half men and women in the old city of Buenos Ayres standing there with but the two messengers to-day representing us. They say we have in India one missionary to the hundred thousand. In Argentina, friends, we have two missionaries for five million. Friends, is it not worth while? Go with us in your prayers, will you not?

Mrs. Harrison: We are so fortunate as to have several representatives of our Mexican work present in this Convention. Mr. and Mrs. Inman are at this Convention somewhere. Are they in the house? If not, we have on the platform Mr. and Mrs. Fuller, Mrs. Bertha Mason Fuller, who are laboring at Monterrey in Mexico. Also Miss Mary Orvis, who is there with them. We will be glad to hear from them.

Mr. J. H. Fuller: Our work in Mexico and in Monterrey in particular has so many departments, and each department requiring so much, that it is painful to have to select one out of all of them. But among those that rise before me this morning there comes [72] nearest, closest and brightest before me my class of ministerial students, who will meet to-day at 10:45 and have a lesson for one hour. That class is composed of fifteen young men and young women. Some of them are in the third year in the ministerial course. They have just the simple Bible; there are no helps for these published in the Spanish language. We have no Bible geography; not another thing in the way of a help for these students. Their teaching has to be done verbally. We endeavor to cover the whole course of Christian work and preparation orally.

Mrs. Harrison: You will want to see and hear briefly from Mrs. Bertha Mason Fuller, whom you knew long as corresponding secretary of Texas before she went to Monterrey to work there.

Mrs. Bertha Mason Fuller: Just a little while back we had an experience of seventy-two hours of rain. At the end of the time two thousand people had lost their lives. Seven blocks of property, mostly stone houses, on both sides of the river for nearly a mile and a half, were wrecked--not even the big stones were left to show where the devastation occurred. But the greatest destruction was not in Monterrey, but throughout the two neighboring States. The second night of the rain we had been talking about how we would get some things for those who were in need. About eleven o'clock there was a tap at the door. Mr. Fuller opened the telegram and read, "Sympathy, two hundred dollars." That means a great deal more than just plain sympathy. But we have been able, through contributions of friends from the States, to keep our money for the repair of the buildings, because you have been sending us food and clothing out of your abundance. The need continues, for the early frosts have killed all the late crops.

Mrs. Harrison: Miss Mary Orvis, who went out to Mexico last fall, labored for us as organizer in Virginia, and I am glad to have you look upon her face and ask her to give you a brief message from Monterrey, Mexico.

Miss Mary I. Orvis: A few years ago one of our brethren listened to an address from a missionary from Mexico, and later he heard the same missionary and the same address, and the next year it was his privilege to hear the same missionary speak and he gave the same address. And the brother turned to his friend and said to him, "Well, I declare, they are eating that same tortilla yet." Friends, that is Mexico. If the brother were here to-day, I would like to tell him that they are eating the same tortilla yet. That is Mexico. And they will continue to eat that and make it in the same way their fathers and mothers made them before them.

But there is one thing new in Mexico, and that is what I want to tell you about in the few minutes in which I shall speak to you. The more progressive in Mexico, especially in northern Mexico, where we live and work, have a great desire to know English. They want to speak the language of the Americano because they think that will help to do what the Americano can do, and what they can do is a great thing in the minds of the Mexicans. Now, we have, in addition to our schools in Spanish in Monterrey, the English school, and in the minds of a good many of our people I have found there is some curiosity as to just why we would spend our time in Monterrey on English work. Were not the American people able to take care of themselves? Why should we as missionaries spend the valuable time in this work? Friends, it is necessary work.

In our English school over 50 per cent. of the children are Mexican blood or have Mexican blood in their veins. Our work is not purely American; it is English-speaking work, you understand, but there we have French and Germans and Swedes and Hungarians and a Mexican mixture of all of these as well. And so we are able, through this English work, to reach a part of Mexico that we could not reach through our regular evangelistic work.

Mrs. Harrison: One of the mottoes of our board, as well as of all missionary enterprises, is, "The field is the world." We hope our hearts are large enough to take in the cry of need, no matter where it comes from. We have just heard the cry of need from Mexico and from South America, and now we want to go back to India. And this is no difficult thing to do, because our hearts [73] are in all of these places. Miss Adelaide Frost has come in since we began this service, and she has a message from Mahoba.

Miss Frost: Brothers and sisters, only heaven can be better than this. After seven years in a heathen land, it is so different, everything is so different, that I have been trying to get acquainted again with my own home land. I want to tell you to-day that I am not a delegate from Ohio, much as I love that dear old State of mine, and I am not a delegate from Minnesota, which is my dear home now. But I am a delegate from India, and we have a Christian brotherhood there which is working for the same things that we are here. I can tell you we have saved almost a thousand children as a brotherhood in India, and they have grown up, many of them, and they know about this Convention, and are praying for it, too, and they, too, are looking for great things from it. I do want you, whenever you see me, to think of India; whenever you see any of us, to think of India, because it is such a great country and there are so few to work compared to the great number of her inhabitants.

Mrs. Harrison: This completes what I think is the crown of any of our convention programs, the introduction of our missionaries. And I am only sorry that they are not all here. But I am sure this has been a rich feast to you--a real harvest home

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