



The
William Booth
Collection

THE GENERAL'S LETTERS

"Go!"

From *"All the World,"* for November 1884

"Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." – Mark 16:15.

Why should not Jesus Christ have "all the world?" Has any one got any sufficient reason? Do any of our readers know of any?

Is there any reason to be found in Hell why the dark stream of lost souls that rolls thitherward day by day should not be lessened and narrowed, or cut off altogether, and sent up with thundering shouts of joy to the gates of Heaven? Are there not sadly too many lost already? Can there possibly be any reason, human or theological, why God's plans of mercy should not be carried out? Oh, if Hell's fires cannot be quenched, cannot we stop the supplies?

Is there any reason to be found in Heaven? Is there room for all these millions in the city that lies foursquare? Is there any angel or glorified spirit who has gone there from this or any other world, who would have any objection to all the world coming up to join their employments, share their joys, and swell their songs?

Is there any reason to be found in the mind of God, why His Salvation should not cover the earth as completely and as plenteously as the rolling ocean covers the mighty deep?

To me all the difficulties of Scripture or theology on the subject are answered by the declaration He has made of His own nature – "GOD IS LOVE." I know of no difficulties but those existing in some of the cut-and-dried theories of men who seem to me to have had more head than heart, and not more head than other people, either; and whom I cannot allow to have ever understood the foundation principles of the religion of Jehovah; or in such difficulties as can easily be traced to the malice and hatred of Satan.

That there is no objection in the heart of Jesus Christ to all the world coming in with a rush – coming in now, coming in for ever – this command sufficiently proves. It seems to have been



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the culmination of His ministry – the completing, finishing, concentrated essence of all the pity, and love, and sympathy that dwelt in His heart. It tells us at once how many He had compassion upon, the number that He had redeemed – the extent of His desire. He commanded what He wanted. He here sends out invitations to just as many as He desired to see at the feast provided in Paradise; that is, He tells His disciples to bid ALL THE WORLD.

And they went on their errand, hand over head. No more shirking, no more quibbling as to who should be the Major, or who the Captain, or what should happen, or about their unworthiness, or what the Skeletons would do, or the authorities would say. Indeed, they had a pretty good guess, after what had befallen their Master, as to what a reception of tears and agony and blood awaited them.

But these things moved them not. They went right bravely and efficiently – and did their share of the work of getting all the world for God.

They did their share. Very many years have passed since then; and alas, alas! The work is all unfinished. Nay, to tell the truth, it is only just begun. There are on this earth, at the lowest computation that can be taken, some twelve hundred millions of people who are as ignorant of this Gospel, and many millions more who, though they know something of its theory, are as destitute of its power as were those to whom these Apostles were sent; and that same Saviour today is issuing the same command that the message of Salvation should be carried to them, that He gave at the hour when His feet last touched the earth prior to His ascension to His Father.

BUT WHO IS TO GO? YOU. You who read this. Who else is there to go? Who else can you be certain will go? These apostolic men are not here now; otherwise you might give them a trifle a week to go for you. They are gone, and have received their welcome "Well done!" we doubt not, at the threshold of the Heavenly City, and I can't see any one else to go so likely as YOU.

You are saved. You say your sins are forgiven, and that you belong to the family of God. You claim the promises made to saints, and reckon when you have done with earth that you are



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going to finish up in the same Heaven provided for them. You say the promises apply to you; why not the commands? Have one, and shirk the other? Never, never, never! They are united. What God has joined together, no man can put asunder. Do you say you are a child and not a servant? Don't talk nonsense. How can you be a child without a child's spirit? And is it not the very essence of the child's spirit to serve your Father, and seek your Father's interests, and carry out your Father's most sacred purposes? If you have not this, most assuredly you lack the first and most convincing evidence of your sonship, which is being willing – nay, choosing – to be a servant; having this advantage, that you are willing to do the work without the hire.

YOU MUST GO YOURSELF. There is no hope of any possible compliance with this command until every man who takes into his heart this hope, takes upon himself the solemn responsibility of telling all the world – or as big a piece of it as he possibly can – the joyful news of this Salvation.

"Not *called*," did you say? Not *heard* the call, I think you should say. He has been calling loudly ever since He spoke your sins forgiven – if you are forgiven at all – entreating and beseeching you to be His ambassador. Put your ear down to the Bible, and hear Him bid you go and pull poor sinners out of the fire of sin. Put your ear down to the burdened, agonized heart of humanity and listen to its pitying wail for help. Go and stand by the gates of Hell and hear the damned entreat you to go to their father's house, and bid their brothers, and sisters, and servants, and masters not to come there. And then look the Christ in face, whose mercy you profess to have got, and whose words you have promised to obey, and tell Him whether you will join us heart and soul and body and circumstances in this march to publish His mercy to all the world.

WHAT IS IT TO GO? Assuredly it is not to sit still. Get up. Shake yourself. Act. Do something; do it at once; go on doing it; do it with your might. Spare no pains. Never stop any more. Read, give, pray, talk, sing – do anything you can. Everything that seems likely to make people know the truth about themselves, and Heaven, and Hell. God will help you. He helps those that help themselves, and especially when they are trying to help somebody else. He is pleased for you



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to help yourself to all the big Salvation He has to give you; but He is ten thousand times more pleased when you set to work to help other people.

SUFFER. Going meant suffering to Christ: it meant this to the Apostles. They went to the world: this meant going to scorn, poverty, stripes, imprisonment, death – cruel deaths. If you go you will have to suffer; there is no other way of going. One of the most common delusions is that people studiously avoid the suffering, pick and choose the sort of work which is agreeable to them, persuade themselves they are “called” to that specially, and then reckon they are going to the world. Suffering and saving are terms of almost the same significance in the Christian’s career. If he suffers for Christ he saves, and if he saves he suffers. These men suffered for Christ, and saved with a vengeance. If they had dodged the suffering they would never have saved at all.

GOING MEANS LEAVING. You can’t go to all the world without leaving something – something that flesh and blood would like to keep, something that perhaps, apart from saving the world, flesh and blood would have a right to keep; but which flesh and blood gladly gives up. And so for you to go means leaving some father or mother, or sweetheart, or some one who objects, who will count you a fool and a madman.

WHERE ARE YOU TO GO? Everywhere. Commence with the house where you live, the shop where you work, the town in which you are known. Then join with others in filling the land. Go to the drunkards at public-house corners; follow them home. Go to anybody – you can’t go wrong. Go to thieves, harlots, publicans. Get a Barracks at the corner of every street. Hoist the Colours in every port, city, and village. March, sing, play, testify, make a noise. Fill the world with the sound of Salvation.

Begin with Europe. Here doors are already opened. How they listen in Sweden! How they flock to the barns in the South of France, listen in secret in Switzerland! Yes, Switzerland – by all means. Go there, as there is a real chance of winning a martyr’s crown as well as a labourer’s hire, in that land of boasted freedom. Never mind.



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Go to America. Think of Chicago, with its 600,000 inhabitants; thirteen theatres in full swing on Sunday nights; as many drinking saloons as there are lamp-posts, and never a Salvation Army Officer in it.

Go to Asia. Think of the five hundred millions in the two empires of India and China, who will not only hear, but welcome you.

Go to Africa, with its coloured multitudes, among whom our simplicity and sympathy and adapted methods would make conquest certain.

Go to Australia, where a hundred Officers are pleaded for at this moment.

Don't answer with difficulties and excuses. "Married a wife," do you say? Take her with you. "Bought a piece of land," have you? Sell it again, and pay somebody's passage to India, or give us a share of the rent, at least.

"Who is to maintain you," do you say? "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Or maintain yourself. Send your name to the Foreign Department, if you have a trade, and say that you are willing to go anywhere where most wanted, and to keep your family by your trade when you get there.

Do you say you are too old or too infirm, or afraid the climate won't agree with you, or that others have claims upon you here? Then send somebody for you, and work on at your calling, and back them up with your gains; so shall the souls won be put down to your account in the great reckoning day.

Go to them all. The whole fourteen hundred millions. Don't despair. *It can be done*. IT SHALL BE DONE. God has set The Salvation Army on the task. If every saint on earth would do his duty, it *could* be done effectually in the next ten years. If The Salvation Army will be true to God, it *will* be done during the next fifty.



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WHAT IS IT ALL FOR? Preach the Gospel. Make every creature understand it. It is only a mockery without. Make them feel their need of it; that is, you must open their eyes, and make them understand something about SIN and DEATH, and JUDGMENT and HELL.

They already know something; their own consciences, illumined by the Spirit of God, which enlightens all men, have taught them something. But what is written small on their consciences you must go and write large, in such letters of flame that neither the world nor the devil can rub them out. And then tell them what they *don't* know – your proclamation of Full Salvation through the Blood of the Lamb!

"Chimerical," "enthusiastic," "extravagant," "Utopian," do you say these calculations and exhortations are? They may be to you; no doubt they are to many, but we Salvation Soldiers believe them. They are not more so than a certain book called the Bible, or was the solemn farewell commandment given by the great Captain of our Salvation – the Lord Jesus Christ.

OBEY!! And upon the pages of "All the World" we will chronicle the miracles wrought, and the victories achieved through you by the mighty Power of the Holy Ghost.