

**“The Vision of the Exalted Lamb Realized In
The Life of Missionary James Fraser
Among The Lisu People of China”**

Revelation 5:8-10

Dr. Danny Akin

Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

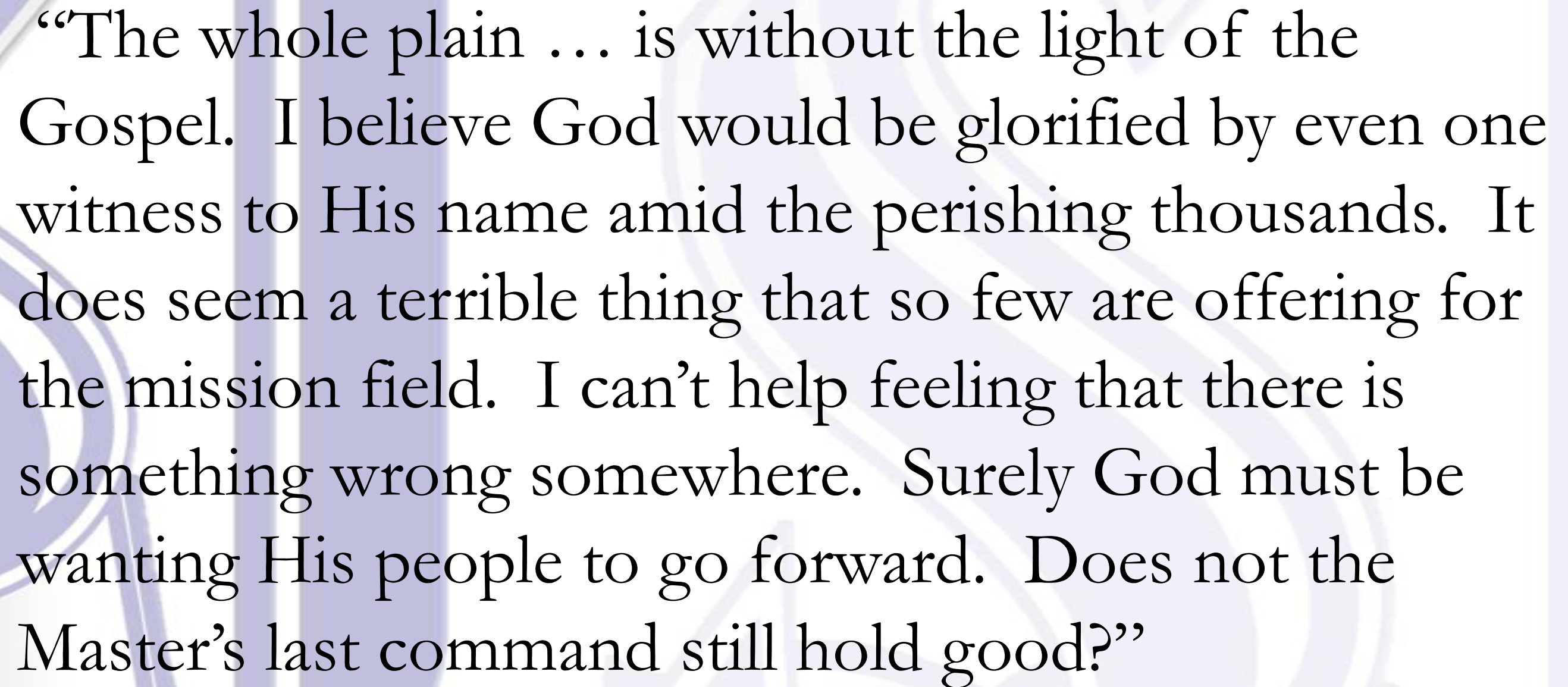
President

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“A command has been given: ‘Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature.’ It has not been obeyed. More than half the people in the world have never yet heard the Gospel. What are we to say to this? Surely it concerns us Christians very seriously. For we are the people who are responsible ...”

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“If our Master returned today to find millions of people un-evangelised, and looked as of course He would look, to us for an explanation, I cannot imagine what explanation we should have to give ... Of one thing I am certain – that most of the excuses we are accustomed to make with such good conscience now, we should be wholly ashamed of then.” (*Do Not Say*)



“The whole plain ... is without the light of the Gospel. I believe God would be glorified by even one witness to His name amid the perishing thousands. It does seem a terrible thing that so few are offering for the mission field. I can't help feeling that there is something wrong somewhere. Surely God must be wanting His people to go forward. Does not the Master's last command still hold good?”

- James Fraser of China, rejected twice by the Mission Board
- 30 years of faithful, gospel ministry for King Jesus
- “Well I am going there anyway because I know I’ve been sent by God.”

“He was assailed by deep and treacherous doubts. Yea, *bath* God said? The question came to him again and again, as clearly as it came at the dawn of time. Your prayers are not being answered, are they? No one wants to hear your message. The few who first believed have gone back, haven't they? You see, it doesn't work. You should never have stayed in this area on such a fool's errand. You've been in China five years and there's not much so show for it, is there? You thought you were called to be a missionary...

...It was pure imagination. You'd better leave it all, go back and admit it was a big mistake. Day after day and night after night he wrestled with doubt and suicidal despair. Suicidal? Not once, but several times he stared over the dark ravine into the abyss. Why not end it all? The powers of darkness had him isolated; if they could get him now they could put an end to the work.”

I. The prayers of the saints contribute to the redeeming of the nations.

5:8

- “I suppose we have most of us had such experiences. We have prayed and prayed and prayed and no answer has come. The heavens above us have been as brass. Yes, blessed brass, if it has taught us to sink a little more of this ever-present self of ours into the Cross of Christ.”

I. The prayers of the saints contribute to the redeeming of the nations.

5:8

- Born in England in 1886
- One of 6 children from a broken home
- Married his wife Roxie at the age of 43
- Died at age 52
- His mother wrote, “I could not pour out the ointment on [Jesus] blessed feet as Mary did, but I gave Him my boy.”

I. The prayers of the saints contribute to the redeeming of the nations.

5:8

Of his burden for the lost:

“I was very much led out in prayer for these people, right from the beginning. Something seemed to draw me to them, and the desire of my heart grew until it became a burden that God would give us hundreds of converts among the Lisu of our western district.”

In a letter to a friend requesting prayer partners:

“Solid, lasting missionary work is done on our knees. What I covet more than anything else is earnest, believing prayer, and I write to ask you to continue to put up much prayer for me and the work here.”

“I will not labor the point. You will see from what I am saying that I am not asking you just to give us ‘help’ in prayer as a sort of sideline, but I am trying to roll the main responsibility of the prayer warfare on you. I want you to take the burden of these people upon your shoulders. I want you to wrestle with God for them.”

On the necessity and power of prayer:

“I am feeling more and more that it is, after all, just the prayers of God’s people that call down blessing upon the work, whether they are directly engaged in it or not. Paul may plant and Apollos water, but it is God who gives the increase; and this increase can be brought down from heaven by believing prayer ... We are, as it were, God’s agents – used by him to do his work, not ours. We do our part, and then can only look to him, with others, for his blessing...

...If this is so, then Christians at home can do as much for foreign missions as those actually on the field. I believe it will only be known on the last day how much has been accomplished in missionary work by the prayers of earnest believers at home. And this, surely, is the heart of the problem.”

“If I am sure of anything it is that your prayers have made a very real difference to my life and service.”

In spiritual warfare:

“One of the temptations in the spirit-warfare is when your body begins to flag, to say, ‘I must give up’, instead of casting yourself upon ‘God that raised the dead’ and can quicken the mortal body to endure and triumph in and through all things.”

In spiritual warfare:

“Eph 6:10. Oh how we need **STRENGTH**, for often we can hardly hold our ground! In every battle there are crucial spots. Get near and stay near to your Divine Chief until He turns and points them out. And at those points face and force the fight. And though the conflict be keen, though defeat seems certain, though the battle should continue for hours, for days, for months, even for years, yet hold on, **HOLD ON**; for to such Jer 1:19 is written: ‘They shall fight against thee but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee to deliver thee.’”

In spiritual warfare:

“The aim of Satanic power is to cut off communication with God. To accomplish this aim he deludes the soul with a sense of defeat, covers him with a thick cloud of darkness, depresses and oppresses the spirit, which in turn hinders prayer and leads to unbelief – thus destroying all power (instead of seeing Heb 11:1).”

In spiritual warfare:

“Seem distinctly led (he wrote) to fight against ‘principalities and powers’ for Middle Village. Have faith for the conversion of that place, and pray as a kind of bugle-call for the hosts of heaven to come down and fight for me against the powers of darkness holding these two old men who are hindering their villages and perhaps three others from turning to Christ. Have a good time of fighting prayer, then sleep in much peace of mind.”

In spiritual warfare:

“The whole cause of my defeat these two days is weakness of spirit. Under these conditions, any test you take fails to work. The spirit must be continually maintained in strength by unceasing prayer, especially against the powers of darkness. All I have learned of other aspects of the victory-life is useless without this.”

In spiritual warfare:

“You arrive at the end of the day cold, hungry and tired, not to find a nice clean room waiting for you, a warm bath, a warm fire, a smile of welcome and a nice meal! No, you, splash along the slushy street from dismal inn to dismal inn ... and you get suspicious stares. Finally you practically force your way into an inn. It is pitch dark; the floor is a mess; there is no furniture but a mud platform, no light, no warmth ... You and your muleteer make a meal of plain boiled rice. But next morning you get out again into your blue skies and snow mountains and forget all your previous night’s troubles.”

II. The blood of Christ has purchased the salvation of the nations.

5:9

- 1) You were slain (v. 9).
- 2) You redeemed us to God by your blood (v. 9).
- 3) You have made us kings and priest to our God (v. 10).
- 4) Those you have redeemed will reign with you on the earth (v. 10).

II. The blood of Christ has purchased the salvation of the nations.

5:9

- Delores Williams of Union Theological Seminary in New York: “I don’t think we need a theory of atonement at all. I don’t think we need folks hanging on crosses and blood dripping and weird stuff” (Re-Imagining Conference; Minneapolis, 1993).
- Virginia Mollenkott says the death of Jesus was nothing less than the ultimate in child abuse. God is an abusive parent and Jesus an obedient and abused child.

Rt. Rev. Jeffrey John: “The explanation I was given went something like this. God was very angry with us for our sins, and because he is a just God, our sin had to be punished. But instead of punishing us he sent his Son, Jesus, as a substitute to suffer and die in our place. The blood of Jesus paid the price of our sins, and because of him God stopped being angry with us. In other words, Jesus took the rap, and we got forgiven, provided we said we believed in him. Well, I don’t know about you, but even at the age of ten I thought this explanation was pretty repulsive as well as nonsensical. What sort of God was this, getting so angry with the world...

...and the people he created, and then, to calm himself down, demanding the blood of his own Son? And anyway, why should God forgive us through punishing somebody else? It was worse than illogical, it was insane. It made God sound like a psychopath. If any human being behaved like that we'd say they were a monster. Well I haven't changed my mind since. That explanation of the cross doesn't work, though sadly it's one that's still all too often preached. It just doesn't make sense to talk about a nice Jesus down here, placating the wrath of a nasty, angry Father God in heaven.”

Gaining victory in spiritual warfare:

“I read [*The Overcomer*] over and over ... What it showed me was the deliverance from the power of the evil one comes through definite resistance on the grounds of the cross.”

Preaching the Gospel:

“I first went through the Acts of the Apostles and some other passages, comparing them with a view to finding out the actual Gospel we are bidden to preach ... The result was very instructive to me. I had never imagined the Gospel was so simple. Why, Peter and Paul both preached the Gospel in words which would not take one minute to say! And I found out that there are just four things which seem to be essential in preaching the Gospel.

Preaching the Gospel:

- 1) The crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
- 2) The resurrection of Jesus Christ – most important of all.
The Gospel was never preached without this being brought in.
- 3) Exhortation to hearers to repent of their sins.
- 4) Promise to all who believe on Jesus Christ that they will receive remission of their sins.

Preaching the Gospel:

Beyond these four points others are mentioned occasionally, but they are not many ... In teaching Christians, it is quite another matter. To them we are to declare ‘the whole counsel of God’, as far as they can receive it. But the Gospel as preached to the unsaved is as simple as it could be. I should not care to take the responsibility of preaching ‘another Gospel.’”

The power of the cross:

“... the ground of the cross was what brought me light. For I found that it worked. I felt like a man perishing of thirst, to whom some beautiful, clear cold water had begun to flow.”

“I have no confidence in anything but the Gospel of Calvary to uplift these needy people.”

“Quite conscience of Mother’s prayers I am sure she is praying for me. Splendid time of prayer alone in my room enabled to get to the cross and remain there. Have peace and rest of spirit.”

The power of the cross:

“Very definitely and decidedly take my stand on 1 John 1:7 – Jesus Christ my Cleanser from all sin. Full of peace and blessing all the rest of the day.”

“The Gospel of a broken heart begins the ministry of bleeding hearts. As soon as we cease to bleed we cease to bless. We must bleed if we would be ministers of the Saving Blood.”

III. The redeemed serve as a kingdom of priests in reaching the nations. 5:10

- Just one month before his untimely death at the age of 52 he wrote, “I often think that it is the very, very few who are prepared, by rigorous self-discipline (not a very popular thing nowadays), for a lifetime of great usefulness ...”

III. The redeemed serve as a kingdom of priests in reaching the nations. 5:10

“It is all IF and WHEN, I believe the devil is fond of those conjunctions ... The plain truth is that the Scriptures never teach us to wait for opportunities of service, but to serve in just the things that lie next to our hands ... The Lord bids us work, watch and pray; but Satan suggests, wait until a good opportunity for working, watching and praying presents itself – and needless to say, this opportunity is always in the future...

III. The redeemed serve as a kingdom of priests in reaching the nations. 5:10

... Since the things that lie in our immediate path have been ordered of God, who shall say that one kind of work is more important and sacred than another? I believe it is no more necessary to be faithful (one says it reverently) in preaching the Gospel than in washing up dishes. It is not for us, in any case, to choose our work. And if God has chosen it for us, hadn't we better go straight ahead and do it, without waiting for anything greater, better or 'nobler'?"

- January 16, “Not a single one to Service in the morning ...”
- January 18, “Abraham was called out by God and went in blind faith; when he got to the land of promise, he found nothing but a famine – much like me with the Lisu, these two years.”
- February 3, “Depressed after defeat this morning, from which no real recovery all day ...
- February 4, “No meal until 2 p.m. Thoroughly depressed about the state of work in Tantsah. No one to count upon in matters demanding an earnest spirit ... The evil one seems to have the upper hand in me today ...”

- February 5, “Yesterday’s attack of depression and defeat almost got over, but not quite. Such times are not easy to recover from, I find ... The majority of Christians have gone in for whisky-drinking ... The outlook here in Tantsah at present seems less hopeful than at any time since I first set foot in the place. I am not, however, taking the black, despondent view I took yesterday ... the opposition will not be overcome by reasoning or by pleading, but by (chiefly) steady, persistent prayer. The men need not be dealt with (it is a heart-breaking job, trying to deal with a Lisu possessed by a spirit of fear) but the powers of darkness need to be fought...

...I am now setting my face like a flint: if the work seems to fain, then pray; if services etc., fall flat, then pray *still more*; if months slip by with little or no result, then *pray still more and get others to help you.*”

- Sunday, February 6 ... B. and Va announce they will become Christians, if their parents will allow them ... Four young men say they will follow Christ, whatever happens ...
- Tuesday, February 8, Mo La P turns Christian in the morning. Gu Va and T, all at his house ... Full of joy and praise.”

“You know, Roxie’, James said one day up in the hills, even when I’ve gone, I don’t think my work in Yunnan will be finished.’ She was startled a few days later when he said, ‘Mr. Payne is passing through in two weeks’ time. I have some money here for him. If anything happens to me, you’ll know where it is.’ ‘But I don’t understand’ [she said] - [He responded] ‘I just thought I’d let you know.’ He talked a lot these days about the children’s future and about the baby expected [their 3rd] before the end of the year. It was September already: the event was not too far off. On Wednesday, September 21st, James had a headache...

...He finished answering some important letters and then played the little organ for a while before going to bed. By the next morning his headache was severe. He sent runners at once to get someone to be with Roxie. James had gone down with malignant cerebral malaria. There was no appropriate medicine in Paoshan. It was not long before he lost consciousness, and for two days the fever intensified; by Saturday evening he was strangely quiet. It was a long night for Roxie: James in and out of delirium, the Chinese doctor and nurses hurrying up and down the stairs, the child crying in the darkness...

...When the sun rose on September 25th 1938, James had gone. It was a shock to his colleagues. He was only 52 and seemed strong and healthy: they found the news hard to believe. But for Roxie the whole world was reeling. Isobel Kuhn wrote to her three days later: ‘The very thought of you makes my hand tremble so and the tears come so that I do not know how I can write. The Lisu have just walked in with their unbelievable message ... Times like this are when we just have to bare our face to the tempest and go on without seeing clearly, without understanding, without anything but naked faith.’”

- Stuart Simpson called Fraser “one of the most successful Christian missionaries in East Asia in modern times!”
- Mrs. Howard Taylor said, “the young man handed over not the latch key but the master key of his whole being.”
- Within 4 months of what is called “The Breakthrough”, 600 Lisu representing 129 families turned to Christ.
- By 1918, ten years into the work, 60,000 believers had been baptized.

- Today there are an estimated 300,000 Lisu Christians in Western China, and thousands more in Myanmar and Thailand.
- James Fraser devised the first written script for the Lisu people. It was officially recognized by the Chinese government in 1992. He would lead the way in translating the New Testament into Lisu.
- Before they married Roxie, his bride to be said, “never once did he tell me the way he had been used among the Lisu.”

- Isobel Kuhn said:

“He never disappointed us in the sharing ... he was our missionary ideal, a continual rebuke, challenge and stimulus to maintain at any cost the apostolic methods of missionary work. His brilliant gifts, united with unfailing humility and a sympathy mother-like in tenderness and thoughtfulness, made him our refuge at all times of perplexity and need.”

- “IN LOVING MEMORY JAMES O. FRASER 1886-1938. How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. WITH DEEPEST LOVE REMEMBER YOU ALWAYS – THE LISU CHURCH.”
- “A Christian is immortal till his work is done.”
- “A man came to visit [my mother] before she sailed. He was a Kachin Christian and badly wanted to meet her. Years before, he said, he had run many miles to kill James Fraser, but James out ran him. Sometime later he heard the message of Jesus Christ; he had believed and became his disciple.”

“On the human side, evangelistic work on the mission field is like a man going about in a dark, damp valley with a lighted match in his hand, seeking to ignite anything ignitable. But things are damp through and through and will not burn, however much he tries. In other cases, God’s wind and sunshine have prepared beforehand. The valley is dry in places, and when the lighted match is applied – here a shrub, there a tree, here a few sticks, there a heap of leaves take fire and give light and warmth long after the kindling match and its bearer have passed on. And this is what God wants to see, and what he will inquire of us: little patches of fire burning all over the world.”