

(i) They all imply that man was in captivity, in slavery, in subjection to an alien power. There was something which had man in its grip.

(ii) They all imply that by no conceivable means could man have effected his own liberation or rescue. He was helpless in the grip of a power and a situation which he could not mend and from which he could not break away.

(iii) His liberation was effected by the coming of Jesus Christ who paid the price which was necessary to achieve it.

(iv) Nowhere in the NT is there any word of to whom that price was paid. It could not have been paid to God because all the time God was so loving the world. It was in fact God's love that sent Christ into this world. It could not have been paid to the devil, for that would put the devil on an equality with God. All that we can say is this—it cost the life and death of Christ to liberate man from the past, the present, and the future power of sin. Beyond that we cannot go, but although thought may be baffled, experience shows that it cost the life of Jesus Christ to bring us home to God.

Trade Language or Vernacular?

The question as to trade language or vernacular has often been asked, and many an answer has been given, but it would seem that the sensible answer is both—each in its place. A trade language is often needed in urban areas and in regions of intermingling of several groups. Without it the missionary may be confined to communication in one of many very minor vernaculars and be unable to speak at all to other people in his district except through interpreters. The publication of the Scriptures is also certainly justified in any widely used trade language, for it may be a long time before the Scriptures are translated into all the vernaculars.

But important as trade languages are, they do not fulfill the principle that people should have a translation of the Good News of the Scriptures *in their own mother tongue*. When the trade language becomes a crutch to avoid a difficult vernacular or to avoid the use of several important vernaculars in an area, it has become far more important than usual experience would warrant. When tribespeople have to learn the trade language from the missionary or in school in order to hear the Good News, or to read the Scriptures, communication can at best be very poor indeed. Missions which work in areas of great linguistic diversity should certainly employ the trade language where it is useful, but every missionary should also be at home in one or more of the vernacular languages in which the basic communication must be done.