

these false gods have been permanently discarded. They are dead. They can never rise again. God has brought them to ruin. Even the memory of them has been largely eradicated. As far as the great mass of people in so-called Christian nations is concerned, the memory of the Roman and Teutonic gods has practically disappeared, except for the generally unnoticed traces remaining in names of certain months or of certain days of the week.

After the joyful recognition in verse 15 of the extent to which God has enlarged His people the next few verses come as a surprise, for this great advance is followed by disappointment. Great expectations seem to be unrealized: "We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind." The key to understanding these verses would seem to lie in the last half of verse 18: "We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen."

Early in the present century, there were those who declared their confidence in "the evangelization of the world in this generation." Great efforts were expended as missionaries went out to many distant lands and for a time it was thought that the entire world would soon be won to Christ. Yet today there are more heathen in the world than there were when the great modern missionary movement began. In sections of Europe and America where the message of salvation was once proclaimed from thousands of pulpits, many of these same churches are today controlled by men who deny the basic teachings of Scripture. Great denominations that fifty years ago supported hundreds of missionaries who were presenting the Word of Christ in distant lands have today in their missionary force only a small fraction of the previous number and many even of these are devoting them selves to social service or to attempts to create a human "kingdom of God" instead of presenting the word of salvation and teaching converts to study the Bible as God's inerrant guide for their lives. One can easily imagine a personification of the multitude of true believers, seeing the change that has occurred within the present century and uttering the words of verse 18: "We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought