

He must work his way at whatever personal cost into the soul of the writings. It is no mechanical revelation that we have. Men have heard God's voice and tried to follow it, and spoken what they have heard and felt. We have a history of redemption ; and we are to make the men live again and speak in the present tense. Shall we not have the spirit of thoroughness that pushes every word to its root and relation, compelling it to yield its utmost suggestion ? Shall we not be willing to subject every opinion to the test of the whitest light ? Oh, for the spirit of a Pauline ambition, not counting itself to have attained, but ever with unveiled face welcoming the truth from every source, expecting larger visions of the truth. It is the spirit of loyalty to every fact, to every teaching of the Word, to every lesson of Providence, to every precept of the Spirit. Then sermons will never be curious vessels, about the same size and made with an infinite deal of nothing, into which, Sunday after Sunday, the same quantity and quality of liquid is poured, the gathering of earlier years of experience and of seminary study ; but as in Elisha's miracle, the oil, the beaten oil of truth, shall flow on until there are no more vessels to be used.

Emphasis has been placed upon the fact that the message to be scriptural in the higher sense must deal with the essential truth of Scripture. This principle will keep us from regarding the Bible either as a storehouse of texts all equally Divine, or as a mass of critical fragments equally profane ; from the error of a false reverence or of a false criticism. It will be a living organism in which God lives and seeks His children. Holy Scripture will not be regarded chiefly as a flower to be analyzed, or a rock to be tested by fire and chemicals ; but for the ministry of its beauty and fragrance, for its strength to bear the hopes and fears of men. This statement should not be misunderstood. The preacher at the farthest outpost of civilization cannot be indifferent to what is going on in the universities. We cannot afford to be ungrateful to the reverent critics. With no doubtful heart we will welcome whatever will throw new light upon the Word ; but for our speech we shall seize the great message of God to the heart of the race. I believe there can be no biblical preaching which does not seize the " indestructible element of Scripture, the one message which dominates its entire and intricate framework, which is independent of lower and higher criticism alike, and whose authority is inseparable from its proclamation."

The reality of the message not only demands the essential truth of the message, but essential truthfulness of interpretation of each Scripture. Away with all conjuring of words, all jugglery with the Scriptures ! Let us not tolerate in ourselves a lazy and unscholarly use of what is false to the present knowledge of the text. Ethical integrity demands accuracy of knowledge and honesty of interpretation. An untruth is no less an untruth because it suggests beautiful sentiment and pious lesson. The authority of the pulpit is not in its claim to authority, but upon its truthfulness. Men must learn to trust us for the accuracy of our spiritual