

that great crisis, to turn the tide of infidelity and immorality. How did they do it? By a divine method, long since revealed as the one and only hope of the church's purity and power, or the world's elevation and evangelization—they preached a simple, pure, full, intrepid gospel. It was no accident that these reformers dared to defend the fundamental, rudimental truths which lie like huge base blocks in the Christian system. Against the temper of their times, breasting opposition and defying persecution, they held up sin in its enormity and deformity, the absolute necessity of the new birth and of personal holiness; they emphasized the inspiration of the Bible, the mediatorship of Christ, and a future state of rewards and punishments. A revival of evangelical teaching and preaching came first, and then a revival of Christian life and the conversion of souls.

It is especially noticeable that all the most successful and soul-converting preaching instructs men in the *whole* gospel. We need to preach and teach *both sides* of the truth. The sword of the Spirit is not a scimitar with one keen edge and a dull back, but a two-edged weapon. It has a sharp edge of law, and another sharp edge of grace, and therefore can be used to cut both ways, and the two keen edges meet in one keener, all-penetrating point that pierces to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow and discerns the inmost thoughts and intents of the heart, laying open the whole man. The word cannot be a mirror until it is first a two-edged sword. What we need to have exposed to view and mirrored in this divine speculum is our inmost soul, not our outside and apparent self, that is so deceptive. Only the preaching that thunders, like that of John the Baptist, in the ears of men the terrors of the law can wake them up from the awful lethargy and rouse them up

from the awful apathy of spiritual death. Then when thoroughly awake to the fact and guilt of sin we may preach sin's remedy. We must wound before the healing balm is appreciated or even applied. The law must pierce like a needle, and then it can draw the thread of gospel consolation after it.

We must preach aggressively and offensively, to use military terms. We must press home positive truth. It is not enough to *stand on the defensive*. In a game of chess or any other game, the moment you can get your antagonist on the defensive the game is against him and you are on the way to victory; and so in warfare. The acutest general, the astutest strategist, is the man who can put and keep the foe on the defensive. God never meant that His soldiers should be forever using spades, throwing up intrenchments. Let us cease apologizing for our faith, trying to answer skeptical assaults, timidly venturing to vindicate Christianity. Let us come out from behind our earthworks and carry the war into the enemy's territory! Compel him to take the defensive. Bear the flag aloft, and plant it on the very battlements of every hostile citadel. The true way to teach and preach is to assume the truth of the word, and preach with authority—*"Thus saith the Lord."* Then the Spirit will positively attend the word and glorify Christ. The true apologetic preaching is the energetic preaching, backed by this authoritative message of an ambassador of Christ who is speaking according to instructions.

And there is need of a continuous and cumulative testimony. Preaching is not "supplying a pulpit," any more than true teaching is consistent with occasional sporadic, spasmodic, disjointed effort. The true teacher follows lesson by lesson. The true preacher gives people line upon line, precept upon precept. Preaching is