

wish to please. He who does not please can scarcely hope to profit his hearers. Such reasoning leads to compromises, and these to further concessions, until the glow of manhood fails, and spiritual independence succumbs to the imperious mandates of worldly prudence. And then indeed is the pulpit muzzled. The preacher reflects the mind of the people. He fears to do otherwise; unpalatable truths are shut out; the gospel is mutilated. Instead of the sincere 'milk of the word' to nourish babes in Christ, or the 'strong meat' for those whose spiritual senses are exercised so as to need it, the juiceless husks of human learning, or the tinsel of rhetoric, or the flowers of a beautiful style, are dealt out to souls amissing for the bread of life. There is too much of this in the church. It is laying waste the fairest fields of the Lord's heritage.

The church needs doctrine. Without it she will perish, in spite of wealth and numbers and culture. We do not mean disputes and wranglings, but doctrine. What God says of man, of sin, and of the devil, must be repeated and enforced. The office and mission of Christ must be explained and defended. The work of the Holy Ghost as it relates to the penitent, the seeker, and the believer, must be kept before the mind. The dread realities of a just retribution must be held up for warning and reproof. Can he be faithful who speaks lightly of these things? Can the church prosper where they are distasteful? Will not God hold both ministers and people to account, if truth falls in the streets, because the flippant outcry against doctrinal preaching has been raised?"

Kindred to this was the remark of the Methodist preacher that "we must preach doctrine more, and not read short moral essays."

It is certainly gratifying to know that there is an occasional voice, coming from different sources, sounding the note of warning against the too common tendency of the present time to disparage doctrinal preaching. True, we would hardly expect a Universalist to insist upon "faithful descriptions of human guilt and danger," to enforce "what God says of the devil," or to hold up "the dread realities of a just retribution as a warning" against sin; but it is worth while to notice the suggestions coming from that source. The gospel is not a vague sentimentalism that affects not a man's principle or conscience, but a system of stubborn facts, precepts, promises, principles, and threatenings, which must be heartily received and carefully observed, if we would meet with divine acceptance. It is the policy of union meetings to suppress doctrinal differences, lest the harmony of the meeting be disturbed. This is the best, and perhaps the only defence of weak positions; but they that are strong need no such defence. They rejoice in the truth, and delight to make it known.