

"Gospel according to John." The "preaching" of Peter at Pentecost is quite unlike that of Paul before Agrippa. The "Gospel" as delivered by Paul to the Jews at Antioch, to the Greeks at Athens, and to the Romans in his great epistle, takes on successively and designedly new phases. It seems, indeed, to have been this marvelous power of self-adjustment, reached through rare culture, sagacity, and versatility that fitted him rather than the impetuous but more clumsy Peter, to be the Apostle to the multiform Gentiles. He was a "chosen vessel" of Him who had before noted the sagacity of men in providing "new bottles" for "new wine." He notably exemplified that characteristic of a "scribe" "instructed unto the kingdom of Heaven" to which our Lord referred in connection with his own unique parabolic method—he brought "forth out of his treasure things new" upon occasion as well as things "old."

Paul never dwarfed nor "hid" the Gospel, nor consented to "another Gospel," even at the hands of an angel from Heaven; but he sometimes "changed his tone," his "dialect," or his method of intellectual approach to meet present emergency. Doubtless a modern "scribe" may study and practice like dexterity in the adjustment of specific means to specific ends in like emergencies. Such an emergency being supposed to have arisen through the "influence of modern skepticism," how, if at all, may pulpit methods be most wisely modified to meet it? This is the question, and it seems a legitimate and pertinent one.

Before discussing it directly, it is well, especially in consideration of the views here to be expressed, to renew a *caveat* already distinctly uttered or inevitably implied in the language of preceding articles in this discussion. It would be madness to make unlimited application of arguments in favor of pulpit discussion of skepticism, as if there were some new Vincentian canon requiring that what is to be done at all, must be done "always, everywhere, by everybody." On the contrary, there is abundant room for caution.

1. *As to place.* There is surely no need to "counteract" the "influence" in question where it does not exist. Doubtless there are such sequestered regions; restful oases, whose quiet pools are untroubled by "winds of doctrine" and unchoked by drifting sands of doubt. Agricultural districts are less liable to the invasions of skepticism than manufacturing towns. There seems some sedative, if not narcotic, influence in the smell of the earth that tempts men to labor stolidly, sleep soundly, study little, and speculate less. There are perhaps isolated villages, unwilling to awaken into this new and vexatious day—haunted it may be by loquacious ghosts, but not by scoffing lecturers or journals. To such places this discussion has no relation.

2. *As to time.* Here also discretion ought to have a place. "Too much is not enough." There are seasons and moods in common thought. Brilliant review articles, startling deliverances from eminent