

would naturally accrue from this source. Because of this beneficent provision of self-defense, preachers, by their ill adjustments of vital truths and their excessive emphasis of some and inadequate emphasis of other doctrines, have not done as much hurt as, undesignedly, they have tried to do.

It is obvious that just so far as the people, in listening to preaching, have been required to fall back upon this inner defense against the extremes of doctrine and disproportionate presentation of truth, the influence of the pulpit has been impaired. Here, now, is an evil to be guarded against; but, in this reference to it, let it not be assumed that it is an evil difficult to escape. Symmetry of biblical doctrine in preaching is easily preserved by one who is controlled by St. Paul's unity of aim, "I am determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified." He who studies and preaches the truths of the Bible as they are headed toward, and center in, and cluster upon, and radiate from, the Cross of the Son of God is as far removed from this peril as the East is from the West. "Whom we preach?" We preach truth, but "truth as it is in Jesus"; we preach doctrine, but doctrine as inspired oracle; and these truths and doctrines in abstract forms only, as they lose themselves in their concrete relationship to Christ and Him crucified.

We have no controversy with those who insist that preaching should be introspective and psychological, anatomizing the heart, availing itself of all the intuitive moral and religious forces that may chance to have survived the Fall and still inhere in the desolate soul of the sinner. We deem it imperative that it should put to use the materials of conviction stored in the moral law and drive them, shaped into a plowshare, through the fallow ground of the natural heart. But preaching on such themes, even when it is kept within its proper proportions, must be done as preliminary to something better, laying an emphasis upon its relativity. It must allow itself to be known as only the "voice of one crying in the wilderness." It is nothing, if not a probe feeling in the wound for live flesh and finding it in the cry of the patient pricked in the heart. In its distinctive work the law brings no balm from Gilead. It only whispers of a physician there. It gives only inarticulate hints of one who shall come from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah, traveling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save. It is a "ministration of death" save as it is preached as a prophecy of "the ministration of life," into which it issues. It was not preaching the Gospel to tell the bitten Israelite to inspect his inflamed wounds, or the leper to mark the progress of disease in his infected limb. Nor is it preaching the Gospel to engage the attention of the sinner in self-inspection, whereby he has awakened only a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation.

I would be understood. I am not saying that the law should not be proclaimed and enforced in the pulpit. Such use of the law is in-