

home to the hearts of men by a new Baptism of the spirit will introduce the Millennial glory of the Church.

Yet in another sense each age has its peculiar truths to maintain. The enemy does not assault the citadel at every point at the same time, nor at the same point in every age. And hence the defenders are called upon according to the times in which they live, to defend particular portions of the edifice, and to exhibit more energetically those particular truths, which may be the subject of special assault. In the application too of the great principles of Christianity to the changing phases of human life, moral, social, and religious, they are ever appearing in new forms and achieving new results.

Besides, too, the truth in its developement is progressive. We do not mean by this, that there are many new truths being discovered, or that any of the old become obsolete. But the principles of God's word are only slowly appreciated, and their full bearing only comprehended in the lapse of ages. And it has commonly happened that each period in the church's history has had some great truth to maintain. The storms of discussion are made the means of its clearer elucidation—circumstances in providence excite attention to it—experience teaches its value and importance, and the peculiar vigor of the assaults of the great adversary upon it endear it to the hearts of the faithful. Principles which may have for a time been dormant in the word of God, or only partially appreciated, become thus established as part of the faith of the church, and are interwoven with its whole experience and practice. Thus one age has had the Arian controversy, in which the doctrines of God's word regarding the person of Christ have been so fully discussed, that, with trifling exceptions, they have since been the undisturbed faith of the church, and another age seemed to have had as its peculiar vocation, the exhibition of the doctrines of sovereign grace in the procuring and bestowing salvation upon the children of men.

While therefore we are to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints" to preach the whole system of divine truth—to "keep back nothing that is profitable," and "not to shun to declare the whole counsel of God," yet if we would not show ourselves "unskillful in the word of righteousness" we must observe what particular portions of the system of divine truth the times and situations in which we are placed require us to hold forth most prominently. If we do not attend to this, though we may preach no positive error, yet our preaching may have the same effect as if we did. To preach morality, when men are trusting to their own doings, would be equivalent to preaching justification by the works of the law. But to insist mainly on justification by faith, when men are already running into Antinomian excesses, would have the same effect as preaching our release from the law as a rule of life. In both cases we would be preaching no error, but we would show that we had not learned "rightly to divide the word of truth." In the one case it would be our duty like Paul to preach that "we are justified by faith without the deeds of the law," and in the other, like James, to proclaim, that "faith without works is dead being alone." The same might be illustrated by other instances. If then we should show ourselves "men of Issachar who had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do," we must learn, what are the errors against which we are particularly called to contend in the present day, and what are the truths upon which we are particularly called to insist. Will my fathers and brethren in the ministry then suffer an imperfect attempt to exhibit "the present truth."