

there is no calling on earth in which it is better to wear out by hard work than in that of the Christian ministry. Magnify its toils and trials as we may, it is the best service to which a man can give his hand, and heart, and head.

II.—IMPORTANCE OF DECLARING ALL THE COUNSEL OF GOD.

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MAY it not be well for modern preachers to pay more careful heed to the proportions of doctrine? Biblical truth is a system not, in the sense of a mechanism, put together with tools, but an organism, the product of life. Its unity is not that of the tent which the patriarch pitched, but like that of the oak under whose boughs he found shelter. Like the human body, biblical truth is pervaded by a single life, and all its parts are alternately means and ends to each other. All sermonizing should be carried on with studied attention to this unity. Care should be taken in preaching lest certain themes become favorites, and be discussed with undue emphasis and frequency, and so impair the symmetry of biblical doctrine. It is possible that a cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith may be so dwelt upon in the pulpit in disproportion as to repel the people from it, or to lead them to discredit it as at variance with the inspired oracles. The doctrines of total depravity, Satanic influence, Divine sovereignty, free agency, future punishment, and even the atonement, have been so preached out of harmony with one another and in distortion of the system that to have accepted them as presented would have been to imbibe hurtful error.

Who can count up the churches into which evangelical Christendom is divided and mark the differences between them without feeling the force of the fact that if the biblical doctrines should be preached in all their pulpits for a few years in due proportions, these churches would of necessity hasten toward unity? Denominationalism is little else than a question of emphasis laid upon doctrine, or polity, or mode of worship, or form of ordinance. There are those who think they see signs of progress toward the removal of this offense, but these signs are deceptive, except as preachers agree on the question of emphasis and preach the doctrines of the Cross as they stood related to each other in importance in the Christian system. But the point we make is that the piety of the Church is injured by a failure to preserve, in preaching, balance in doctrine. Fortunate that that force which we call "*vis medicatrix nature*" reappears in the Christian world in the combined action of common sense and common conscience, to defend believers and even repentant hearers from much of the evil that