

PRACTICAL PREACHING

It is objected that practical preaching is the right kind of preaching, and that prophecy is not practical. Is this true? It is not true. The preaching of the Ten Commandments, the social virtues, and the neighborly and moral duties may be called practical preaching by some, but it is not so in the Christian sense of the word. The most successful preaching is the preaching of the cross in which Paul gloried, and the crown for which he waited. The two advents are the poles around which the orb of duty rolls—the strong foundation on which the morality of the new man reposes. Faith lays hold of the cross, the fountain of divine mercy, and out of love to Him that first loved us, brings forth in the heart and life of the believer the fruits of righteousness. Hope looks forward to the crown, and the kingdom, and the promised inheritance, to nerve us for the trials and duties of life, and make us victorious over all our spiritual enemies. This is practical religion. Doctrine is the root and basis and motive of practice; and in the whole range of theology there is not a more practical doctrine than the second advent—no, not one. I challenge you to show me a duty of which it is not in one way or another made the motive.

Read, and consider the following texts of Scripture. It is the motive for patient waiting, 1 Thess. 1:10; for divine hope, Titus 2:13; for moderation in all things, Phil. 4:5; for prayer to be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man, Luke 21:36; for long-suffering patience, James 5:8; for heavenly-mindedness, Luke 21:34; for perseverance in spite of persecution, 1 Pet. 1:7; of godliness and holy conversation, 2 Pet. 3:11,12; it is the motive for earnest preaching, 2 Tim. 4:1-3; for fighting the good fight of faith, 2 Tim. 4:7,8; for reverence and godly fear, Heb. 12:26-28; for sobriety and watching unto prayer, 1 Pet. 4:7. This is practical preaching; but if you preach these duties without the Advent, which is their chief motive and strength, you are asking the people for bricks without giving them the straw—the steam is taken from the engine and the train stops.—*Messiah's Herald*.

If the belief of the coming of the Lord has so much power to mould and influence the child of God, what indescribable power and influence should and does the belief that he *has come*—is now present a spiritual being—the „harvest” now progressing under his supervision as the chief reaper, and the gathering of the ripe wheat now being in progress and soon to be finished and the righteous then made to shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father—what effect as a separator and sanctifying power, should this truth have we enquire? What preaching can be so powerful?

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