

The Sacred Cow Pen

NOWHERE IN THE BIBLE . . . does a prophet, when predicting future events, preface his prophecy with “I believe,” or “it may be,” or “this could be,” or “it seems likely,” or “I am of the opinion,” or any other such evasive hedging which takes any real commitment out of his words. Such “prophecy” would be meaningless and empty. Yet that is precisely what *all* the preachers of prophecy do today.

Nowhere in the Bible does an evangelist, an apostle, a teacher, when setting forth a doctrinal truth or an historical event, qualify his teaching with “I believe,” “It seems to me,” “It is therefore likely,” “It could be,” “I am of the opinion,” or any other of scores of prefacing phrases that effectively notify the audience that he is about to say nothing which can be depended upon. That is the means whereby present day preachers impress their congregations with their orthodoxy, their scholarship, their charitable consideration of the beliefs of others, and say nothing redemptive to a world that is perishing for lack of sound doctrine.

The Bible speaks in dogmatic terms . . . always. It never sets forth opinions or creeds of men. It is God’s declaration of what always has been, what was, what is, and what will be. That is one reason why its authority has the power to persuade men. If we would preach biblical truth, we also must preach dogmatically. If we cannot preach dogmatically, then what better claim have we to be heard than this world’s psychologists, psychiatrists, philosophers and social reformers?

It is true that the writers of the Holy Scriptures were living oracles, moved upon by the Spirit of God, and could so speak infallibly when inspired. We, in turn, can only speak infallibly when we declare what the Bible says. That, because of our removal from the original languages, depends somewhat upon interpretation. Therefore, there are a great number of matters upon which we cannot speak dogmatically, but can only give our opinion if and when such would be of any practical value. But that should be the exception, not the rule in our preaching. We should preach, for the most part, nothing which has not been unshakably established by the entire Bible and the whole of Christian teachers throughout the history of the Church. “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers” (Titus 1:9).

Men who would be saved wait on a man with a message and a mandate, not a mixer with a mealy-mouthed opinion. The man in the dark wants light so he can know the way, not an idea of what the way may be. Morality, right, justice, depend on absolute values. If the Bible, in its revelation of God is not that absolute truth, then this world has never seen it and justice has no basis whatsoever.

In the face of dying humanity, a perishing world, a confused civilization that is rapidly going insane for the lack of dependable direction, brethren, we who of all men on earth have anything of value to say, let us stand up and say it! The Bible *is* the word of God. Christ *is* the Son of God. Men without Christ *will* go to hell. Salvation, full and complete *is* in Christ Jesus. Whether we believe it or not is not the thing people need to hear. They want to know what *is* the truth. I beg of you, by brethren. Learn, settle in your own mind and heart what the truth is . . . and then see if you cannot get yourself accused of preaching dogmatically.

- C. M.