

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

PULPIT HAS LOST POWER

THE Rev. Lyman Abbott, of New York, spoke sadly of the decadence of the power of the pulpit, addressing 3,000 University of Wisconsin men and women at a convention at Madison, Wis. 'It is said the cloth has lost its power – it has,' said Dr. Abbott. 'It is said the pulpit has lost its power – it has. But a man, altruistic in the highest sense and spiritual, will never lose his power.'

* * * – *Press Report.*

It was certainly appropriate that Dr. Abbott should make the above statement to college people. Admitting the facts, let us find also their cause. It is because of the inconsistency of its teaching that the pulpit has lost its power with the masses. The pulpit backs up and endorses the teachings of all the colleges of our day along the lines of Higher Criticism and Evolution. The people are coming to understand that this means that the pulpit is in antagonism to the Bible. If Evolution be true, man never fell and hence needed no Redeemer and no saving from a fallen state, but needed merely to be let alone in his evolutionary progress. According to Higher Criticism the Bible in general is unreliable. Moses never wrote the books accredited to him, and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel and others never wrote the books accredited to them – never were inspired of God to write these books. And if this be true, then Jesus and the Apostles were deceived and could not have been inspired by God when they quoted from these sacred writings of the past and declared them to be the Word of God and vouched for their authorship.

NO WONDER CHURCH ATTENDANCE IS SLIM

On the other hand the public notice that the very ministers who thus preach Evolution, Higher Criticism, unbelief in the Divine Revelation, keep right along preaching some of the absurdities which

our forefathers claimed were in harmony with the Bible. Is it any wonder that the people are coming to see the inconsistency of such a position? How long might they expect to be blind to it? What must be the influence?

The result is that the masses have less and less confidence in the clergy. The people do not know what the clergy believe even when they hear them speak, for their address may be from the standpoint of the creeds or from the standpoint of Higher Criticism, according to their moods. The result of this uncertain sounding of the trumpet is that the masses are coming to the conclusion that the whole matter of religion is a big guess and that some of the guesses are influenced by temporal considerations. No wonder Church attendance is slim! No wonder doubt and skepticism are prevalent! No wonder that faith in the Bible is undermined and religion made to look ridiculous and contradictory!

The unbelief of the people grows and threatens to become agnosticism, or worse, atheism! Those who have brought about this condition of things during the past thirty years are the college professors and the best educated pulpiteers of Christendom. And now they stand astonished at the results, which they should have foreseen. Verily they are fulfilling the Divine prophecies of Isaiah, which, referring to our day, declare, "The wisdom of their wise men shall perish; the understanding of their prudent men shall not be manifest." (Isa. 29:14.) No wonder the civilized world is in trepidation as it sees the onward march of Socialism! And however honest and well-intentioned many Socialists may be, the result of their effort will spell anarchy and a time of trouble such as the world has never yet seen – a time of trouble, however, predicted by Daniel the Prophet, whose prediction was endorsed by Jesus Himself. – Dan. 12:1; Matt. 24:21.

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What is the remedy? No remedy can possibly reach the disease! The Bible rightly understood is the balm of Gilead which alone could

have helped. But matters have gone so far that comparatively few have sufficient confidence in the Bible to be willing to make a re-examination of it in the light of the Divine Plan of the Ages, which alone shows the harmony of the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation.

But while we cannot hope to stem the tide of "higher critical," evolutionary infidelity – while we cannot hope to counteract the influences of more than half of Christendom and of three-fourths of all the pulpits of Christendom, we do hope, by the Lord's grace, to find some of the Truth-hungry sheep and to assist them to an appreciation of the Heavenly Father's Message, given by Jesus, the Apostles and Prophets, but lost during the Dark Ages. We can help them to find the lost key of knowledge, whereby God's Word opens up, revealing to the eyes of faith and obedience a Creator infinite in Wisdom, Justice, Love and Power, a Savior and a great one, able to save to the uttermost all who come unto the Father through Him, and a Divine arrangement and Plan consistent with the Divine character. By these means the Lord's faithful ones will be sustained from falling in this evil day mentioned by the Apostles and Prophets. – Eph. 6:11-13; Psa. 91:7.

