

resurrection in their literal meaning, and accepts them as true. When he meets the radical, he has a clear question to discuss. If the historical reliability of the gospels is demonstrated an honest radical must admit the fact of the resurrection and proceed to give consideration to its bearing on his own duty toward this ever-living Lord. With the liberal it is harder to deal. He twists words so far from their natural significance that it is difficult to prove to him that any particular passage has a definite meaning. His method of interpretation can derive almost any thought from a chapter, and can ignore the most seemingly obvious teaching.

This, of course, is not to suggest that all language must be interpreted literally. Like every other bit of great literature, the Bible contains many figures of speech. These add tremendously to the beauty of the passages where they occur. More than that, they make its meaning clearer. When Christ said, "O generation of vipers" (Matthew 23:34), He did not suggest that his hearers were crawling reptiles, but He did express a judgment ^{as to} their character more clearly than could have been done by a whole paragraph of literal discourse. Figures of speech are a common and useful part of all language, including the language of the Bible. Their presence, however, gives no warrant for the type of interpretation sometimes called "spiritualization", which consists in interpreting all the elements of a passage as figures, until the passage has no literal peg on which to hang and may mean anything or nothing according to the whim of the reader. A pinch of salt on a dish of vegetables adds to its flavor and increases its food value, but a cupful of salt poured