

THE
ATONEMENT OF CHRIST,

CHIEFLY IN RELATION TO

THE GREAT QUESTION,
WAS IT FOR ALL MANKIND,

OR FOR THE

ELECT ONLY?

EMBODYING THE VIEWS SET FORTH BY THE
AUTHOR IN HIS DEFENCE BEFORE THE PRES-
BYTERY IN LONDON, C. W., IN FEBRUARY,
1859, AND ALSO AT TORONTO, BEFORE
THE SYNOD, IN JUNE FOLLOWING.

BY ROBERT PEDEN,

*Minister of the Gospel, Amherstburgh, C. W., Author of "A Hidden
Gospel the Cause of the Loss of Souls," &c.*

Acts vi. 11-12—And they departed from the presence of the Council,
rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name.
And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach
and preach Jesus Christ.

T O R O N T O :

PRINTED AT THE EXAMINER'S OFFICE, KING STREET EAST.

1860.

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TO THE CHURCHES OF CANADA.

AND MORE ESPECIALLY THOSE

In Connexion with the Synod of the Presbyterian Church,

THIS LITTLE TREATISE

Is Humbly Dedicated,

WITH FERVENT PRAYER THAT, UNDER THE BLESSING
OF GOD, IT MAY BE THE MEANS OF LEADING
TO THE DUE INVESTIGATION OF A SUBJECT

So Vitally Important to the Church and the World,

BY THEIR HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E .

Circumstances, in the providence of God, have called forth this little Treatise on the most important of subjects. The writer having, a few years ago, published a small work entitled, "*A Hidden Gospel the Cause of the Loss of Souls*," in which he endeavoured to set forth the unlimited extent of the Atonement, was served with a libel by the Presbytery of London, C. W., to which he belonged, and cited to appear before the Synod, which met in Toronto in June, 1850. Having, after long and prayerful investigation, seen no reason to change his views, which were rather strengthened than otherwise, by additional light, he was suspended from the Ministry of that Church, and the Presbytery were empowered to depose him if he should still persist in the promulgation of his views. The writer has, therefore, thought it necessary to issue this Treatise, not so much for his own vindication, as in defence of what he firmly believes to be Christ's Truth. And though in doing so, he can already hear the voice of Ecclesiastical authority addressing him in the tone of the High Priest to the Apostles, "Did we not straitly command you that you should not teach in this name"? He desires, notwithstanding, to answer with Peter and the other Apostles, "We ought to obey God rather than man.—(Acts v. 28.) That God may own this little work in leading some, who may be

groping in obscurity, to Him who is "the door" by which, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, is the fervent prayer of the writer. His desire is to keep the mind of the reader, as well as his own, in relation to divine truth, in the position of the three Marys—that of nearness to the Cross. (John xix. 25.)

R. P.

AMHERSTBURGH, C. W.,
24th June, 1850. }

THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST,

CHIEFLY IN RELATION TO THE GREAT QUESTION.

WAS IT FOR ALL MANKIND, OR FOR THE ELECT ONLY ?

SECTION I.

THE GENERAL PRINCIPLE OF THE ATONEMENT
EXPLAINED.

THE PROMINENCE GIVEN TO THE DEATH OF
CHRIST ACCOUNTED FOR ONLY BY THE
DOCTRINE OF ATONEMENT.

1ST. CORINTHIANS I, 23—We Preach Christ crucified.

There is no subject to which the human, and probably too, the Angelic mind can be directed, of such transcendent grandeur and importance as the DEATH OF CHRIST. *Historically* considered, it is the great event in the world's history; *Doctrinally*, it is the central truth in the Christian system; and *Practically*, it is the medium of the mightiest influences which the Godhead has brought to bear on the minds of intelligent beings. The whole Word of God conspires to draw our attention to the Cross, and keep us riveted there. Whether we look to the ancient dispensation, or the new; to the sacrifices, types, and prophecies of the one, or the doctrines, promises, and duties of the other; still do we find that the death of Christ stands out with the most marked prominence and peculiarity. From the

first intimation of mercy made to fallen man, down to the apocalyptic vision which brings us to the gates of the celestial city, through which we get a glimpse of glory, and there see, "in the midst of the throne, the Lamb as it had been slain," and where, also, we learn the anthem of the heavenly host, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"; we see the old dispensation and the new—the Church on earth and the Church in heaven—harmonize in the leading principle of God's word, in regarding CHRIST as the great and glorious centre of attraction, and the *death* of Christ as that which elicits the most marked and peculiar attention. "Christ *crucified*" is the nucleus of the whole evangelical system, the focal point of divine truth, the foundation of all Christian experience, the theme of the Gospel ministry, the song of the redeemed in heaven, and the study and admiration of the angelic throng. In a word, the preaching of the Gospel is the preaching of the Cross, and the great design of the institution of the Lord's Supper is to give the most emphatic expression to that distinguishing prominence and peculiarity.

That period then which stood out to the Saviour's own view, in bold relief as "the Hour," is no less so in the history of the world, and will continue to stand out in the isolation of a peculiar attractiveness during the ceaseless ages of eternity. In that endless future, when Kings and Conquerors shall be forgotten, when human glory shall have long passed away as "the flower of the grass," when the greatest names on the roll of earthly fame shall have sunk into oblivion, when the mighty affairs that shook nations, convulsed empires, and threw their shadow over a long series of ages, shall have passed away into forgetfulness—this is "the hour" that shall never be forgotten, it will live embalmed in the

hearts of the redeemed, it will wake their harps to endless praises, and attract and accuminate the hallelujahs of seraphic spirits. The cross of Christ will be the eternal monument of this world's history, the grand memorial of a world's fall, and a world's redemption.

But why this mighty prominence to the scene on Mount Calvary? Why around the cross gathers this growing halo of interest? Why is the experience of the believer, "God forbid that I should glory save in the *cross* of our Lord Jesus Christ," but the echo of Revelation and of the song of Heaven? Why this special regard in preaching to Christ *crucified*? Is it that He died merely as a martyr? Is it that He died only to attest his truth and seal his testimony with his blood? Is that death of agony and shame thus specially the central subject of attractiveness because it was anticipated with more than usual serenity, and endured with more than ordinary heroism? No, no. Let Socinianism, let Unitarianism look to Gethsemane and Calvary, and they cannot unravel the mystery.—Were the death of Christ but a martyrdom, or an example of suffering patience, then tenfold better were it to reverse the order of divine truth and give to it a position in the back ground. Better were it merely to look to his blameless life, and his benevolent character, and remove into comparative obscurity the scene of the crucifixion.

Compare Him in the prospect of his sufferings with a Stephen and a Paul, and a host of eminent martyrs of whom the world was not worthy, "who were stoned, who were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword." See Stephen in the hour of trial, when his face shone as an angel, and when the infuriated mob rushed upon him gnashing with their teeth, and stoned

him ; notice his holy serenity as he looked up steadfastly to heaven. Witness Paul when addressing the Ephesian Elders, he says ; “ and now behold I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city that bonds and afflictions abide me, but *none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, that I might finish my course with joy.*” Now turn to our blessed Redeemer ; see him in the anticipation of his sufferings as he thus speaks, “ Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say ? Father, save me from this hour.” See him in Gethsemane as he falls prostrate and prays, “ Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” Hear that prayer a second time. See “ the sweat from him as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.” Hear his anguish thus expressed : “ my soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death.” Hear him again the third time, as being in an agony he prays the more earnestly, “ Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.” See him suspended on the cross, and hear that loud and bitter cry, “ my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.”*

Why these agitating emotions ? Why this bitter anguish of soul ? How is this striking difference between our Redeemer and many of his suffering followers to be accounted for ? Socinianism cannot answer these questions satisfactorily, but the Word of God unravels the mystery. It reveals most distinctly to us, in connexion with the death of Christ, the great doctrine of ATONEMENT. It makes known to

Dr. Payne, of Exeter, if I remember right, has an illustration of this kind in one of his Lectures on Divine Sovereignty.

us that there were elements of anguish in his sufferings, peculiar to these sufferings ; that there were ingredients put into the cup which was given him to drink, of inconceivable bitterness. It teaches us to look not only at those sufferings which man could inflict, when He, though innocent, was enduring the curse of human law, but to look more deeply, and contemplate a severity, an intensity, a peculiarity of suffering which the Father inflicted when he was enduring the curse of the *divine* law. "It pleased the Lord to bruize him and to put him to grief."

The great doctrine of the Atonement is that which throws this mighty halo of interest around the cross. It is because in connexion with that death we have the most gracious and important truth, "He died for our sins," "He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities." He became sin for us ; "He bare our sins on his own body on the tree." "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." It is this blessed doctrine alone, so clearly laid down in Scripture, that at once gives substance to the shadowy sacrifices and types of the old dispensation, and accounts for the prominence given to the sufferings of Christ, and the manner in which they were anticipated and endured. A doctrine then so explicit, so prominent, occupies no secondary or subordinate place in the Christian system. To misunderstand it, is darkness ; to misplace it, is confusion ; and to exclude it, is death. The human body may exist without an eye or an ear, a foot or a hand, but it cannot without a heart ; so men may adopt a religious system defective in some parts which, however useful and important, are not essential to existence ; but a system from which this

distinguishing doctrine is excluded is devoid of the essential medium of spiritual vitality. It is another Gospel than Paul preached, and as such, it and its advocates come under the anathema which the holy Apostle pronounced, "If any man preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed."—Gal. i. 9.

THE ATONEMENT IN RELATION TO THE DIVINE MORAL GOVERNMENT.

ISAIAH xlii. 23.—He will magnify the Law and make it honourable.

Man constituted as he is a rational and accountable being is under the moral government of God. Connected as this world is with the throne of the Eternal by *physical* laws, it is principally through man that it is connected with that throne by *moral* Laws. There are certain principles that arise essentially out of that relationship which we in common with all moral beings sustain to God, that are infinitely important, and immutably permanent. They can never be changed, modified or subverted. They are like God himself unchangeable.

Hence in reference to creatures such as men who have rebelled against the government of Jehovah there is a superlative difficulty in the exercise of a clemency that would seek their deliverance. Even in human governments marked as they are by so much imperfection, and characterized too frequently by oppression on the one hand, and laxity on the other, there is often a real and great difficulty in the exercise of mercy, or the proclamation of a general amnesty. But how infinitely more difficult is the exercise of mercy to transgressors in a government so infinitely perfect in its principles, precepts and penal sanction as the moral administration of Jehovah? His law is a transcript of Himself, it is

holy just and good, it cannot be more so, it cannot be less so. It is planned by infinite wisdom, it is dictated by infinite benevolence and most appropriately adapted to promote and secure the happiness of all who conform to its unvarying principles. Under such a government the danger is very great, that the exercise of mercy will be misunderstood as encouraging the hope of impunity in the commission of sin.

See this in a lesser point of view. Look to the physical laws of God, those that relate to matter. Were God to relinquish or change one single principle in his physical government, it is impossible to tell what an amount of disorganization and confusion would be the result. Suppose an individual were maniac-like to throw himself from some mighty precipice, shall God change or relinquish any of the principles of the material system to save him from destruction? Shall he withdraw from every particle of matter its power of attraction and gravitation? What would be the result? Why, from planet to planet, from system to system, from star to star, there would soon be nothing but one mighty chaos, "the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds." It is evident that in interposing at all for the deliverance of such an individual, it would only be in such a way, as would not tend to the subversion or relinquishment of the mighty principle of his government through the material universe.

If this is so in reference to the principles of God's physical government, how much more so in reference to those still higher and nobler principles that are the very pillars of his moral administration. It is abundantly evident that any attempt at the exercise of mercy that would have the legitimate tendency to weaken or relax or change the great principles of moral obligation would

tend to be morally suicidal to the holiness and happiness of the universe. If there had been no way in which the salvation of man could be effected in entire consistency with these great principles, we are perfectly persuaded, that no ray of hope would ever have cast its light over the midnight darkness of man's total and eternal despair. It is hopelessly vain to imagine that God would subvert the principles of his government to save man. It is a fearful misconception therefore that lies hid in the enquiry, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" To the question, "Do we make void the law through faith? the whole scheme of grace from its centre to its circumference cries aloud as with trumpet-tongue, "Nay we establish the Law." The Law is magnified and made honourable.

To man as a creature placed under moral law, conformity to its principles and obedience to its precepts are necessary to secure the blessings of that administration, and non-compliance exposes to its fearful penalty. This is the great rule connected with moral obligation. Now to man as a violator of that law, there is no provision in that law to cancel his guilt and reinstate him in holiness and happiness. He is hopelessly lost. But blessed be God, He has not left him to perish. In His infinite wisdom and mercy he has devised, and at infinite expense has executed a gracious scheme perfectly satisfactory to his government, on the one hand, and most benevolently adapted to the exigencies of a lost and perishing world, on the other. He has been pleased to introduce a new expedient, by which in perfect consistency with his character and administration he can deal with man as a sinner on an entirely new and peculiar arrangement. The condition of the moral Law is, He that doeth these things shall live by them, but He

has revealed to a man as a fallen creature this new procedure, *He that believeth shall be saved.* Under the former arrangement the creature is justified by his works,—his obedience, under the new he is “justified by faith,” “The just shall live by faith.” (Rom. i. 17.)

Here then is an entirely new and peculiar arrangement. Here is a new feature in the divine administration. Here is a mode of procedure with moral beings unknown till now, in the history of the universe.

But the enquiry suggests itself, How is the Supreme Governor vindicated in this? What secures to his perfections their full requisition of glory? Are not his holiness and justice dishonoured? Is not his government weakened and relaxed? Is not sin connived at and encouraged? Are not the principles, precepts, and penal sanctions of his holy Law relinquished and dishonoured? The answer to all these enquiries is most satisfactory. The Atonement of Christ is regarded by Jehovah as so infinitely meritorious, so glorifying to His character, His government and his Law, so condemnatory of sin, so illustrative at once of his love and mercy, and of his justice and Holiness, so fitted to increase the love and confirm the obedience of all holy Intelligencies—so adapted to counteract the inroads of rebellion, and to win the hearts of men to Himself, that Jehovah considers it not only safe and consistent, but peculiarly glorifying to Himself and his administration to deal with guilty and apostate man in a way of sovereign grace, and to issue the great proclamation of mercy, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” “The obedience unto death” of the only begotten Son of God in behalf of sinful man is so God-glorifying—so law-honouring, so declaratory of the Father’s determination to uphold his Law, so illustrative of the benignity and rectitude

not only of its principles and precepts but even of its penalty, that Jehovah is now willing to receive and justify every sinner, who, though destitute of personal righteousness, will look to him for pardon and acceptance through the atonement of his own Son. Hence "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses," and the gospel ministry of reconciliation is for the express purpose of beseeching men as if God was beseeching them, and praying them as if Christ were entreating them to be reconciled unto God, *for*,—observe the reason—"He hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Notice then briefly the connexion or relation between the covenant of works and that of grace—between the Law and the Gospel. Under the covenant of works the condition is "He *that doeth* these things," under the covenant of grace, it is, He that *believeth*. Under the former the creature was himself the surety; under the latter Christ is the surety. Under the former, the creature is accepted by his own righteousness; under the new, he is accepted by faith in the righteousness of another. The Covenant of Works did not necessarily secure that those placed under it *must* enjoy the rewards of the divine government—it only secured that, if they obeyed the Law, these blessings would be realized. So the Covenant of Grace does not necessarily secure that all placed under its conditions *must* be saved; it secures, He that *believeth* shall be saved. As in the former, blessings were conditioned on obedience; so in the latter salvation is conditioned on faith. Under the former the creature was left to the freedom of his own will; there was no physical omnipotence interfering with his moral agency. There were indeed set before him

the blessings of obedience on the one hand, and the penalty of disobedience on the other—so under the new arrangement, while the mightiest and most gracious influences are brought to bear upon him to induce him “to believe and be saved,” yet these moral and spiritual influences are of a nature adapted to him as a moral and responsible being. Heaven plies its mightiest influences, it sets before the sinner “Life and Death, the blessing and the curse,” and with the most earnest entreaty importunes the sinner, “choose life,” “believe and live,” “turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die,” “Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.”

The atonement then of the Son of God makes the Law and the Gospel harmonize, makes the latter magnifying and honouring to the former. To every cavil, to every imputation of guilt, the believing sinner can humbly yet confidently take up the challenge, “Who is he that condemneth”? because he can add, “It is Christ that died.” And this leads us to one remark on the necessity of faith; how it is that the blessings of salvation are conditioned on believing. The apostle says, “it is of faith, that it might be by grace,” and it is also stated, “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” Faith in Christ is a condition of salvation, because it is necessary not only that Jehovah should be satisfied with the atonement of Christ, not only that holy Intelligences should see in it a perfect satisfaction to the Law of God, but the *sinner himself* must be led to see how it is consistent with the perfections and Law of God that he a guilty and hell-deserving creature should be justified and reinstated into the favour and fellowship of God and of holy beings. Now the sinner could not see this without a knowledge of the work of his Redeemer, without a looking to God and trusting in his mercy and grace only through the

blood of atonement. Hence the importance and necessity of clear apprehensions of the death of Christ, and of the great principle of procedure in grace founded on that atonement, "He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned."

SALVATION THROUGH THE ATONEMENT PECU- LIARLY GLORIFYING TO GOD.

LUKE ii. 14—Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men.

The Atonement of Christ has a two-fold aspect; it has an aspect towards God, and there it throws on his perfections and his throne a flood of glory; it has an aspect towards man, and there it introduces peace and good will. It is a very inadequate view to look upon it as merely securing the divine perfections from suspicion, and the principles of his government from injury. This negative view of Christ's work is incomplete. It not only vindicates Jehovah, but it gives him peculiar glory; it not only tends to prevent the inroads of sin and misery, but it is the medium of an immense accession to the well-being of the universe.

Salvation, through the atonement, is regarded by God as peculiarly glorifying to Himself. The word of God represents Him as most ready and willing to receive sinners through Christ. This is taught us in prophecy, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him and to our God, and He will *abundantly pardon*," "He waits to be gracious." Our Saviour has also in the most touching manner taught this same truth in the parable of the returning prodigal, where we see a yearning father running to meet and welcome his repentant but prodigal child, he puts the best robe upon him, and the ring on his hand, and shoes

on his feet, and kills the fatted calf to rejoice over a long lost son. And this is intended to be a faint type of the readiness and intensity of desire on the part of Jehovah to receive the returning sinner and restore him to all the privileges and blessings of sonship in his own spiritual family.

Now let us observe how the atonement brings peculiar glory to Jehovah.

1st. While God's JUSTICE is as fully satisfied through it, divine MERCY is peculiarly glorified. Had mankind suffered their own desert, and no atonement been made for sin, justice would have been satisfied, but there would not have been any room for the exercise of mercy. That attribute would have lain latent among the glories of the Godhead. But the atonement gives development to this lovely feature in beautiful harmony with justice and rectitude, and while Justice has its claims fully honoured, as fully as if mankind had perished, nay more fully ; mercy with divine sweetness goes forth with a majesty and a grace on her errand of benevolence to "preach good tidings to the meek, to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound."

2nd. While God's HOLINESS is fully vindicated and honoured by the atonement, there is an honourable channel for the outgoings of God's LOVE to the sinner. Had we been called to suffer for our own sin, there would have been a display of divine holiness in hatred of sin and expulsion of the sinner from his favour and communion ; but the outgoings of his love to the sinner would have found no vent ; but here through the atonement, while his holiness is as impressively, nay more impressively exhibited, his Love has a free channel in harmony with

his other perfections in its outgoings to the world ; and as God is love and it is his delight to diffuse his love; there is in the peculiar scope of its exercise towards the perishing and the guilty a spectacle of the sublimest interest to the universe. " Herein is love not that we loved God, but that he loved us and gave his son to be the propitiation for our sins."

3rd. While God's law is fully honoured, while its penalty as well as principles are fully magnified by the atonement, there is through it an immense amount of misery prevented. Had all transgressors been required to suffer the deserts of sin, the penalty of the law would have had its demands, but the atonement is an honourable ground on which to exempt those who believe in Christ from that penal infliction, and thus through the atonement an inconceivable amount of misery is prevented, " There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus."

4th, Through the atonement an immense addition is made to the holiness and happiness of the universe.

5th. Through the atonement the stability of God's government is strengthened and consolidated among his intelligent creatures. Had no atonement been made and sinners consigned to despair, all holy beings would have joined in the ascription, " Righteous art thou, O Lord." But in the " obedience unto death" of the Son of God, they see sin branded with as deep a stigma, divine holiness and justice as fully honoured, but they see more, they see more strikingly the rectitude, the benignity, the necessity of the principles of the divine administration, they see more fully developed and that too in a peculiar and unparalleled manner the infinite love, mercy and benevolence of Deity ; his infinite regard for the happiness of his creatures and the necessary connexion be-

tween holiness and happiness. There is every thing to draw forth and increase their love to Jehovah, and whatever increases their love must tend so far to strengthen obedience.

Sin did not originate in the world ; it had its existence among angels. The Justice and Holiness of the great Sovereign Ruler had been conspicuously manifested to an intelligent universe in their perdition. They were hopelessly lost, and thus outcasts from Heaven their desire and design were to run a crusade against God by extending their conquests of sin and death ; and so soon as man was created their design was to introduce rebellion. Had the holiness and justice of Deity—these severer attributes of his character, if we may so speak, been again signally exhibited without any possibility of bringing into development the benign and lovely features of his mercy and grace, the tendency would be to draw more conspicuous attention to these perfections that produce awe than to those that increase love. But the atonement most wonderfully gives marked development and prominence to the Love—the Grace of God, so that the principles of God's moral administration are greatly strengthened and glorified, and the love and obedience of his creatures more fully secured.

6th. The atonement will furnish the most striking manifestation of the righteousness of God in the final perdition of unbelieving and impenitent sinners. It is true that although sinners had perished and no atonement had been made, there would have been perfect rectitude on the part of the Sovereign, but how will that rectitude be enhanced and more fully developed, when after his mighty scheme had been planned and at infinite sacrifice on the part of the Godhead executed, and its gracious overtures of mercy made known to the sinner for his

acceptance,—the sinner rejected, repeatedly rejected these blessed proffers, and resisted the strivings of the Spirit of God—how gloriously vindicatory of the rectitude of that punishment that shall fall on his devoted head, not merely as a sinner against Law, but a rejector of the Gospel. “This is *the* condemnation that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than the light.” The Lord Jesus Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God and *obey not* the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power.” “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Fellow-sinner, How shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation,”—“Of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing, and done despite to the Spirit of grace.”

SECTION II.

THE ATONEMENT SHEWN FROM SCRIPTURE TO
BE UNLIMITED.

The great question, Did Christ die for all mankind, or for the Elect only ? is one that has not a little agitated the professedly Christian Church. Nor is it a question of little moment. As the Atonement of Christ lies at the foundation of the christian system, so it lies also at the basis of all true religious experience ; it is an essential element in all evangelical piety. If so, it cannot be regarded as irrelevant or unnecessary to have a clear knowledge on a subject so vitally important. From the previous Section it will appear that we are decidedly of opinion that the Atonement of Christ was for mankind-sinners generally, and not exclusively for the Elect. We most fully believe that An Atonement was necessary to enable God consistently with his government and his character to deal with mankind-sinners as he now does, placing them under a dispensation of Mercy which is not confined to the Elect, but extends to the world ; and making to men, wherever the Gospel comes, the overtures of a free and full salvation, whether, on the one hand, they believe and are saved, or on the other, believe not and perish.

But on a subject so fundamentally important the great enquiry is, "What saith the Lord"? "To the Law and the Testimony." And here we are not permitted to grope in darkness. The truth seems written as with a sunbeam, and we can only account for the perplexity and obscurity which many entertain on this

subject to the interception of mere human authority between them and the light of Revelation.

The following passages of the Word of God either explicitly assert or imply the unlimited extent of the Atonement of Christ. In adducing them, we shall simply follow the order as they occur in the New Testament :

The first passage in proof of Universal Atonement is that which contains the great Commission given to the Apostles ; Mark xvi. 15 : " Go ye unto all the world, and preach *the Gospel to every creature.*" Here is the universality of the commission, but it does not and cannot extend farther than the length and breadth of the Atonement. A gospel for every creature necessarily implies an atonement for every creature. Here then is the universality, and that which follows reveals the principle of God's procedure in reference to those to whom this gospel is proclaimed : " He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." It is evident that those who perish as well as those who are saved have a relation to the same atonement, which could not be if for the former there had been really no atonement at all.

The next that occurs according to the order already specified—Luke ii. 70 : " The Angel said, Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for unto you is born in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

Again, John iii. 16 : " God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Here the love of God as manifested in the gift of the Son, was a love *to the world*—a love not restricted so far as *the Atonement* is concerned to the Elect. There

is evidently a great difference in the extent of the love on God's part in giving the Son, and the limitation occasioned in connexion with the reception or rejection of that Son by the world. That difference is most clearly asserted in the verse.

We are aware that some have tried to make out that by the *world* here is meant the elect, and they even sometimes try to improve God's word to suit their limited views, by the interpolation of the qualifying word *elect* before world. But Dr. Wardlaw, of Glasgow, has, in one of his Essays, shewn the absurdity of any such supplement; and instead of improving the verse, it would make it read absurdly, for it would read thus: "God so loved the *elect* world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever*"—who-soever of what? Whosoever of the *elect* believeth, which would imply that not all, but only some of the elect might believe, which is contradictory. Besides it would be making the word world apply exclusively to the elect, whereas in its general meaning in Scripture it stands rather in contradistinction to the elect. The elect are those called or chosen *out of* the world.

Notice now the succeeding verse: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that *the world* through him might be saved."

The next passage to which we advert is the beautiful prayer of our blessed Redeemer for his Disciples shortly before his sufferings and subsequent separation from them, John xvii. 9, "I pray not for the world, but for them thou hast given me." Verse 20, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one; as thou Father art in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; *that the World may believe that*

thou hast sent me." On a hasty inspection of this passage, more especially the 9th verse, persons have been led to regard it as a proof of a limited atonement; and it has often been adduced in this way; but it is entirely beside the true scope of the passage. Observe, in the passage there are two principal objects of desire of our Saviour regarding his people, viz., their holiness, verses 15-19; and their union, verses 21-23. The usefulness and efficiency of his church in its relation to the world, depended very materially on a spirit of holy union. While his prayer is directly for his disciples, it is indirectly for the world; it is that the world may be influenced and induced to believe in the Son of God through a holy and united agency on the part of his followers. So far then from this prayer excluding the world from his regard, it is a most beautiful and touching manifestation of his desire for the salvation of the world. His ardent prayer terminates on this as a great object, "*that the world may believe,*" and repeated in verse 23, "*that the world may know that thou hast sent me.*" In a word, it is a prayer for the holiness and union of his professing people that through their instrumentality the *world* may be converted unto God.*

Again, observe 1st Cor. xv. 1-3: "Moreover, Brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand, by which also ye are saved," &c., "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received how that *Christ died for our sins* according to the Scriptures." Now, observe here the prominence the Apostle gave to the atonement of Christ. When he preached the Gospel, he delivered this great truth first of all.

* See a beautiful Tract entitled, "I pray not for the World."

He did not wait till they were believers before he could stand among them and say, "Christ died for our sins." No, it was a first, a principal truth. Had the Apostle required them first to believe *the Gospel* before he could tell them that truth, then the difficulty would be to find out what gospel they could have believed, or Paul could have preached to them prior to his proclaiming to them this great doctrine of Atonement.

The next passage in order is that important one in ii Cor. v. 14. "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that he died for all that they who live should not live to themselves, but to him that died for them and rose again." Here the Apostle even proves the universality of human guilt and depravity by the extent of the atonement. Why should Christ die for all if all were not dead? This passage, in connection with the 10th verse, teaches us that human guilt, human accountability, and the Atonement, have a universality of extent. To limit the one might as reasonably lead to the limitation of the rest.

Observe also in connection with this the beautiful passage at the close of this chapter, verse 18 to the end.

Again, i. Tim. i. 15: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation," &c. Still farther, ii. 1-6. "Prayers are to be made for all men," and why? because, v. 3, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who *will have all men* to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, for there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave *himself a ransom for all*, to be testified in due time."

Notice also in Heb. ii. 9, it is stated that "he tasted death for every man."

Also, Titus ii. 11 : "For the Grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men hath appeared, teaching," &c. This is the proper translation, and is so given in the marginal notes.

Another explicit statement is made to us in i. John ii. 1 : "We have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous ; and he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." A passage so plain and unambiguous that to cramp and limit it would be a dangerous mode of interpretation. We have no more authority to make, the whole world in this passage mean less than it does in Rom. iii. 19, where it is stated, "All the world is guilty before God."*

These are only a selection of passages from many that either expressly affirm or evidently imply that the Atonement of the Son of God was not for some only, but for all ; not for the Elect exclusively, but for mankind generally. Hence the importance of the great commission, and the deep responsibility resting on the church to carry that gospel round the world, and by a holy separation from the world, and a union of heart and cooperation of effort to be the subordinate agency under the Spirit of God in effecting the evangelization of the whole human family, (John xvii. 21-23.)

* For a more extended illustration of these and other passages, see a most valuable treatise published by the Evangelical Union, entitled, "The Extent of the Propitiation." See also my "Hidden Gospel," Sec. i.

SECTION III.

A LIMITED ATONEMENT UNSCRIPTURAL AND UNREASONABLE.

Having shewn from the word of God the great scriptural doctrine of an atonement for all, we proceed now to state our objections to the dogma of Limited Atonement.

Let us first define the doctrine, and the best method is to give a brief statement of what it is from its own abettors.

The following is a short extract from JUNKYN on "Justification" :—

The person or persons whose sins lay on Jesus, and caused his death, are his principals ; that is, they are the persons for whom he acted and suffered—whose sin " he put away by the sacrifice of himself," Hence,

They whose sins " he bore in his own body on the tree," whose sins he *suffered for*—(because this is what is meant by his bearing them)—*cannot, without the most palpable violation of all right, and law and justice*, be themselves constrained to suffer for the same sins. " Shall not the judge of all the earth do right ?" Therefore,

The atonement—the satisfaction rendered to divine justice, is as extensive so, as the sheep of Christ's flock, and no more—the atonement is as long and as broad as the salvation of God. Or in other words, they whose sins are washed out in the blood of Calvary, must be saved, and none others *can* be. " There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. In other words, They, and all they for whom Christ died—for whom he paid the ransom, or price of redemption, will be saved, and none others. To maintain any other doctrine, is to abandon the atonement altogether.

Dr. CANDLISH also thus writes :

" The question being, in the first place, Was the death of Christ, or his work of obedience unto death, considered in the light of a satisfaction rendered to divine justice, and an atonement made for human guilt, undertaken and accomplished for any but the elect ?—

we answer without qualification or reserve, in the negative. *They for whom Christ died are infallibly saved.*"

Also in page 91 he adds,

Thus, in the first place, for his name's sake, God being such as he is, must necessarily provide for all the seed of Christ being in due time brought to him and savingly made one with him; otherwise, were any of them to be finally lost—the punishment of their sins having been actually borne by Christ—there would be *injustice and inconsistency* with God.

The Rev. Dr. BURNS in the "Record" says, "The price being paid, all for whom it is paid shall go free and none else."

The Rev. Dr. WILLIS also in the same periodical thus writes—

"No one denies that the blood of Christ is, in respect of inherent value sufficient not only to have atoned for all men, but for all creatures—angels as well as men. But either it was according to the will of God a price for all, or it was not. If it was, then the salvation of all must follow; if Christ was made sin for every individual of the human race, *justice requires* that all shall be made "the righteousness of God in him."

Now observe in regard to these quotations there is a certain harmony of view among these Limitarians. Junkyn maintains that all for whom Christ died must be saved, else there would be on the part of God the most palpable *violation of all right and law and justice*, Dr. Caudlish affirms there would be *injustice and inconsistency with God*, and Dr. Willis agrees and says *Justice* requires their salvation.

Our objections to such a view of the atonement are manifold, for,

1st. It is inconsistent with the *nature* of an atonement. If an atonement were the literal endurance of the *identical sufferings* of those for whom it was made, then it would necessarily be limited to those whose punishment was thus *literally* borne; but this hypothesis is entirely untenable because it would necessarily measure the value and efficacy of Christ's atonement by the amount

of suffering endured. It would place all its value on his suffering *alone* to the exclusion of that arising from his divine dignity. It would necessarily detract from its infinite meritoriousness, because if the punishment of more than the Elect had been borne there would have been an increase of suffering on his part, and if fewer, there would have been less. Besides it must be evident that there are elements of suffering in the punishment of lost souls that never could have entered into Christ's. He never endured remorse—he never felt the reproach of a guilty and accusing conscience. Even in the darkest hour he could look up and say, "*My God, my God.*"

We can hardly conceive then that any can hold such a hypothesis, more especially as they sometimes speak of its infinite value and its intrinsic sufficiency for angels as well as men if God had so intended it. When it is said that Christ became sin for us, or a curse for us, we are not necessarily to consider that He endured the *identical* sufferings which we would have borne throughout eternity, but that he endured such *substitutionary sufferings* as, in connexion with his divine dignity, Jehovah regarded as sufficiently honouring to his moral administration, nay more honouring in being borne by Christ, than in the literal punishment on the offenders themselves, so that the Father can now in perfect consistency with the full requisitions of his law, grant forgiveness of sin to all who come to Him through the infinite merits of his Son.

2nd. There are no passages in the word of God which expressly assert that Christ died for the elect only. It is true we read, that "he loved the Church and gave himself for it," and that "he laid down his life for the sheep," yet there is no passage that positively affirms

that he died for them only, while there are numerous passages which plainly declare that he died for others besides those who shall ultimately be saved ; yea that " he died for all," that " he is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world."

3rd. If there are any for whom no atonement has been made, their salvation is *a moral impossibility*. For such Christ is not, and can not be a Saviour. For them no door has been opened into spiritual pastures. Between them and eternal life there exist all the obstacles that lie between Satan and eternal happiness. God is not able to save them to the uttermost, else if He could save any without an atonement, we do not see why he could not save all. We are generally accustomed to warn the sinner that if he perish, the whole blame will be attributable to his rejection of Christ ; but if this theory be correct he perishes for want of atonement, for want of that which, according to Limitarians, would have *necessarily secured* his salvation. There can be no Gospel for those for whom Christ did not die. To such the gospel message (if it deserves the name) would be like entering a prison and locking the door behind us and beseeching the prisoner to escape. He asks for an opening. He looks above, but the thick ceiling is between him and the blue sky. He looks around and the massy walls of his dungeon hem him round. He looks to the window and its iron gratings present an insuperable obstacle. He looks to the door, but it is bolted, it is barred. The message is a mockery. But notice how the scriptures describe it, it is preaching "*deliverance* to the *captive* and the *opening* of the prison doors to them that are bound."

4th. *God is not willing* to save any for whom Christ did not die. It is not unusual with the abettors of a

limited atonement to represent that there is an unbounded sufficiency in the atonement for all, yea for angels as well as men, if God had so intended it. One of our extracts at the head of this Section declares this. Dr. Candlish also avows that such is the infinite meritoriousness of Christ's death, that had the number whom he represented been increased a hundred fold, it does not appear that it would have been needful for him to have done or suffered more. Observe then, that which limits the atonement to some only is just the *will* of God ; it is just *his pleasure*. Hence it follows as a plain inference that God is not willing to save any for whom he has provided no atonement. If He had been willing, he would have included them. Notice, in contrast with this, the explicit testimony of his own word. "God is long suffering, not willing that any should perish." He will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." "As I live saith the Lord I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they would turn and live ; turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die ?" Our blessed Redeemer wept over Jerusalem, saying, "O that thou hadst known the things that belong to thy peace." "How often *would* I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye *would not*."

Can we suppose the God of truth importuning sinners to turn and live and at the same time consider that in relation to multitudes who do not turn, that He had really no sincere desire, because he had long prior excluded them from an atonement. He is represented as entreating them to run counter to his own will ; to appropriate that which never had been provided for them, the appropriation of which would be spiritual robbery.

5th. A limited atonement is inconsistent with a *universal offer*. Limitarians admit a universal offer, although it is singular they do not recognize that the terms so extensive employed in describing the call are equally extensive in describing the atonement. Consistency seems to require that those only for whom a Saviour has been provided, should have the offer of that Saviour. There can be no "good news" to any sinner if Christ's work does not include that sinner. There cannot be good news for every creature, unless there is an atonement for every creature. A universal offer based on a limited atonement is placing a broad and mighty structure on a narrow foundation. It is placing the pyramid on its apex.

All however admit a universal offer. To render the two harmonious it is perhaps stated, that we are to make a universal offer, because we do not know who the Elect are. We are to offer to all indiscriminately because we are ignorant of those for whom atonement has been made. We reply that this would make the universal offer merely *human*. If in your ignorance, you make your offer extend to more than those for whom Christ died, you make your *human* offer stretch beyond God's.

But you are ready to affirm that the universal offer is not merely man's, it is God's offer. We reply,—Suppose then that by some divine communication you were made acquainted with the fact that for certain sinners to whom you came, no atonement had been made, could you say to each of them sincerely and honestly, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and *thou* shalt be saved?" Would you not be making a statement that was really not true, and employing an earnestness that was only a mockery. Now how is God's

represented in a Limited Atonement? He is exhibiting as offering salvation and accompanying that offer with the most solemn entreaty, to those for whom *he knows* no atonement has been made. He is placed in a position in which a human being would be ashamed to stand. Here then is the dilemma. Is it said that the universal offer is man's, then we ask, why make it stretch beyond God's? Is it said that the universal offer is God's, then to speak with the deepest reverence you represent God as tantalizing the non-elect with false offers of mercy.

6th. A limited atonement presents us with the singular incongruity of God's requiring multitudes of the human family to believe in Christ as a Saviour "able to save to the uttermost," whilst there are infinitely mightier obstacles between them and salvation than *unbelief*. The insuperable legal obstacles arising from the justice and holiness of God have not been removed. These could only be removed by the atonement of Christ. It is therefore abundantly evident that those for whom no atonement has been made, are not, and cannot consistently be regarded as under the condition of the new arrangement, "believe and live." The requisition of faith in Christ, therefore on their part as a means of salvation is incongruous.

7th. A limited atonement presents us with the singular and awful spectacle of God's punishing with the severest condemnation all those for whom Christ did not die, and that too, because *they would not trust in him as a Saviour although he did not die for them*. It cannot be doubted but that a fearful condemnation is spoken of in relation to unbelief and rejection of Christ. It is not merely as transgressors of the Law, but as rejectors of the Gospel that those to whom the message

comes, are to be punished. "This is *the condemnation* that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light." "He that believeth not shall be damned." "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" The Lord Jesus Christ is to be revealed in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God and *obey not the gospel*, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction." Unbelief and rejection of Christ incur the deepest condemnation, and yet according to this theory that deepest condemnation arises from *not trusting* in an atonement that was *never made for them*. Without giving them the least possibility of salvation through Christ, they are sunk into aggravated guilt and misery.

7th. A limited atonement greatly obscures the gospel. Our Saviour tells us, there is a gospel to be preached to every creature. Limitarians however affirm that they cannot tell sinners that Christ has died to make atonement for their sins, until they believe. It is only *after* they believe that they can tell them this "good news." Now it is evident that if we cannot point sinners to an atonement that has been made for them before they believe, we cannot tell them of a Saviour able and willing to save. That could only be true in reference to those for whom He died, for whom the price has been paid and none else. Now what is the gospel that is to be preached to every creature which is to be believed *prior* to our being able to tell them that Christ is the propitiation for their sins. It must be a gospel independent of the atonement, and if Limitarians preach an atonement prior to the sinner's believing they are overstepping their own system. How different the course of the holy apostle. "I was determined to know nothing among you but Christ and Him crucified." When he went among the Corinthians proclaiming the "good

news," he did not proclaim some kind of gospel and *after* they believed it, he could say, "Christ died for our sins; but it was the *first*, the principal truth by believing which they were saved, and it is thus he writes, "I delivered unto you, *first of all*, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures."

8th. A limited atonement is a very *indefinite* atonement. It is true that such an atonement in the view of God would be definite, that is he would know perfectly those for whom it has been provided. But our enquiry is not what is definite to Him, for what is there that is not perfectly known to Him? That is not the rule whereby *we* judge of what is definite or otherwise. We judge of it by its aspect of distinctness to ourselves. Now a propitiatory sacrifice offered and accepted only for some, would be so far as man is capable of knowing its extent, exceedingly indefinite. Ministers would be required to preach at a peradventure, and in the dark. They would not know but they might be dealing so earnestly and energetically with persons for whom no propitiatory work has been provided. An unlimited atonement on the other hand gives assurance that there is an atonement sufficient for all, and that the great obstacle between the sinner and salvation is unbelief. His object is to seek the removal of that obstacle by preaching Christ and Him crucified. God's desire (2 Pet. iii. 9) and Christ's prayer (John xvii. 21) as well as his propitiation are that "the world might be saved." (John iii. 17.)

9th. A Limited Atonement presents us with a most inconsistent view of what is termed the *sufficiency* of the Atonement. Many who advocate this doctrine nevertheless very gravely assert that there is a sufficiency

for all. They attempt to draw a distinction between its *sufficiency for all* and its *efficiency for some*, as if Christ in some inexplicable way died in two senses. The obscurity in their case, we consider, arises from their attributing to the atonement itself a difference, which is clearly traceable to the difference of position in respect to the atonement. Believers look to Christ—they enjoy light; unbelievers reject Christ—they are in darkness. The difference is not in Christ or his work, but in their aspect either towards or against him. It would just be as correct to say that the difference between day and night was attributable to a difference in the sun. The sun is the same, whether it be to us day or night, summer or winter; the difference is clearly traceable to the changes of our position in relation to that luminary. So with Christ; “He is the same yesterday, to day and for ever,” and whatever changes we experience are not in him, but arise from our relation to him.

Failing however to realize this simple and important distinction, while they maintain that all for whom Christ died must be saved, and consequently limit the Atonement really to the Elect, they, nevertheless, for the sake of an appearance of consistency with a free salvation, endeavour to represent that the Atonement is sufficient for all. But it is to be observed how this sufficiency is described. According to Drs. Candlish and Willis, such is the intrinsic value of the propitiatory sacrifice of Christ, that it is sufficient to atone not only for all men but for Angels as well as men if God had so intended it. Now, observe what kind of universal sufficiency this is: It is a sufficiency extending to the non-elect in the same sense as it might extend to angels if God had seen fit thus to extend it. What

is this but a mere hypothetical sufficiency? It may exist intrinsically in the atonement, but it is no more available for those for whom it has not been provided, than for devils. It is a sufficiency according to this view extending equally to both. It is evident that when Limitarians talk of a sufficiency for all, they are using a phrase that has nothing really under it—it is a mere assumption—a mere name. Suppose that as a debtor I am put into prison and have nothing to pay; what advantage would it be to be able to tell me that there is a sufficiency of money in the Bank of England to pay all my debts, and not mine only but thousands of others if the Directors were willing to do so. That mere sufficiency that did not give me a warrant and ground of encouragement to make application would be entirely valueless. So we must be able to shew sinners the abundant warrant that they have to come unto God through Christ,—a warrant that could not be valid on the hypothetical sufficiency adverted to.

10th. A limited atonement is a great barrier to the enquiring sinner's finding peace. As there can be no salvation beyond the circumference of the atonement, the anxious sinner may very properly be perplexed with the enquiry; whether the atonement includes him. As the Rev. Mr. McCheyne remarks in one of his sermons.* "It gives no comfort to know that Christ is a precious Saviour to others, unless I know that he is a precious Saviour to me. If the deluge is coming on—the windows of heaven opened, and the fountains of the great deep broken up—it gives me no peace to know that there is an ark for others, unless you tell me that it is an ark for me. You may tell me of Christ's righteousness for ever, and of the safety of all that are in him;

but you must convince me that that righteousness answers me and is offered to me, else I have no comfort."

Now if Christ only died for some, how is the sinner to be able to find out whether he is one of the some—the knowledge so necessary to his peace. There are only two ways. Either he must get some special miraculous communication from heaven—some private nible for himself, or the knowledge must be obtained inferentially from something else. As regards the first, it is not to be expected. As to the second method of obtaining it as a deduction from some mental exercises or experiences, it is entirely unsatisfactory. It is requiring sinners to look inwardly into their own hearts to obtain a warrant to trust in Christ, whereas the Bible way is to look outwardly to the word of God to get God's own warrant. Dr. CHALMERS thus exposes this fallacious and unsatisfactory mode of seeking salvation :

"Instead of looking broadly out on the gospel as an offer, they look as anxiously inward upon themselves for the personal qualification of faith, as they ever did upon the personal qualification of obedience. This transfers their attention from that which is sure, even the promises of God—to that which is unsure, even their own fickle and fugitive emotions. Instead of thinking upon Christ, they are perpetually thinking upon themselves—as if they could discover Him in the muddy recesses of their own hearts without previously admitting him by the avenue of a direct and open perception. This is not the way the children of Israel looked out upon the serpent that was lifted up in the wilderness. They did not pore upon their wounds to mark the progress of healing there; nor did they reflect on the power and perfection of their seeing faculties; nor did they even suffer any doubt that still lingered in their imaginations, to restrain them from the simple act of lifting up their eyes."—*On Rom.* iv. 16.

Hear also how the sainted McCHEYNE justly condemns it,

"Examine from whence your comfort flows. All true gospel comfort flows from the cross of Christ—from the Man of Sorrows. The comfort of hypocrites flows from themselves. They look to themselves for comfort; they look to the change on their life—they see some improvements there, and take rest from that; or, they look deeper to their concern—their mourning over sin—their con-

victions—their endeavours after Christ; or, they look to their devotions—their delight in prayer—their flowing of affections and words; or to texts of the Bible coming into their minds; or, they look to what their friends or ministers think of them, and they take comfort from these. All these are refuges of lies—false Christs, that must be cast away, or they will ruin your soul. Christ's blood and righteousness, and not any work in your own heart, must be your justification before a holy God. True Gospel comfort comes from a sight of Christ's bearing double for all our sins. "Behold the Lamb of God!" Gospel comfort is a stream that flows direct from Calvary."

Again he says,

"But many look in for righteousness; they begin to look to their sanctification for peace; they begin to look to the work of the Spirit in them for righteousness, instead of the work of the Son for them. This grieves the Spirit. This is quite contrary to the divine plan of salvation—dishonours the law—makes Christ dead in vain."

The mode thus condemned so clearly is that into which Limitarians are pushed in adherence strictly to a Limited Atonement,—O! what a hiding of the glorious Gospel. How it withdraws the attention of the sinner from the only sacrifice—even "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world."

11th. A limited atonement has no proper *analogy in the types and emblems of Scripture*. Christ is the *Light* of the world. When a man walks in darkness, it is not because there is no light in the sun of righteousness, but "because he will not come to the light." Christ is the great Physician. Has he power to heal those only who are actually healed? Is not the death of a sinner traceable not to want of healing power in Christ but to want of a personal application to that healing virtue. Christ's blood is a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, but it will be known that those who were not washed in that Spiritual Jordan, remained vile, not from any deficiency in Christ, but because they preferred the Abana and Pharpar of their own righteousness. Christ is the spiritual *manna*. Had the manna only

power to nourish those who were actually nourished? Had an individual of the Israelites refused to eat of it, it would be absurd to charge his death on any deficiency of a nutritive virtue in the food. Christ is the smitten Rock. Had not the water, from it, a power to assuage the thirst of those who would not drink as those who did? He was typified by the City of Refuge; but did not its gates stand open to every one placed in the circumstances to require it. He was typified by the Brazen Serpent, but who would limit the healing virtue through it, only to those who were actually healed? The only reason for any perishing was that they did not look. The defect was not in the serpent but in themselves. So also the blood of the sacrifices and of the Paschal lamb, and various other emblems are employed in scripture to set forth, the fullness, the freeness and the fitness of gospel grace for all sinners, yea the very chief; and most emphatically to warn all to whom the gospel comes, that if they perish, *they destroy themselves*. (Hos. xiii. 9) "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

12th. A limited atonement *cannot be preached*. We commend to the attention of the reader the following eloquent remarks from the pen of a Presbyterian minister in the United States, who is known in Britain and this Continent as one of the greatest Commentators in the present day. We refer to the Rev. Dr. A. BARNES, of Philadelphia. He thus writes in the *Biblical Repository*:—

"There is a third form of theology which may be noticed, in its relation to preaching, similar to those already referred to. It is that which men are constrained to *abandon* when they come to preach, or which will not bear the test applied to it, when they engage earnestly in an effort to convert sinners to God. It may be taught in the schools—it may be defended by a venerable tradition—it may be embodied in creeds, or in standard systems of the-

dology—but it cannot be preached. It contains dogmas so abhorrent to the obvious teaching of the Bible—so repellant to the common sense of mankind—so at variance with what are found to be just principles of philosophy—so much fitted to retard a work of grace, and so utterly contradictory to what a man is constrained to preach when his heart is full, and when he has the most enlarged and elevated views of the work of his Saviour, that he *cannot* preach them. It would shock his own feelings—it would contradict all his prayers—it would be fatal to all his efforts to do good—it would throw off the sinner to a hopeless distance, though he had begun to return to God—it would present theology as at war with the elementary convictions which men have of what must be true.

“ Among those dogmas, we may mention the doctrine of *limited atonement*. It would be improper to deny that plausible argumentation may be adduced in favour of that doctrine; and still more, that it has been held by men of great eminence in theology—but it cannot be preached. It does not suggest itself to a man's mind when he is preaching—it does not fall in with the design of preaching. When a man is most deeply engaged in his work, it cannot be preached. It must always be practically abandoned when, under the highest influence of his commission, and under the constraint of the highest motives which press on the soul, the preacher offers the gospel to his fellow-men. Then, there is nothing that more cramps the powers and fetters the hands, and chills the heart of a preacher, than such a doctrine; and though there may be, here and there, one so clearly and thoroughly trained in such a form of systematic theology, so fettered and bound by authority, and by the manacles of a creed, so wholly under the influence of a theology derived from past ages, that he will have the moral courage to stand up in the pulpit and defend the dogma—freeze him though it does, and grate on the feelings of his hearers though it may—yet it is not a dogma that is, or can be, extensively preached. It never has been—it never will be. It comes so across a minister's commission, to “preach the gospel to every creature,” implying that the gospel is to be, without mental reservation on the part of God or man, offered to every human being—it is so contrary to the current statements of the New Testament about the design of the atonement, as understood by the mass of readers of that book—it is so chilling to the gushing feelings of a preacher, when his heart warms with compassion for guilty men—it is so contradictory to the prayers which he must offer, in the sanctuary and in his nearest approaches to the throne of mercy in private—it is so cold and withering in its influence on the heart, that men will not preach it. If they felt that it was an essential and necessary part of their message, they would abandon preaching altogether, and engage in farming, or teaching, or the mechanic arts—*anything*, rather than have their better feelings subjected to constant torture.

“ As a matter of fact, therefore, the doctrine of limited atonement is not, and cannot be preached. It is found in ancient books of divinity, written in a darker age, and when the principles of interpretation were less understood, and the large and liberal nature of the gospel was less appreciated. It is “petrified” in certain creeds

maintained by the church—made firm, like fossil remains in a transition state, when ancient opinions were passing to a more liberal form. It is taught in a few seminaries, where men feel themselves constrained to repress the warm emotions of their own souls, and are prohibited from allowing their own minds to reach conclusions which they can scarcely avoid. But the doctrine is not preached, except when the heart is cold and dead. It is not preached when the soul is on fire with the love of men, and when the cross, in its true grandeur and glory, rises to view. It is *never* preached in a revival of religion—a proof, not fable, that the doctrine is not true.”

13th. A Limited Atonement was unknown in the Christian Church till the ninth century. We have before us an address on this subject delivered by the Rev. G. KENNEDY of Leith, Scotland, in which we have a most clear and decided testimony to this effect. His statements have not, so far as we are aware, been questioned. In reviewing the writings of the early Fathers of the Christian Church, he gives brief extracts sufficiently satisfactory on this point. We shall advert only to a few out of many. In the first century we look to the infallible writings of the Apostles. In the second century, Irenæus says, “*Christ was the Saviour of the whole human family,*” and Justin Martyn affirms, “*Christ wrought out a great salvation for mankind.*” In the third century, Origen a most distinguished writer says, “*Christ gave himself for the redemption of the entire human race; to redeem those who were in bondage, by tasting death for every man.*” Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, affirms, “*Christ’s death was designed to benefit or save those that despise him and ultimately perish.*”

In the 4th century, we have many writers, but we shall only mention the names of Chrysostom and Augustine. The former declares, “*Christ died, not for believers only, but for the whole world.*” Augustine, one of the most renowned of the Fathers, was the great

champion of Predestination. Pelagius and some of his disciples charged him in connexion with that doctrine with holding a limited atonement, that Christ died only for the elect. In his reply he *repudiates the charge*, and complains of *their falsely accusing him*. Altogether about twenty instances may be noted in his writings where he maintains the universality of the atonement. He declares that Christ *died for Judas*, though he ultimately perished. In the sixth century, Primasius a great admirer of Augustine, writes "Christ died for all, and shed his blood for every man, though only those that believe shall be saved." We cannot however do better than quote, in conclusion, Mr. KENNEDY's own words,—

"During the first eight hundred years, then, of the Christian era, the doctrine of a limited atonement did not originate. We have endeavoured to lay before you, calmly, yet candidly, the evidence upon the subject, so far as it may be gathered from ecclesiastical history. In case any of you should suppose that the speaker stands alone in this conclusion, he may be allowed to say that he is very far from that. If names are of any use. I may say, that Vossius, Dally, Whitby, Goodwin, and Bishop Davenant, all agree in saying that the doctrine of an atonement for the elect *only* was not known during the first eight centuries; and all these are men who had not many equals in their extensive and accurate knowledge of the history of the Christian Church.

"It now remains for us, in a very few words, to say when this dogma of a limited atonement was originated, tenaciously maintained, and fearlessly proclaimed. In the year 847, a monk, of the name of Godeschalcus, enamoured of Augustine's predestinarian views, began very boldly to propagate them. On the notion that Christ died *only* for the *elect*, he laid peculiar stress. This he maintained, and quite legitimately, flowed, by necessary consequence, from Augustine's doctrine of predestination. Rabanas Maurus, in whose diocese Godeschalcus laboured at the time he began to propound this novel doctrine, wrote and spoke against him in various ways; and at last assembled a council, when the monk was still farther condemned. He was then sent back to Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, from whom he originally received the order of priesthood. Here, in the year 848, another council was assembled, in which he was condemned a second time, and "was also treated in a manner equally repugnant to the principles of religion and the dictates of humanity." Because he still maintained his doctrine, he was imprisoned, where he lingered till the year 868.

when he died ; affirming with his last breath the truth of his views. Thus did the limited atonement originate."

What evidence can be plainer and more explicit with regard to the origin of this dogma which has done, and still does much to cramp and confine the fulness of the Gospel of Christ. And in connexion with this it is remarkable to notice that although the name of Calvin has been associated so much with this doctrine and others of a kindred nature, yet there is the greatest room to doubt whether really that great Reformer did hold that doctrine in the stringent way held by many that adopt his name. The Rev. Dr. Jenkyn a most able writer on the atonement, and who has most clearly demonstrated its universality, states that he has examined the whole of Calvin's Institutes for the express purpose of ascertaining this point, and he has not been able to find a single passage which asserts that Christ died for the elect only, or for those only who shall ultimately be saved. And in addition to this it is highly worthy of notice that Calvin in his last will and testament, written a little before his death thus says, "I testify also and profess, that I humbly seek from God, that he may so will me to be washed and purified by the great Redeemer's blood, shed for the sins of the whole human race, that it may be permitted me to stand before his tribunal under the covert of the Redeemer himself."

SECTION IV.

A LIMITED ATONEMENT IN RELATION TO THE
ELECT AND THE NON-ELECT INCONSISTENT
WITH THE SCHEME OF GRACE.

Eph. ii. 8. "By grace are ye saved through faith."

The reader's attention is again solicited to the description of Limited Atonement at the beginning of the previous Section. The statements there made, though abundantly harmonious with one another, are entirely inharmonious with divine grace. It is there stated that all for whom Christ died, *must* be saved—*justice* requires it; "*they cannot*, according to Jenkyn, *without the most palpable violation of all right, law and justice, be themselves constrained to suffer for the same sins.*" and to this Dr. Candlish agrees in saying, *there would be injustice and inconsistency with God.*

Now it is important to notice *this aspect* of the doctrine. Let us look briefly at it in its relation to the Elect and Non-Elect. First to

THE ELECT.

The Elect are those for whom, according to this view, atonement has been made; for whom *alone* it is a price, and therefore in reference to whom God is obliged by justice and consistency to pardon their sins and save them—and to act otherwise would be a *violation* of all right and law and justice. It follows therefore most legitimately

1st. *They never could have been in a state of condemnation.* If it would be unjust in God to condemn them

because the punishment of their sins was literally borne by Christ, then the question arises, were they ever in condemnation? If it would be a violation of all law and justice to condemn them *in eternity*, would it not be equally a violation of justice and consistency to condemn them *in time*? Now, we ask, is this in harmony with the word of God? Does it not speak of Believers as having been in a state of condemnation prior to their faith in Christ—as dead in trespasses and sins—as *children of wrath even as others*—without Christ and *without hope*? Now to speak of them as having been so, would necessarily be a reflection of the deepest kind on God, charging him with a violation of justice and consistency. Does not this doctrine also lead most plainly to the conclusion, that at the present moment, all the unbelieving, ungodly, gospel rejecting sinners, but who are among those for whom atonement has been made, are in virtue of that atonement necessarily exempted from condemnation prior to faith, for it would be a violation of all right and law and justice on the part of God to regard them as under condemnation?

2nd. This view necessarily renders salvation *independent of faith*. If God is obliged by justice and consistency to a certain procedure, and the very supposition of any other would imply a violation of law, &c., it is evident, that that renders the salvation of the Elect entirely independent of faith. They must have been in a state of salvation as much *before* believing as after. It is true that the knowledge of this would be useful, but the salvation *itself* was in no way conditioned on faith. Now, the Word of God from beginning to end points us to the necessity of faith in order to salvation. The great principle or rule of grace is kept prominently before us: "Believe and live, believe not and perish."

“It is of *faith*, that it might be by *grace*.” “Without faith it is impossible to please God.”

3rd. It does not exhibit the remission of sins to those for whom Christ died as *pardon* and *forgiveness*. If justice requires it, if all right and law and consistency demand it, it is evident that this necessary and imperative demand of Law is not *pardon*. It cannot be *forgiveness*. How unnecessary it would be to look up and say, *Forgive* us our trespasses. We do not consider that a man is forgiving another a debt, if *justice demands* that the liability should be cancelled. For example, suppose an individual owed me a hundred pounds and had nothing to pay, and another generous friend were to interpose and pay me the identical amount in his stead ; would it not be absurd in me to pretend to forgive and pardon my debtor ? I am bound by justice and consistency to do so, and in cancelling the obligation, there is strictly *no pardon* in the matter.

4th. This view renders the remission of sin to the elect a matter of *right* and *justice*, and not an act of *free grace*. The whole word of God is most emphatically explicit in regarding the whole of a sinner's salvation from its beginning to its consummation as all *of free grace*. Grace not only in providing an atonement, but grace still freely in exercise even *after* the atonement is provided. It is evident, however, that whatever grace may be manifested in the original appointment of Christ as the surety of sinners, certainly if it obliges God by *mere justice* to save those for whom atonement is made, all that is done after such an appointment is no longer *free grace*, but the demands of strict law and justice. Drs. Jenkyn, Wardlaw, and Payne, have unanswerably brought this objection to a limited atonement, and it is a wonder that after the

powerful argumentative artillery of such men that it still exists; but it is evident that Limitarians themselves in broaching their favorite dogmas have not seen the necessary tendency of their view to *subvert grace* in that scheme which is emphatically a *scheme of grace*. "Through grace are ye saved." We are most ready to allow that they are strenuous for grace, but we are desirous that they should not cleave to that which is subversive of it.

On this point Dr. WARDLAW well observes, that he objects to an atonement for the elect alone, because says he,

"It excludes every thing of the nature of grace from every part of the sinners salvation, excepting the original appointment of the Surety, whose payment, in each case, of the estimated debt, cancels the bond, and renders the liberation of the debtor *not gracious but obligatory*."

Dr. PAYNE also has a similar remark, he says,

"It renders the deliverance of the elect from punishment a matter of justice to them. There may, indeed, consistently with this opinion, have been grace in the acceptance and in the provision of a substitute; but surely if that substitute endured the precise amount of punishment which the strong arm of the law would have otherwise laid upon those whom he represented, there *can be no grace in remitting it afterwards to them*."—*Letters on Sovereignty*.

Observe now secondly in reference to

THE NON-ELECT.

They are those for whom no atonement has been made—no price paid—

1st. How are we to account for God's procedure to them in suspending during their existence here, the full amount of the penalty of their sins? On what principle can we explain God's dealings with them in sending his Spirit to strive with them—or offering them

salvation—in urging and beseeching them to believe and live ?

2nd. If all for whom atonement is made, *must* be saved, it follows that when a sinner dies in unbelief and impenitence, that really *no atonement* had ever been made for him. Hence,

3rd. If during that sinner's life any person proclaimed a Saviour for him ; it turns out that he was trying to persuade him to put trust in that which had no existence ; to enter into the sheepfold when for him there was no door, and to get into which could only have been by climbing up some other way as a thief or a robber.

4th. According to this opinion, we need never be concerned about sending the gospel to the perishing heathen, or to any person around us ; for we would be assured, that if there are any among them or us to whom the propitiation extends, God is obliged by justice to save them ; and of course also on the other hand if there are none, what is the use of sending the gospel. In reference then to the Heathen now perishing, to the question, why do they perish ? Scripture gives a reply that appeals strongly to our sympathies and responsibilities, it is “for lack of *knowledge*,” but according to the opinion we are combating, it is for lack of that which would have obliged God as a mere act of justice to save him.

5th. What is the use of preaching *the terrors* of the law to sinners at all ? Paul was led to say, “knowing the terror of the Lord we persuade men.” To preach of the “wrath to come,” and of the awful consequences connected with *sin* and impenitence appears in his view (to speak on so grave a subject with reverence) entirely

nugatory ; for in the first place, to seek to awaken the minds of those for whom atonement is made by making known the terrors of the law, would be to warn them of that which it would be a *violation* of all law and right to inflict ; and secondly, to preach such truths to those for whom no atonement is made is just “ *to torment them before the time.*” Now, to hear ministers who hold such views warning sinners, is entirely incongruous with their own system.

6th. It would introduce a *complete fatalism* into the scheme of grace. It would tend either to presumption or despair. The sinner has no choice in the matter. The atonement is a *past* transaction, finished eighteen hundred years ago. He may reason—the price has either been paid for me, or it has not. If it has, I *must* be saved ; if it has not, I *cannot*. God only knows, I leave that matter with himself. Were this view correct, would it not be in entire harmony with it for a minister to address his congregation thus,—“ Dear friends, You have all sinned against God, and deserved his wrath and curse ; but I have to tell you that an atonement has been made of such a nature that all for whom it is provided *must* be saved, else God would be unjust, and of course those for whom it has not been provided *cannot* be saved” ; and here he might add the words already quoted “ *The price being paid, all for whom it is paid shall go free and none else.*” And if the enquiry was, Has that price been paid for me ? no satisfactory reply could be given. It would lead either to presumption or despair.

7th. Such a doctrine must tend when legitimately carried out, to strike at the root of the Church’s responsibility to carry the Gospel to the world, and also at the

sinners's accountability to God in receiving that Gospel when it is preached.

O ! when will the professing Church learn the simple lesson of preaching the Gospel to every creature, believing that there is an atonement for all, that there is a glorious fulness and freeness in its provisions for the exigencies of a perishing world ; and that whatever *other* reason or reasons there be why sinners are not converted to God, certainly *that* is *not* the true reason that ascribes it to a defectiveness in that propitiation which is for " the sins of the whole world " ?

SECTION V.

A LIMITED ATONEMENT INCONSISTENT WITH THE STATEMENTS OF SOME OF THE MOST EMINENT FREE CHURCH DIVINES.

Having satisfactorily, as we think, shewn that this tenet is neither in harmony with scripture nor reason, and that it is subversive of grace, we shall now solicit the reader's notice to a few extracts from some of the most celebrated divines in the Free church of Scotland, in order to prove that many of their statements are entirely contradictory to what, by that church is held to be a *standard* doctrine.

And here we have the pleasure of submitting a few extracts from one whose praise has long been in all the

churches, and whose spirit we believe is now with his Saviour. We refer to the late Dr. Chalmers.* In his exposition of Rom. v. 18, 19, he says:

And it is of vital importance for you to know, that the free gift, though it comes not upon you all in the way of absolute conveyance, it at least comes upon you all in the way of offer. It is yours if you will. The offer is unto all and upon all who now hear us—though the thing offered is only unto all and upon all who believe. We ask each individual among you to isolate himself from the rest of the species—to conceive for a moment that he is the only sinner upon the face of the earth, that none but he stands in need of an atoning sacrifice, and none but he of an everlasting righteousness brought in by another and that might avail for his justification before God. Let him imagine, that for him the one and solitary offender, Christ came on the express errand to seek and to save—that for him He poured out His soul unto the death—that for him the costly apparatus of redemption was raised—that for him and for him alone, the Bible was written; and a messenger from heaven sent to entreat that he will enter into reconciliation with God, through that way of mediatorship which God in his love had devised, for the express accommodation of this single wanderer, who had strayed, an uncast and an alien from the habitations of the unfallen: And that it now turns upon his own choice whether he will abide among the paths of destruction, or be re-admitted to all the honours and felicities of the place from which he had departed. There is nothing surely wanting to complete the warrant of such an individual, for entering into hope and happiness: and yet, ye hearers, it is positively not more complete than the warrant *which each and which all of you have at this moment. To you, individually to you.* God is holding out this gift for your acceptance—you is He beseeching to come again into friendship with Him. With you is He expostulating the cause of your life and your death; and bidding you choose between the welcome offer of the one, and the sure alternative of the other if the offer is rejected. He is now parleying the matter with every hearer; and just as effectually, as if that hearer were the *only creature in the world, to whom the errand of redemption was at all applicable.* There is nothing in the multitude of hearers by whom you are surrounded, that should at all deaden the point of its sure and specific application to yourself.

We could not possibly desire a clearer and fuller statement of unlimited atonement. It is impossible to reconcile it with the opposite doctrine, and the warrant

* The writer may here remark that in his defence before the Synod, when reading some of these extracts from one so greatly venerated by the Free Church, considerable uneasiness was manifested by many of the members as they no doubt felt the inconsistency of their position in libelling him for views so clearly brought out by that Father in Israel.

thus given, we believe to be no stronger—not more free than the Word of God enjoins.

Observe also another quotation from his remarks on ch. vi. 11:

Why, my brethern, it is no-where said in the Bible that Christ so died for me in particular, as that by His simple dying the benefits of His atonement are mine in possession. But it is everywhere said in the Bible, that He so died for me in particular, as that by His simple dying, the benefits of His atonement are mine in offer. They are mine if I will. Such terms as *whosoever*, and *all*, and *any*, and *no every one*, bring the gospel redemption specifically to my door; and there it stands for acceptance as mine in offer, and ready to become mine in possession on my giving credit to the word of the testimony.

Again on ch. viii. 31:

‘For us all.’ The apostle may perhaps be confining his regards in this clause to himself and to his converts, to those of whom he had this evidence that they were the elect of God—even that the gospel had come to them with power, and with the Holy Ghost, and with much assurance. But notwithstanding this, we have the authority of other passages for the comfortable truth, that Christ tasted death for every man—and so every man, who hears of the expiation rendered by this death, hath a warrant to rejoice therein; and that He is set forth a propitiation for the sins of the world—and so it is competent for every one in the world, to look unto this propitiation and be at peace; and that He gave Himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time—and so might each of you who hears this testimony, embrace it for himself, and feel the whole charm of his deliverance from guilt and from all its consequences. Christ did not so die for all, as that all do actually receive the gift of salvation. But He so died for all, as that all to whom He is preached have the real and honest offer of salvation. He is not yours in possession, till you have laid hold of Him by faith. But He is yours in offer. He is as much yours as anything of which you can say I have it for the taking. You, one and all of you, my brethern, have salvation for the taking; and it is because you do not choose to take it, if it do not indeed belong to you.

Again, ch. ix. 24:

We tell you of God’s beseeching voice. We assure you, in His name, that he wants you not to die. We bid you venture for pardon on the atonement made by Him who died for all men.

Once more, on ch. x. 12, he writes:

God, it is said here, makes no difference between the Jew and the Greek; and there are some, who, in defending the articles of their own scientific theology, would make the universality of the gospel offer lie in this—that, now when the middle wall of partition

is broken down. it might be offered to men of every nation. But the Scriptural theology carries the universality farther down than this—and so as that the gospel might be offered, not merely to men of every nation, but to *each man* of every nation. God is not only no respecter of nations, He is no respecter of persons. It is not only whatsoever nation shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved; but *whatsoever man of that nation* shall call upon the name of the Lord, he shall be saved.

In addition to these most clear and satisfactory exhibitions of a full and free salvation, we would take the opportunity of submitting an extract from the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, containing the views of that great man, as expressed in a conversation with the Rev. Mr. Dunn of that Body. It will readily be seen that the views entirely harmonize with the extracts from his own writings.

Mr. Dunn writes as follows, under the head, “*Reminiscences of Dr. Chalmers*”:

His views of the deeply-interesting and important subjects of redemption will interest your readers. I have heard him speak thus: “Particular redemption presents the gospel unfavourably: it is a drag and deduction to the offers of the gospel. Those ministers must feel the difficulty of preaching, who think that Christ died only for the elect. Thus the message of Heaven’s good-will has been laid under embarrassment; reasons have been taken from the upper counsels to retard the gospel. The annunciation from Heaven’s vault is, ‘Peace, good-will,’ as boundless as the universe. Christianity will soon break forth from the prisonment in which, by many, it has long been held. They have made it to pass through a strainer, instead of falling as a universal shower upon the world. It is not sufficient that we believe ‘Christ gave himself for his sheep:’ but that ‘He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world.’ A man is not first to believe that he is one of Christ’s sheep, but that he is one of the ‘world:’ for it is not said ‘Look unto me, ye few favourites;’ but, ‘all the ends of the earth.’ In no place in the Bible is pardon offered to the elect, but to every person as one of the species. If the gospel were offered only to the elect, it would not be glad tidings to a single soul; for no one knows, when he first hears the gospel, that he is one of the elect. ‘There never was a more direct way to darken the message of the gospel than to mix up the doctrine of election with it: such preaching gives a world of perplexity and alarm to hearers. There is nothing in the dogma of predestination that should in the least trammel us in our offers of salvation. It is a distorted gospel that does not offer salvation to all. It is not a limited, but a universal offer of the gospel, that is the instrument

of salvation in every particular case. The Sun of Righteousness has arisen as generally upon human spirits, as the natural sun has arisen upon human eyes. That minister is not true to his commission, who does not indiscriminately offer the gospel. That theologian darkens and bewilders himself, who goes to the decrees. But we are told it is God's work to enlighten and renew men. Yes; but God's grace is given with great liberality, and it is lamentable that any clergyman should shroud this doctrine by any speculation on predestination, which is too deep and mysterious for our optics.

"The offer of the gospel is not only to men of all nations, but to all men of all nations. And all men may accept of it. All men ought to accept of it: they have a warrant to do it. It is their own fault if they do not. It is their condemnation if they do not. The only sense in which redemption is particular and limited is, that some will refuse the offer; but this is their own fault."

We have thus given, at some length, the views of that venerated man, because he occupies so prominent a position in the churches, and more especially in the Free Church; and also, because we believe that his views on these points were far a-head of many that belong to that church, and profess the utmost respect for his opinions. We cannot but feel that if it be heresy in us to hold an unlimited atonement, there is the strongest reasons to bring—not the Doctor himself, for he is now beyond the bar of man, but *his writings*—to the tribunal of that church, for verily there is sufficient to warrant an indictment; if a *limited* atonement is the *standard* doctrine of that church, and that it is so we have had the plainest proof in our own case.

We could also adduce extracts from McCheyne, Paterson, Purves, and others of the Free Church, but we forbear. Sufficient has been brought forward to prove the entire irreconcilability of these statements with the dogma in question.

SECTION VI.

TWO MAIN SOURCES OF ERROR IN A LIMITED
ATONEMENT.

Truth and Error can never harmonize ; they are two lines that never run parrallel. If they touch, they touch but to cross each other. To deviate from the line of truth, and to pursue that line, would never lead in that direction to truth again,—continuance would only increase separation. The Word of God is the great line of truth, and while many follow it a certain length, they are led into some point of divergence either by their own speculations, or by following where others have opened up a line of divergence before them. Some pursue this line and never come back to truth ; others again, after finding themselves brought into darkness and confusion, leave the line and make an abrupt return to the infallible standard, and thus pursue a zig-zag course, partly of truth and partly of error. Yet it is always to be observed that the line of truth is never again reached, without *leaving* the line of deviation.

It is well known in Geometrical science that when two lines diverge, the farther that they are extended, they only recede the farther from each other ; and at the same time it is true that the angle at the points of greatest extension, where the interval appears so great and so marked, is *really no greater* than the angle at the original point of divergence. This is emphatically so in moral science. When the lines of truth and error are sufficiently extended into their ultimate tendencies, we are often enabled to observe the mightiest discrepan-

cy; but yet it is no less true, also, that the discrepancy thus so observable is, in reality, no greater than at the first point where the deflexion commenced.

This leads us to the adoption of two important methods in our endeavours to distinguish truth from error. The first is to extend the lines sufficiently—that is to carry them out to their legitimate tendencies—till an obvious interval of separation is fully marked; and having accomplished this, the second thing is to retrace these lines, and endeavour to detect the exact point where the divergence begins, and if that point can be discovered, it is a matter of great moment *there* to put up, for the sake of the unwary traveller, a finger post, with its index to the way of truth, and with the legible inscription, “*This is the way, walk ye in it.*”

Our object in carrying out the dogma of limited atonement so far into its ultimate tendencies, has been for the purpose of fully showing its divergence from the truth of scripture, and from the scheme of redemption as a scheme of *grace*. In doing so we have endeavoured to extend that line in its own direction, without seeking unfairly to bend it to our own purposes. And at the same time we are willing to give the abettors of that doctrine full credit for not intentionally diverging from truth, or endeavouring to subvert grace. Having, however, plainly seen the marked and wide separation, it should be our desire to discover, if possible, where are the points in the line of truth at which that deviation originates.

The following we regard as probably main sources of error in limited atonement:

1st. One source of error is in the assumption that the sufferings of Christ, by way of atonement, were

identically the same as those which the elect would have suffered through eternity. We believe that this idea very frequently is the great nucleus in the views of many on this subject, and seems apparent in the extract given from Jenkyn. We have already adverted to this in Section III., when speaking of the *nature* of atonement. But we desire to draw attention farther to it as a main source of error. For were it true, the atonement would necessarily indeed be limited to the *Elect only*.

That the sufferings of Christ were not, and could not be *identically the same* with the *literal punishment* of the sins of those for whom he suffered. will be apparent if we consider, *First*,—God in receiving an atonement for sin admitted a *change* in the person suffering. The law in its strict letter denounced its penalty only on the transgressor, “*the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*” In the atonement, there is a change from those that sinned to Christ. Here is a substitution—a change from the strict *letter*, but not from the spirit of the law.

2nd. It is evident that Christ’s sufferings were not *identically the same* in *duration* with the sufferings of lost sinners. The penalty of the law is not merely temporal death, but death spiritual and *eternal*. It is *ever-lasting* misery.

3rd. It is as evident that there was a difference as to the *kind of* suffering endured as well as to the *duration*. 1st. Remorse and the stings of a guilty and accusing conscience are fearful elements in the torments of lost spirits. It is evident our Saviour could never have suffered from these. 2nd. Even in his sufferings he had joys and supports that fallen spirits never could have. We are told, “for the joy that was set before

him he endured the cross and despised the shame." He knew that beyond the dark cloud that hung over him, and that oppressed his soul, there was a bright and glorious sunshine, after the Divine justice had discharged its fiery thunderbolt; but it is evident that to the lost soul there is no such beam of sunshine—no ray of hope behind the dark cloud of *eternal* despair.—3rd. There was on the part of Christ deep submission to God, even under the awful infliction of divine justice, a state of mind very different from that of lost souls, whose misery will be aggravated by blasphemous and rebellious insubordination to Jehovah. 4th. The manifestation of tenderness to his mother, his conversation with the penitent thief, his prayer to God, and the spirit of forgiveness towards his persecutors, are sufficient to show that he did not experience the *identical* feelings of misery which are elements in the sufferings of lost souls.

4th. It is evident that his *human nature alone* was really susceptible of suffering. Theologians tell us his divine nature was *impassible*. If it were insisted on then, that his atonement consisted in the endurance of the *identical* sufferings, it would follow that the whole value of his atonement consisted in *so much suffering merely*, and hence, also, the inference would be legitimate, that the value of the atonement was attributable *exclusively* to his *human nature*, for it was in *it* that he suffered. But it is evident, that however great and inconceivably intense his sufferings were, that it was his *divinity* that lent *infinite value* to those sufferings. It was not just so much suffering abstractly considered; but the value lay in this, that it was, the sufferings of *such a sufferer*—no less than the only begotten of the Father—one infinite in dignity—and of infinite influence in relation to the

government of God. We are willing, however to admit that many Limitarians do not hold *exact identity* between Christ's sufferings and the literal punishment of lost souls; for it will be observed that Dr. Candlish in one place expressly affirms that he believes that although the number of the elect had been a hundred fold greater, that Christ would not have required to have done or suffered more than he did. This statement seems plainly to indicate that the value of the atonement does not arise merely from the proportionate amount of suffering endured by our great substitute. This is also, we allow, plainly implied also in Dr. Willis's statement of an intrinsic value of an infinite kind in Christ's atonement.

We go on, therefore, to notice another point of deviation, viz., *Second*. That the atonement in *itself* necessarily secures that all for whom it is provided *must be saved*. This is an error similar to the one previous, and runs parallel with it. This point has become one of divergence in two opposite directions. Assuming that the atonement *per se* necessarily secures salvation, it has led those who plainly saw that all would not be saved into the dogma, that therefore the atonement must be limited; and that, therefore, those passages that seemed so plainly to assert that Christ died for all, must be taken in a limited sense. Again, on the other hand, Universalists assuming the same false principle, and looking at those passages that teach so plainly that Christ *died for all*, have run into the other extreme of holding that *all will be saved*. The two opposite dogmas may be traced to the same point.

It is thus that from a mistaken view of the nature of atonement that the most serious errors have prevailed. The atonement does not *force* God, it *enables*. It does

not demand the *exercise of justice*, it *satisfies* justice; and permits the exercise of *mercy*. It does not *oblige* God to save some, else there *would be a violation* of all law and justice, but it *enables* him to save those that believe in Christ *without any violation of law and justice*. It makes "mercy and truth meet together—and righteousness and peace to embrace each other."

Look to the language of Scripture. Our Saviour says, "I am come that ye *might have* life," not that ye *must* have it. "God sent not his Son to condemn the world, but that the world, through him, *might be saved*," not *must* be. Of how many is he obliged to say, "Ye will not come to me that ye *might have* life." "How often *would I* have gathered you—but ye *would* not."

Look for illustration to some of the types. The blood of the paschal lamb though appointed by God as a means of protection from the destroying angel, did not *in itself* necessarily secure that deliverance. It secured only that when it *was sprinkled* on the door-post, the deadly visitation would not enter. The manna did not in itself secure that all the Israelites must be nourished; it only secured that they *who eat of it* would be nourished. The city of Refuge did not secure that every person guilty of certain acts would be safe, it secured only that those *who fled* to it would enjoy safety. The lifting up of the brazen serpent did not secure that every serpent-bitten Israelite would not to die—it secured only that those *who looked* would be cured. So it is with the work of Christ, it does not *in itself* secure that all for whom it is accomplished *must* be saved; it secures only that "he *that believeth* shall be saved." "Except ye *eat* the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man, ye have no life in you." "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. It is not enough that the blood be shed, it must be *sprinkled*—not enough the fountain be opened, we must *wash* in it—not enough the manna come from heaven, we must *eat* it—not enough a “door” be opened unto spiritual blessings, we must *enter* in—not enough the foundation be laid, we must *build* upon it—not enough that there is balm in Gilead and a physician there, we must *apply* to him and receive the healing virtue. Nothing is plainer from the whole tenor of scripture doctrine and type, than that the atonement does not *in itself* necessarily save, but it is the medium of salvation to those that trust in it. “The gospel is the power of God unto salvation unto *every one that believeth*.”

To illustrate still farther the nature of an atonement, take an illustration. Suppose an individual has been condemned, and that justly by the laws of his country, for some great crime. The Sovereign as the head of executive power, in the exercise of the royal prerogative of clemency, does not extend the offer of pardon to the criminal, unless there is something that will vindicate his character as a governor and support the administration. There must be something that not only in his own view, but also in the view of his dutiful subjects, will exhibit him as just while he thus exercises mercy. Suppose that in his behalf some person of the highest dignity and influence, who has an inviolable attachment to the governor and the government interposes; he subjects himself to the great sacrifices on the prisoner's account, not however in opposition to the law or government, but to uphold the law and open up a way for the exercise of royal clemency. But it is to be observed, that the interposition in behalf of the criminal, however

great, does not change the government, does not *force* the sovereign to pardon the criminal for the sake of *justice*; no, no, it satisfies justice and enables him to manifest *grace*. So it is in the government of Jehovah, He manifested inconceivable grace in providing and accepting the atonement, but when He offers through it pardon, it is as much *grace after* the atonement as before it, but it is grace harmonizing with justice in virtue of the interposition in our behalf of the Son of God.

The idea therefore, that the atonement, in itself, necessarily secures the salvation of all for whom it is made, because it *obliges* God by his justice,—and to act otherwise would be a violation of all law—is an entire misapprehension of what an atonement is as an expedient introduced into moral government. It opens up a way for the overtures of grace, but the grace thus offered may be despised—the message thus sent may be rejected; but it will never be true on that account that in reality there was no atonement provided for such at all.

SECTION VII.

THE ATONEMENT IN RELATION TO THOSE THAT
FINALLY PERISH.

A difficulty seems to be felt by some in regard to a universal atonement, because it represents it as made for those who perish, as well as those who are ultimately saved. A little consideration may suffice to shew such that this is no solid objection. We consider that in reference to those who are punished for rejecting the Gospel, an atonement was necessary to vindicate God's dealings with them, as well as his dealings with those "that believe to the saving of the soul." For

1st. Many passages of scripture plainly *imply*, that those who perish, do not perish for any want of atonement. Hear that solemn warning accompanied by the oath of God—"turn ye, turn ye, *why* will ye die?" It is evident that Jehovah intends to shew sinners that the reason is not in Him, or the provisions of his grace, but in their own wilful unbelief. Observe that other expostulation, where God speaking through the prophet says, "Is there *no balm* in Gilead, is there *no physician* there? *why* then is not the health of the daughter of my people recovered?" To suppose for a moment that this spiritual disease was occasioned by the want of a physician or a healing virtue, would entirely destroy the whole force of the appeal. Notice also the great commission to preach the gospel to every creature. Here is the universality—a gospel to all—but the difference

of result is attributable to the reception or rejection of it, and not to any inherent defectiveness in it to any.

2nd. The scriptures expressly *assert* that those for whom atonement is made, *may* perish. The apostle in exhorting the Corinthians to the adoption of a rule of conduct in relation to *meats*, warns them against putting a stumbling-block in the way of others, lest, says he, "through thy knowledge shall the weak brother *perish, for whom Christ died.*" (1st Cor. viii. 11.) Peter, also in his 2nd epistle, ii. 1st v., thus writes, "There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even *denying the Lord that bought them*, and bring upon themselves swift destruction." Here it is evident that though bought by the Lord, they may, by denying him, bring upon themselves swift destruction.

3rd. By referring to some of the quotations from the early Fathers given at the close of section 3, it will be seen that they believed in an atonement made for all—for those who despise Christ, as well as those that receive him.

4th. How can we account for God's procedure in *punishing* those that reject Christ not merely for sins against Law, but for the awful sin of *unbelief*; if it be true that He was never really offered *as a Saviour*? How shall we account for the "sorer punishment" of which they shall be worthy? It would be good news to many a lost soul in the place of woe, if they found out that after all, Christ had never made any atonement for them. It would pluck the most painful stings of remorse from their accusing consciences.

5th. How can we account for God's procedure with them *when on earth*? God dealt with them very differ-

ently from fallen angels for whom no saviour dieth. Let us take for illustration two cases set before us in the word of God—namely, that of the Antediluvians and that of Judas. We are told by the apostle Peter that those who perished at the flood are now “spirits in prison.” We are told moreover, that the spirit of Christ preached to them when they were on earth—and that was through Noah, who was a “preacher of righteousness.” We are told that God’s Spirit strove with them, dealing with them in a gracious and long suffering manner, till He was obliged to say, “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.”* Can we account for Jehovah’s merciful dealings with that ungodly generation on any other principle than that of an atonement? Was not an atonement necessary to enable God’s Spirit as a Holy Spirit, thus to go forth on his mission of mercy and grace? The very dealings of Jehovah with the world from the time of man’s apostacy, made an atonement necessary, even although the gracious overtures grounded on it should be disregarded by man. He has evidently dealt with man since the fall, on the basis of a propitiatory sacrifice; as if the Lamb had been slain *from the foundation of the world*. Hear what McCheyne says in reference to those before the flood,—

The men were giants in wickedness. Every imagination of their heart was only evil continually. But this is the very reason he strives. He sees the flood that is coming—he sees the hell that is beneath them; therefore does he strive. In the preaching of Noah he pleaded with them; he pricked their hearts—made them think of their danger, their sin, and their misery. In preparing the ark he pleaded with them—showed them the way of safety, and said, “Yet there is room.” He made every stroke of the hammer go to their hearts. “The Spirit and the Bride say, come.” O how sad it is to think that so many who have the Spirit of God striving with them, *should perish after all*.

Such appeals to the conscience as this, would be entirely valueless, nay, even absurd, on the supposition

that really after all, no atonement had ever been made for these anti-deluvians; for we contend that an atonement is necessary, not only *actually* to save, but even *to bring* such means before sinners as are intended and adapted to that end, although these means—those strivings of the Spirit may be resisted, and they perish.

Look again to the case of the traitor Judas. We have plain intimation that he is a lost soul. Our Saviour says, "It had been good for that man if he had never been born." We are told also that "he went to his own place." Yet hear how Mr. McCheyne describes the gracious dealings of the Redeemer with him, and on the assumption that Christ's atonement did not include even him, the whole would appear a mere absurdity. In his sermon on John xiii. 21, he thus writes:

Question.—What could be Christ's reason for so often and so solemnly speaking of his betrayer?

Answer.—I can see no other reason for it but that he might make one last effort to *melt the heart* of his betrayer. 1st. His perfect knowledge of him. 2nd. His anxious love for him; as if he had said, "*I love thee, Judas: I have left the bosom of the Father just for lost sinners like thee: I pitied thee before the world was: I am quite willing still to be a Saviour to thee.*" In this way He tried to win the traitor—to draw him to Himself. The second argument which Christ made use of to meet and win the heart of Judas was His love: *I have loved thee, Judas, and came to save thee.* He willed not the death of Judas—he willed not the death of any of you.

He then concludes this beautiful discourse with the following paragraph:

My friends, there may be within these walls some with a heart as hard as that of Judas. You think that Jesus is your enemy. But what does the Bible say? Look there—He is troubled in spirit—He weeps as he did over Jerusalem. Yes, He that once *shed his blood for you*, now sheds his tears for you. Immanuel grieves that you will not be saved. He grieved over Judas, and He grieves over you. He wept over Jerusalem and He weeps over you. He has no pleasure that *you* should perish—He had far rather

that *you* would turn and live. There is not one of you within these walls so hard, so cruel, so base, so unmoved, so far from grace and holiness, so Judas-like, that Jesus does not grieve over your hardness—that *you* will resist all his love—that *you* will still love death, and wrong your own souls. Oh! that the tears which the Saviour shed over your lost and perishing souls might fall upon your hearts like drops of liquid fire—that you might no more sit unmelting under that wondrous love which burns with so vehement a flame—which many waters cannot quench—which all your sins cannot smother—the love which passeth knowledge. Amen.

Another difficulty to which we shall briefly advert, as experienced by some with regard to an unlimited atonement, is, that it represents Christ as dying for many *in vain*, and as if God's will was counteracted. To the objector we would say, in reading the preceding extracts did you sympathize with the spirit of them, and yet do not the appeals made come from the admission of the very point which you regard as a difficulty? *Christ's blood and Christ's tears shed for impenitent and lost sinners.* That God wills and desires the salvation of many who still perish in their sins is plainly a doctrine of Scripture, and an exemplification of his earnest and intense interest in the well being even of those who "will not come to Him that they might have life."

But look at this difficulty in the light of both views of the extent of the atonement, and it cannot fail to appear, that so far from its being on the side of the unlimited view, it is entirely so on the other.

According to the *unlimited* view, those that ultimately perish, perish for not knowing or believing in Christ's atonement. According to the *limited* view, they perish for want of that which would have *necessarily procured* their salvation—which would have *compelled* God by *justice* to save them. God, according to this theory, is represented as receiving and accepting only for a fa-

voured *few* an atonement which even Limitarians affirm was a *price sufficient for all* men—yea, even for fallen angels too—an infinite price that might have secured *necessarily* the salvation of all guilty beings, and would have obliged Him to save them all—but alas! alas! it was limited only to a few. What a dark cloud does this throw on the character, and more especially the *love* and benevolence of Deity! If Limitarians would only admit that the atonement was sufficient for the elect only; then there would not be so great a difficulty—but when they say that it was *sufficient to secure the salvation* of all beings—(for that is what they consider necessary to an atonement)—but that Jehovah would not receive it with this unlimited value, and, therefore, while Christ paid a *price sufficient for all* guilty beings—it was only accepted as really a *price* for some.

O how immensely is the difficulty increased. Does not Christ die *in vain* as much in the one view as in the other—yea, inconceivably more so; for while taking the atonement in its *unlimited* extent, we can warn the sinner that if he perish it will be because he “*neglects* so great salvation”—on the other view, we could not escape from the conclusion, that either there was some inherent defectiveness in the atonement for all, or (to speak with trembling) Jehovah would not confer salvation commensurate with the price which Christ paid. O! what inconceivable difficulties crowd around that view that represents Jehovah as *obliged* to save those for whom the price has been paid, and that, therefore, those who are not at last saved, had really no price paid for them at all.

In Conclusion,—The doctrine of an unlimited atonement, so plainly in harmony with Scripture doctrine,

exhortation and warning, sets most clearly before us the following *practical reflections* :

1st—The great responsibility of the Church to carry “the Gospel to every creature.”

2nd—The clear and explicit warrant that we have to tell sinners, wherever we find them, of a perfect propitiation for sin, and to urge them to an immediate acceptance of the overtures of mercy. We know that so far as *atonement* is concerned we are not preaching at a peradventure ; we know that wherever we see a human being, that he is, whilst on this side of the grave, within the circumference of atoning blood.

3rd—We see the dreadful, the fearful nature of *unbelief*. It shuts out Christ—and the blessings of salvation—it exposes to the most fearful condemnation.

4th—The importance of preaching Christ and Him crucified. Pointing to him as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world—resolving, like Paul, to glory only in the Cross.

5th—The fearfully aggravated doom of those who amid the privileges of Gospel light still go down into spiritual and eternal darkness.

Lastly—The responsibility resting on every sinner to whom the Gospel comes. It is a message from God, of infinite importance—it does not leave him as it found him—it is either the savour of life unto life, or—O! dread alternative!—it is the savour of death unto death. Dear reader, have you found peace through the peace-speaking blood of Christ? Have you laid hold on the hope set before you in the Gospel? If not, we would now, “as ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you, in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God; for, *He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*”

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