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THE ATONEMENT,
NOTE,

A SERMON, BY W. H. STOKES, OF GEORGIA.

BY THE EDITOR.

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to the slaughter, and as a "sheep dumb before her shearers, not opening his mouth."

These passages, together with those references made to them in the New Testament, present Immanuel, God with us, as the great sacrifice for sin; him who, though he knew no sin, was made sin, (or a sin-offering) for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The doctrine of vicarious atonement takes certain things for granted, such as that God is angry with the wicked, because of their sin, and that he cannot, consistently with the dignity of his throne, take them again into favor until his law receive satisfaction for the indignities offered it by presumptuous offenders.

The whole gospel scheme then contemplates two parties at variance—1st, the infinite God, having a right to control fully and forever the creatures of his power and the objects of his care; and 2ndly, these creatures, in open hostility to his rightful claims.

In a case of this sort, it would seem that the offended Sovereign might take summary vengeance upon the guilty rebels; might treat them as he did the fallen angels; place them beyond the pale of mercy forever. But no; he is merciful as well as just, and what has gone far to heighten both his mercy and his justice, his own infinite wisdom has fixed upon an expedient by which these two attributes receive an honorable vindication in the pardon of the sinner. Upon the great leading principle of the New Testament revelation, God can be the just God, and yet the Saviour.

That a scheme of moral administration, which exalts the sovereign and humbles the subject, should meet the unqualified disapprobation of the latter, is not matter of surprise; and that human ingenuity should task all its powers to strip it of its offensive aspects, is also to be expected. For the carnal mind is enmity to God. But after all, the truth remains stable as the throne of God itself, that "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, the Lord Jesus Christ,"—a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

These things perceived, we assert—

1. That the whole of God's merciful dispensation regards Christ as a sacrifice for sin. Says Isaiah,—“But he was wounded for our transgressions; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and

with his stripes we are healed.”—Isa. lv: 5. Of the like import is the language of Zechariah: “Awake, O sword, against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts. Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered, and I will turn my hand upon the little ones.”—Zech. xiii: 7. In perfect correspondence with these prophecies are the words of Matthew: “Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”—Mat. xx: 28. We have also Paul’s testimony: “Who,” referring to Christ, “was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. 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.”—Rom. iv: 25; 1 Cor. xv: 3; 2 Cor. v. 21. No less explicit is the language of Peter: “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”

Again: John has declared Jesus Christ to be the great *hilasmos*, i. e. the *propitiation* for our sins—a sacrifice pleasing to God, and one to be pleaded as the ground of human forgiveness. And he (Christ) is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.—1 John ii: 2; iv: 10.

But it may be asked why was the body of Christ more efficacious in procuring the pardon of a repentant sinner than the death of Peter, of Paul, or of any other man who has yielded up his life in the cause of God and holiness? The answer to this question is, that there could be no remission without the shedding of blood, and the blood of *just such a person as Christ*. In the volume of the book, in the very head of the book, as some copies have it, Christ was designated as the sacrifice whose infinite merit would appease the throne of insulted justice. Hence *a body was provided him!* By virtue of that mysterious connection which subsists between the God-head and the humanity of Christ, the dignity which pertains to the former attaches in some way to the latter, imparting to the blood of Christ a value, an effi-

cacy, not to be ascribed to the blood of any creature, however exalted. "But," says the apostle, "we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, (or for a little while lower than the angels) for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor, that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. . . . Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels," implying clearly his pre-existence, "but took on him the seed of Abraham," and in this-capacity was in a situation "to be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."—Heb. ii: 14—17.

2. My second remark is, that the sacrifice of Christ has made a *complete atonement for sin*. By this I mean, that his sacrifice has laid a broad ground upon which the parties at variance may come to an honorable agreement. God the Father, has declared himself well pleased with his Son—with his character—his office as Mediator—with the whole of his purchasing work. In view of the Saviour's active and passive obedience, the throne of heaven is well reconciled to the idea of taking the returning prodigal again into favor—of bestowing all the benefits of divine grace upon him. This can be done, and the affairs of God's holy government suffer no detriment, because Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

The learned tell us that the word which is translated *atonement*, means in the Old Testament a covering, and that when it is used as a verb, it is to be understood to cover; hence it admits of an application to cases in which God is represented as *passing by* the sins of his creatures—as pardoning their sins—as remembering them no more forever. In this use of the term, as might be expected, the cause of pardon, i. e. the consideration in view of which this grace is extended, is mentioned in connection with the act of pardoning itself. "The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an *atonement* for your souls."—Exod. xxx: 15.

There is one statute, one Saviour for rich and poor. The efficacy is found in the appointment, in the intrinsic merit of the sacrifice itself, not in any thing belonging to the character of the individual who pleads it in bar as the ground of his acquittal before the Judge.

Again : " Aaron shall offer his bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself, and make an *atonement* for himself and for his house. . . . And he shall wash his flesh with water in the holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering, and the burnt offering of the people, and make an *atonement* for himself and for the people."—Lev. xvi: 6, 24. Now, the half-shekel and the bullock of the sin-offering were the considerations in these cases, in view of which the divine protection was extended to the worshippers.

There is such a thing as averting the anger of those in controversy. Jacob sent a present to Esau, saying, "peradventure he will accept me." This present was intended as a "covering;" as an *atonement*, to turn aside the wrath of his offended brother. David inquired of the Gibeonites what he should do for them, wherewith he should make an atonement for them, in order that they might bless the inheritance of the Lord; and the Gibeonites replied that seven men of the house of Saul should be given them, that they might hang them up in Gibeah of Saul. And the king said, I will give them. This he did that he might stay the famine which had prevailed over Israel for three years, year after year.—2 Sam. xxi. Such is the mercy of the Lord towards his creatures, that when they repent of their sins, and resort to those expedients which he himself has devised for their restoration to favor, he passes the pen of obliteration over the record of their offences, blotting them out forever.

As the sacrifices of divine appointment under the Old Testament dispensation were effectual in turning aside merited wrath, so the sacrifice of Christ, when pleaded in the exercise of faith, avails to the purification of the conscience, and the final salvation of the soul. Christ is the great *hilasterion*—"the lid or cover of the ark of the covenant—the mercy seat, so called, because the high priest was accustomed once a year to sprinkle upon it the blood of the expiatory victim, by which a ceremonial atonement was made for

the people, and Jehovah was propitiated."* *How* it was that the wings of the cherubim, overshadowing the mercy-seat, and the other circumstances attendant upon the altar standing within the vail adumbrated the atoning sacrifice of Jesus, we cannot speak with certainty. Modesty certainly becomes us when we approach this subject; as the great apostle himself remarks concerning it: "Of which (things) we cannot now speak particularly." This much, however, he did assert concerning the ceremonies of the Old Testament economy: "Which stood only in meats and drinks and divers washings and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come, a high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood; he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God."—Heb. ix: 10-14.

It would be an easy matter to multiply quotations of this sort. Passage after passage might be adduced, to show that Christ is set forth as a propitiation through faith in his blood for the remission of sins—the whole scope of the Bible is to this point. And after all, the whole might be summed up in this one short sentence: **THE BLOOD OF THE SON OF GOD CLEANSETH FROM ALL SIN.**

3. The contemplation of the great sacrifice of Christ, as furnishing ground for the non-imputation of guilt to the true believer, is at all times pleasing; but when we have done this, our joy is but half complete, because we have seen only one side of the picture. Not only is sin not imputed, when the character of Christ is properly apprehended by the eye of faith, but the *righteousness* of God is *unto* and *upon* every believer, as the meritorious cause whence are derived to him all spiritual endowments by which he is characterized as a child of God and an heir of heaven. It is true,—
 "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is

*Robinson.

covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."—Psa. xxxii: 1, 2. But it is affirmed in immediate connection, by the apostle to the Romans, that David in this language describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.—Rom. iv: 6. Luther's text, I mean the text which rang in his ears, and thrilled his heart as he climbed upon his knees Pilate's staircase at Rome,* includes the whole view which I am desirous to present at this time. The text is this: *The just shall live by faith!* Perhaps more properly, the just by faith shall live. This one principle pervades the great epistle to the Romans. May I not say the whole Bible? A man must be the subject of that faith which has Christ for its object—he must believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God, before he can adopt the language of Paul: "Being justified by faith I have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ."—Rom. v: 1.

II. I proceed, in the second place, to show, that Christ by his sacrifice does actually take away sin.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."—1 John iii: 8. A most glorious object! He came to dethrone the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that works in the children of disobedience. His was a mission of merciful achievement—to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself. He does take away sin. The principle of sin, of daring, presumptuous rebellion, is subdued in the heart of every one who repents by his grace, and believes to the justification and ultimate salvation of his soul.

The parable of the leaven in the meal, illustrates beautifully and forcibly how the great sacrifice of Christ takes away sin. In the individual believer, the principle of grace originating in the atonement, works, and continues to work, till all the powers of the soul are restored to their proper action, and the solicitations of the flesh are silenced by the superior promptings of holiness. The Spirit operates where the sacrifice of Christ is pleaded. Through the entire mass of the holy discipleship, the wide world over, the influence of this one sacrifice is extended. And in proportion as the

*DeAubigne's Hist. Reform.

boundaries of the heavenly kingdom are enlarged, the amount of sinfulness is diminished. This process is going on in the world; and the Scriptures authorize the belief, that finally, the principle of rebellion will be banished from the earth. The sun of the millennial day will shine upon a comparatively sinless world. And a little farther on, in the dispensations of Him who occupies the eternal throne, the "new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," will dazzle upon the vision of those who "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

In taking away the sin of the world, the sin both of Jew and Gentile, the first effort of the grand sacrifice is to destroy the *guilt of sin*. This guilt consists in a consciousness of malignant rebellion against God. So long as this principle of rebellion remains unsubdued in the heart, there can be no peace with God, no solid happiness. It is an awful fact, and must forever remain a fact, that "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men." This wrath bears heavily upon those whose wills are not brought to harmonize with the will of heaven. In the process of salvation by the grace of God, the will is so renewed as to approve what God approves, and to hate what he hates. Or perhaps it would be better to say, the *man*—the *moral agent*—in the exercise of that power of the soul which we denominate *will*, enters fully and cordially into all the plans of infinite wisdom, love and power, which contemplate the moral order of the universe. Where such submission takes place, there can be no discord, no enmity, no guilt. All this is the result of dying love—the cross has effected this heavenly reconciliation.

2. The blood of Christ avails to break down the *dominion of sin*. Sin shall not have dominion over you. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin; for he that is dead is freed from sin. There is a striking analogy between the death and resurrection of Christ, and the release of a truly justified soul from the dominion of sin. "Now, if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye

also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In the sixth chapter of Romans, from which we have made this quotation, we have a most luminous account of this great subject. The believer is there represented as *dead* to sin—as having nothing more to do with it—just as Christ had nothing more to do with death after his glorious resurrection.

It is one thing to be dead *by* sin forensically, i. e. to be dead in the eye of law and justice; it is quite a different thing to be dead *to* sin, as furnishing motives to human conduct. The law contemplates every transgression as dead—dead in trespasses and in sins; the gospel represents Christ as furnishing a ransom, that the rebel go not down to the pit. Death, then, and *that* death which the transgression merited, has been endured, not by the original offender truly, but by his glorious substitute. This fact, so full of interest to the child of God, and ever exerting its own legitimate influences upon the heart—ever pressing the claims of saving tenderness and power over all the attributes of the soul, is recognized as fixing the obligation to glorify God with all its energies, chastened and combined for the high and holy exercise. Can a man stand by the cross, study its mighty import, feel its effects upon his inmost nature, and then go away and be a sinner? No, no! Gratitude forbids it. The spirit of holiness forbids it. The joyous aspirations of a brand plucked from the burning forbid it. What! Crucify afresh his Lord, and put him to an open shame—abuse his crown—rally once more to the black standard of death—invite again the chains of a most debasing despotism! Far, far be such treason from him. Rather let him exult in the conscious enjoyment of that freedom which it is Christ's, and his alone, to bestow.

3. The salvation found in the atonement of Christ, frees its subject from the *love of sin*. Who loves the tyrant from whose merciless exactions he has been delivered? The soul redeemed, meets the frown of its old task-master with the doctrine of Paul, "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord."—Rom. v: 21. Delight in the law of God after the inward man, excludes all delight arising from infractions upon that law. The spirit of hell cannot co-exist with the spirit of heaven. There is no agreement between light and darkness—no amity between

Christ and Belial—no fraternity between God's family and the children of the devil. Their spirits are uncongenial. It were a miracle to see a man *love* the source whence he *knows* and *feels* have come all his miseries—*love* the old serpent, by whom he is told and *believes*, the race of mankind were bitten to death—*love* the poison which still rangles in his veins, though counteracted by the balm of life. No. The child of God, relying as he does, upon the all-sufficiency of Jesus, does not love sin.

4. The believer is saved by the blood of Christ, and by the sanctification of the Spirit, from the *practice of sin*.

Practice is the development of principle. Delivered from the law as a covenant, whose stern exactions bind him over to death, the believer still feels that it constitutes the great, perfect rule of action, and that therefore, he is not at liberty to violate its precepts. It is God's law, and therefore the best possible law. In this view of the subject, as one that has received a new life, the gift of infinite benevolence, he yields his members, not as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but on the contrary, "as instruments of holiness to God. Standing as the believing, hoping sinner does, upon Mount Zion's peaceful top, reflecting upon the exhibitions of God's mercy to his race, and to himself in particular, he cannot do otherwise than present his body—his soul—his whole man—a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, as a reasonable and most imperative service. The higher life within, seeks a new theatre for its development; new associations constitute the source of its aliment, and other employments than those of sin call out its heaven-born energies.

5. The Lamb of God takes away the *consequences of sin*.

Death is in the world. Graves are opened on the right hand and on the left. "Death hath passed upon all, inasmuch as all have sinned." One dark destiny awaits the virtuous and the vicious—The tomb! There is, however, a bright side to this melancholy picture. From the page of heavenly truth we read: "For if by one man's offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ. The dead are not always to sleep in their graves; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet

shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 15 chap.

All these things are to be brought about by the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. All the church, the purchase of his blood, are thus saved from sin—from the concomitants of sin. But the time is coming, the time seen by ancient prophets in vision, in which the sin of the world will be literally and gloriously taken away; when the wheel of divine providence, full of eyes, shall have performed a few more revolutions; when God shall have chastised human wickedness by using one nation as an instrument wherewith to thresh another; when the beast and the false prophet shall have accomplished the objects of their destination;—then shall the stars of heaven fall from their places; proud Babylon shall be tumbled to the dust, and the merchants of the earth shall weep over her. Sceptres, diadems, tiaras, all will lose their charm, and HE whose right it is to reign will ascend the throne, and be hailed as King of kings and Lord of lords, from one extremity of the earth to the other.

Could we, brethren, dive into the depths of prophecy; could we but witness how steadily the Most High has contemplated the final conquest and enthronement of his Son—remembering at the same time, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, we should not doubt the final result; we should cast our eyes forward to that period when the old serpent shall be bound; when Christ shall dwell amongst his saints, and wipe all tears from their eyes, sorrowing and sighing being done away forever. Such a day will come—when sin's dreadful tragedy shall be closed—when the gospel triumph shall be complete—and there shall be nothing to molest in all God's holy mountain.

III. We proceed in the third and last place, to show, briefly, that we must look to Christ for the great blessings which we have specified.

Behold the Lamb of God! See in him God's faithfulness

in fulfilling his promises to his ancient people Israel. It was an affecting saying of Abraham when he replied to Isaac and said: "God will provide himself a sacrifice, my son." God had indeed, in his own unchanging counsels, fixed upon a sacrifice, but many hundreds of years had to pass on before that sacrifice could be set forth, in entire completeness, for the wants and woes of our world. But these hundreds of years did not make the promise of none effect. Christ came. He approaches John upon the banks of the Jordan, and John exclaims, Behold the Lamb of God! This illustrious personage fulfils his mission to the world—dies upon the cross, rises again from the dead, and returns to his native heaven. Henceforth, he is the subject of angels' songs, and an object of attraction to earth. It is to this glorious object that we are to look for life, for salvation, for immortal glory.

1. We are to look to him for *instruction*. He is the great Prophet of the church; and whether we regard the matter of his instructions, or the manner in which they are imparted, we are prepared to assert, that "never man spake like this man. He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

2. We are to look to him for *righteousness*. Alas for us, our righteousnesses are as but filthy rags in the sight of infinite purity. We cannot plead at the bar of God our having kept inviolate the pure and holy law during the whole of our being. In this respect we are ten thousand talents in debt, and have nothing to pay. But Christ is *the Lord our righteousness*. In him we are perfectly safe. There is *now* no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus.

3. We are to look to him for *repentance and faith*; for every grace necessary to constitute us the children of God, and heirs of the promises. With his own right hand God has exalted his Son to be a Prince and a Saviour—to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins. Christ our Lord is both the Author and the Finisher of the Christian's faith.

4. We are to look to him as an *example* of patience and forbearance. In the midst of those propensities incident to all who perform the pilgrimage of this vale of tears, it is wise to consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we should be wearied and faint in our minds. Is he persecuted? he threatens not. Is he crucified? he prays for his murderers. Does he commission his

disciples to preach the everlasting gospel to a world of sinners? the injunction is, "Begin at Jerusalem." Let the chief priest, and the scribes, and the pharisees, though their hands reek with the blood of his innocence, have the first overture. Here is magnanimity superior to any thing earth-born; without a parallel in the annals of fame. We are to study this example until we are changed into the same image; until we may be identified by the reflection of the glorious rays from the Sun of Righteousness, inseparable from our characters.

In short, brethren, the views and feelings of Peter must be ours when he says, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."—John viii: 68, 69. Yes, *that* Christ—that *anointed* one—that *sealed* one—that *only* one, who can save us, and crown us at God's right hand. O, if ever we get up to that world of light and love, through the mediation of Him who died for us and rose again, we shall need a harp, each one, to swell that chorus which John heard in vision: "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."—Rev. i: 5, 6.

And now, in conclusion, permit me to inquire—

First. What think ye of Christ? Whatever he may have been to kings, to emperors, to the great men of the earth, to patriarchs and prophets, he has been an object of strong desire. However contemptible his character may have appeared to those who knew him not, to such as have known him, he has appeared the fairest among ten thousand, the one altogether lovely. Little interest as the busy throng may take in the affairs of his kingdom, it is destined to fill the universe with its glory. Let us then be wise before it is too late. Let us now give him our hearts—our hearts, grateful and entire. Surely, he has won them by his love; he has bought them by his blood.

2ndly. What are we to think of that indifference which many evince in regard to the whole subject? May we not be permitted to ask you, dear friends, in the language of the illustrious Paul, how you are to escape, if you neglect this great salvation, which began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed by them that heard him? Dwell, I pray you,

upon this momentous question. How are you to escape? O, revolve it in your minds a thousand times, until you can dispose of it in a manner pleasing to God, and satisfactory to yourselves. Know you not that it is written, "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the spirit of grace."—Heb. x: 28, 29. Can it be possible that such a text as this can be read to a man who is conscious to himself that he is in a state of irreconciliation to God, and his heart still remain unmoved? If such should be the fact, his own apathy should alarm him, and he should be found instantly upon his knees, begging God to take from him a heart of stone, and give him a heart of flesh.

May God of his infinite kindness give us a clear understanding in regard to all these things, and make us to say with an apostle, concerning Christ, that though we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Amen.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

Atonement, substitution, imputation, satisfaction, in some or other of the modifications of them, are among the commonest of all our ideas. They enter essentially all the relations, pursuits, employments, evils and benefits of our existence. The thought abridged is simply this: that the well doing or the evil doing of some, inures to the advantage or disadvantage of others.

In all matters of municipality and police, every citizen feels it. The carelessness of a servant or child ignites a curtain by a candle; or the malice or mischief of some reckless wight commits to the flames a stable or a shanty at midnight; and instantly forty thousand persons are roused from their slumbers by the clangor of twenty bells. A shot decides the fate of a battle, which decides the fate of two great nations, which in its turn affects the destinies of the world for a hundred generations. The health or disease, ignorance or cultivation, virtue or vice of whole families, is equally dependent on this general law. The present civil and religious liberty we now so richly enjoy as a nation, was secured

by the cannon and bayonets of our God-fearing and valiant forefathers. In a word, war and peace, government and laws, education and morals, individual, family and national prosperity, all recognize the all-pervading thought of advantage or disadvantage to some, through the well doing or ill doing of others. If religion harmonizes with nature and providence, on what principle then ought we to expect that this great feature should be absent from the one, while it exhibits itself in every shape in the other?

Our fall in Adam, and our recovery by Christ, are the two great fundamental truths of divine revelation. He who in theory understands these is a theologian. He who in heart feels these, is born again of the Spirit of God. He who in conduct exemplifies his acquaintance with both, is a practical Christian. The points from which these truths may be contemplated are countless. The ramifications through which each of them leads are countless. But few and simple as they are, known and felt, they bring life from death, salvation from ruin, glory from wrath.

It is not pretended that the resemblances and analogies between the moral world and the physical are perfect. Very far from it. Indeed, in religion every thing is peculiar to itself. Natural realities are inadequate representations of spiritual, in two respects: one by their infinite inferiority, and another by their imperfect similarity. Were they perfectly similar, the disproportions are so great, that the similarity would be measurably imperceptible. In like manner as triangles are similar, although one may be so small that fifty may be drawn on the thumb-nail of a man, and another so large that one side may reach from the earth to the remotest fixed star of the firmament. But the similarity is always itself imperfect. Love in the bosom of a Christian towards his fellow Christians, is neither instinct nor passion, but a divine principle. Hence, as Christians, he loves all Christians equally. That affection which I have for those Christians whose tastes and habits are in common things my own, is no part of my Christian love for them. It may be friendship, or something else, but it is no part of the love I bear them for Christ's sake. So of the suretyship of Christ for us: it differs from all other suretyships. So of the atonement made for sin by the death of Christ: it differs from all other satisfactions rendered for others by their substitutes. But this we know: the life of all who believe is in virtue of his death.

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