

amazing distance between the Creator and the creature, and assumed man's nature into union with His own, that He might be humbled for human sin, that He might become subject to the law for us, that He might sorrow, and suffer, and bleed, and die for our redemption. He stood in our stead; He expiated the curse due to us: He thus made it honourable for God to pardon, He made it possible for God to shew us mercy. And why did He perform a work of such a kind in order to our being delivered from the moral dominion of sin? For two reasons. First, no Divine efficacy could be exerted upon human souls for any purpose that was advantageous to man, unless a way was opened by which God could honourably bestow blessings on His offending, rebellious creatures. And, secondly, because without the possibility of deliverance from condemnation it would have been vain to tell sinners to cleanse their souls and cease from sin. While under the curse they never would have become willing to obey the law; nor, without a hope of heaven, would they have moved one step towards holiness. But, when peace from heaven is proclaimed, the door to new obedience is thrown open, then the prisoners of despair are released, and they may then follow their glorious deliverer. The lame man may then leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb may sing; and those who are thus made joyful may be constrained by the mercies of God "to present themselves unto Him a living sacrifice."

II. In the second place, Christ has become the Teacher of men—the Great Prophet of His church, in order to effect our deliverance from the dominion of sin. The reason is, that the freedom of the Gospel is a moral freedom—it exists in the mind and heart of man. It is effected by truth communicated to the mind, received into the heart, and having its operation there in the thoughts and principles.

Christ himself is the great subject of His own teaching. He exhibited in His work what it is needful for man above all things to know and believe, and He further addresses this truth to man. He did so in His personal teaching; He now does so in His word, by the ministry He has established in His church, and by His providence. "Learn of me," He says, "and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Observe particularly the language in the context, in which the liberty of the Gospel is described,—"*If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" What then is this truth which makes the soul free? It is preeminently the doctrine of the Cross, in which all others centre, or with which all others are connected,—It is the doctrine of the wondrous love of God shewing mercy through a dying Redeemer—It is, that God has said of rebellious man, "Deliver from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom"—It is, that His love to the world has been such, so great, that He gave up His only-begotten and well-beloved Son to die for the guilty—It is the truth that the Son gave himself a ransom for many, for "it is Christ that died"—It is the truth of the stable and manger of Bethlehem; of the infirmities and sorrows of mortal flesh submitted to for us; of the agony in Gethsemane's garden; of the shame and mockery of the judgment bar; of the malefactor's death of ignominy on the cross, and of the deeper anguish of His spotless soul under the hidings of His Father's countenance—It is the truth that love has been shown to man which passeth knowledge—It is such truth that our Great Emanuel preaches to man, in order to break, to melt, to refine, to purify his heart. O! let the truth as it is in Jesus be repeated by one repentant sinner unto another, till Christ, lifted up on the Cross, has drawn all men after Him, and all nations are employed in one song of praise.

He declares to men, further, blessings incalculably great and precious, the purchase of His blood, ready to be bestowed upon all who come to God through Him. He proclaims a pardon for all past offences, full and free, to the sinner who may regard his sins as of the deepest die; "God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses;" "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Adoption, righteous-