

pose that a purely experimental doctrine was an unfathomable mystery.

Besides those which have resulted from theories based on an arbitrary use of atonement as a technical term, misconceptions have arisen from arraying one divine attribute against another, as in suggesting that God's justice had to be satisfied in order that his mercy or love might operate. It has often been stated, for instance, that divine justice demands the condemnation of the sinner, while divine mercy calls for his deliverance, as if justice and mercy in God were opposed to each other. All essential attributes meet together in him, and he acts, not according to one of them at one time, and another of them at another time, but in conformity with all of them at all times.

Another class of misconceptions has arisen from supposing that God suffered in the work of atonement, that is, with Jesus on the Cross. But that supposition is erroneous. An infinite Being cannot suffer, because suffering implies limitation. God sympathizes as only a divine Being can sympathize, but he does not suffer. Such a notion is inconceivable to most thoughtful writers, and to the present writer it is unthinkable. The Scriptures tell us that he sympathizes with us in our troubles and afflictions, and that he compassionates us when we turn from sin to righteousness; but more than that they do not teach, nor warrant us in teaching.