

world even as Jesus overcame the world. He subjected the world around him, its proffered power and glory, to the higher law within him. Christ has no fellowship with Belial. So may we direct our mind to the inward and not to the outward things, "for though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." And again, "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." We plainly see this can have no reference to the outward man, Jesus, but must refer to the Christ-power that dwelt in him. And that same Christ-power or spirit is with us, and approves us for doing right and reproves us for doing wrong. It is that within us which condemns not by anger or passion or revenge but by love. God is love. It is the unchangeable attribute by which He has ever manifested himself to the children of men. We hear it said that He is angry with the wicked every day. It is not so. I can testify to the fact from my own experience that this attitude of revenge is born in our own natures, from a consciousness of breaking the divine law. Real reform can only be produced by the love of the Father. How was it in the case of the prodigal son? In the father's house he was obedient to the law revealed to his mind; but he lost that heavenly state by sin and transgression and wandered away into a strange land, strange to his former state of innocency and purity. But when he came to a sense of his lost condition he remembered that there was bread and to spare in the father's house. He became humble and called out from the depths of his abased and penitent soul, "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee." That was the condition, the only condition in which his father would receive him, a state of humility, of willingness to be instructed. This is the condition in which all may be restored. The father did not say, "I will not be reconciled until an innocent son be put to death." He said nothing

that can be construed into the necessity of a vicarious atonement. To satisfy his infinite law and dignity, he demanded no murder and suffering on the cross. None of this, but the father embraced him. In his infinite love and compassion he fell upon his neck and kissed him; "for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

And how came he dead? It does not have reference to the death of body, but a loss of the experience he had in the father's house. He had dug his own grave in the lusts of the world, and worshipped that that could not satisfy the cravings of his immortal nature, but wonderfully did he experience a resurrection. And to the great work of this resurrection he put his own hand.

This has always been to me a choice parable. It embraces all the stages and experiences of man. It takes him in the heavenly state, follows him in the fall, to a death in sin and the lowest hell, through the resurrection and to a restoration again into the Father's house. It has left nothing out. It embraces all the experiences of the children of men; and as regards the father, we see nothing of blame, or anger, or revenge on his part. Men who are under the influence of angry passions and a spirit of revenge have originated this character in their own hearts and attributed it to God. This parable sets aside also the whole doctrine of vicarious atonement that is so tenaciously held in various churches, and have kept them so much in the background, where they are found to-day.

Christ, then, is a spirit, and not an outward man—it is the power and wisdom of God. It is so simple it seems as though the very children can understand it, and they would if they had not received a wrong bias in their early years, through traditional and educational sources, and from the very catechisms of the church. Were they stripped of all these prejudices, could