

But there is another special element in this matter: Christ suffered for us. There is an atoning element in the suffering of Christ which can never be in the suffering of any one else, and that was the reason why the apostle here brought in the words of the text in the way He did. Christ was so great that His suffering can be accepted as a sin-atonement; so great that He can be put forth before the human race as an example. A perfect example must, to the person copying it, be the same, and yet different. If people were so small as to be like us in everything, then they are not sufficiently great to be regarded as an example for us. He belonged to the lower orders of society; yet He was sufficiently great to be the means of human redemption. There was such greatness in His life—in that aspect of it in which we all should be like Him—that He was in that very thing itself unlike everyone else.

Christ suffered for us, and left us an example. There must be no division of the two. You must not regard the suffering on one hand, and the example on the other. You must not divide Christ. The apostle asked the same question—could Christ be divided? It could not be done, I love to contemplate the life of Christ as an example, and the death of Christ as an atonement for sin. If He were an atonement without being an example, He would have been no atonement. If He were an example and yet not an atonement, He would be no example. If I preach to you Christ as an atonement, but not an example, my doctrine would be immoral; and if I preach to you the example of Christ, leaving aside the atonement of Christ, my preaching would be worthless. If man preached an atonement without an example, they would incite men to bravado; if they preached the example without the atonement, they would merely leave men hopeless. The New Testament always couples the two elements in the life of Christ. There is not one passage where the atonement is spoken of without some connecting clause mak-

ing it a stimulus to example. There is not one passage speaking of the example of Christ where that example is not made to rest on the fundamental doctrine of the atonement.

The word "example" in the text, is synonymous with the word *model*, or the idea of design. I do not know of any system, or of any religion, which can place before men a life fit to copy, except that of Jesus Christ. In Him we have the model of a perfect character. In the next verse the apostle changes the figure. Indeed I do not know that the apostle did not confuse the figures. Small authors are painfully attentive to details of that kind—they never will confuse figures. But the master minds—men like Williams, of Pantycelyn, and Simon Peter—they sometimes get confused about their figures. Their ideas were so vast; they heaped figure upon figure, and so at times there was a little confusion. Here the apostle, after describing Christ as an example, proceeded to refer to Him as a shepherd leading His sheep to the green pastures. The sheep followed the shepherd. They had implicit reliance on him. And Christ has left us an example which we may with equal certainty follow. The idea is that the example of Christ was complete—was perfect in its well-known outline and unity. There was nothing in it which ought not to be in; there was everything in it which ought to be there. Looked at from whatever point you choose, there was nothing to alter, there was nothing which could be altered. Stand back a little—further back still, and yet further back—far enough to enable you to see Him all in all—and still there is no defect, there is no lack of finish. People who lived near Him when He was on earth failed to see Him altogether, in all the fullness of His character. But He has gone from them; eighteen hundred years have elapsed since the time He lived a man among men, and between Him and them there is now the distance which separates earth from heaven, from the throne of God itself. There is ample opportu-