

God, in a past eternity, decreed to bestow the direct energy of the Spirit, in which Calvinists believe, it must be less than an atonement to "the rest of mankind," whom God has "passed by and ordained to dishonour and wrath." And if it be an atonement to the rest of mankind, it must be more than an atonement to the eternally and unconditionally elect, as there is more in it, according to this writer, for them, than for the rest. We think indeed that the writer in the *Record* imposes on himself, by confounding the subjective and the objective. This appears to us evident from the phrase, "actual reconciling efficacy," which he employs. What we would understand by the reconciling efficacy of the atonement, is its fitness to reconcile, as the instrument used by the Holy Spirit, because it reveals the love and mercy of God to us, sinful rebels. Actual reconciliation we regard as the consequence of the atonement to those that believe in it, and in him who made it. And this accords with the Bible. Paul exhorted men in Christ's stead, "Be ye reconciled to God." When he addressed persons thus, the presumption is that they were unreconciled to God, for if they had been reconciled to God, the entreaty would have been inapplicable. But the atonement is the reason for his entreaty: "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." 2 Cor. v. 20, 21. We must not then confound reconciliation and atonement. The atonement is one thing and reconciliation is another. Reconciliation is the effect of the atonement. Men are earnestly entreated to be reconciled to God, or to be friends with God, because an atonement has been made for them. The atonement has glorious efficacy: it magnifies and honours the law, which men have broken, so that God can righteously receive them into his favour. As it is an exhibition of the love of God to sinful men it is fitted to restore, and when men behold it, it actually restores, their alienated hearts to God from whom they have revolted.

This writer says, "The chief matter of contention is the extent of the atonement's efficacy in actually reconciling men to God." Now this is not the chief matter of contention. He himself admits that Arminians maintain that the "actual efficacy of the atonement is limited." If Arminians hold that the actual efficacy of the atonement is limited, that all are not actually saved, how can this be the main point of dispute between them and the Calvinists? The question is, did Jesus die in the same sense for all men? and is the preacher warranted by the Bible to say to every sinner, Jesus died for you? To this we answer, Jesus died