

sense of something given to God, or something done for him, of such a character as to win his favour or forgiveness, the sacrificial work of Christ being especially and distinctively denoted by it. That use of the term, however, is not sanctioned by anything in the Bible. Though the work of Christ in the reconciliation of God and man may be called an atonement, because it is pre-eminently atoning in its effect, there is no authority in Scripture for so designating it, much less is there any authority for saying that sin was expiated by anything Jesus did.

All men admit that the English word, like the corresponding Greek word, signifies at-one-ment, though many justify the traditional use of it as a technical term. But who made it a technical term? It was not the evangelists; it was not the apostles; it was not the writers of Scripture; it was the theologians of a later age. Unscientific theologians are responsible for the arbitrary use of the term, which is as misleading as it is unscriptural. From that way of speaking and writing misconceptions have arisen, and, so long as that way of thinking obtains, misconceptions will continue to arise.

While, then, either the love of God or the work of Christ may be objectively considered an atonement, or a means of atonement, in its Scriptural application, as in its literal signification, the term denotes only action or result. It is the act of becoming reconciled to God or the state of being recon-