

not, man with men. Jesus Christ was not humanity deified, neither was He Deity humanized; but the Divine and the human nature united to make one person, as body and soul are united to make one man. This is a profound mystery we cannot fathom or comprehend, but the first truth in the economy of grace.

We have, also, a comprehensive statement of the doctrine of atonement in this text. This is the grandest work of God, revealing God to man, and man to himself as they are revealed nowhere else. In the atonement every attribute of the Deity combines to shed a brightness over the Divine character, which exceeds all the glory of former manifestations as the light of the sun exceeds the light of the glow-worm. It sheds the rays of heaven upon the questions of sin and misery, and throws over the darkness of human destiny a flood of light. It shows us how the Divine-human Christ—the incarnate God—became the sinners' substitute, and by His death reconciled God to man and man to God. Upon the general doctrine of Atonement I spoke to you two weeks ago, and I am not going to enlarge upon that aspect of the question again to-night.

The text of our attention to an aspect of this subject which is seldom discussed. Christ is here revealed to us not only as the Incarnate Word and Redeemer of man, but also as the conservator of the moral universe. "And having made peace through the blood of the cross, by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, I say, *whether they be things in earth or things in heaven.*" Here you perceive that the redemption of man by Christ is predicated with being a means of good to the angels in heaven. What is called "the moral influence" theory of the atonement is a one-sided half-truth when applied to fallen man; but it is a blessed whole-truth when applied to the unfallen intelligences who surround God's throne in the heavenly world. This I conceive to be the drift of the Apostle's meaning when he speaks of Christ's death reconciling the heavenly hosts to the Eternal Father. Reconciling, not in the sense in which that term is applied to man; but the bringing and binding together in eternal harmony of these holy intelligences by the study of this wondrous scheme, and the Divine character as seen therein.

Some may be led to regard these statements as the speculations of the preacher rather than the voice of God. To the law and the testimony, if it be not the voice of revelation reject it at once. There is just this remark to be made, we are indebted solely to Paul for what light we possess on this subject. He alone was commissioned to publish it to the world. With the single exception of the text, all he has given us on

this subject is found in the Epistle to the Ephesians. Turn, then, to the first chapter of that epistle and read with me beginning at the seventh verse: "In whom we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace; wherein hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and in earth, even in Him." I cannot, as some, regard the Apostles here as speaking of the gathering of the Jews and Gentiles into one Church. By "the dispensation of the fulness of times," Paul evidently means the outcome of all the dispensation; and by "the things in heaven and earth" he evidently means the different orders of intelligent beings.

Turn now, if you will, to the third chapter of the same epistle and begin to read at the eighth verse: "Unto me who am less than the least of all saints is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship (or "dispensation," as it ought to be rendered) of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ; to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus the Lord. "From this passage it is evident that it was part of the Divine plan in the redemption of man by Jesus Christ to impress the minds of angels with the excellency His character, and in this way ensure their allegiance for ever.

Look again at the text: "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven. Bengel regards this verse as though it referred to the reconciliation of angels to men by the death of Christ, angels being God's friends, were men's enemies while he was hostile to God. But the reconciliation of which Paul speaks is not of angels to man, nor of man to angels; but of both to God. As Alford remarks, "Sinful creation is reconciled to God strictly *by* Christ; sinless creation is reconciled to God; by a nearer relation, and a higher glorification of Him"—by the law of sympathy and love.

These are all the passages of Scripture which treat of this subject, and they teach us just this much: while the angels, as holy beings, did not need the death of Christ as