

The New Testament ascribes a great variety of influences to the death of Christ, and uses a multitude of expressions in relation to it. Many of these are highly figurative, as where Christians are said to "wash their robes white in the blood of the Lamb," and many are naturally borrowed from the Jewish ritual and sacrifices. But there are two principal influences, relating to the twofold consequences of sin, as separating us from God and as depraving our nature. The work of Christ, in relation to the first, is called in the New Testament *reconciliation*, in relation to the second, *redemption*. The first removes the guilt of sin, the second its power. By the first we are forgiven, by the second we are cleansed from all unrighteousness. Now the first of these effects was of too inward, subjective and spiritual a character, to suit the tone of thought in the early church. They passed by, therefore, the fact of Reconciliation: and took hold of the fact of Redemption, as comprising the chief part of the work of Christ. And seizing a single expression of Scripture in relation to this, they built their whole theory on its literal application. The word thus taken as the foundation of their system was the word "*Ransom*," a word used by Christ\* of himself, and applied also to his work by the Apostles. "A *ransom*," they argued, "is paid to deliver captives from the hands of their enemies. But if Christ gave his life as a ransom for us, to whom did he give it? It must have been to an enemy who held us captive. And who could this be except the devil?" Thus argued, for example, Irenæus, contending against the Gnostics,† who endeavored to take a more

\*Matt. xx. 28. Mark x. 45. Titus ii. 14. 1 Peter i. 18, etc.

† The Gnostic views of the death of Christ were quite different from each other. Thus Basilides admitted a real death of Jesus, but only of