

It is, therefore, incorrect to speak of any unconditional benefits of atonement. That is to say, there are no unconditional benefits of a saving kind. There are unconditional benefits flowing from the work of Christ, benefits both moral and social; but the benefits of atonement are conditioned, as has been explained. So, when it is said that, by virtue of the unconditional benefits of the atonement, children are heirs of the kingdom of God, it is true in the sense that provision exists in the divine character for receiving graciously the souls of all who die in the innocence of infancy.

Moreover, atonement is not simply boundless in its provision, but unceasing in its operation. There is nothing exceptional or unnatural about it. Light is always active, and so is divine love. God is always working on the spirits of men, and some of them are yielding to him all the time, so that atonement is a constant process; and, as this working will continue so long as man endures, it is likewise a perpetual process. Inasmuch as the operation of divine love is continuous and eternal, we may say that atonement is continuous and eternal, too.

Those, therefore, who speak of the finished work of Christ, ignore or overlook this fact. When Jesus uttered his expiring cry, his work of revelation and redemption was accomplished. He had then finished the work he was given to do in person on the earth. But he has since been working by his spirit and