

“old things are passed away, behold all things are become new.”

We see how the apostle walked in the power of this in verse 13. “Whether,” he says, “we be beside ourselves, it is to God.” That is, if he were beyond the influence that belonged to him as a man, it was not an excitement that belongs to those influences, it was because he was absorbed in God. It is what is called ecstasy. When his spirit was free to rise above present service in what he was in Christ, he was lost in God, carried out beyond himself. If he were sober, if he had to weigh difficulties—come down into the sober estimate of what was before him—it was God in love working in him. His thought was entirely for others in that love. This was his daily life; as to himself, transported with God; and, when he did think about things down here, all his thoughts were for others. It was the love of Christ that constrained him, and he looked upon all around in connection with the death of Christ. It was no longer a living Messiah in the flesh with promises for Israel. All this was over. Christ had died, and He judged that Christ would not have gone into death if men had not been there. The whole history of Adam’s race is closed in death. If they had not all been dead, Christ would not have been found in death; why have gone down there if others were not lying there? And therefore those who from amongst these lived were now to live not to themselves, but to Christ who