

ject; his moral law requires that man love him supremely and his fellows as himself. This law man has transgressed. As a sinner he is exposed to the penalty due to the violation of God's law, and is unfit for God's service on earth, and for the place of holy happiness and happy holiness. The Bible declares the sinfulness of man. Dear reader, it is your duty to admit the truth respecting your condition and character, and your interest also. The Bible does not make you a sinner. It simply declares that you are a sinner. Your own conscience concurs in its representations as to this point. You know that you have not loved God most and best, and your neighbours as yourself. You know you are, as unconverted, unprepared to appear in the presence of God, that you are "without a shelter from the wrath to come." The atonement has been provided for you by the God of love to meet your wants as a fallen creature. And therefore to admit the truth respecting your character and deservings as a sinner is to place your soul in a favourable position for seeing the truth respecting the atonement.

You are not to suppose that your sins and state as a sinner rendered the atonement absolutely necessary. Justice might have been satisfied, the holiness of God might have been displayed in the punishment of the rebels against his righteous authority. No atonement has been provided for fallen angels. Justice requires, for the good of the universe, that they be punished. And justice might have been satisfied with the punishment without remedy of transgressors of the race of Adam. But the atonement is necessary in view of God's purpose to extend forgiveness to men, to be received and enjoyed by them on wise conditions. It was necessary that some measure should be introduced into God's moral government, to answer, in that government, the same ends as the consignment of sinners to woe as the penalty of their disobedience. You thus see that while the atonement of Christ is a merciful provision by the God of love and mercy for your salvation, you cannot truly understand it, while refusing to admit that you are a sinner against high Heaven, and worthy of God's righteous indignation.

The English word atonement primarily means "reconciliation." Trench says, respecting the words "atone" and "atonement"; "The notion of satisfaction lies now in these words rather than that of reconciliation. An 'atonement' is the *satisfaction* of a wrong, which one party has committed against another, not the *reconciliation* of two estranged parties. This last, however, was its earlier meaning; and if the word may be divided, 'at-one-ment,'