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## CHRIST AND MAN.

How far the atonement of Christ is available in its application to man's redemption, is a question that has been discussed by far-reaching minds, both in the light of theory, and of revelation. On the possibility and hope of redemption depends entirely the virtue and efficacy of the atonement. It virtually becomes the Alpha and Omega, the very foundation upon which must be reared the entire structure of the Christian religion. And without a correct understanding, a true conception of this principle, there can be no living faith, no abiding hope in man's redemption from his fallen and sinful condition, deprived of his Father's presence and favor.

The life, character and mission of Jesus Christ to earth, presents such a contrast with that of ordinary man, that it has been difficult to recognize the fact that they are of the same family, children of the same Father and destined to the same inheritance in the same glory. He is full of wisdom, love and works of righteousness; the other of folly, hate and wickedness. The one possessing all power both in heaven and on earth, the other subject to the infirmities of life and even death without even power to deliver. The one clothed with power to lay down his life and take it again; the other in bondage to both sin and death, temporal and spiritual. The one promising eternal life to all who would believe on Him; the other destitute of even hope of obtaining it, but by and through His intercession and favor. The one covenanting to live without sin, that by virtue of His innocence His life might be an acceptable sacrifice to offer for a ransom of the guilty. The one by whom the world and they who inhabit it were made, and by whom alone man can be redeemed. The one by his life and the power of his example declaring that he is "God with us," and that by virtue of his divine mission and redeeming power man may recognize his true relation and dependence upon the efficacy of the atonement made by him and accepted by the Father for man's redemption and restoration to all that had by sin been lost.

From the condition entailed upon the entire human race by the transgression of one, it was decreed that all should be redeemed through the obedience of one—that as in one all died

spiritually, by being cast out from the Father's presence, so in one should all be made alive and come back into His presence again.

The atonement, therefore, must be as far reaching in its redeeming power as was the fall in its consequence; otherwise it would be incomplete, only partial in its application, and when, and where, and to whom it would be inoperative could never be determined. This once admitted as being possible, would destroy all faith in the mercy and justice of God, as one who is "no respecter of persons."

The atonement was made and accepted by the Father for the express purpose of bringing man back into the presence of his maker; consequently, must be applicable to man during the entire period of time he must endure banishment from that presence, whether in the body, or to the spirit out of the body, until they unitedly, as the soul of man, in immortality come to the immortal presence, where there will be no more death as there was none before.

This involves the extent or limits of the claim of mercy upon the creature, before reaching the bounds of justice; for one can never be permitted to trespass upon the other. These two different attributes of Deity have each their active field of operation, and are never found in conflict with each other.

Mercy extends just as far as the atonement is efficacious, and so long as that is applicable to the creature he is within the jurisdiction of mercy, and may lay claim to all its advantages and powers by complying with the terms, which are faith, repentance and obedience. These demand and secure forgiveness with divine power.

None are entirely out of the reach of redemption by virtue of Christ's atonement until they become angels to the devil. They can only become such by first knowing that Jesus is the Christ, by faith and obedience to His will, and receiving the Holy Ghost, and then altogether turning away from and denying Him by which they put Him to an open shame, and virtually crucify Him afresh to themselves, and assent to the shedding of His innocent blood.

This places all such in a more fearful condition even than the Jews were in when they actually accomplished his death. Jesus prayed the Father to forgive them for they knew not what they did. But for those who have once known Him,

that He is the Redeemer, by the Holy Ghost, which bears witness of both the Father and the Son, there is no forgiveness in this world nor in the world to come. It is written of all such that where God and Christ dwell they cannot come, worlds without end. They are not only deprived of the Father's presence, lost to redemption's power, but the end of their torment and suffering no man knows; it has not been, nor ever will be revealed to man.

All others than these, whatever be their condition, whether in this world or in the world to come, or the spirits in the paradise of God, the mercy of God, by virtue of Christ's atoning blood, has claim upon them.

Mercy, considered as a principle or as an attribute of Deity, is from everlasting to everlasting. "The mercy of God endureth forever." It is the great distinguishing feature of His character in dealing with His children. It is evidence of His love, under the influence of which justice is ever administered, but in its application to individual merit it only follows such acts of the children of men as are prompted by the same spirit as is in Him who is the fountain and source thereof. Acts of love are acts of mercy and the test of love is keeping the law. No wilful violation of law has any claim on mercy. Justice ever demands a vindication of the law, and to appease that demand the penalty attached must be endured. By suffering such penalty the transgressor atones for his individual guilt, when mercy again claims the creature as free from the bondage of sin, and within the realm of her loving kindness and redeeming power.

For their individual sins all men may endure the punishment affixed to the violation of each and every law of their being and exaltation, and where justice is satisfied, they may by repentance and obedience be restored to the mercy and grace of God, and learn, as David did, that their souls shall not be left in hell, because God's Holy One did not see corruption.

By virtue of His power over death, and acquiring all other power both in heaven and on earth, He will at last, when He accounts to the Father, have the honor and glory of saying: "Of all thou hast given me I have lost none, save those who are sons of perdition." All will be permitted to dwell in some one of the many mansions which are prepared in the Father's house—in some