

SERMON XIII

RECONCILIATION BY CHRIST ALONE

Tobias Crisp

"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." {II Cor.5:19}

This great Apostle of the Gentiles, Saint Paul I mean, though he did not first break the ice, nor lay the first hand upon the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, to pull it down, that they might become both one in one Christ; {for Peter went before him, and was indeed the first in this business, though with great bitterness of spirit even from the rest of the Apostles themselves; who supposed that the glorious privileges of Christ were to be confined only to the nation of the Jews, as you may perceive in Acts, chapter 8 & 9; though Paul I say, was not the first;} yet, as he himself speaks in this business of publishing the grace of God in Christ to the Gentiles, he labored more abundantly than they all; of which labour of his, this chapter gives abundant testimony, especially in the beginning of verse 14, where he gives the great occasion, or motive, why he did preach Christ so clearly and freely to the Gentiles; "for the love of Christ," {saith he,} constrains me; as if he should say, seeing that the glory of the grace of God hath so far extended itself, as that not only the Jews, but also the Gentiles, may have a portion in him, it is a pity that so much abundant grace which serves to the magnifying of Christ so exceedingly should be concealed; Christ hath done so much for me, thinks Paul, that it were an unworthy part in me to conceal that which should make so much unto his glory; the love wherewith he hath loved me, constrains me to do the utmost {that he might have all his praise} to manifest his glory.

Therefore having thus laid down the great motive that set him on work to publish the Gospel, he takes up this resolution to do it, let it cost him what it will; {as it is like to do all that will be so exact in publishing the Gospel as he was;} yet the love of Christ did so constrain him, that he cannot keep it in; he must speak out this love of his. Thus he comes to the business in the latter end of verse 14, "if one {that is, Christ} died for all, then were all dead."¹ The Apostle's meaning is this, he puts the emphasis upon the word "all;" and that emphasis is not spoken simply, but relatively and comparatively; as much as to say, it is not only the Jews that have part in the death of Christ, but all have a part in it. If Christ had an eye not only on the Jews, but on the Gentiles too, in his death; then, saith he, "all were dead," that is, all his people have a part in that death. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." {Rev.5:9}

Now, that the Apostle here mainly intends the setting forth of the largeness of God's grace in Christ, extending not only to the Jews, but also to the Gentiles, verse 16, makes clear; for, saith he there, "henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." Give me leave to open the meaning of it; for I must tell you there is a great deal of mistake concerning the scope of the Apostle in these words, which makes

¹ {Note: The sense of the passage is not that Christ died for all that were dead, but that all were dead for whom he died; and the meaning is, that if Christ died for all, then all those were dead for whom he died. Wherefore this text does not make for the doctrine of general redemption; for it should be observed, that it does not say that Christ died for all men, but for all; and so, agreeable to the Scriptures, may be understood of all the persons mentioned. Gill.}

the sense of them so obscure in the reading of them. The Apostle was once of the same mind with James, and the rest; that Christ, as he came of the flesh of Abraham, and so, according to the flesh, was of the kindred of all the Jews; they verily thought that the virtue of Christ, and redemption by him, had extended no further than to the flesh, that is, to the same flesh of which he came; they of the circumcision chide Peter, that he should offer to go outside the bounds of the Jews, to preach the Gospel to them, which they thought had no part in it; the Apostle was of this mind once; but "henceforth {saith he} know I no man after the flesh;" that is, I will never preach Christ after the flesh, as if none had share in him but those that are of the kindred of which he came; nay, saith he, "though I have known Christ thus after the flesh, henceforth I know him so no more;" where he expounds what he spoke before; as if he should say, I thought that Christ had a mind to save none but the kindred of which he came; I will know him thus no longer; I will preach the Gospel so no more; I will preach it no more to the Jews than to the Gentiles; they that are not of the flesh of Christ, have as great a portion in him as those that are of his flesh.

Hence he begins to gather up his main doctrine which he would preach to the Gentiles, and that he brings in verse 17, "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" where the emphasis lies upon "any man;" "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" as if he should say, this is the new doctrine I will now preach to the world; not if the Jew be in Christ; but if any man in the world be in him, he is a new creature; every man in the world hath this privilege, as well as the Jews; if any man be in Christ, he shall be a new creature, as well as the Jews; and because of some obscurity in this phrase, therefore, in verse 18, the Apostle expounds his own meaning, what he intends by a new creature. Give me leave to open this place to you; for I must tell you there are some great mistakes in this point. Most men think that this phrase, new creature, is a renewed, sanctified man, so as he becomes new in his own conversation, when his life is changed; I do not deny the truth of the thing, all that are in Christ, he renews them, sanctifies them, and subdues iniquity in them; but, under favour, let me tell you, the Apostle's meaning here by new creature is not that they are sanctified; but that they are new creatures; that is, they are reconciled unto God; this is his meaning; "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature;" that is, he is brought into a new condition that he was not in before; and this new condition is that he is now reconciled unto God; whereas, before, he was an alien and stranger to him.

But, you will say, how will it appear that the Apostle's new creature is a person reconciled, and considered as reconciled, and not as sanctified?

I answer, this is clear by verse 18, "for all things are of God, who hath reconciled us unto himself by Jesus Christ, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Mark well, the main thing he drives at here is, to let the Corinthians know, and us with them, what the main ministry was which Christ had committed unto them; which was this, to publish, that "God, from whom all things are, hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ;" that this was the ministry which was committed unto them.

Now, if the Apostle had spoken here of sanctification, he would have said, that the ministry committed unto him, with the rest, was a ministry of sanctification, as well as reconciliation; but the ministry God committed to him here was this, God reconciling men to himself by Jesus Christ; so that the being a new creature here, which was the ministry committed to the Apostle, is reconciliation with God by Jesus Christ. Now in verse 19, the text that I have read unto you, he begins anew to explain more particularly, what this ministry is that the Lord hath committed unto him. "To wit, {saith he,} that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." And therefore, in the next verse you shall find that he makes this so essential a business to the ministry of the Gospel, that he calls himself, and the rest, ambassadors, and ambassadors for this very purpose, namely, in Christ's stead, to beseech people that they would be reconciled unto God; and then, in the closure of the chapter, he tells them what the fruits of this reconciliation are, and by what means we come to partake of it. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." From which words I might observe to you, as they have reference to the coherence.

First, what the great and main business of us that profess ourselves to be the ministers of Christ, ought to be in the world with men. It is to be lamented, I confess, and I would to God there were no occasion to speak of it, whilst we profess ourselves to be the ambassadors of Christ, to dispatch this great business, to beseech men in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God; we are too much the ministers of Moses, pressing and thundering the wrath of God from heaven; publishing unto men the working out their own salvation by their own works, according to the law; putting on them the performance of duties in every particular, that they may have peace and joy of spirit from it; telling them, that they must make their peace with God, by fasting, and prayer, and mourning. Is this to beseech men in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God by Christ alone? This is the message of the ministers of the Gospel; and whoever he be that forsakes this message, he goes, and is not sent; he takes upon him to manage a business out of his commission; for the commission is, that we in Christ's stead should beseech men to be reconciled unto God, and that by the blood of Christ alone.

Secondly, I might note a thing, which, peradventure, puzzles the heads of many people, how you may understand those many texts of Scripture that speak so largely of the extent of the death of Christ, "he died not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world;" and so, verse 14, "if one died for all then were all dead." From whence many collect the universality of redemption unto all particular persons in the world; but from this coherence you may plainly perceive, that the Apostle's main drift is not that every particular person partakes of reconciliation by Christ; he doth not speak of every particular, but in opposition to the Jews; as if he should say, you mistake yourselves, you that are of the Jews, that boast of Christ, as if there were no Christ but in yourselves; no, saith he, you are mistaken, he goes beyond you, he goes over all the world.² And when John saith, {I Jn.2:2,} "and he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" he doth not say ours, in reference to believers, but he saith ours, as he was naturally of the stock of Abraham; when he saith, "not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world," he doth not oppose the world unto the elect, but the world of the elect unto the Jews; and his meaning is, all the world hath a part in Christ, and in every corner of it there is a portion of Christ, as well as there is in us, who are of the seed of Abraham; and, therefore, the Apostle saith expressly that "the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith;" {Rom.4:13;} that is, not made to Abraham and to his seed after the flesh, but to his seed after the Spirit; that is, those that walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham. By this you may be able to resolve those manifold difficulties that arise from the universality of the tender of grace by Christ unto the world; the world, I say, is opposed only unto the narrow confines of the Jews, and includes not particular persons; but this is not that I mainly drive at for the present. I come to the text itself. The substance of the main ministry of the Apostle stands in this, that "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." In which you may observe with me.

First, the great grace, that living, lively, and heart-reviving grace the Apostle brings to light, and commends to the comforting of the hearts of God's people, and that is reconciliation with God. Secondly, note here, the original author or efficient of this reconciliation and grace, that is, God himself. Thirdly, note also, the main means by which this reconciliation is effected, and that is Christ

² {Note: The learned Hoornbeeck asserts that the Doctor from this passage, and I John 2:2, after quoted, "collects the universality of the redemption of all particular persons in the world, though all are not partakers of that reconciliation;" in which this learned man appears to be mistaken; for the Doctor does not collect this himself, but only says, "many collect it from hence;" and he himself seems to be of a different mind by the adversative 'but' from this coherence, &c., and expressly says, the Apostle does not speak of every particular person, but in opposition to the Jews; and so, on the other text, I John 2:2, he observes, that the Apostle does not oppose the world unto the elect, but the world of the elect to the Jews; and suggests that there are some in all the world, and in every corner of it, that have a part in Christ, and are his portion; which is very far from the doctrine of general redemption; and though the Doctor sometimes uses some general phrases, when off his guard, yet I cannot think he held the doctrine of universal redemption; and this learned Professor himself, who is the only one I ever met with that charged the Doctor with it, seems to have some hesitation himself about it; for he says, [of the Doctor and those in his time called Antinomians,] "they teach some sort of universal redemption, or universal redemption in some sense." Gill.}

himself alone; "God was in Christ." Fourthly, note this, the time when this reconciliation was made between God and persons in particular. The Apostle himself, though he lived so many years before us, speaks of it as a thing already past; he doth not say that God is, or will be, but he speaks in the past-perfect tense that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself;" it is a thing long before finished perfectly to our hands; that we may, when God hath given us eyes to behold it, see it as a thing already done, and perfected before, and not now perfecting, much less now to be begun. Fifthly, we may note the persons with whom God in Christ is reconciled, and that is the world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself."

The principal thing I mean to drive at is the consideration of the great grace that the Apostle brings hereto light; and that is, reconciliation with God; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." What is it {will you say} for God to be reconciled to persons?

For the clearing of this, first note, something is to be premised as a necessary antecedent to reconciliation itself. Unto reconciliation, of necessity there must be supposed something to be done by us, occasioning a breach between God and us; administering such just cause of distaste, and of offence, as not only caused God to separate himself afar off from men, but also to prepare wrath and vengeance. Wherever there is reconciliation, it is supposed there was a breach made; and, upon the breach made, reconciliation is the bringing persons, thus at distance and difference by a breach, to become one again; and, therefore, you must know, there is no man under heaven reconciled unto God, but as he is, or was considered as walking contrary unto God; and that this contrary walking unto him hath occasioned a breach between God and him. And, therefore, you shall find, when the Apostle speaks of our being reconciled unto God, he brings still in this clause, that there were estrangement and distance, before such union and reconciliation; as in Eph.2:13, where you shall find how he brings in the previous consideration; "but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." This making nigh, or bringing together, is the reconciliation that is made with God; and the persons that are thus made nigh, before their bringing nigh, are said to be afar off; as much as to say, there is that contrariety between God and man naturally, that puts him afar off from God, and makes him remote. The Lord beholds the wicked afar off, saith the Psalmist, "though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off." {Ps.138:6} God keeps at a distance with men, when they walk in a way giving distaste and offence unto him; and it is the business of Christ to bring them nigh again, those that were thus sometimes afar off. But the Apostle speaks more plainly in Col.1:21; "you, {saith he,} that were sometime alienated {or estranged, that is to say, from God} and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Here he not only shows that there is a remote distance, and a kind of estrangement between God and men, before reconciliation; but he delivers the true proper ground from whence this alienation proceeds; "who were alienated in your minds by reason of your wicked works;" our wicked works are they that cause alienation and estrangement from God; "and you, that were sometime alienated," are now reconciled by Christ; "in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight." And, therefore know, this must be laid down as a certain position, and be received of men, that in respect of themselves they are alienated and estranged persons, and the wickedness of their ways is that which causeth this alienation, and estrangement and separation from God.

But some {it may be} will object; was there ever a time that God was alienated and estranged as an enemy to those people of his, with whom he is now reconciled? Some will say, God loves his people with an everlasting love, and he never looks upon his people but with a look of love, and with a look of union.

For answer to this, give me leave to clear a mystery unto you; this seems to be a kind of paradox, that God should, from all eternity, look with eyes of love upon his people, and yet there should be a time in which there should be an alienation or enmity between God and them. For the reconciliation of this difference, you must know, it is one thing for God to recollect all future things that shall come in all the several times of the world, into one thought of his own; and it is another thing for these things to come to pass in their several times, according to their own nature. You must

know, it is true, that in God's eternal thoughts, according to the infinite vastness of his own comprehension, he did sum up, from first to last, all the occurrences and passages which in succession of time should come to pass. As for example; he had at once in his eye man in his innocency, in his fall, and in his restoration by Christ; he had in his eye man committing sin against him from time to time; and, at the same instant, had in his eye Christ dying for these sins of men, and so satisfying his own justice for their transgressions. Now, because God had all things at once in his eye, which, in respect of their actual being, are in succession of time; therefore, it comes to pass, that God, from all eternity, had everlasting love unto his own people, though in time they do those actions which, in their own nature, are enmity against God. For example; you and I are, it may be, this moment committing some sin, which is enmity to the nature of God; that sin, simply considered in its own nature, hath an estrangement in it, to separate between us and God; but though it is true, that sin committed hath, in its own nature, a power of separating; yet, as God from all eternity had the present sins we now commit, in his eye, and at the same moment had the satisfaction in his eye; from hence it comes to pass, there was not a time in which God actually stood at enmity with our persons; but, in respect of the nature of things coming successively to pass, man's condition may be considered as a condition of enmity; and again, it may be considered as a condition of reconciliation to God. That you and I were born in sin is true, and that this our being born in sin was a state of enmity against God, is as true; that in the fulness of time Christ came into the world, and then actually did bear our sins, by which God became reconciled unto us again, is also most certainly true. There is a great distance of time between sin committed, and that satisfaction actually made; but in respect of God's eye looking upon all things at once, there is no distance of time between that enmity which sin did produce, and that reconciliation which the blood of Christ hath wrought, to take away this enmity. I hope, though this be a high mystery, yet it will be clear to such that will but take into consideration that difference between God's own simple act of comprising all the sins of the world at once, {I mean that infinite act of God in that infinite comprehension of his,} and the succession of things in their own time and nature; this being supposed, that persons actually do that which is enmity, and that which makes a difference and separation.

Reconciliation itself briefly stands in this, namely, that whatever breach there was, or was occasioned by any act of man in it, all these breaches are quite made up, and taken away; when God is reconciled to persons, he hath no more quarrel with, nor controversy against them with whom he is reconciled; though this day, yesterday, tomorrow, and the next day, thou dost commit a sin, which, in its own nature, is enmity, and may occasion a breach between God and thee; yet, I say, if God be once reconciled, all whatever administers any quarrel or controversy between God and thee, is absolutely taken up; he hath no more to object against thee, or to hit thee in the teeth withal. Understand, I beseech you, the nature of reconciliation, and you shall find there is more in it than usually is apprehended. You know as long as men stomach one another, and, as often as they have occasion, are quarrelling one with another; all this while these persons are not reconciled indeed, though peradventure there may be some complimentary shaking of hands; if still there be snarling one at another, and stomaching one another, they are not reconciled; so I say, is God quarrelling with thy spirit? Is he still hitting thee in the teeth with such and such sins that thou committest against him? Is the bitterness of God poured upon thee? Is his wrath revealed against thee? I say, if there be this wrath of God at any time truly revealed against thee, there is not yet a reconciliation of God towards thee. In reconciliation there are no old grudgings, quarrellings and controversies; there is no hearing of them anymore; in that there are forging and forgetting, as you use to say; and all this, whatever it is with men, it is thus with God; wherever God is reconciled, he forgives and forgets forever.

Therefore you shall find when the Lord speaks of reconciliation in the covenant, he saith, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people;" here is the drawing and making a person one with himself; "and your sins and your iniquities will I remember no more," follows it. I beseech you, observe it well, there is a great deal of matter in this expression, and this will give you rest if ever you have it. Either you must deny God is reconciled, or you must conclude he hath forgiven your transgressions, and he will remember your sins no more.

It may be you feel much corruption venting itself; though you act this and that transgression at this time, if God be reconciled to you, he doth not remember your sins you now commit. "Your sins," mark it well, because I know it is harsh to men, and contrary to sense and reason, yet it must be true, because the Lord hath spoken it; "your sins, and your iniquities, I will remember no more." You will say, when? I answer, when God is entered into covenant with a people; "and this shall be the covenant I will make in those days," saith the Lord, "I will sprinkle you with clean water, and your sins and iniquities I will remember no more." {Ez.36:25, Heb.10:16,17}

How can this be, you will say, is God grown so forgetful, that he takes no notice, that at this instant I sin, and cannot he remember I sin? This seems to be a mighty strange argument.

Now suppose I could not answer this; is this a truth that God saith, or no, "your sins and your iniquities I will remember no more?" If this be not a truth, then the word of God is untrue, and then farewell all the ground upon which a person ought to build; but let God be true, and every man a liar; therefore, to clear it, I say, God remembers, and knows well enough that we act this; his meaning then is, I will remember them no more, to hit you in the teeth with them; I will have no more to say to you for these transgressions you now commit; for all that he has to say against iniquity, against this present iniquity committed; he hath said it over to Christ already, when he was upon the cross; and this sin now committed was then in the remembrance of God; he took the full payment for it, and for that sin that shall be committed tomorrow, unto the end of the world, he took all the payment of Christ; therefore he will never repeat them over to you; this is God's way, not to hit his people in covenant in the teeth, nor upbraid them with any sin they commit; this is plain in the latter end of the text, "not imputing their trespasses unto them;" as if he had said, I will never call you to an account for the sins you commit; I will never tax you for them; you shall be in mine eyes as if you did not sin; all that I mean to ask, I have it already, at the hands of my Son. "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied;" {Is.53:11;} with the beholding of it. In Isa.27:4, you have a notable expression, "fury is not in me," saith God. You will say, how can that be; is not God angry? Doth he not pour out his wrath and vengeance? Doth not his fury burn against sin? The prophet speaks in the name of God in that place; "fury is not in me;" but if you will read the passage well, observe it, and you shall find of what time the Lord speaks this; he speaks not of the present, but of a certain time that he prophesies of. The Lord hath a vineyard, he watches over it, and waters it night and day; and this vineyard shall enlarge its borders, and shall spread itself over all the world; the meaning then is this; there is a time to come, wherein the people of the Lord, the vine of the Lord shall spread itself, not in the garden of Israel only, but all the world over; that is, the Gentiles shall be received into fellowship with God, as well as the Jews; Christ shall come, and pull down the wall of partition; and the Gospel of Christ shall be preached all the world over; then "fury shall not be in me;" when Christ hath offered up himself, and perfected forever them that are sanctified, then the Lord hath no more fury to pour out upon such as are in him; when your reconciliation is made with God; know from the first time of it till your last breath, there shall not be the least fury in God to you; for that is poured out upon Christ already, and there is not one drop of that poison to be poured out upon you. Isa.54:9, is a most admirable place; "as I have sworn {saith the Lord} that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee." What; God not be wroth with, nor so much as rebuke persons? Yea, so saith the Lord, "I will not be wroth," for I have sworn unto thee, that as the waters of Noah, &c. You know the Lord made a covenant, that there should never come a flood to drown the world anymore; this covenant is firm, so as that the water shall drown all the world again before God will be wroth with his people anymore; when is this? Look into the beginning of the chapter, and you shall see; when the Jews shall inherit the Gentiles, then it shall be.

But you will say, the Lord in that chapter saith, "in a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; and therefore it seems God was wroth and angry then, when he said he would not be wroth, and with the same people.

But mark it well, there is a great mistake, as if the Lord spake all in that chapter to the same people; he distinguisheth between his present dealing with them, and with his people afterwards,

when the Gentiles shall come into his fold; indeed it is true, he saith, he forsook this church as the wife of his youth, "but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer;" there was a time in which the Lord was wroth and hid his face; but there is a time when he will not only be kind, but will have mercy with everlasting kindness; that is, a kindness that hath no intervenings of wrath mixed, but that holds out, an everlasting love; and this mercy without any wrath between, should be when the people of the Jews should inherit the Gentiles; when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, by Christ's taking away the wall of partition.

In brief, know this as a certain truth, God once reconciled is so forever; God is not such a changeling as to be reconciled today, and fall out tomorrow again; God when he is once become friends with a man, he is so forever; nothing shall break squares between God and him. {Rom.8:38,39}

Again, consider by what means this reconciliation is wrought, and then it will be manifest unto you that God cannot be angry, for it is by Christ; "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." I ask this question, did Christ fully satisfy the indignation of God, or did he satisfy it only in part, leaving some remainders of it for the creature to come after and bear? If Christ did not fully satisfy indignation, he is but a piece of a Saviour; he did not save to the uttermost; he should be no perfect Saviour, if he did not satisfy the wrath of God to the uttermost; but if he did fully satisfy, as God himself "beheld the travail of his soul, and was satisfied;" then all indignation is past. Look as it is with men that are to make accounts; suppose a man should account for a hundred several sums, these accounts are not satisfied, except he satisfy and pay every sum; if he pay ninety-nine sums, and leaves but one unpaid, the creditor is not satisfied. Either Christ hath paid all, or some must come after to pay the rest; certainly indignation never ceases till there be complete satisfaction. Either God hath satisfaction perfectly in Christ, or a believer must pay the remainder; either he hath the full of Christ, or a believer himself must satisfy. Suppose that Christ had satisfied God's indignation for all sins but one, and a believer must satisfy that one; that one is enough to damn him forever; for he cannot give satisfaction for one sin.

If Christ had satisfied for all, and had taken away the whole indignation, how can God come and pour out new indignation? And {to conclude} know this, that this perfect reconciliation, this peace with God, is not a thing now to be agitated, and controverted in heaven; as if there were an act of parliament now in hand, in hope it will pass, which must have some fear with it, lest it should miscarry; but God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. Let me tell you, whoever you are that can claim a part in Christ, your reconciliation is finished to your hands; Christ is now making reconciliation in heaven for you; "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself;" he is not now reconciling; the thing is finished; your reconciliation is complete. God hath past it not only by vote and consent in heaven, but he hath past it upon record under his hand, in the ministry of the Gospel; we hold out to you reconciliation accomplished; we do not hold it forth as doing, or to be done with him; but it is done with him; if you do but close with it, the thing is finished for you.