that He is:’ the relative has an argumentative force) **is the beginning** (of the  
Church of the First-born, being Himself  
*first-born from the dead*. Compare “*Christ  
the firstfruits,*” 1 Cor. xv. 23, and especially  
Gen. xlix. 3; Deut. xxi. 17; Rev. iii. 14.  
But the word evidently has, standing as it  
does here alone, a wider and more glorious  
reference than that of mere temporal precedence: see note on Rev. iii. 14: He is  
the Beginning, in that in Him is begun  
and conditioned the Church, vv. 19, 20),  
**the First-born from** (among) **the dead** (i.e.  
the first who arose from among the dead:  
but the term *first-born* [see above] being  
predicated of Christ in both references, he  
uses it here, regarding the resurrection as  
a kind of birth. On that which is implied  
in *it*, see above on ver. 15); **that He** (emphatic again: see above) **may become** (the  
*aim* and *purpose* of this his priority over  
creation and in resurrection) **in all things  
pre-eminent** (*first in rank*: the word is a  
transitional one, from priority in time to  
priority in dignity, and shews incontestably  
that the two ideas have been before the  
Apostle’s mind throughout).

**19**.] *Confirmatory of the above-said priority:—’of  
which there can be no doubt, since it  
pleased*,’ &c.—**Because in Him He was  
pleased** (the subject here is naturally understood to be *God*, as expressed in 1 Cor.  
i. 21; Gal. i. 15: clearly not *Christ*, as  
some think, thereby inducing a manifest  
error in the subsequent clause, ‘by Himself  
He willed to reconcile all things to Himself,’ for it was not to Christ but to the  
Father that all things were reconciled by  
Him, see 2 Cor. v. 19) **that the whole fulness** (of God, see ch. ii. 9; Eph. iii. 19, and  
on *the word*, note, Eph. i. 10, 23. We  
must bear in mind here, with Meyer, that  
the meaning is not active, *that which fills any thing*, but passive, *that with which any  
thing is filled:* all that fulness of grace  
which is the complement of the divine  
character, and which dwells permanently  
in Christ. The various other interpretations see in my Greek Test.) **should dwell**(“this indwelling is the foundation of the  
reconciliation,” Bengel);

**20.**] **through Him** (as the instrument, in Redemption as  
in Creation, sce above ver. 16 end) **to reconcile again** (see note on Eph. ii. 16) **all  
things** (the universe : not to be limited to  
‘*all intelligent beings,*’ or ‘*all men*,’ or  
‘*the whole Church*:’ these *all things* are  
broken up below into terms which will  
admit of no such limitation. On the fact,  
see below) **to Him** (viz. to **Himself**, i.e. to  
God, Eph. ii. 16: the writer has in his  
mind two Persons, both expressed by *He*  
and *Him*, and to be understood from the  
context); **having made peace** (the subject  
is not Christ [as in Eph. i. 15], but the  
Father: He is the subject in the whole  
sentence since the beginning of ver. 19) **by  
means of the blood of** (genitive possessive,  
belonging to, figuratively, as being shed  
on) **His cross,—through Him** (emphatic  
repetition, to bring HIM, the Person of  
Christ, into its place of prominence again,  
after the interruption occasioned by the  
last clause),—**whether** (*all things* consist  
of) t**he things on the earth, or the  
things in the heavens.**—It has been a  
question, in what sense this reconciliation  
is predicated of the whole universe. Short  
of this meaning we cannot stop: we cannot hold with Erasmus and others, that  
it is a reconciliation of the *various portions of creation to one another* : nor, for  
the same reason, with Schleiermacher, understand that the elements to be reconciled  
are the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who were at  
variance about earthly and heavenly things,