

out the requirements of that which God is, and of His claims upon us, is to shut out God in the most plausible way, in order to gratify our own hearts. Divine love, then, which acts according to the nature, character, and will of God, is that which ought to direct and characterise our whole Christian walk, and have authority over every movement of our hearts. Without this, all that brotherly love can do is to substitute man for God.

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1 JOHN iv. 7, &c.

Here it will be worth our while to notice the order of this remarkable passage (7-20). We possess the nature of God, consequently we love; we are born of Him and we know Him. But the manifestation of love *towards* us in Christ Jesus is the *proof* of that love; it is thus that we know it (11-16); we enjoy it by dwelling in it. It is present life in the love of God, by the presence of His Spirit in us; the enjoyment of that love by communion, in that God dwells in us, and we thus dwell in Him (17); His love is perfected with us; the perfection of that love, viewed in the place that it has given us—we are, in this world, such as Christ is (18, 19); it is thus fully perfected with us—love to sinners, communion, perfection before God, gives us the moral and characteristic elements of that love, what it is in our relationship with God.

In the first passage, where the Apostle speaks of the manifestation of this love, he does not go beyond the fact that one who loves is born of God.