

What an angel is, save as the part of connection with God necessarily reveals some elements of his nature, he does not know. He that loves, knows God, for he is born of Him, being partaker of the divine nature: a blessed truth, the spring (righteousness being introduced,) of eternal joy and infinite delight.

But when we come to the practice down here, we find difficulty in it. I love the brethren: what coldness after all, often self has come in, and I fail in love. I cannot trust my own heart a minute. Can I really say I am born of God and know God when I find so much in a treacherous heart that belies after all what I desire? I hope, I fear—there is no liberty of spirit. And it is so far well; but, therefore, the blessed Spirit gives us the knowledge of love from another side, and where it is perfect: in God Himself, His ways and dealings. In this the love of God is *manifested* towards us, in our case. But let me briefly analyse the passage, that we may seize its completeness and bearing. First, in verses 9, 10, God's love to the sinner; verse 12, the enjoyment of His love in the saint; and 17, perfected in the boldness it gives us for the day of judgment.

First, His love to us as sinners. The eternal object of God's delight, His only begotten Son, was sent in blessing to us, and with this two fold object—first the positive blessing, what is given, that we might live through Him. We were dead in sin, God gives us a new life—a divine life. We no