

That it is by the truth of the gospel received by the sinner that soul is born again is evident from the latter part of our Saviour's conversation with the Jewish Ruler. He illustrates the way in which the new birth is produced by the brazen serpent. As a penalty for disobedience the Israelites were bitten by fiery serpents. As a remedy Moses was commanded to make a serpent of brass and set it upon a pole, that whosoever looked to it might live. This brazen serpent was a means of cure to the serpent-bitten Israelites; looking to it they lived; at the same time it was evidence to them of the love of that God against whom their sins had been committed. The brazen serpent to which they looked, and, by looking to which, were healed, was to them an unfolding of the heart of God. The Son of man was lifted up on the Cross; he made full atonement for the sins of mankind. By looking to him pardon is received. The atonement is the ground of pardon, and faith in the atonement is the condition on which God bestows it. To be pardoned therefore it is necessary that you believe that Jesus died for your sins. But the truth that Jesus made propitiation for your sins leads you to see into the heart of God. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." This truth respecting the love of God in the gift of Christ is the means by which the blessed Spirit produces love to God in the soul. Love begets love. The love of God in the gift of Christ as your atoning Saviour is love to you as a sinner. Christ did not die to make it true that God loves you; he died to open a channel for the righteous forthflowing of the love of God to your soul. Christ the unspeakable gift is the mighty blessing, which the river of the divine love has borne to the souls of men. You need not look for a greater or more precious gift. Look to Christ as your atoning Saviour—to the love of God in giving him up to suffer and die in your room—to God as well-pleased in Christ towards you and you will love God. By faith in Jesus you are born into God's family; and the truth about God's love to you in the gift of Christ, whose atonement for your sins God has accepted, is the instrument used by the Holy Spirit to restore to you the disposition of a child: and you cry Abba, Father. Loving God, you will delight in God and in doing his will. It is thus by receiving the incorruptible seed of the truth about Jesus into your mind, that you are born again. The Spirit begets the soul anew with the word of truth. The love of God to you in the gift of Jesus aton-