

1. A continuous communion with God the Father and with Jesus Christ.

2. A continuous sense of unity, fellowship, with the Christian brotherhood.

3. A continuous sense of freedom from sin through the atonement.

4. An unmistakable discernment of moral truth and duty.

5. A full assurance of hope, boldness in the day of judgment, the absence of all fear.

6. A full and abiding apprehension of God's love. "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him."

This high state of experience is its own attestation: "Ho that believeth hath the witness in himself."

But while St. John dwells so largely upon the distinct experience of this higher state, he too, like Paul, speaks largely of its moral results in the character and life. He that is thus "born of God doth not commit sin." He is full of loving compassion to his brethren. He is freed from the love of the world as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and especially from the spirit of hatred. He keeps God's commandments and does not find them grievous.

But St. John goes even further, and sees in this spirit of perfect love, a guide in matters of Christian doctrine, concerning which he says, "Ye have an unction from the Holy Ghost and ye know all things." This passage is evidently related to the promises contained in St. John's Gospel concerning the gift and guidance of the Comforter: "He shall guide you into all truth," etc. There has been a disposition to take these promises in a purely supernatural way as a direct magical communication of all knowledge, or, at least, of all needed knowledge. This idea appeared in the early days among the Montanists, and it has reappeared in almost every century since. St. John is indeed a mystic, a profound mystic, as we have seen, holding up to view the pure, distinct, inner consciousness, the experience of religion as we phrase it, as no other New Testament writer has done, and even distinguishing its higher and perfect form from all lower forms. But we have already seen with what strong