

The nature of God, which is love, being in us, he who loves knows Him, for he is born of Him, has His nature and realizes what it is.

It is that which God has been with regard to the sinner, which demonstrates His nature of love. Afterwards, that which we learnt as sinners, we enjoy as saints. The perfect love of God is shed abroad in the heart, and we dwell in Him. Already as He (Jesus) is, in this world, fear has no place in one to whom the love of God is a dwelling-place and rest.

The reality of our love to God, fruit of His love to us, is now tested. If we say that we love God and do not love the brethren, we are liars; for if the divine nature so near us (in them) does not awaken our spiritual affections, how then can He who is afar off do so? Accordingly, this is His commandment, that he who loves God love his brother also. (See also chap. v. 1, 2.)

But a danger exists on the other side. It may be, that we love the brethren because they furnish us with agreeable society, whose conscience is not wounded. A counter-proof is therefore given us. "Hereby we know that we love the children of God, if we love God and keep His commandments." If I walk with the brethren themselves in disobedience to their Father, it is certainly not because they are His children that I love them. If it was because I loved the Father and because they were His children, I should assuredly like them to obey Him. To walk, then, in disobedience with the children of