

The Spirit of Love - Part 2

by William Law

The sermon explores the idea that God is all goodness and can only will goodness, and that the supposed wrath of God is not a real attribute of God but rather a manifestation of the disorder or bad state of being of humanity.

Scripture: Psalm 136:1, John 3:16, Romans 5:8, Ephesians 2:4, 1 John 4:8

Topics: "God's Love", "Nature of Wrath"

Description

William Law discusses the nature of God as an infinite source of love, emphasizing that God's essence is unchanging and cannot include wrath or anger. He argues that all creatures exist to manifest God's love and goodness, and that any notion of divine wrath arises only from the fallen state of creation, not from God's nature. Law asserts that true goodness and happiness can only be found in the union of the divine life with human existence, and that the concept of wrath attributed to God in scripture must be understood in the context of human disobedience and separation from divine love.

Transcript

THE

FIRST DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

Theogenes, Eusebius, and Theophilus.

[Love-2.1-1] Theogenes. Dear Theophilus, this Gentleman is Eusebius, a very valuable and worthy Curate in my Neighbourhood; he would not let me wait any longer for your second Letter of the Spirit of Love, nor be content till I consented to our making you this Visit. And indeed, we are both on the same Errand and in equal Impatience to have your full Answer to that Part of my Objection, which you reserved for a second Letter.

[Love-2.1-2] Theophilus. My Heart embraces you both with the greatest Affection, and I am much pleased at the Occasion of your Coming which calls me to the most delightful Subject in the World, to help both you and myself to rejoice in that adorable Deity whose infinite Being is an Infinity of mere Love, an unbeginning, never-ceasing, and forever overflowing Ocean of Meekness, Sweetness, Delight, Blessing, Goodness, Patience, and Mercy, and all this as so many blessed Streams breaking out of the Abyss of universal Love, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, a Triune Infinity of Love and Goodness, for ever and ever

giving forth nothing but the same Gifts of Light and Love, of Blessing and Joy, whether before or after the Fall, either of Angels or Men.

[Love-2.1-3] Look at all Nature, through all its Height and Depth, in all its Variety of working Powers; it is what it is for this only End, that the hidden Riches, the invisible Powers, Blessings, Glory, and Love of the unsearchable God, may become visible, sensible, and manifest in and by it.

[Love-2.1-4] Look at all the Variety of Creatures; they are what they are for this only End, that in their infinite Variety, Degrees, and Capacities, they may be as so many speaking Figures, living Forms of the manifold Riches and Powers of Nature, as so many Sounds and Voices, Preachers, and Trumpets, giving Glory and Praise and Thanksgiving to that Deity of Love which gives Life to all Nature and Creature.

[Love-2.1-5] For every Creature of unfallen Nature, call it by what name you Will, has its Form, and Power, and State, and Place in Nature, for no other End, but to open and enjoy, to manifest and rejoice in some Share of the Love, and Happiness, and Goodness of the Deity, as springing forth in the boundless Height and Depth of Nature.

[Love-2.1-6] Now this is the one Will and Work of God in and through all Nature and Creature. From Eternity to Eternity he can will and intend nothing toward them, in them, or by them, but the Communication of various Degrees of his own Love, Goodness, and Happiness to them, according to their State, and Place, and Capacity in Nature. This is God's unchangeable Disposition toward the Creature; He can be nothing else but all Goodness toward it, because he can be nothing toward the Creature but that which he is, and was, and ever shall be in Himself.

[Love-2.1-7] God can no more begin to have any Wrath, Rage, or Anger in Himself, after Nature and Creature are in a fallen State, than He could have been infinite Wrath and boundless Rage everywhere, and from all Eternity. For nothing can begin to be in God, or to be in a new State in Him; every Thing that is in Him is essential to Him, as inseparable from Him, as unalterable in Him as the triune Nature of his Deity.

[Love-2.1-8] Theogenes. Pray, Theophilus, let me ask you, does not Patience and Pity and Mercy begin to be in God, and only then begin, when the Creature has brought itself into Misery? They could have no Existence in the Deity before. Why then may not a Wrath and Anger begin to be in God, when the Creature has rebelled against him, though it neither had nor could have any Existence in God before?

[Love-2.1-9] Theophilus. 'Tis true, Theogenes, that God can only then begin to make known his Mercy and Patience, when the Creature has lost its Rectitude and Happiness, yet nothing then begins to be in God or to be found in him, but that which was always in him in the same infinite State, viz., a Will to all Goodness, and which can will nothing else. And his Patience and Mercy, which could not show forth themselves till Nature and Creature had brought forth Misery, were not new Tempers, or the Beginning of some new Disposition that was not in God before, but only new and occasional Manifestations of that boundless eternal Will to all Goodness, which always was in God in the same Height and Depth. The Will to all Goodness, which is God himself, began to display itself in a new Way when it first gave Birth to Creatures. The same Will to all Goodness began to manifest itself in another new Way, when it became Patience and Compassion toward fallen Creatures. But neither of these Ways are the Beginning of any new Tempers or Qualities in God, but only new and occasional Manifestations of that true eternal Will to all Goodness, which always was, and always will be, in the same Fullness of Infinity in God.

[Love-2.1-10] But to suppose that when the Creature has abused its Power, lost its Happiness and plunged itself into a Misery, out of which it cannot deliver itself, to suppose that then there begins to be something in the holy Deity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that is not of the Nature and Essence of God, and which was not there before, viz., a Wrath, and Fury, and vindictive Vengeance, breaking out in Storms of Rage and Resentment because the poor Creature has brought Misery upon itself, is an Impiety and Absurdity that cannot be enough abhorred. For nothing can be in God, but that which He is and has from Himself, and therefore no Wrath can be in the Deity itself, unless God was in Himself, before all Nature, and from all Eternity, an Infinity of Wrath.

[Love-2.1-11] Why are Love, Knowledge, Wisdom, and Goodness said to be infinite and eternal in God, capable of no Increase or Decrease, but always in the same highest State of Existence? Why is his Power eternal and omnipotent, his Presence not here, or there, but everywhere the same? No Reason can be assigned, but because nothing that is temporary, limited, or bounded, can be in God. It is his Nature to be that which He is, and all that He is, in an infinite, unchangeable Degree, admitting neither higher, nor lower, neither here nor there, but always, and everywhere, in the same unalterable State of Infinity. If therefore Wrath, Rage, and Resentment could be in the Deity itself, it must be an unbeginning, boundless, never-ceasing Wrath, capable of no more, or less, no up or down, but always existing, always working, and breaking forth in the same Strength, and everywhere equally burning in the Height and Depth of the abyssal Deity. There is no medium here; there must be either all or none, either no Possibility of Wrath, or no Possibility of its having any Bounds. And therefore, if you would not say, that every Thing that has proceeded, or can, or ever shall proceed from God, are and can be only so many Effects of his eternal and omnipotent Wrath, which can never cease, or be less than infinite; if you will not hold this monstrous Blasphemy, you must stick close to the absolute Impossibility of Wrath having any Existence in God. For nothing can have any Existence in God, but in the Way and Manner as his Eternity, Infinity, and Omnipotence have their Existence in him. Have you any Thing to object to this?

[Love-2.1-12] Theogenes. Indeed, Theophilus, both Eusebius and myself have been from the first fully satisfied with what has been said of this Matter in the Book of Regeneration, the Appeal, and the Spirit of Prayer, &c. We find it impossible to think of God as subject to Wrath, or capable of being inflamed by the Weakness, and Folly, and Irregularity of the Creature. We find ourselves incapable of thinking any otherwise of God, than as the one only Good, or, as you express it, an eternal immutable Will to all Goodness, which can will Nothing else to all Eternity, but to communicate Good, and Blessing, and Happiness, and Perfection to every Life, according to its Capacity to receive it.

[Love-2.1-13] Had I an hundred Lives, I could with more Ease part with them, all by suffering an hundred Deaths, than give up this lovely idea of God. Nor could I have any Desire of Eternity for myself, if I had not Hopes, that, by partaking of the Divine Nature, I should be eternally delivered from the Burden and Power of my own Wrath, and changed into the blessed Freedom of a Spirit, that is all Love, and a mere Will to Nothing but Goodness. An Eternity without this, is but an Eternity of Trouble. For I know of no Hell, either here or hereafter, but the Power and Working of Wrath, nor any Heaven, but where the God of Love is all in all, and the working Life of all. And therefore, that the holy Deity is all Love, and Blessing, and Goodness, willing and working only Love and Goodness to every Thing, as far as it can receive it, is a Truth as deeply grounded in me as the feeling of my own Existence. I ask you for no Proof of this; my only Difficulty is how to reconcile this Idea of God to the Letter of Scripture. First, Because the Scripture speaks so much and so often of the Wrath, and Fury, and vindictive Vengeance of God. Secondly, Because the whole Nature of our Redemption is so plainly grounded on such a supposed Degree of Wrath and

Vengeance in God, as could not be satisfied, appeased and atoned by any Thing less than the Death and Sacrifice of the only begotten Son of God.

[Love-2.1-14] Theophilus. I will do more for you, Theogenes, in this Matter than you seem to expect. I will not only reconcile the Letter of Scripture with the foregoing Description of God, but will show you, that every Thing that is said of the Necessity of Christ's being the only possible Satisfaction and Atonement of the vindictive Wrath of God is a full and absolute Proof that the Wrath of God spoken of never was, nor is, or possibly can be in God.

[Love-2.1-15] Eusebius. Oh! Theophilus, you have forced me now to speak, and I cannot contain the Joy that I feel in this Expectation which you have raised in me. If you can make the Scriptures do all that which you have promised to Theogenes, I shall be in Paradise before I die. For to know that Love alone was the Beginning of Nature and Creature, that nothing but Love encompasses the whole Universe of Things, that the governing Hand that overrules all, the watchful Eye that sees through all, is nothing but omnipotent and omniscient Love, using an Infinity of Wisdom, to raise all that is fallen in Nature, to save every misguided Creature from the miserable Works of its own Hands, and make Happiness and Glory the perpetual Inheritance of all the Creation is a Reflection that must be quite ravishing to every intelligent Creature that is sensible of it. Thus to think of God, of Providence, and Eternity, whilst we are in this Valley and Shadow of Death, is to have a real Foretaste of the Blessings of the World to come. Pray, therefore, let us hear how the Letter of Scripture is a Proof of this God of Love.

[Love-2.1-16] Theophilus. Before I do this, Eusebius, I think it requisite to show you, in a Word or two, the true Ground and Nature of Wrath in all its Kinds, what it is in itself, whence it has its Birth, Life, and Manner of Existence. And then you will see with your own Eyes why, and how, and where Wrath or Rage can, or cannot be. And until you see this fundamentally in the Nature of things, you cannot be at all qualified to judge of the Matter in Question, but must only think and speak at random, merely as your Imagination is led by the Sound of Words. For until we know, in the Nature of the Thing, what Wrath is in itself, and why, and how it comes into Existence, wherever it is, we cannot say, where it can enter or where it cannot. Nor can we possibly know what is meant by the Satisfaction, Appeasement, or Atonement of Wrath in any Being but by knowing how, and why, and for what Reason Wrath can rise and Work in any Being; and then only can we know how any Wrath, wherever raised, can be atoned or made to cease.

[Love-2.1-17] Now there are two Things, both of them visible to your outward Senses, which entirely open the true Ground and Nature of Wrath, and undeniably show what it is in itself, from whence it arises, and wherein its Life, and Strength, and Being consist. And these two Things are, a Tempest in the Elements of this World, and a raging Sore in the Body of Man, or any other Animal. Now that a Tempest in the Elements is Wrath in the Elements, and a Sore in the Body of an Animal a Wrath in the State of the Juices of the Body, is a Matter, I think, that needs no Proof or Explication. Consider, then, how or why a Tempest arises in the Elements, or an inflamed Sore in the Body, and then you have the true Ground and Nature of Wrath. Now a Tempest does not, cannot arise in the Elements whilst they are in their right State, in their just Mixture or Union with one another. A Sore does not, cannot break forth in the Body, whilst the Body is altogether in its true State and Temperature of its Juices. Hence you plainly see, that Wrath has its whole Nature, and only Ground of its Existence, in and by the Disorder or bad State of the Thing in which it exists and works. It can have no Place of Existence, no Power of breaking forth, but where the Thing has lost its proper Perfection, and is not as it ought to be. And therefore no good Being, that is in its proper State of Goodness, can, whilst it is in such a State, have any Wrath or Rage in it. And therefore, as a Tempest of any kind in the Elements, is a sure Proof that the Elements are not in their right State, but under Disorder,

as a raging Sore in the Body is a certain Indication that the Body is impure and corrupt, and not as it should be; so in whatever Mind, or intelligent Being, Wrath or Rage works and breaks forth, there, there is Proof enough, that the Mind is in that same impure, corrupt, and disordered State, as those Elements that raise a Tempest, and that Body which gives forth an inflamed Sore. And now, Gentlemen, what think you of a supposed Wrath, or Rage in God? Will you have such Things to be in the Deity itself as cannot have Place or Existence even in any Creature, until it is become disordered and impure and has lost its proper State of Goodness?

[Love-2.1-18] Eusebius. But pray, Theophilus, let me observe, that it does not yet appear to me, that there is but one Wrath possible to be in Nature and Creature. I grant there is such a Likeness in the Things you have appealed to, as is sufficient to justify Poets, Orators, or popular Speakers, in calling a Tempest Wrath, and Wrath a Tempest. But this will not do in our present Matter; for all that you have said depends upon this, whether, in a philosophic Strictness in the Nature of the Thing, there can be only one Wrath, wherever it is, proceeding strictly from the same Ground, and having everywhere the same Nature. Now if you can prove this Identity or Sameness of Wrath, be it where it Will, either in an intelligent Mind, the Elements of this World, or the Body of an Animal, then your Point is absolutely gained, and there can be no Possibility for Wrath to have any Existence in the Deity. But as Body and Spirit are generally held to be quite contrary to each other in their most essential Qualities, I do not know how you can sufficiently prove, that they can only have one Kind of Wrath, or that Wrath must have one and the same Ground and Nature, whether it be in Body or Spirit.

[Love-2.1-19] Theophilus. Wrath can have no better or other Ground and Nature in Body, than it has in Spirit, for this Reason, because it can have no Existence or Manner of working in the Body, but what it has directly from Spirit. And therefore, in every Wrath that is visible in any Body whatever, you have a true Manifestation of the Ground and Nature of Wrath, in whatever Spirit it is. And therefore, as there is but one Ground and Nature of Wrath in all outward Things, whether they be animate or inanimate, so you have Proof enough, that so it is with all Wrath in the Spirit or Mind. Because Wrath in any Body or outward Thing, is nothing else but the inward working of that Spirit, which manifests itself by an outward Wrath in the Body.

[Love-2.1-20] And what we call Wrath in the Body, is truly and strictly speaking, the Wrath of the Spirit in the Body.

[Love-2.1-21] For you are to observe, that Body begins not from itself, nor is any Thing of itself, but is all that it is, whether pure or impure, has all that it has, whether of Light or Darkness, and works all that it works, whether of Good or Evil, merely from Spirit. For nothing, my Friend, acts in the whole Universe of Things but Spirit alone. And the State, Condition, and Degree of every Spirit, is only and solely opened by the State, Form, Condition, and Qualities of the Body that belongs to it. For the Body can have no Nature, Form, Condition, or Quality but that which the Spirit that brings it forth, gives to it.

[Love-2.1-22] Was there no eternal, universal Spirit, there could be no eternal or universal Nature; that is, was not the Spirit of God everywhere, the Kingdom of Heaven, or the visible Glory of God, in an outward Majesty of Heaven, could not be everywhere. Now the Kingdom of Heaven is that to the Deity, which every Body is to the Spirit, which liveth, worketh, and manifesteth itself in it. But the Kingdom of Heaven is not God, yet all that it is, and has, and does, is only an outward Manifestation of the Nature, Power, and Working of the Spirit of God.

[Love-2.1-23] It is thus with every creaturely Spirit and its Body, which is the Habitation or Seat of its Power; and as the Spirit is in its Nature, Kind and Degree, whether heavenly, earthly, or hellish, so is its Body. Were there not creaturely Spirits, there could be no creaturely Bodies. And the Reason why there are creaturely Bodies of such various Forms, Shapes, and Powers, is because Spirits come forth from God in various Kinds and Degrees of Life, each manifesting its own Nature, Power, and Condition, by that Body which proceeds from it as its own Birth, or the Manifestation of its own Powers.

[Love-2.1-24] Now the Spirit is not Body, nor is the Body Spirit; they are so essentially distinct, that they cannot possibly lose their Difference, or be changed into one another; and yet all that is in the Body is from the Nature, Will, and Working of its Spirit. There is therefore no possible Room for a Supposition of two Kinds of Wrath, or that Wrath may have two Natures, the one as it is in Spirit, and the other as it is in Body; first, because nothing can be wrathful but Spirit, and secondly, because no Spirit can exert, or manifest Wrath but in and by its Body. The kindling its own Body is the Spirit's only Wrath. And therefore, through the whole Universe of Things, there is and can be but one possible Ground and Nature of Wrath, whether it be in the Sore of an animal Body, in a Tempest of the Elements, in the Mind of a Man, in an Angel, or in Hell.

[Love-2.1-25] Eusebius. Enough, enough, Theophilus. You have made it sufficiently plain, that Wrath can be no more in God Himself than Hell can be Heaven. And therefore we ask no more of you, but only to reconcile this with the Language and Doctrine of the holy Scriptures.

[Love-2.1-26] Theogenes. You are in too much Haste, Eusebius; it would be better to let Theophilus proceed further in this Matter. He has told us what Wrath is in itself, be it where it will; I should be glad to know its one true Original, or how, and where, and why it could possibly begin to be.

[Love-2.1-27] Theophilus. To inquire or search into the Origin of Wrath, is the same Thing as to search into the Origin of Evil and Sin: For Wrath and Evil are but two Words for one and the same Thing. There is no Evil in any Thing, but the Working of the Spirit of Wrath. And when Wrath is entirely suppressed, there can be no more Evil, or Misery, or Sin in all Nature and Creature. This therefore is a firm Truth, that nothing can be capable of Wrath, or be the Beginning of Wrath, but the Creature, because nothing but the Creature can be the Beginner of Evil and Sin.

[Love-2.1-28] Again, the Creature can have no Beginning, or Sensibility of Wrath in itself, but by losing the living Power, the living Presence, and governing Operation of the Spirit of God within it; or in other Words, by its losing that heavenly State of Existence in God, and Influence from Him which it had at its Creation.

[Love-2.1-29] Now no intelligent Creature, whether Angel or Man, can be good and happy but by partaking of, or having in itself, a two-fold Life. Hence so much is said in the Scripture of an inward and outward, an old and a new Man.-- For there could be no Foundation for this Distinction, but because every intelligent Creature, created to be good and happy, must of all Necessity have a two-fold Life in it, or it cannot possibly be capable of Goodness and Happiness, nor can it possibly lose its Goodness and Happiness, or feel the least Want of them, but by its breaking the Union of this two-fold Life in itself. Hence so much is said in the Scripture of the quickening, raising, and reviving the inward, new Man, of the new Birth from above, of Christ being formed in us, as the one only Redemption and Salvation of the Soul. Hence also the Fall of Adam was said to be a Death, that he died the Day of his Sin, though he lived so many hundred Years after it: it was because his Sin broke the Union of his two-fold Life and put an End to the heavenly Part of it, and left only one Life, the Life of this bestial, earthly World in him.

[Love-2.1-30] Now there is, in the Nature of the Thing, an absolute Necessity of this two-fold Life in every Creature that is to be good and happy; and the two-fold Life is this, it must have the Life of Nature, and the Life of God in it. It cannot be a Creature, and intelligent, but by having the Life and Properties of Nature; that is, by finding itself to be a Life of various Sensibilities, that hath a Power of Understanding, Willing, and Desiring: This is its creaturely Life, which, by the creating Power of God, it hath in and from Nature.

[Love-2.1-31] Now this is all the Life that is, or can be creaturely, or be a Creature's natural, own Life; and all this creaturely natural Life, with all its various Powers and Sensibilities, is only a Life of various Appetites, Hungers, and Wants, and cannot possibly be any Thing else. God Himself cannot make a Creature to be in itself, or as to its own Nature, any Thing else but a State of Emptiness, of Want, of Appetite, &c. He cannot make it to be good and happy, in and from its natural State: This is as impossible as for God to cease to be the one only Good. The highest Life, therefore, that is natural and creaturely, can go no higher than this; it can only be a bare Capacity for Goodness and Happiness, and cannot possibly be a good and happy Life, but by the Life of God dwelling in, and in Union with it. And this is the two-fold Life, that of all Necessity must be united in every good and perfect and happy Creature.

[Love-2.1-32] See here the greatest of all Demonstrations of the absolute Necessity of the Gospel Redemption and Salvation, and all proved from the Nature of the Thing. There can be no Goodness and Happiness for any intelligent Creature, but in and by this two-fold Life; and therefore the Union of the Divine and human Life, or the Son of God incarnate in Man, to make Man again a Partaker of the Divine Nature, is the one only possible Salvation for all the Sons of fallen Adam, that is, of Adam dead to, or fallen from his first Union with the Divine Life.

[Love-2.1-33] Deism, therefore, or a Religion of Nature, pretending to make Man good and happy without Christ, or the Son of God entering into Union with the human Nature, is the greatest of all Absurdities. It is as contrary to the Nature and Possibilities of Things as for mere Emptiness to be its own Fullness, mere Hunger to be its own Food, and mere Want to be its Possession of all Things. For Nature and Creature, without the Christ of God or the Divine Life in Union with it, is and can be nothing else but this mere Emptiness, Hunger, and Want of all that which can alone make it good and happy. For God himself, as I said, cannot make any Creature to be good and happy by any Thing that is in its own created Nature; and however high and noble any Creature is supposed to be created, its Height and Nobility can consist in nothing, but its higher Capacity and Fitness to receive a higher Union with the Divine Life, and also a higher and more wretched Misery, when left to itself, as is manifest by the hellish State of the fallen Angels. Their high and exalted Nature was only an enlarged Capacity for the Divine Life; and therefore, when this Life was lost, their whole created Nature was nothing else but the Height of Rage, and hellish Distraction.

[Love-2.1-34] A plain Demonstration, that there can be no Happiness, Blessing, and Goodness for any Creature in Heaven, or on Earth, but by having, as the Gospel saith, Jesus Christ made unto it, Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Peace with God.

[Love-2.1-35] And the Reason is this; it is because Goodness and Happiness are absolutely inseparable from God, and can be nowhere but in God. And on the other Hand, Emptiness, Want, Insufficiency, &c., are absolutely inseparable from the Creature, as such; its whole Nature cannot possibly be any Thing else, be it what or where it will, an Angel in Heaven, or a Man on Earth; it is and must be, in its whole creaturely Nature and Capacity, a mere Hunger and Emptiness, &c. And therefore all that we know of God, and all that we know of the Creature, fully proves, that the Life of God in Union with the creaturely

Life (which is the Gospel Salvation) is the one only Possibility of Goodness and Happiness in any Creature, whether in Heaven or on Earth.

[Love-2.1-36] Hence also it is enough certain, that this two-fold Life must have been the original State of every intelligent Creature, at its first coming forth from God. It could not be brought forth by God, to have only a creaturely Life of Nature, and be left to that; for that would be creating it under a Necessity of being in Misery, in Want, in Wrath, and all painful Sensibilities. A Thing more unworthy of God, and more impossible for Him to do, than to create numberless earthly Animals under a Necessity of being perpetually pained with Hunger and Thirst, without any Possibility of finding any Thing to eat or to drink.

[Love-2.1-37] For no creaturely Life can in itself be any higher, or better, than a State of Want, or a seeking for something that cannot be found in itself; and therefore, as sure as God is good, as sure as He would have intelligent Beings live a Life of Goodness and Happiness, so sure it is, that such Beings must of all Necessity, in their first Existence, have been blessed with a two-fold Life, viz., the Life of God dwelling in, and united with, the Life of Nature or created Life.

[Love-2.1-38] Eusebius. What an important Matter have you here proved, in the Necessity and Certainty of this two-fold Life in every intelligent Being that is to be good and happy: For this great Truth opens and asserts the certain and substantial Ground of the spiritual Life, and shows, that all Salvation is, and can be nothing else, but the Manifestation of the Life of God in the Soul. How clearly does this give the solid Distinction between inward Holiness, and all outward, creaturely Practices. All that God has done for Man by any particular Dispensations, whether by the Law, or the Prophets, by the Scriptures, or Ordinances of the Church, are only as Helps to a Holiness which they cannot give, but are only suited to the Death and Darkness of the earthly, creaturely Life, to turn it from itself, from its own Workings, and awaken in it a Faith and Hope, a Hunger and Thirst after that first Union with the Life of the Deity, which was lost in the Fall of the first Father of Mankind.

[Love-2.1-39] How unreasonable is it, to call perpetual Inspiration Fanaticism and Enthusiasm, when there cannot be the least Degree of Goodness or Happiness in any intelligent Being, but what is in its whole Nature, merely and truly the Breathing, the Life, and the Operation of God in the Life of the Creature? For if Goodness can only be in God, if it cannot exist separate from Him, if He can only bless and sanctify, not by a creaturely gift, but by Himself becoming the Blessing and Sanctification of the Creature, then it is the highest Degree of Blindness, to look for any Goodness and Happiness from any Thing, but the immediate Indwelling Union, and Operation of the Deity in the Life of the Creature. Perpetual Inspiration, therefore, is in the Nature of the Thing as necessary to a Life of Goodness, Holiness, and Happiness, as the perpetual Respiration of the Air is necessary to Animal Life.

[Love-2.1-40] For the Life of the Creature, whilst only creaturely, and possessing nothing but itself, is Hell; that is, it is all Pain and Want and Distress. Now nothing, in the Nature of the Thing, can make the least Alteration in this creaturely Life, nothing can help it to be in Light and Love, in Peace and Goodness, but the Union of God with it, and the Life of God working in it, because nothing but God is Light, and Love, and heavenly Goodness. And, therefore, where the Life of God is not become the Life and Goodness of the Creature, there the Creature cannot have the least Degree of Goodness in it.

[Love-2.1-41] What a mistake is it, therefore, to confine Inspiration to particular Times and Occasions, to Prophets and Apostles, and extraordinary Messengers of God, and to call it Enthusiasm, when the common Christian looks, and trusts to be continually led and inspired by the Spirit of God! For though all

are not called to be Prophets or Apostles, yet all are called to be holy, as He who has called them is holy, to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect, to be like-minded with Christ, to will only as God wills, to do all to his Honour and Glory, to renounce the Spirit of this World, to have their Conversation in Heaven, to set their Affections on Things above, to love God with all their Heart, Soul, and Spirit, and their Neighbour as themselves.

[Love-2.1-42] Behold a Work as great, as Divine and supernatural, as that of a Prophet and an Apostle. But to suppose that we ought, and may always be in this Spirit of Holiness, and yet are not, and ought not to be always moved and led by the Breath and Spirit of God within us, is to suppose that there is a Holiness and Goodness which comes not from God; which is no better than supposing that there may be true Prophets and Apostles who have not their Truth from God.

[Love-2.1-43] Now the Holiness of the common Christian is not an occasional Thing, that begins and ends, or is only for such a Time, or Place, or Action, but is the Holiness of that, which is always alive and stirring in us, namely, of our Thoughts, Wills, Desires, and Affections. If therefore these are always alive in us, always driving or governing our Lives, if we can have no Holiness or Goodness, but as this Life of Thought, Will, and Affection works in us, if we are all called to this inward Holiness and Goodness, then a perpetual, always-existing Operation of the Spirit of God within us, is absolutely necessary. For we cannot be inwardly led and governed by a Spirit of Goodness, but by being governed by the Spirit of God himself. For the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Goodness are not two Spirits, nor can we be said to have any more of the one, than we have of the other.

[Love-2.1-44] Now if our Thoughts, Wills, and Affections, need only be now and then holy and good, then, indeed, the moving and breathing Spirit of God need only now and then govern us. But if our Thoughts and Affections are to be always holy and good, then the holy and good Spirit of God is to be always operating, as a Principle of Life within us.

[Love-2.1-45] The Scripture saith, "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think a good Thought." If so, then we cannot be chargeable with not thinking, and willing that which is good, but upon this Supposition, that there is always a supernatural Power within us, ready and able to help us to the Good which we cannot have from ourselves.

[Love-2.1-46] The Difference then of a good and a bad Man does not lie in this, that the one wills that which is good, and the other does not, but solely in this, that the one concurs with the living inspiring Spirit of God within him and the other resists it, and is and can be only chargeable with Evil, because he resists it.

[Love-2.1-47] Therefore whether you consider that which is good or bad in a Man, they equally prove the perpetual Indwelling and Operation of the Spirit of God within us, since we can only be bad by resisting, as we are good by yielding to the Spirit of God; both which equally suppose a perpetual Operation of the Spirit of God within us.

[Love-2.1-48] How firmly our established Church adheres to this Doctrine of the Necessity of the perpetual Operation of the Holy Spirit, as the one only Source and Possibility of any Degree of Divine Light, Wisdom, Virtue, and Goodness in the Soul of Man, how earnestly she wills and requires all her Members to live in the most open Profession of it, and in the highest Conformity to it, may be seen by many such Prayers as these, in her common, ordinary, public Service.

[Love-2.1-49] "O God, forasmuch as without Thee we are not able to please Thee, grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all Things direct and rule our Hearts." Again, "We pray Thee, that thy Grace may ALWAYS prevent and follow us, and make us CONTINUALLY to be given to all good Works." Again, "Grant to us, Lord, we beseech Thee, the Spirit to think and do ALWAYS such things as be rightful, that we, who cannot do anything that is good without Thee, may by Thee be enabled to live according to thy Will." Again, "Because the Frailty of Man, without Thee cannot but Fall, keep us ever, by thy Help from all Things hurtful, and lead us to all Things profitable to our Salvation," &c. Again, "O God, from whom all good Things do come, grant to us thy humble Servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those Things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same."-- But now the true Ground of all this Doctrine of the Necessity of the perpetual Guidance and Operation of the Holy Spirit, lies in what has been said above, of the Necessity of a two-fold Life in every intelligent Creature that is to be good and happy. For if the creaturely Life, whilst alone, or left to itself, can only be Want, Misery, and Distress, if it cannot possibly have any Goodness or Happiness in it, till the Life of God is in Union with it, as one Life, then every Thing that you read in the Scripture of the Spirit of God, as the only Principle of Goodness, opens itself to you as a most certain and blessed Truth, about which you can have no doubt.

[Love-2.1-50] Theophilus. Let me only add, Eusebius, to what you have said, that from this absolute Necessity of a two-fold Life, in every Creature, that is, to be good and happy, we may, in a still greater Clearness see the Certainty of that which we have so often spoken of at other Times, namely, that the inspoken Word in Paradise, the Bruiser of the Serpent, the Seed of the Woman, the Immanuel, the holy Jesus (for they all mean the same Thing) is, and was the only possible Ground of Salvation for fallen Man. For if the two-fold Life is necessary, and Man could not be restored to Goodness and Happiness but by the restored Union of this two-fold Life into its first State, then there was an absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing, that every Son of Adam should have such a Seed of Heaven in the Birth of his Life, as could, by the Mediation of Christ, be raised into a Birth and Growth of the first perfect Man. This is the one Original Power of Salvation, without which, no external Dispensation could have done any Thing towards raising the fallen State of Man. For nothing could be raised, but what there was to be raised, nor Life be given to any Thing but to that which was capable of Life. Unless, therefore, there had been a Seed of Life, or a smothered Spark of Heaven in the Soul of Man, which wanted to come to the Birth, there had been no Possibility for any Dispensation of God, to bring forth a Birth of Heaven in fallen Man.

[Love-2.1-51] The Faith of the first Patriarchs could not have been in Being; Moses and the Prophets had come in vain, had not the Christ of God lain in a State of Hiddenness in every Son of Man. For Faith, which is a Will and Hunger after God, could not have begun to be, or have any Life in Man, but because there was something of the Divine Nature existing and hid in Man. For nothing can have any longing Desire but after its own Likeness, nor could any Thing be made to Desire God, but that which came from Him, and had the Nature of Him.

[Love-2.1-52] The whole mediatorial Office of Christ, from his Birth to his sitting down in Power at the right Hand of God, was only for this End, to help Man to a Life that was fallen into Death and Insensibility in him. And therefore his mediatorial Power was to manifest itself by Way of a new Birth. In the Nature of the Thing nothing else was to be done, and Christ had no other Way to proceed, and that for this plain Reason, because Life was the Thing that was lost, and Life, wherever it is, must be raised by a Birth, and every Birth must, and can only come from its own Seed.

[Love-2.1-53] But if Christ was to raise a new Life like his own in every Man, then every Man must have had originally, in the inmost Spirit of his Life, a Seed of Christ, or Christ as a Seed of Heaven, lying there

as in a State of Insensibility or Death, out of which it could not arise but by the mediatorial Power of Christ, who, as a second Adam, was to regenerate that Birth of his own Life, which was lost in all the natural Sons of Adam the first.

[Love-2.1-54] But unless there was this Seed of Christ, or Spark of Heaven hidden in the Soul, not the least Beginning of Man's Salvation, or of Christ's mediatorial Office could be made. For what could begin to deny Self, if there was not something in Man different from Self? What could begin to have Hope and Faith and Desire of an heavenly Life, if there was not something of Heaven hidden in his Soul, and lying therein, as in a State of Inactivity and Death, till raised by the Mediation of Christ into its first Perfection of Life, and set again in its true Dominion over Flesh and Blood?

[Love-2.1-55] Eusebius. You have, Theophilus, sufficiently proved the Certainty and Necessity of this Matter. But I should be glad if you knew how to help me to some more distinct Idea and Conception of it.

[Love-2.1-56] Theophilus. An Idea is not the Thing to be here sought for; it would rather hinder, than help your true Knowledge of it. But perhaps the following Similitude may be of some Use to you.

[Love-2.1-57] The Ten Commandments, when written by God on Tables of Stone, and given to Man, did not then first begin to belong to Man; they had their Existence in Man, were born with him, they lay as a Seed and Power of Goodness, hidden in the Form and Make of his Soul, and altogether inseparable from it, before they were shown to Man on Tables of Stone. And when they were shown to Man on Tables of Stone, they were only an outward Imitation of that which was inwardly in Man, though not legible because of that Impurity of Flesh and Blood, in which they were drowned and swallowed up. For the earthly Nature, having overcome the Divinity that was in Man, it gave Commandments of its own to Man, and required Obedience to all the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life.

[Love-2.1-58] Hence it became necessary, that God should give an outward Knowledge of such Commandments as were become inwardly unknown, unfelt, and, as it were, shut up in Death in the Soul.

[Love-2.1-59] But now, had not all that is in these Commandments been really and antecedently in the Soul, as its own Birth and Nature, had they not still lain therein, and, although totally suppressed, yet in such a Seed or Remains, as could be called forth into their first living State, in vain had the Tables of Stone been given to Man; and all outward Writing, or Teaching of the Commandments, had been as useless, as so many Instructions given to Beasts or Stones. If therefore you can conceive, how all that is good and holy in the Commandments, lay hid as an unfelt, unactive Power or Seed of Goodness, till called into Sensibility and stirring by Laws written on Tables of Stone, this may help your Manner of conceiving, and believing, how Christ as a Seed of Life or Power of Salvation, lies in the Soul as its unknown, hidden Treasure, till awakened and called forth into Life by the mediatorial Office and Process of the holy Jesus.

[Love-2.1-60] Again, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and thy Neighbour as thyself." Now these two Precepts, given by the written Word of God, are an absolute Demonstration of the first original Perfection of Man, and also a full and invincible Proof, that the same original Perfection is not quite annihilated, but lies in him as a hidden, suppressed Seed of Goodness, capable of being raised up to its first Perfection. For had not this Divine Unity, Purity, and Perfection of Love toward God and Man, been Man's first natural State of Life, it could have nothing to do with his present State. For had any other Nature, or Measure, or kind of Love begun in the first Birth of his Life, he could only have been called to that. For no Creature has, or can have a Call to be above, or act above its own Nature. Therefore, as sure as Man is called to this Unity, Purity, and Perfection of Love, so

sure is it, that it was, at first, his natural, heavenly State, and still has its Seed, or Remains within him, as his only Power and Possibility of rising up to it again. And therefore, all that Man is called to, every Degree of a new and perfect Life, every future Exaltation and Glory he is to have from the Mediation of Christ, is a full Proof, that the same Perfection was originally his natural State, and is still in him in such a Seed or Remains of Existence, as to admit of a perfect Renewal.

[Love-2.1-61] And thus it is, that you are to conceive of the holy Jesus, or the Word of God, as the hidden Treasure of every human Soul, born as a Seed of the Word in the Birth of the Soul, immured under Flesh and Blood, till as a Day-Star, it arises in our Hearts, and changes the Son of an earthly Adam into a Son of God.

[Love-2.1-62] And was not the Word and Spirit of God in us all, antecedent to any Dispensation or written Word of God, as a real Seed of Life in the Birth of our own Life, we could have no more Fitness for the Gospel-Redemption, than the Animals of this World, which have nothing of Heaven in them. And to call us to Love God with all our Hearts, to put on Christ, to walk according to the Spirit, if these Things had not their real Nature and Root within us, would be as vain and useless, as to make Rules and Orders how our Eyes should smell and taste, or our Ears should see.

[Love-2.1-63] Now this Mystery of an inward Life hidden in Man, as his most precious Treasure, as the Ground of all that can be great or good in him, and hidden only since his Fall, and which only can be opened and brought forth in its first Glory by Him to whom all Power in Heaven and on Earth is given, is a Truth to which almost every Thing in Nature bears full Witness. Look where you will, nothing appears, or works outwardly in any Creature, or in any Effect of Nature, but what is all done from its own inward invisible Spirit, not a Spirit brought into it, but its own inward Spirit, which is an inward invisible Mystery, till made known, or brought forth by outward Appearances.

[Love-2.1-64] The Sea neither is, nor can be moved and tossed by any other Wind, than that which hath its Birth, and Life, and Strength, in and from the Sea itself, as its own Wind. The Sun in the Firmament gives Growth to every Thing that grows in the Earth, and Life to every Thing that lives upon it, not by giving or imparting a Life from without, but only by stirring up in every Thing its own Growth, and its own Life, which lay as in a Seed or State of Death, till helped to come out of it by the Sun, which, as an Emblem of the Redeemer of the spiritual World, helps every earthly Thing out of its own Death into its own highest State of Life.

[Love-2.1-65] That which we call our Sensations, as seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling, are not Things brought into us from without, or given unto us by any external Causes, but are only so many inborn, secret States of the Soul, which lie in their State of Hiddenness till they are occasionally awakened, and brought forth into Sensibility by outward Occurrences. And were they not antecedently in the Soul, as States and Forms of its own Life, no outward Objects could bring the Soul into a Sensibility of them. For nothing can have, or be in any State of Sensation, but that which it is, and hath from itself, as its own Birth. This is as certain as that a Circle hath only its own Roundness.

[Love-2.1-66] The stinking Gum gives nothing to the Soul, nor brings any Thing into Sensibility but that which was before in the Soul; it has only a Fitness to awaken, and stir up that State of the Soul, which lay dormant before, and which when brought into Sensibility, is called the Sensation of bad Smelling. And the odoriferous Gum hath likewise but the same Power, viz., a Fitness to stir up that State of Sensation in the Soul, which is called its delightful Smelling. But both these Sensations are only internal States of the Soul,

which appear, or disappear, are found, or not found, just as Occasions bring them into Sensibility.

[Love-2.1-67] Again, the greatest Artist in Music can add no Sound to his Instrument, nor make it give forth any other Melody, but that which lieth silently hidden in it, as its own inward State.

[Love-2.1-68] Look now at what you will, whether it be animate, or inanimate: All that it is, or has, or can be, it is and has in and from itself, as its own inward State; and all outward Things can do no more to it, than the Hand does to the Instrument, make it show forth its own inward State, either of Harmony or Discord.

[Love-2.1-69] It is strictly thus with ourselves. Not a Spark of Joy, of Wrath, of Envy, of Love or Grief, can possibly enter into us from without, or be caused to be in us by any outward Thing. This is as impossible, as for the Sound of Metals to be put into a Lump of Clay. And as no Metal can possibly give forth any other, or higher Sound, than that which is enclosed within it, so we, however struck, can give forth no other or higher Sound either of Love, Hatred, Wrath, &c., than that very Degree which lay before shut up within us.

[Love-2.1-70] The natural State of our Tempers has Variety of Covers, under which they lie concealed at Times, both from ourselves and others; but when this or that Accident happens to displace such or such a Cover, then that which lay hid under it breaks forth. And then we vainly think, that this or that outward Occasion has not shown us how we are within, but has only infused or put into us a Wrath, or Grief, or Envy, which is not our natural State or of our own Growth, or has all that it has from our own inward State.

[Love-2.1-71] But this is mere Blindness and Self-Deceit, for it is as impossible for the Mind to have any Grief, or Wrath, or Joy, but what it has all from its own inward State, as for the Instrument to give forth any other Harmony, or Discord, but that which is within and from itself.

[Love-2.1-72] Persons, Things, and outward Occurrences may strike our Instrument improperly, and variously, but as we are in ourselves, such is our outward Sound, whatever strikes us.

[Love-2.1-73] If our inward State is the renewed Life of Christ within us, then every Thing and Occasion, let it be what it will, only makes the same Life to sound forth, and show itself; then if one Cheek is smitten, we meekly turn the other also. But if Nature is alive and only under a religious Cover, then every outward Accident that shakes or disturbs this Cover, gives Leave to that bad State, whether of Grief, or Wrath, or Joy that lay hid within us, to show forth itself.

[Love-2.1-74] But nothing at any Time makes the least Show, or Sound outwardly, but only that which lay ready within us, for an outward Birth, as Occasion should offer.

[Love-2.1-75] What a miserable Mistake is it therefore, to place religious Goodness in outward Observances, in Notions, and Opinions, which good and bad Men can equally receive and practise, and to treat the ready real Power and Operation of an inward Life of God in the Birth of our Souls as Fanaticism and Enthusiasm, when not only the whole Letter and Spirit of Scripture, but every Operation in Nature and Creature demonstrates that the Kingdom of Heaven must be all within us, or it never can possibly belong to us. Goodness, Piety, and Holiness, can only be ours, as thinking, willing, and desiring are ours, by being in us, as a Power of Heaven in the Birth and Growth of our own Life.

[Love-2.1-76] And now, Eusebius, how is the great controversy about Religion and Salvation shortened.

[Love-2.1-77] For since the one only Work of Christ as your Redeemer is only this, to take from the earthly Life of Flesh and Blood its usurped Power, and to raise the smothered Spark of Heaven out of its State of Death, into a powerful governing Life of the whole Man, your one only Work also under your Redeemer is fully known. And you have the utmost Certainty, what you are to do, where you are to seek, and in what you are to find your Salvation. All that you have to do, or can do, is to oppose, resist, and, as far as you can, to renounce the evil Tempers, and Workings of your own earthly Nature. You are under the Power of no other Enemy, are held in no other Captivity, and want no other Deliverance, but from the Power of your own earthly Self. This is the one Murderer of the Divine Life within you. It is your own Cain that murders your own Abel. Now every Thing that your earthly Nature does, is under the Influence of Self-will, Self-love, and Self-seeking, whether it carries you to laudable or blamable Practices, all is done in the Nature and Spirit of Cain and only helps you to such Goodness, as when Cain slew his Brother. For every Action and Motion of Self has the Spirit of Anti-christ and murders the Divine Life within you.

[Love-2.1-78] Judge not therefore of your Self, by considering how many of those Things you do, which Divines and Moralists call Virtue and Goodness, nor how much you abstain from those Things, which they call Sin and Vice.

[Love-2.1-79] But daily and hourly, in every Step that you take, see to the Spirit that is within you, whether it be Heaven, or Earth that guides you. And judge every Thing to be Sin and Satan, in which your earthly Nature, own Love, or Self-seeking has any Share of Life in you; nor think that any Goodness is brought to Life in you, but so far as it is an actual Death to the Pride, the Vanity, the Wrath, and selfish Tempers of your fallen, earthly Life.

[Love-2.1-80] Again, here you see, where and how you are to seek your Salvation, not in taking up your traveling Staff, or crossing the Seas to find out a new Luther or a new Calvin, to clothe yourself with their Opinions. No. The Oracle is at Home, that always and only speaks the Truth to you, because nothing is your Truth, but that Good and that Evil which is yours within you. For Salvation or Damnation is no outward Thing, that is brought into you from without, but is only That which springs up within you, as the Birth and State of your own Life. What you are in yourself, what is doing in yourself, is all that can be either your Salvation or Damnation.

[Love-2.1-81] For all that is our Good and all that is our Evil, has no Place nor Power but within us. Again, nothing that we do is bad, but for this Reason, because it resists the Power and working of God within us; and nothing that we do can be good but because it conforms to the Spirit of God within us. And therefore, as all that can be Good, and all that can be Evil in us, necessarily supposes a God working within us, you have the utmost Certainty that God, Salvation, and the Kingdom of Heaven, are nowhere to be sought, or found, but within you, and that all outward Religion from the Fall of Man to this Day, is not for itself, but merely for the Sake of an inward and Divine Life, which was lost when Adam died his first Death in Paradise. And therefore it may well be said, that Circumcision is nothing, and Uncircumcision is nothing, because nothing is wanted, and therefore nothing can be available, but the new Creature called out of its Captivity under the Death and Darkness of Flesh and Blood, into the Light, Life, and Perfection of its first Creation.

[Love-2.1-82] And thus also, you have the fullest Proof in what your Salvation precisely consists. Not in any historic Faith, or Knowledge of any Thing absent or distant from you, not in any Variety of Restraints, Rules, and Methods of practising Virtues, not in any Formality of Opinion about Faith and Works, Repentance, Forgiveness of Sins, or Justification and Sanctification, not in any Truth or Righteousness,

that you can have from yourself, from the best of Men or Books, but wholly and solely in the Life of God, or Christ of God quickened and born again in you, or in other Words, in the Restoration and perfect Union of the first two-fold Life in the Humanity.

[Love-2.1-83] Theogenes. Though all that has passed betwixt you and Eusebius, concerns Matters of the greatest Moment, yet I must call it a Digression, and quite useless to me. For I have not the least Doubt about any of these Things you have been asserting. It is visible enough, that there can be no Medium in this Matter; either Religion must be all spiritual or all carnal; that is, we must either take up with the Grossness of the Sadducees, who say there is neither Angel nor Spirit, or with such Purification as the Pharisees had from their washing of Pots and Vessels, and tithing their Mint and Rue; we must, I say, either acquiesce in all this Carnality, or we must profess a Religion that is all Spirit and Life, and merely for the sake of raising up an inward spiritual Life of Heaven that fell into Death in our first Father.

[Love-2.1-84] I consent also to every Thing that you have said of the Nature and Origin of Wrath. That it can have no Place, nor Possibility of Beginning, but solely in the creaturely Nature, nor even any Possibility of Beginning there, till the Creature has died to, or lost its proper State of Existence in God; that is, till it has lost that Life, and Blessing, and Happiness, which it had in and from God at its first Creation.

[Love-2.1-85] But I still ask, what must I do with all those Scriptures, which not only make God capable of being provoked to Wrath and Resentment, but frequently inflamed with the highest Degrees of Rage, Fury, and Vengeance, that can be expressed by Words?

[Love-2.1-86] Theophilus. I promised, you know, to remove this Difficulty, and will be as good as my Word. But I must first tell you, that you are in much more Distress about it than you need to be. For in the little Book of Regeneration, in the Appeal, in the Spirit of Prayer, &c., which you have read with such entire Approbation, the whole Matter is cleared up from its true Ground, how Wrath in the Scriptures is ascribed to God, and yet cannot belong to the Nature of the Deity.

[Love-2.1-87] Thus you are told in the Appeal, After these two Falls of two orders of Creatures (that is, of Angels and Man), the Deity itself came to have new and strange Names, new and unheard of Tempers and Inclinations of Wrath, Fury, and Vengeance ascribed to it. I call them new, because they began at the Fall; I call them strange because they were foreign to the Deity, and could not belong to God in Himself. Thus, God is said to be a consuming Fire. But to whom? To the fallen Angels and lost Souls. But why, and how, is He so to them? It is because those Creatures have lost all that they had from God but the Fire of their Nature, and therefore God can only be found and manifested in them as a consuming Fire. Now, is it not justly said, that God, who is nothing but infinite Love, is yet in such Creatures only a consuming Fire? And though God be nothing but Love, yet they are under the Wrath and Vengeance of God because they have only that Fire in them which is broken off from the Light and Love of God and so can know or feel nothing of God but his Fire of Nature in them. As Creatures, they can have no Life but what they have in and from God; and therefore that wrathful Life which they have, is truly said to be a Wrath or Fire of God upon them. And yet it is still strictly true that there is no Wrath in God Himself, that He is not changed in his Temper toward the Creatures, that he does not cease to be one and the same infinite Fountain of Goodness, infinitely flowing forth in the Riches of his Love upon all and every Life. (Now, Sir, mind what follows, as the true Ground, how Wrath can and cannot be ascribed to God.) God is not changed from Love to Wrath, but the Creatures have changed their own State in Nature, and so the God of Nature can only be manifested in them, according to their own State in Nature. And, N.B., this is the true Ground of rightly understanding all that is said of the Wrath and Vengeance of God in and upon the Creatures. It is

only in such a Sense, as the Curse of God may be said to be upon them, not because any Thing cursed can be in or come from God, but because they have made that Life, which they must have in God, to be a mere Curse to themselves. For every Creature that lives must have its Life in and from God, and therefore God must be in every Creature. This is as true of Devils, as of holy Angels. But how is God in them? N.B. Why, only as He is manifested in Nature. Holy Angels have the Triune Life of God, as manifested in Nature, so manifested also in them, and therefore God is in them all Love, Goodness, Majesty, and Glory, and theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

[Love-2.1-88] Devils have nothing of this Triune Life left in them, but the Fire, or Wrath of eternal Nature, broken off from all Light and Love; and therefore the Life that they can have in and from God is only and solely a Life of Wrath, Rage, and Darkness, and theirs is the Kingdom of Hell.

[Love-2.1-89] And because this Life, (though all Rage and Darkness), is a Strength and Power of Life, which they must have in and from God, and which they cannot take out of his Hands, therefore is their cursed, miserable, wrathful Life, truly and justly said to be the Curse and Misery, and Wrath, and Vengeance of God upon them, though God Himself can no more have Curse, Misery, Wrath, and Vengeance than He can have Mischief, Malice, or any fearful Tremblings in his holy Triune Deity.

[Love-2.1-90] See now, Theogenes, what little Occasion you had for your present Difficulty. For here, in the above cited Words, which you have been several Years acquainted with, the true Ground and Reason is plainly shown you, how and why all the Wrath, Rage, and Curse that is anywhere stirring in Nature, or breaking forth in any Creature, is and must be in all Truth called by the Scriptures the Wrath, and Rage, and Vengeance of God, though it be the greatest of all Impossibilities for Rage and Wrath to be in the Holy Deity itself.

[Love-2.1-91] The Scriptures therefore are literally true in all that they affirm of the Wrath, &c., of God. For is it not as literally true of God, that Hell and Devils are his, as that Heaven and holy Angels are his? Must not therefore all the Wrath and Rage of the one, be as truly his Wrath and Rage burning in them, as the Light and Joy and Glory of the other, is only his Goodness opened and manifested in them, according to their State in Nature?

[Love-2.1-92] Take notice of this fundamental Truth.

[Love-2.1-93] Every Thing that works in Nature and Creature, except Sin, is the working of God in Nature and Creature. The Creature has nothing else in its Power but the free Use of its Will; and its free Will hath no other Power, but that of concurring with, or resisting the Working of God in Nature. The Creature with its free Will can bring nothing into Being, nor make any Alteration in the working of Nature, it can only change its own State or Place in the working of Nature, and so feel and find something in its State, that it did not feel or find before.

[Love-2.1-94] Thus God, in the Manifestation of himself in and by Nature, sets before every Man Fire and Water, Life and Death; and Man has no other Power, but that of entering into and uniting with either of these States, but not the least Power of adding to, or taking any Thing from them, or of making them to be otherwise than he finds them.

[Love-2.1-95] For this Fire and Water, this Life and Death, are Nature, and have their unchangeable State in the uniform Working of God in Nature. And therefore, whatever is done by this Fire and Water, this Life and Death in any Creature, may, nay, must, in the strictest Truth, be affirmed of God as done by Him. And

consequently, every breathing forth of Fire, or Death, or Rage, or Curse, wherever it is, or in whatever Creature, must be said, in the Language of Scripture, to be a provoked Wrath, or fiery Vengeance of God, poured forth upon the Creature. And yet, every Thing that has been said in Proof of the Wrath of God shows, and proves to you at the same Time, that it is not a Wrath in the Holy Deity itself.

[Love-2.1-96] For you see, as was said above, that God sets before Man Fire and Water, Life and Death; now these Things are not God, nor existent in the Deity itself; but they are that which is, and is called Nature, and as they are the only Things set before Man, so Man can go no further, reach no further, nor find, nor feel, nor be sensible of any Thing else, but that which is to be felt or found in this Nature, or Fire and Water, Life and Death, which are set before him. And therefore all that Man can find or feel of the Wrath and Vengeance of God, can only be in this Fire and this Death, and not in the Deity itself.

[Love-2.1-97] Theogenes. Oh Theophilus, you have given me the utmost Satisfaction on this Point, and in a much better Way than I imagined. I expected to have seen you glossing and criticizing away the literal Expression of Scriptures that affirm the Wrath of God, in order to make good your Point, that the Deity is mere Love.

[Love-2.1-98] But you have done the utmost Justice to the Letter of Scripture, you have established it upon a firm and solid Foundation, and shown that the Truth of Things require it to be so, and that there can be no Wrath anywhere, but what is and must be called the Wrath and Vengeance of God, and yet is only in Nature.

[Love-2.1-99] What you have here said, seems as if it would clear up many Passages of Scripture that have raised much Perplexity. Methinks I begin to see how the Hardness of Pharaoh's Heart, how Eyes that see not, and Ears that hear not, may, in the strictest Truth, be said to be of or from God, though the Deity, in itself, stands in the utmost Contrariety to all these Things, and in the utmost Impossibility of willing or causing them to be.

[Love-2.1-100] But I must not draw you from our present Matter. You have shown, from the Letter of Scripture, that nothing else is set before Man but Fire and Water, Life and Death; and therefore, no Possibility of Wrath or Love, Joy or Sorrow, Curse or Happiness to be found by Man, but in this State of Nature set before him, or into which at his Creation he is introduced as into a Region of various Sensibilities, where all that he finds or feels, is truly God's, but not God himself, who has his supernatural Residence above, and distinct from every Thing that is Nature, Fire or Water, Life or Death.

[Love-2.1-101] But give me Leave to mention one Word of a Difficulty that I yet have. You have proved that Wrath, Rage, Vengeance, &c., can only exist, or be found in Nature, and not in God; and yet you say, that Nature is nothing else but a Manifestation of the hidden, invisible Powers of God. But if so, must not that which is in Nature be also in God? How else could Nature be a Manifestation of God?

[Love-2.1-102] Theophilus. Nature is a true Manifestation of the hidden, invisible God. But you are to observe, that Nature, as it is in itself, in its own State, cannot have the least possible Spark, or Stirring of Wrath, or Curse, or Vengeance in it: But, on the contrary, i

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