

**A Description  
of the  
New Creature**

**Abraham Godshalk**

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From its Birth until its Maturity  
"Unto a Perfect Man;  
Unto the Measure of the Stature  
of the  
Fullness of Christ"

With Its Necessity, Origin, Growth,  
and Final Glorious and Happy State, through  
Jesus Christ.

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”  
1 Thessalonians, 5:21.

By Abraham Godshalk

# **Abraham Godshalk**

Doylestown Minister

Abraham Godshalk was born near Doylestown on December 29, 1791. He married Sarah Schrauger on October 17, 1815. To this union were born seven children. He was a farmer and was ordained at Doylestown in 1824. In 1838, he wrote a treatise on the New Birth. It was published at Doylestown in both German and English in 1838. The English copy contains seventy-six pages. It was probably written to fortify the Mennonites against the proselyting activities of the Evangelical Association which won its converts by teaching the necessity of highly emotional conversions. He died August 19th of that year.

From History of Franconia Mennonites.

## Preface

Respected Reader – My object in writing this, so far as I know myself, was not to gain the applause of men. If it had been, I presume I should be often disappointed, for I fear I have written such truths as some will not readily receive. On the other hand, having a sincere love of truth and for a considerable time I have pretty much the same ideas of the matter as you will find them written down in this work. I have a desire to be profitable to my fellow creatures, believing that many of my fellow mortals have not yet a correct knowledge of regeneration, particularly the young; and that many preach up a kind of regeneration in our day that is not well-founded in scripture. Namely, that the change is at once so perfect, that no growth is necessary, or that the regenerated man is at once free from sin. I fear such men have not yet known the spirituality of God's law, for not only he that killeth, but he that hateth his brother is a murderer (1 John 3:15); and thus, the law is spiritual.

Now regeneration, at least in its commencement, is a work of the mind. When it first takes place, it has the lusts of the flesh, yea, all the evil inclinations to war against; and even ignorance itself, together with the temptations and allurements from without. It is therefore unreasonable to believe that the regenerated man should at once be a perfect man in Christ; but rather that he has need of growing in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I do not contend that known sins may not be overcome; but he who has a clear view of GOD'S HOLY LAW, will indeed find that he must struggle hard, watch faithfully and seriously, humble himself under the mighty hand of God, and also of men, or the law of sin will sometimes take the advantage of him. How natural to be angry when we are reviled. Now if you can not sincerely bless when you are reviled, but on the other hand you allow yourself to be angry or to revile again, then boast not of your perfection, for you have not yet got it, and so it is in many instances.

My desire was to show you your imperfection by the perfection of the law of Christ, if you have not yet grown up unto manhood in Christ; and to show you what perfection is. That if it is possible, I might entice you to make it your continual aim, to lay aside every weight and the sin which does so easily beset us, and to run with patience the race that is set before us, that you may gain the heavenly prize.

I have in this little book shown to you as clearly as I could, the infant state of a child of God, how and wherein he grows up to be a young man in Christ, what he is in this state; and also, the perfect man, who is grown up unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. I here add that, he who does grow up to manhood in Christ, will also reach the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, unless having put his hands to the plow, he should look back.

Now knowing that regeneration is INDISPENSABLE for an entrance into the heavenly kingdom, and believing that a correct knowledge of a so essential article must be beneficial to

man, these things caused me to search diligently to come to a correct understanding of the matter. That I might present it to myself and others, in as true of a light as possible.

Now, I do not wish to be understood to think that I know more than all other men. I have nothing to say in my favor, but that I examined the matter with impartiality, and a sincere love of truth; and that I bestowed much time to investigate God's holy word on this important subject. I consider myself far from being infallible. Neither have I depended on myself, but on God's holy word. Which, you may clearly see by reading the following pages. Nevertheless, as I, a poor, feeble man, was instrumental in bringing God's word together in form (as you will find it in the following pages) and being bound sometimes to pass my opinion on it, I do not doubt that it has its imperfections. However, I am sure you will find many good things in it. Hold fast to that which is good, and profit thereby.

Now, I would not have it that any man should think more of me than he can see of me. I cannot yet say that I have arrived at that state of perfection which I have described as belonging in this world, but I sincerely wish to. Here, some will perhaps say, "How do you know a road which you have not traveled at full length?" To which I say that we can see a road pretty correctly a considerable distance before us, and if we could not see before us at all, we should be stumbling almost at every step. Even so, it is in a spiritual sense. If we could not see before us, we could not run for the prize without stumbling almost at every step. Again, he who has a telescope and has acquired a knowledge of its use can

see things correctly at a great distance. Now, the Holy Word of God is the telescope that revealed these things to me.

This work was originally written by me in German, and afterward translated from that language into English. This was done as follows: The scripture passages were taken as they stand in the English Bible, and my own words, I knew what I had meant, therefore was able to make an English translation of them. If the work had been written by another man, I should have been altogether insufficient for the work of translation. At least without the aid of books. But having written it myself, I felt at liberty to make such amendments and additions as it seemed good to me. Nevertheless, in all important matters, it is one with the German, so much as language will allow.

In conclusion, I will yet say, that if anyone is desirous of knowing who and what I am. I inform him, that I am a farmer, who was at a pretty early day called to be a preacher of the Gospel, and who has not even had the advantage of a good common education. I have therefore not the power of writing in a polished style. Perhaps it is best so, for if I had been brought up in a theological school, I should perhaps have been filled with so strong a prejudice in favor of what I had learned, as to be forever unfit for an impartial investigation of God's holy word, and thus you and I might never have seen the produce of this my impartial investigation. May the Lord God attend this work with his blessing, and give to every reader the discerning eye, and the willingness to receive truth wherever it is found, to hold fast to it, and walk by it to the end of his life, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

Abraham Godshalk

## A Description of the New Creature

Text, Gospel of John:

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, how can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?

Jesus answered, Verily, verily I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God (John 3:3-5).

With the aid of God, I intend to explain this text in the following order:

1. Answer the interrogation, why must man be born again?
2. Show the means by which regeneration is brought on.
3. Show what being born again, or regeneration, is in itself.
4. Show what manner of being he is who is born again, or born of God.

## Why Must Man Be Born Again?

In the first place, the question is asked, “Why must man be born again before he can see or enter into the kingdom of God?”

I answer, because he did not remain that which God originally made him. Namely, a holy, guiltless and happy being, but he became through the transgression of the law of God, an unholy, guilty and unhappy being.

Herewith, I will not assert that Adam, the first parent of us all, by this one transgression of the law of God, did so far fall from God, that there was no more any faith, any virtue, or any desire to worship God in him. The opposite does much more shine forth, out of his own deeds and words and those of his wife and children. For we see that when it was told them that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, they believed it. For at the birth of Cain, Eve said, “I have gotten a man from the Lord.” Intimating, as I think, that she believed she had already received the promise of the Lord. But Oh! How she was deceived in this, for Cain was a murderer.

I think it is highly probable that Adam also had some form of worship. Inasmuch, as his two first sons, Cain and Abel brought offerings unto the Lord. Cain of the fruit of the ground, and Abel of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof (Genesis 4:3-4). Now, either the sons must have inherited this from their parents, they must have learned it from them, or God must have revealed himself more to the children than to the parents. Either the revelation was by or without the means of the parents. I for my

part, believe that the sons learned it of their parents, and that Adam had some form of serving God. Namely, an offering up of sacrifices to reconcile his God for past offenses; and in this it is probable his children, and many of his descendants imitated him.

As already in the days of Seth, men began to call upon the name of the Lord (or as the German translation has it – men began to preach of the name of the Lord). Also, Noah and Abraham built altars and offered burnt offerings thereon, without a particular command from God given to them, that we can read of.

I therefore, conclude that something like an inclination to worship a superior being remained in Adam after the fall. But the degeneracy soon became greater and divided itself, in some more, in others less. For we see that Cain, the firstborn, was a wicked man. Far, no doubt, above what his father was. His descendants, or all those who were wicked like him, were called the children of the world, or of men. And the descendants of Seth, or those who were virtuous like Abel, Seth, Enoch and so on, were called the children of God.

All this was together in Adam and Eve, namely, the children of God and of the world, or the good and the evil. For they had tasted sin, and so knew by experience what was good and evil. But these two being divided in their descendants became two separate and distinct people.

The children of the world were a temptation unto the children of God, as we may read, (Gen. 6:2). And that temptation brought them to a fall, so that God concluded to destroy nearly all his intelligent creatures from the face of the earth. Here also, in

the few that were saved, the evil as well as the good seed remained. For though Noah did build an altar unto the Lord, his descendants degenerated into idolatry. As we may learn by Rachael stealing her father's idol. It is even credible that in the day when God called Abraham, there was but little faith in (or knowledge of) the living God, in the world. Therefore, God chose and called Abraham, that he might through him and his seed, reveal himself to the world. And Abraham came from place to place, preached of the name of the Lord, and performed a service to God, and by this became a light unto many.

Many revelations were given to his descendants by Moses and the Prophets. Yet, they degenerated even into idolatry and were therefore led captive into Babylon. They were again brought back, and again fell into sin and hypocrisy. So that there were but few truly virtuous, when Jesus Christ made his appearance in this world; Who is the true seed of Abraham, and the light of the world.

Both Cain and Abel had some form of worship and men called upon the name of the Lord in the days of Seth. Also, there always was, and yet is (at least with a great majority of mankind) a kind of service to a supposed or real superior being. As well with the ungodly as with the godly. Though this is true, nevertheless, very few men have a good testimony given them by the Deity, but very many have an evil one. And this (that man is ignorant and wrong of himself according to understanding, will, and deed) is the reason why he must be born again before he can enter into the kingdom of heaven. As I will further show from holy scripture. Paul says, "And you has he quickened, who were

dead in trespasses and sins, wherein, in time past, ye walked according to the course of this world; according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:1-2).

Thus far Paul seems to have spoken exclusively of the Ephesians, who were of the Gentiles. But in the third verse of this chapter, he begins to include himself and all believing Jews, and confesses, that before their conversion, they were no better than the Gentiles (as we have it in the third and fourth verses of this chapter). “Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ” (Eph. 2:3-5).

Similar expressions Paul makes in his Epistle to the Colossians, “And you, being dead in your sins. And in the uncircumcision of your flesh, has he quickened together with him (that is with Christ), having forgiven you all your trespasses” (Col. 2:13). Here Paul describes man as being dead in trespasses and sin, and by nature a child of wrath; and even goes so far as to say of the unconverted Gentiles, that they had “their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts” (Eph. 4:18).

Not that the Gentiles did not at all know of the existence of an Almighty God, but that they did not give him due respect and

reverence, which brought them into such a helpless state as we may see in Romans, “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools; and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies between themselves. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.” (Romans 1:21-25).

Now such a people had great need of being born again. Not only the Gentiles, but also the Jews (as has already been said), were sometimes greatly degenerated (though God had revealed his will to the latter more abundantly than to the former). This was the case to a high degree in the days of Isaiah the Prophet. As we may see in his first chapter where he says: “Hear, O heavens, and give ear O earth, for the Lord has spoken: I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel does not know, my people do not consider. Ah, sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters. They have forsaken the Lord; they have provoked the holy one of Israel unto anger; they are gone away backward. Why should you be stricken anymore? Ye will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises,

and putrifying sores. They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment” (Isaiah 1:2-6).

I will now further show from holy scripture what is the main cause why men so easily fall from the Lord, and that cause is also the main reason why he must be born again for an entrance into the kingdom of God. David says: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speaketh, and be clear when thou judgeth. Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me” (Psalms 51:1-5). Now, that David was not conceived in an uncommon sinful manner appears to be certain, when we consider that he was conceived and brought forth in lawful wedlock. We do indeed find that Obed, the grandfather of David, was born of Ruth, a Moabite woman; but even she has the testimony of having been a virtuous woman, and such a one as held herself fast to the people and the God of Israel.

Therefore, as David came to the world in an honorable manner, and particularly as he was somewhat mixed with Gentile blood, that which he said of his own birth may also be said of all others. We are therefore all shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, and are therefore unclean from our birth, and that in heart. We have of ourselves not even the will to do that which is truly good.

As Paul says, “For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure” (Phil. 2:13). Therefore, we should pray with David: “Create in me O God, a pure heart: give unto me a new and a sure spirit.”

Here perhaps, someone who knows me, and the society to which I belong, will say, “If man is so impure from his birth as he is here represented, why do you and others of your society so often contend that all who die in their infancy, die happy.” To such I would say, that God is of more purity than to impute sin where there is no law, and that it is impossible to have a law where there is no understanding, and that infants have no understanding. You will say then, that some do die in their infancy, and as their own sins are not imputed, they are certainly doomed to die on account of Adam's sin. So they are, but this will not harm them, as they will also partake of the justification unto life, that came upon all, by the righteousness of one, namely Christ (Rom. 5:18).

That man has not the good or the sufficiency to do the good of himself, further appears out of Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians. Where he says: “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God” (2 Cor. 3:5).

In order yet more clearly to show the evil inclination and actual wickedness of man, I will quote the following scripture passages, without mixing any of my own words among them:

“And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually” (Gen. 6:5).

“The imagination of man’s heart is evil from his youth”  
(Gen. 8:21).

“If they sin against thee (for there is no man that sinneth  
not)” (1 Kings 8:46).

“Shall mortal man be more just than God? Shall a man  
be more pure than his maker? Behold he put no  
trust in his servants; and his angels lie charges with  
folly: How much less in them which dwell in  
houses of clay, whose foundation is in the dust,  
which are crushed before the moth?” (Job 4:17-19).

Then Job answered and said, “I know it is so of a truth;  
but how should man be just with God? If he will  
contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a  
thousand” (Job 9:1-3).

“What is man, that he should be clean; and he that is  
born of a woman, that he should be righteous?  
Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints, yea, the  
heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more  
abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh  
iniquity like water” (Job 15:14-16).

“If thou Lord, shouldest mark iniquity, O Lord, who  
shall stand?” (Psalm 130:3).

“Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy  
sight shall no man living be justified” (Psalm  
143:2).

“Who can say, I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin” (Prov. 20:9)?

“For there is not a just man upon earth, that does good and sinneth not” (Eccles. 7:20).

Besides all that has been said, Christ teaches us to pray, “forgive us our trespasses”. With this he would bring to our minds that we have trespassed, and likewise teaches us to ask for pardon.

Paul also shows in Romans the third chapter, and from the 14<sup>th</sup> Psalms and the 53<sup>rd</sup> Psalms, that: “There are none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable. There is none that does good, no not one” (Rom. 3:10-12). He then mentions some particular sins, and concludes as follows. “Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to those that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (Rom. 3:19). Again, he saith: “For there is no difference” (between Jew and Gentile he would say), “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:22-23). To this I will add the testimony of John, who says in his first Epistle, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. And the truth is not in us” (1 John1:8).

In such a flood of evidence from holy writ, we may discover why it is so necessary for man to be born again. Knowing also that God is holy (holy and righteous) and that his kingdom on earth is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. That the

heavens, where the kingdom of God is established forever, is described to us under the name of the New Jerusalem as a most shining, glorious, and holy place, “Into which there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie” (Rev. 21:27).

Behold, therefore, how necessary it is for man to be born again. In particular, as that which is born of the flesh, is flesh, and is carnally minded, and this is enmity against God. What the fruits of carnal-mindedness are, we may learn, in Galatians. “For the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. 5:17). Again, “Now, the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witch-craft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. Of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal. 5:19-21). How necessary then is regeneration? It is not only necessary on account of man’s sinfulness by nature, but also on account of the consequences of sin. For, by sin, sickness, and distress, pain and death came upon all mankind. Yea, the first creature must die, both according to body and spirit, before we can be truly happy. And a new creature must come forth, as the Lord saith, “Behold, I make all things new.” The natural body shall see corruption, but the spiritual body shall be green and blooming forever.

That the holy scriptures give such abundant testimony of the fall of man, his sinful uncleanness and evil desires,

inclinations or propensities, means that man is such by nature. Yea, from his birth, more inclined to the evil than to the good. And that on account of his love being first to the evil, he also learns it first, or does by nature that which is evil, before he knows what is good and evil. On this wise there is not a man, nor ever was a mere man, who never sinned. Not that there were not some, in almost all ages, who became righteous.

For example, Abel obtained witness that he was righteous. Also, Enoch, before his translation, had the testimony that he pleased God. Yea, of Enoch it is even said, that he walked with God, and he was not, for God took him. Yea, he was translated, that he should not see death. Yet, we have reason to believe that he was changed. As flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Again, Christ says: "Many prophets and righteous men have desired to see that ye see, and did not see it." If then we would contend from the foregoing scripture testimonies, that all men always remained wicked, we should be at variance with the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of Paul, and of all through the whole scriptures, who at any time call any man righteous. Moreover, such an assertion would leave no room for repentance, conversion or regeneration. Though there are so many testimonies in the holy scriptures of the corrupt condition of man by nature or birth. Yet it must be admitted, that there is a great difference in them even from their birth, and this difference shone forth in Cain and Abel. For as Cain brought an offering unto the Lord, he had no respect to it. And the reason was, that Cain did not do well. As the Lord said unto him, "If thou doest well, shall not thou be

accepted? And if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door?” But Abel and his offering, the Lord had respect to. By which the Lord testified that he was righteous. Enoch, I presume, had no strong inclination unto evil, or he would hardly have walked in such a manner as to be translated into another region without seeing death. Samuel too, who was one prayed for to the Lord, appears to have had a love to God and religion very young. For he ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen Ephod (1 Sam. 2:18). On the contrary, the sons of Eli, the Priest, were wicked, and Absalom, the son of David, was no less wicked. Of the like examples there are many more in holy writ, but it would be superfluous to take up more time and space with them here.

As the strict observer will see a difference in the temperaments and passions of his own children, and much more in the children at large, he will therefore readily agree with me in this. Herewith, I do not mean to screen any of all faults, and make them appear, as such who have no need of regeneration. No, I will much rather conclude that “God is true, and every man a liar” (Rom. 3:4). Yet in different degrees. This is the reason why every one must be born again, before he can enter into the kingdom of God.

Having now shown at least some of the principal reasons why man must be born again, I go on to the next proposition.

## Means By Which Regeneration Is Brought On

Secondly. The means which God makes use of to regenerate man, are the following. Or I ought to have said, among the means which God makes use of to regenerate man, are the following. For, I shall hardly be able to exhibit them all. Christ is the great medium from which all others flow. As he himself says, “He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man” (Matt. 13:37). And he says, “The seed is the word of God” (Luke 8:11), and this is the incorruptible seed from which springs up a new creature. As Peter says, “See that you love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever” (1 Peter, 1:22-23). Now this incorruptible seed is Christ, as John says in his gospel, “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God” (John 1:1); and he says, “The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). Similar expressions John makes in his first Epistle, “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the word of life” (1 John 1:1). Here it is evident, that with this word of life, he means Christ. Now this word that is Christ, was in the beginning with God, “For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in the earth, visible or invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things are

created by him, and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist” (Col. 1:16-17). Paul often asserted that Christ was before he made his appearance in the flesh; yea, before the laying of the foundation of the earth. In that, as shown above, and shall further be shown, he asserts that God made the world by Christ. For, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, he says, “God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past unto the fathers of the prophets, has in these last days spoken unto us by his son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds” (Heb. 1:1-2). A like doctrine he gave to the Ephesians when he says, “Unto me, who am less than the least of the Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the ministry, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God. Who created all things by Jesus Christ” (Eph. 3:8-9).

Now, as God made all things by Christ, how reasonable is it then to believe that he is also the means of regeneration. Having now asserted that Christ is the means of regeneration, the great and weighty question remains now to be answered. How is he the means? Our first parent, Adam, was created in the image of God. As the Lord saith, “Let us make man in our image.” Of this the Lord did not only speak, but he has also done it. As we see, “So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him” (Gen. 1:27). Now, that man is in body the image of his God, I verily believe, but I do not believe that this constituted all the likeness that Adam had to his maker. For he was also endowed with wisdom above all other created beings. Not only this, but he

was also righteous and holy. As it appears from Ephesians, where Paul says, “And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:26). Adam was created in the image of God, and above we see that, that which is created after God (or rather in the image of God), is righteous and truly holy. Therefore, Adam must have been righteous and holy before his fall. Now, “Christ is the Image of the invisible God; the firstborn of every creature,” as Paul testifies, (Col. 1:15). Therefore, Adam must have been in Christ, and Christ in him, before the fall. And whatsoever good thing remained in Adam after the fall was Christ. I think I have already shown in the first part, that some good still remained in Adam though he had fallen.

Now, when mankind multiplied, Christ shone forth in many, namely in Abel to whose offering God had respect. In him Christ might have been a means of regeneration for many (had not Cain killed him) namely, by example and precept; “and by it he being dead yet speaketh” (Hebrews 11:4). In Seth’s days there must also have been men in whom Christ, or the word, was. As men then began to call upon the name of the Lord, or began to preach of the name of the Lord (*as the German translation has it*). Both, I doubt not, are true. So, I conclude that they preached of the name of the Lord, and also called on his name. In Enoch, Christ was also, for of him we read that he “walked with God” (Gen. 5:24). Now, as Enoch led a godly life, Christ the image of God must also have been in him, and was in him a means of regeneration for many others, through the light which they had by his good example. And we know not otherwise than that he also instructed others by words. Indeed, it is highly credible that he

did. In Noah, Christ also was, both in word and deed, for he was a just man and perfect in his generations, and “Noah walked with God” (Gen. 6:9). He was also a “preacher of righteousness”, as we read in the 2nd Epistle of Peter (2 Peter 2:5). But the People were in his days, like the Jews in the days when our Savior was personally on earth. They would not have Christ to reign over them. Yea, they did not accept the means of salvation, and they therefore perished in the flood.

Christ was also in Abraham and Lot, for both were such as were obedient by faith, yet the word (the means of regeneration) was in them. Particularly in Abraham, to whom the word of the Lord came as follows: “Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shall be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:1-3). Here we see that Abraham was not only blessed, but he was also to be a blessing, and that blessing was to be to all the families of the earth. I think that I may well say that Christ was in Abraham, and that he was in him a means of regeneration, seeing that Jesus Christ said to the Jews, “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.” From this the Jews understood him to say that he had seen Abraham. “Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham.” To this Jesus replied, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am.” Though Christ Jesus does not here say clearly that he was before Abraham, yet I do not know what else we are to understand from it. Let his

meaning have been what it may, it is nevertheless certain that Christ was before Abraham. Yea, before Adam, and all other created matter, or all things could not have been made by him.

It appears further, that Christ was in Abraham, by his intercession for the Sodomites, as this shows that the nature of Christ was in him. For Christ is the true Mediator, or Intercessor of man with God. Christ was not only in Abraham, but He also shone through him to the enlightening of man. When the Lord appeared to Abraham in the plain of Morea, Abraham built unto him an altar, and when he had moved from thence, he pitched his tent between Bethel and Hai. There he built an altar to the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord, and when there was a famine in the land, Abraham went down into Egypt (Gen. 12). In process of time, Abraham went up out of Egypt, and again inhabited the tent which he had built between Bethel and Hai, where he had before built an altar, and there again called on the name of the Lord, or (as the German translation has it in both cases) he preached of the name of the Lord. I again say, that I doubt not that both are true, and that he preached and prayed).

Thus, Christ was a means of regeneration in Abraham, by word and deed, or by precept and example. Now, Abraham was a chosen man unto the Lord, for after he had shown obedience by his intent to offer up his son Isaac at the command of God, the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven and said, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord: for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son; thine only son; that in blessing, I will bless thee, and in multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea

shore, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice.”

Now, this promised blessing unto all nations of the earth by the seed of Abraham was already given, in part, by the natural descendants of Abraham, even before Christ made his appearance in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. In that Moses, the law-giver, and the holy prophets descended from him, and they prophesied not only to the children of Israel, but sometimes also to the Gentiles. We may learn this by the command of the Lord to Jonah to cry against Nineveh, whose wickedness had come up before the Lord. Though Jonah was unwilling to preach in the capital of the kings of Assyria and, in consequence, fled before the Lord, yet he could not escape from the Lord. For though he had entered into a ship to fly, the Lord sent a great wind, and it so happened that Jonah was cast overboard. From whence he was miraculously brought to land again. After he had received the second command, he was obedient, and went into the city of Nineveh, a day’s journey, and cried and said, “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” Short was his sermon, but it had the desired effect. Therefore, the people of Nineveh believed God. Now here, Christ was a means of regeneration for the Ninevites, through Jonah, for they repented, clothed in sackcloth, and turned from the evil of their ways and were saved.

I will now return to Moses, and show that Christ was a means of regeneration in and by him, for Paul saith, “Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And

were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink (for they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ)” (1 Cor. 10:1-4). That is, they all ate and drank the word of God that was given to them by Moses, as a means of regeneration. But it had not this effect with many of them, wherefore God was not well pleased with them, but cast them down in the wilderness.

Among all the prophets who went before Jesus of Nazareth, Moses was the most remarkable, since he led the children of Israel up out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, full nigh unto the land flowing with milk and honey. Also, because by him God gave the law, which not only contained short instructions (as some of the prophet’s prophecies), but the whole council of God, in so far as it should then be revealed. Wherefore, all the doctrine contained in the Old Testament is dependent on Moses or the law. Indeed, some of the writers of the Old Testament quoted the law in like manner, as holy scripture is now quoted in preaching and writing. As we may see in the eighty-first chapter of Psalm, verses ten to eleven, and I presume in many other places. The law was the foundation on which the Jewish church was built, and therefore it was a means of regeneration.

Here some perhaps will marvel that I call the law a means of regeneration. Exhortation is not only necessary for regeneration, but also doctrine or teaching. It is not only necessary to exhort men to cease from evil, and learn to do good, but to teach them what is good and evil, or right or wrong. This was in

particular the office of Moses. The reason that the Pharisees, who were under the law and thought themselves keepers of it, had yet need of being born again, was because they made the commandment of God of none effect, by their own traditions. As Christ told them, “Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For, laying aside the commandment of God. Ye hold the tradition of men” (Mark 7:7-8). Because they understood the law too much in a literal sense, they were therefore too busy in the performance of outward ceremonies to the neglect of the weightier matters of the law. As we read, “Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cummin; and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith” (Matt. 23:23).

Again, knowledge of sin is necessary unto regeneration, and this, Paul saith comes by the law, “for by the law is the knowledge of sin,” (Rom. 3:20). Again, “I had not known lust, except the law had said, ‘Thou shall not covet’” (Rom. 7:7). Here we see how necessary it is to be taught of God by his word, in order to do his will, or become his child. Indeed, the most substantial parts of the law stand yet immovable, and are a light that lightens us, and a glass wherein we may examine ourselves, and see our sins. Surely, if the law is rightly understood, or expounded as our Savior expounded it saying, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12), then it is “holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good,” as Paul says (Rom. 7:12).

But to be shorter on the subject, I say, that Christ was a means of regeneration in all men to whom the word of the Lord was preached, and they preached it unto others, who did also preach it, and also in them who kept it for an example, this is as powerful as doctrine. He therefore who has Christ in him, though he instructs only by example, is a light to the world, and consequently a means of regeneration. Accordingly, Christ was a means of regeneration in all true believers, and in all the righteous, a light of the world.

Of the Gentiles Paul saith, that they had their “understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them; because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness” (Eph. 4:18-19). And that this was the case with the Gentiles more than with the Jews, was because they had not the light of the law as had the Jews.

As I said in the first part of this work, so I say here again, that it is credible that there was but little knowledge or faith in the living God at the time when the Lord called Abraham. Therefore, God chose him to be a light to the world, and a father from whom should proceed many prophets, lawgivers and preachers. To the intent that the world might be instructed in the will of God touching man, so that many might be born again. Though the Jews had the law and the prophets, they laid aside the commandment of God, and held the traditions of men. Yea, they put false constructions on the law, and thereby made it of none effect. They attended so much to the ceremonial parts of the law and to the

traditions of men, that the more weighty parts of the law were neglected. They had with few exceptions, as much need of regeneration as the Gentiles.

In due time, Christ came in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, a most perfect means of regeneration, and taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes. His words were of a piercing and convincing nature: "it pierced them to the heart." He rebuked hypocrisy in all, and showed wherein the Jews had departed from the right way, and commanded them to repent. He cleansed the church of all human doctrines or traditions, and even the law he cleansed of its ceremonies, and of its defects in allowing retaliation by returning evil for evil; teaching not to resist evil, but when smitten on the one cheek, to turn the other also. Also, of its permission to hate an enemy; teaching us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, and pray for them which despitefully use us and persecute us. Moreover, he cleansed the law of its permission to swear an oath, showing that our power is too limited to bind ourselves with an oath, and that our communication should therefore be yea, yea, nay, nay; and that whatsoever is more than these, comes from evil.

Moreover, he explained the law in a true manner. In many instances, showing forth the spirit and life from an apparently dead letter. Which mode of showing, the spirit and life of the law, was extended by his apostles. So that we now see that he that only hates his brother is a murderer, though he does not kill him. Let no man say that I am saying too much while I have scripture authority. All Christians will acknowledge that the word was never before preached so perfect as it was by Jesus of Nazareth, in

whom it pleased the father, that all fullness should dwell. The law was indeed in part perfect, but in other respects, it was only destined for a time, and for a particular people, and was therefore not faultless. As Paul, in the first place, shows that our blessed Redeemer is a High Priest, according to the order of Melchizedek, and not after the order of Aaron. Now the priesthood being changed, there is made, of necessity, a change also of the law; for there is verily a dis-annulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by which we draw nigh unto God, (Hebrews 7).

Again, if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for a second; and after mentioning the foretelling of a new covenant, concludes by saying: "In that he saith, a new covenant he has made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away" (Hebrews 8).

Therefore, Jesus Christ came unto his own as a true High Priest of God. Not like Moses to sprinkle his Testament with strange blood, but with his own. Neither, like Aaron, to enter into the holy of holies by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood. Not into the holy places made with hands, but into the Heaven itself. Now to appear in the presence of God for us, he entered in once by his own blood into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, (Hebrews 9).

Again, as it is not possible to take away sins by the blood of bulls and goats. "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, 'Sacrifices and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast

thou prepared me' In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast no pleasure: Then said I, 'lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me), to do thy will, O God,' by which Paul says he taketh away the first, that he may establish the second; by which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10).

Yea, Jesus Christ came to cleanse the church of its dead works; to do the will of God, both in word and deed; and to be obedient unto the shameful death of the cross. This is the new and living way, wherein we should follow him. Whereby, we would be so nearly allied to him as to have the privilege to be called his brother, sister, or mother (Matt. 12:50). He it is, in whom all the promises of God are, yea and amen. Consequently, it is he on whom rested the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of council and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.

Here we see among others, that he had the spirit of might, where he could pour out the promised spirit over mankind, and he did pour it out, and yet still pours it out. For Peter says, "The promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off." In this manner Jesus Christ was a powerful means of complete regeneration. Christ was further means of regeneration in all his apostles, whom he sent to preach himself, that is to preach the word. Many indeed were thereby regenerated to the glory of God the Father.

I have now sufficiently maintained that Christ, or the word of God (which two names I have taken as signifying the same), is

the true means of regeneration. Yea, the living seed from which all spiritual and godly life springs up. From what has been said, it sufficiently appears, that the word of God came to a few without any human agency; for example, to Abraham, Moses, and all the Prophets.

But that this mode of enlightening man is universal, I do not find much more. I find that those to whom the word of the Lord came, they were sent to teach or to preach unto others. And those among them who were faithful servants of Christ, they taught as well by example as by precept, as Jesus of Nazareth also did. That it pleased God to enlighten man by the instrumentality of man, appears from all his commands to the Holy Prophets and others, to go and preach. As our Savior said to his disciples, “Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). And “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations” (Matt 28:19).

If it had been the will of God to enlighten all mankind without any human agency, then it would have been superfluous to send out certain inspired men to aid in the work. And because it pleased God to proclaim his word to man by man, and not by angels, nor by universal inspiration; he commanded Cornelius to send for Simon Peter, who was to tell him what he should do (Acts 10:6). Here the Lord might as easily have told Cornelius what to do by the means of the angel as well as by Peter; but he pointed Peter to the appointed means. Thereby, teaching him and us, with him, that it pleased him to enlighten man, by the instrumentality of man. “For it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe” (1 Cor. 1:21).

Here some will perhaps ask, “Has man indeed nothing more permanent to depend on?” “Will he then not often be deceived?” This is a sorrowful truth, which might easily be illustrated, that man may be, and often is deceived. But there are given unto man certain signs whereby the true prophet may be distinguished from the false one. First of all, reason teaches that a preacher should live up to what he teaches, and that any good doctrine must make for the common good of man. For if a preacher, preaching for instance to the heathen, should not at all live up to what he taught them, would they not conclude that he did not believe it himself, and that therefore they do not need this. For the power of distinguishing between true and false prophets, is in the hands of all intelligent creatures, if they would use it.

There are other signs, among which are the gift of miracles. However, they are only in the hands of those who have the scriptures, or those that otherwise saw the signs. Of which we read, that when Moses was afraid the Israelites would not believe him, the Lord said unto him, “What is that in thine hand?” and he said a rod; and he said, “Cast it on the ground,” and he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. When Moses at the command of God, took the serpent by the tail, it became again a rod in his hand. So also, when Moses by the command of God, put his hand in his bosom and pulled it out again, it was leprous as snow. And when he had again put in his hand and plucked it out again, his hand was turned again as his other flesh (Exodus 4:2-4). These two signs were given unto Moses, to do before the children of Israel, that they might believe that the Lord had sent him. If they should not believe by these two

signs, then he was to take water from the river and pour it on the ground, and it should become blood on dry land. These signs, namely, the gift of miracles were in the hands of at least a great majority of God's prophets, but even this was not enough to establish their godly mission.

As we see in Deuteronomy "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken, but the prophet has spoken presumptuously, thou shall not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:22). Similar words, Jeremiah the prophet, spoke to Hananiah, the prophet, "The prophet which prophesieth of peace, when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known that the Lord has truly sent him" (Jer. 28:9). This is indeed the best sign. For by the predictions of the prophets coming to pass, we have the best assurance that their mission was from on high, and that they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Thus, the whole sacred volume is established.

As in the law, there were given signs whereby to know the true from the false prophet, so also in the Gospel, a sign is given whereby to distinguish between the true and the false preacher. "Ye shall know them by their fruits," says Christ. He makes use of very reasonable argument to enforce the assertion, saying: "Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit," (Matt. 7:16-17).

I here leave every one to draw his own conclusion as to the meaning of our Savior, having shown that God chose the agency of man to enlighten man.

Someone will perhaps say, I thank God that we have something more permanent to depend on than man, or the agency of man. We have the written word of God, and therefore we do not need to depend on man.

It is true, we have the written word of God, and we also thank God for it, as we would for a precious treasure, and as for a light that lights us in all things. If we believe the word from our hearts, and come to it in sincerity for light. It is indeed, a great fountain of light, and as it now stands, with the addition of the New Testament, the word will be a sure guide to heaven, if only we will follow it. It is the foundation of all our spiritual light, and of all our hopes of a blessed immortality, and of all truly good doctrine in our day, whether it is so acknowledged or not.

There was a time for establishing the law by miracles, and then they were no longer so abundant; and there was a time for establishing the Gospel by miracles, but among us, miracles have ceased. I for my part, could scarcely trust a revelation to myself of something truly new, were it not attended with the evidence of something super-natural. Wherefore, I conclude that the scriptures are our best light.

But how were the holy scriptures given? Most certainly not without the agency of man. The law was first given unto Moses and then through him to the children of Israel. The prophets, the Lord had inspired with what they should prophecy, and thus they

spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ preached in the presence of his disciples, but wrote no book. His disciples afterward wrote down the most important parts of what he said and done. Luke put on record the most important part of the apostles' doings, including some of their preaching. The apostles wrote epistles to the churches, and unto individuals. John the apostle, had a revelation on the island of Patmos, and put it on record by divine command.

Here you see that the holy scriptures were given by the instrumentality of man; but you will perhaps say they were very pious and godly men, who had the glory of God and the salvation of man at heart. So, I believe too, but had we lived in their days, what would we then have thought concerning them. We should perhaps have thought and acted like the Jews sometimes did; namely, they had rejected the true, and had accepted the false prophets. You will perhaps say, we should not have acted so, but contrariwise. So, the Jews thought too in the days of Jesus Christ's ministry on earth, saying: "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets," (Matt. 23:30).

But what did they do in their days? Answer: They rejected the foremost of all prophets, and murdered the prince of life, and the son of God himself. Is it not true, that even in our days, where we have the holy scriptures from the beginning of Genesis, to the end of the Revelations to Saint John, and have received it as the infallible word of God—that yet many among us hardly know what preacher to receive as a true one.

Perhaps you will say that almost all men know. And it is so far true that almost all are brought up to a certain belief, some to one, and some to another. Perhaps a majority of mankind do not once truly think for themselves, but take for granted, that the way in which they were brought up is certainly right. They are therefore unwilling to examine anything else, but willing to cry out heretic or infidel against everyone who feels himself bound to proclaim doctrines contrary to their own. And some I fear, if they do undertake to examine any other doctrine but their own. Do it with so much prejudice, that they are not in a much better condition to judge, than a blind man would be to judge of colors. But when all prejudice is laid aside, then man does not see all things so clearly for a time. He is in a measure stricken with blindness, like Paul was on his way to Damascus. Afterward, he will be cured of it when he turns to the Lord.

As Paul says of the Israelites, “Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away,” (2 Cor. 3:16). And as our Savior says, “I am the light of the world; he that followeth me, shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life” (John 8:12). He that follows him, that is, he that lives up to the doctrines so far as he understands them, and seeks earnestly, with a heart single to the glory of God, shall not remain in any injurious ignorance, but shall receive light sufficient whereby he may travel safe. As David saith, “The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant” (Psalm 25:14).

That the word of God is a medium of our regeneration, not only Peter, as has been said, but also Paul and James tell us.

Saying: “Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures” (James 1:18). And after that the apostles were begotten again by the word of truth. They were instruments in the hands of the Lord to beget others, by the medium of the word. As Paul says to the Corinthians, “For though you have ten-thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus have I begotten you through the Gospel” (1 Cor. 4:15). And this establishes my former assertion, namely, that Christ was a means of regeneration.

I will now add yet that in all those to whom the word of the Lord came so that they would preach it unto others, and who were, or are yet faithful in the discharge of this duty; yea, all without exception, who are born again of that incorruptible seed, the living word of God, are each in his station or place, a kind of secondary means of regeneration for those with whom they have intercourse. For their wholesome words which are always mild and seasoned with salt, and their good walk in Christ are sometimes effectual to the seeding of others with the same word and spirit wherewith they are pregnant. And herewith agree the words of Peter, when he says: “Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives” (1 Peter 3:1).

In place of the word conversation, the German has the word walk, and Webster in defining the word conversation, tells us it means—familiar discourse, behavior. Therefore, I conclude that we are to understand from it, their whole walk, in words and

deeds. Here we see that Peter was of the opinion that men may be won by a godly walk or conversation. But we must not understand him as though he would exclude the word and faith as a means of regeneration. On the contrary, we understand that the woman is being regenerated by the medium of the word, and then the man becomes convinced of the divinity of her religion by her “chaste conversation, coupled with fear”, and thus be won over to the faith (1 Peter. 3:1-2). O that all, both men and women, both young and old, who profess the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, would lay it to heart, how much the cause of Christ might be helped forward by a godly life or conversation, and also how much it is impeded by a wicked life or conversation. I hope it would cause some to be a little more careful, not to be leading their fellow beings along with themselves to destruction.

Therefore, parents are a means of regeneration for their children. At least, all regenerated parents, yea children of God, are anxious that their children should also be children of God. They therefore check the evil propensities in them, and bring them up in the “nurture and admonition of the Lord.” And if we have not yet come to this, those of us who are parents, it is to be feared that we ourselves have made but little progress in regeneration. We should, out of love to God and our children, seek their eternal welfare, by bridling their evil inclinations, and not suffering them to fulfill their own will while they are yet unenlightened. We should be showing them by a corresponding walk, that we are in earnest when we exhort them to the good.

May we consider all such institutions that are truly founded on the word of God, or have their appointment from God, as

means of regeneration. Thus, the assembling of the believers, where preaching, exhortation and prayer are performed, are the happy means of regenerating many. This we find is founded on the word of God. For the Lord told Moses to collect the people, that they might hear his word. And not only this, but Paul also says, “Let us consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is” (Heb. 10:24-25). Yes, it is a means I think, by which at least, some are born again, who do not desire any such thing. Men go to these places from various motives. Some, perhaps to see and be seen—others from a desire to hear how this, that, or the other man can speak. Some from custom, and in going they sometimes find by it that which they did not seek. As it is written, “I am found of them that sought me not” (Rom. 10:20). Yes, they became impregnated with godly and regenerating seed, and though it did not spring up at once, yet with a little more moisture from above, it may grow, and in the end, bear excellent fruit.

Sickness in ourselves and neighbors, as also the death of friends and neighbors, are sometimes a means of regeneration by calling to our minds the word of the Lord that was before heard or read, and by awakening our fears. Again, as a means of regeneration may be considered all judgments from the Lord upon his intelligent creatures. As it is written, “When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness” (Isa.26:9). And this is the end for which they are sent, as Paul says: “For they verily (meaning their earthly fathers), for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit

that we might be partakers of his holiness” (Heb. 12:10). Though, all the things that are mentioned herein, together with others things that might be mentioned, are a means to regenerate man, made use of, both by God, and some of them also by man. Yet, neither of them (excepting Christ considered according to his power), nor yet all of them, in themselves alone, are sufficient to regenerate man, or to make a new creature. For neither of the holy men of old, with all his preaching and good example, could regenerate all in his time, nay most of them, not even all that heard them. Not even Moses, with the whole law, and what is more, even all the sayings, sermons, miracles, blameless examples of Jesus of Nazareth and his faithful apostles, could regenerate all that had seen and heard them. How much less then shall the weaker means be sufficient. And I also add the whole sacred volume is insufficient to regenerate all who read it, and hear sermons from it. For if the holy scriptures were in themselves sufficient, all who read and hear them, would be new creatures. Which we know is not the case.

Here I think it is applicable what Paul says in Galatians, “If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law” (Gal. 3:21). And as before mentioned, the means are in themselves insufficient. Therefore, a more powerful means is needed, for Paul says, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor 2:14). Here we see the truth of what Christ says, “No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him:” (John 6:44). Here we see again,

that all external means of themselves are insufficient. For of what avail is preaching (the best of means), if the Lord open not the heart? As he did open the heart of Lydia, the seller of purple, so that she attended to the things which were spoken by Paul, (Acts 16:14).

And this attention to do the word of God is nothing short of faith, which is the brightest means of regeneration. Indeed, when it has become a living faith, it is regeneration itself. But the other means, namely, the instruction which is received by the ear, or by reading, or in some other way, must go before, and offer itself in the mind of man, to be believed. As Paul saith: “How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall they preach except they be sent” (Rom. 10:14-15). Again, he says, “But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord who has believed our report? So then, faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:16-17). Now we see it is already a work of the spirit of God, whereby faith is wrought in man, but yet it is by faith that man receives the promised spirit, (Gal 3:14), the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father (Rom. 8:15).

That the word of God, the incorruptible seed, was to be scattered out over all nations, we learn from the command of Christ. “Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). Here we see again, that the means of the word is to be applied to all, and also that it is not effectual without the means of faith. As an apostle says, and we also know of our own knowledge that faith is

not enjoyed by every man. Wherefore, he says to the Ephesians, “By grace you are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Eph. 2:8). Wherefore, the children of God are indeed not born of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Those who believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ have power to become the children of God. As already said, this power consists in the gift of the promised spirit which is received by faith. This spirit, if not grieved, by willful sin, will cause us to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot better conclude this part, than by comparing it to the sowing of our natural seeds. How in the first place, our natural seeds have their origin in God, but they are put into our hands, and if we do not sow them, most certainly we will bring starvation and misery on ourselves and our posterity. If we till the ground in the best manner, and sow our seeds thereon, still we cannot make them grow, but it is God that gives the increase. Even so it is with the incorruptible seed, the word of God. It doubtless had its origin with God, for methinks it is worthy of God, but it was placed into the hands of men to sow. Now if those men had not sown it, what a deplorable state of spiritual starvation we should have been in. And as this seed, (thank God), is still in the hands of men, it is our duty to sow it again and again, so that it may be handed down to the latest posterity. But though all who are called to be spiritual sowers, should be faithful in the discharge of this duty, they cannot give the increase. For neither Paul that plants, nor Apollos that watereth, are anything; but God, that giveth the increase, (1 Cor. 3:7). Moreover, so far as a word is

concerned in the regeneration of man, it must be the word of God, for the words, or the traditions of men can never do it. They may indeed make proselytes, but this may be far from regeneration. As we may read “Woe unto you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves” (Matt. 23:15).

## What Being Born Again, Or Regeneration, Is in Itself

Thirdly. I promise to show what regeneration in itself is. The third and fourth parts might have been considered under one heading, but as regeneration in itself is a godly, and consequently a perfect thing, and those possessed of it, particularly at the commencement, have their infirmities and imperfections, I thought it's best to divide them into two parts. Before I undertake to show what regeneration is, I will show what I think it is not. And it is truly not infidelity, and is never obtained by unbelief, for without faith (Paul says) it is impossible to please God. Neither is it in mere imagination, but something real and substantial. It is not barely every comfort that the sinner receives, for this depends on the foundation on which it rests; and if it rests on a crying of peace, where there is no peace, it certainly is not regeneration. Again, it is not a hypocritical transformation. Again, it is not fanaticism, but a most sober and rational thing. Which, he that has it, will show it in all his conversation.

I go on now to show, truly, what regeneration is. First, it is a change in man, as the terms: regeneration, new creature, etc. sufficiently imply and show forth. Our Savior could hardly have made use of more powerful and significant expressions, or given a better type than the birth of man. For, at every birth a new creature comes forth that never existed before (I now speak of nature), without the least of its own aid. And we may further say of this what we will. It had its origin in God, beyond which, I presume, even the atheist can not go. For, I at least presume, they have not

yet found out how nature, without any seed, produced man. Even so it is in a spiritual sense that the seed is originally from God, the husband of the bride (the church). Who, is pregnant with the incorruptible seed, and often in travail, and brings forth with fear, children unto God, her husband. As Paul says: “My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you” (Gal. 4:19). Notwithstanding, it is not in the power of the bride to give the increase, but God gives it. Therefore, regeneration is a change of such a nature as not to be produced by man alone. Neither by the regenerated, nor by him who is to be regenerated, but by the co-operation of God with man. So that it may be said with propriety of the regenerated man, that he is born of God. There are many, I know, who think that all who will, may be regenerated, and so I think too. For it is in the will that regeneration has its commencement. For it is only once the wicked man has the will to receive Christ, or in other words, to cease from evil, and to learn to do good, that he has the most essential part. He is no more what he was before, but now he is a new creature. Understand me right, he is new in will. And Paul shows most clearly, that it is God which worketh in man, both to will and to do, of his good pleasure. Though this may be by some considered small, it is nevertheless a commencement of regeneration, a birth out of God by faith. And when to the will is added the deed, we have regeneration in a good degree.

Regeneration is putting on Christ, by faith. And Christ may with much propriety be called a new man, for there never was any like him on earth before. And where Christ is to be put on, the old man must be put off. As Paul says, “That ye put off concerning the

former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor” (Eph. 4:22-25). To put on Christ, is not merely to believe that he is, but to receive him in all, as he is, namely, in doctrine, in examples, and in merits. As Paul says, “As ye have learned him, so walk ye in him”. And if we put on Christ with his holy doctrine and example, the consequence, first of all, with the sinner must be repentance. Secondly a patterning after Jesus, which leads to sanctification of the flesh, and of the spirit. If we then also put him on with his merits, we are then begotten again to a lively hope of life everlasting, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

Now, he that has truly put on Christ, cannot do otherwise than to love God, and his brother. This Christ has repeatedly taught, namely, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another”. Again, “Thereby shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another”. Herewith, St. John agrees, saying: “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God” (1 John 4:7). Again, “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments” (1 John 5:2-3). And when man has once such a love to God, by virtue of which he keeps his commandments, then he is indeed a NEW CREATURE. “Old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new,” (2 Cor. 5:17). Yea, man is changed in will, understanding and

deeds; yea, in heart. So, then we see that regeneration consists in light from God, in faith, in a change of the will, and in a change of the passions and propensities; it is where the blind are made to see, and the ignorance of the will of God must depart. And faith grounds itself on knowledge that gave evidence. Being convinced thereby, the perverse will become right, so that man only wills what God wills. The passions are so altered that we love that which we before loved not, and hate, or at least deny ourselves of what we before loved, that is to say, all things forbidden of God.

I have now given a brief description of regeneration, in so far as it is necessary unto a complete entrance into the kingdom of Christ on earth. It being righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. I close this part by saying, that I think regeneration will never be completed in this world. On the contrary, that man must die and see corruption, or be changed (as Paul says) and consequently a new body (which Paul calls a spiritual body) shall come forth, and in such a completely changed state, both in body and spirit. They which are born again in spirit here on earth, shall in due time see God, yea, Amen. As I must speak of these things more at large in the fourth proposition, I will here say no more.

### **What Manner of Being He Is Who Is Born Again, Or Born of God**

I will come now to show, fourthly, what manner of being, a regenerated man is. With the belief, that at least most men will allow, that the purifying of the will belongs to the commencement of regeneration, and that Paul was a regenerated man when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans. I here commence. Now in the seventh chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, he says: “For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, consent unto the law that it is good. Now then, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me” (Rom. 7:14-17). Now he speaks still more plain, saying: “For I know that in me (that is in my flesh). dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good, I find not” (Rom. 7:18).

Would any man here say that there truly dwelt no good thing in Paul at this time? I for my part could not. Neither does he say it, but only, that in his flesh dwelt no good thing. Otherwise, Paul no doubt had faith and the will to do the good, which are indeed good things. But the performance of that which is good was only wanting. As he further saith: “For the good that I would, I do not (mark he would do the good), but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” How clearly this shows that he has done the evil which he yet did against his already sanctified will, by the inclination to evil in the flesh. Which he calls a law at

variance with the law of his mind. So that when he would do good, evil was present with him. He also calls it a “law of sin and death” (Rom. 8:2). He also calls it a body of death, saying, “Oh wretched man that I am: Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” But notwithstanding all this, he delighted in the law of God after the inward man. A proof that he was a regenerated man. For, I take it for granted that the man who has nothing of regeneration, does not delight in the law of God after the inward man. Yea, methinks he rather abhors the law of God. With all this, Paul would describe his situation while yet young in Christ, and it also describes the situation of other babes in Christ. For, I take it for granted, that all the children of God must experience this conflict between the flesh and the spirit. His childhood in Christ, he would describe, and not his mature years. Neither the situation in which he then was when he wrote this epistle. For in the seventh chapter, he complains so hard against the law of sin and death, and that on its account he could not do the things, which, after the inward man, he had the will to do. And seems even weak in faith, of ever being relieved, saying, “who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” And a few verses further, namely, in the eighth chapter, and the second verse he saith: “For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death”. He tells us soon afterward, that he, together with other believers, did no more walk after the flesh, but after the spirit, in chapter eight verse four.

Now this great advance did hardly happen in the few moments that were necessary to write the few intervening verses. But on the contrary, as has already been hinted, he first describes

the situation of a child in Christ, or the state in which he first found himself after his conversion. And afterward, the state in which he found himself when he wrote this epistle. Paul had at the time when he thus complained, a measure of faith, and the will to do the good. Therefore, he had power to become a true child of God. This power he faithfully used until he became strong enough, after the inward man, or in the spirit of his mind, to overcome the law of sin and death. No more to walk after the flesh, but after the spirit.

O, that all Christians might do as Paul did, and not stand still with a mere beginning. As it is customary in our days. – Men give up to their infirmities too much, saying, “we are poor weak creatures, and cannot live so perfect as the Lord would have us live”. And thus, stand still, or give up, instead of looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2). That we also might be made free of the law of sin and death by making use of the measure of faith which we already have, by striving against our corrupt nature (or the law of sin and death), and by frequent visits to the throne of grace. With fervent prayer for aid, that the Lord would give us bread from heaven, to nourish the inner man, that we may grow and recover strength sufficient to crucify the old man, or the flesh with its lusts and desires.

It would be hard to tell where regeneration begins in every one, or from whence it comes to every one (otherwise than the certainty that it comes from God). As our Savior said unto Nicodemus, “The wind bloweth where it listeth and thou hearest

the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, on whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the spirit". Here we see that even he who receives the birth out of the spirit does not exactly know whence this came upon him; it is like unto the wind which men can hear and feel, but cannot exactly tell from whence it comes or whither it goes. So, it is with him that receives the birth, or is born out of the spirit of God. He feels the power, but does not directly know from whence this comes unto him, or what is its end. Even as men do not exactly understand the nature of the wind, but it commonly comes to man while hearing the word of God, by which, according to Paul's doctrine, faith comes, and by this also the will to receive it. For by faith Abraham obeyed, and by faith man is yet made willing to receive Christ, and to be obedient unto him.

How clear these things are seen in the three thousand souls who believed through the miracles which they had seen and heard, and the preaching of Peter on the great day of Pentecost. For, when they had heard Peter, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" They now had the faith and the will to do, and now desired to know what they should do. They were willing to obey. And Peter told them what they should do, namely, **REPENT AND BE BAPTIZED** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38).

We cannot here conclude, that they, by their obedience, obtained the birth out of the spirit. But on the other hand, the birth out of the spirit wrought obedience in them. And by obedience,

they were to receive further gifts of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps, Peter here means the miraculous gift of the Holy Ghost, whereby men spoke with tongues, and performed other miracles. Let this be as it may. We see that the Holy Ghost was more than once given to the apostles, and so it may be unto others. And it is clear that additional gifts of the Holy Spirit depend on man's obedience. For our Savior teaches us to pray, and gives great encouragement thereto by saying, that a father will not give the bad thing, while the good one is asked for. Adding, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good things unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him" (Luke 11:13).

Here we see how man, by obedience, grows in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Again, in proof of the position that regeneration generally commences by the hearing of the word, I appeal not only to the preaching of Peter on the day of Pentecost, but also to his preaching to Cornelius, and those that were with him. Now when Peter had preached Christ to them, or as it reads, (Acts 10:44), while he was yet preaching, the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard the word. We directly see obedience in them, they were baptized. A proof that they put on Christ. As Paul says, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ" (Gal. 3:27).

Herewith, he would say, as many of you as have been baptized into the Christian Church, have pledged yourselves to be obedient unto Christ, and to the rejection of everything opposed to him. Not that every man by his bare baptism, truly puts on Christ. Paul would only call to their minds how that they had pledged

themselves to keep that religion which is freed from all unnecessary ceremonies, which they had learned through Christ. And not again to fall back to the dead works of the law, or be entangled in the yoke of bondage. Again, Paul says: “This only would I learn of you, received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith” (Gal. 3:2). Herewith, he would say, that they did receive the spirit by the hearing of the preached word of faith, and that through faith. For, he tells them that they were all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26).

I think I have now shown that to have faith and the will to do good (consequently to repent of the evil) is the infant state of the child of God. And I add, that though those graces are but weak, they are nevertheless the gift of God “who divides to every man severally as he will” (1 Cor. 12:11). I presume many will here contradict me, saying, “so small a beginning is not regeneration”. But this I cannot help – I must give truth as I find and understand it. But to call the faith, through which the will comes to do that which is truly good, together with the will, a small thing, I do not understand.

How many thousand are there who think themselves orthodox in faith, and were therefore children of God, and yet they do not have so much as the will to do that which is truly good. They may indeed be faithful in their attendance of religious meetings, to hear preaching, and are anxious to pray in order to be heard and seen of men, like the Pharisees of old. But mercy, and the true and living faith are omitted by them, as they were by the Pharisees. Yea, many are not yet willing to deal according to justice with their fellow men, nor do they do anything about

showing love and mercy. I therefore say, that it is indeed a great thing to have the will to do that which is truly good and right, in all things.

Whence come so many of the last described class? The main cause of their existence is man's natural proneness to evil. Again, the belief that Jesus is the Christ, is now prevalent in the land, and we are brought up to it from our infancy. Now, this is a kind of dead thing, learned from our parents, and other sources, which may not be called living faith, as many afterward experience. For true and living faith embraces Christ wholly, namely, in doctrine, example and merits. It embraces the threatenings, as well as the promises in God's word, and thereby the will is created to cease from the evil and learn to do the good. Another cause for their existence may be, that men are not always taught godly truth, or rather not the whole truth. For there is so much said against the moralist, and as it appears to me, they are classing him with the self-righteous Pharisee. I honestly fear many are thereby hindered from being moral, and made so fearful of self-righteousness, as not to become righteous at all.

Now, I do want to know what more we need to ask of man, than to become strictly moral. Can any man in his sober senses believe, that any man will be strictly moral without living faith. Let men look what morality means, and no more think that the Pharisees were moral men, but those Christians whom they hated and persecuted were moral men, who performed the duties of life. I verily believe too, that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, "cursed is every one that hangeth on the tree". But, in order to understand a

man, we must mark the tenor of his discourse. The Galatians had fallen back to the dead works (ceremonies) of the law, from which Paul labored hard to release them. Telling them, that if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law, but now it is by faith, as no law gives life without faith (which I think I sufficiently showed in the second part). He would therefore teach them that they were by faith in Christ, the children of God, and that Christ by his death had put away the law, by nailing it to the cross That they should serve in newness of the spirit, and not according to the deadness of the letter. Or in other words, to be circumcised in heart, and not outwardly, but to become truly moral and not ceremonious.

I also believe that he became “the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2) – by sealing his testament with his own blood, and establishing it with miracles, and by appearing again to many after a triumphant resurrection from the dead, and the pouring out of the Holy Ghost, by which men believed, repented of their sins, and became righteous. As we read, “They continued steadfastly in the apostle’s doctrine and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). If they continued in the apostle’s doctrine; they were now righteous men. For no man would have the hardihood to say that the apostles taught them unrighteousness, and thus I doubt not, God was well satisfied with them. So, he is satisfied to this day, with every one in his turn, who truly believes, repents of his sins, and forsakes them, and thus turns to God again. A man’s faith can never be better than the foundation on which it rests.

Now we know that the Scribes and Pharisees did make void the law of God, that they might establish their own traditions, and that they shut up the kingdom of heaven against men, not entering themselves, nor suffering those that were entering to go in (Matt. 23:13). The same may still happen, and I fear does. But enough of this, I did not undertake to write in order to judge more than what is indispensable with every writer and speaker; but to bring truth to light, with the least possible offense.

Now of the infant state wherein faith and all is yet weak, Paul writes in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, saying: “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able” (1Cor. 3:1-2). And gives them to understand wherein they were carnal, and consequently only babes in Christ. Namely, in their devotions, according to the names of men, one saying I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos. By which are envying and strife among them, and tries to curse them of their division, and restore them to true Christian fellowship. Telling them, among other things, that neither Paul that planted, nor Apollos that watered, are anything, but God, that gave the increase; and that the planter and the waterer are one; and that he, as a wise master builder, laid the foundation and that others built on the same; and that other foundation no man could lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Paul also writes of this weak state of the child of God, saying, “For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the

oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat; for every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness; for he is a babe” (Heb. 5:12-13). Peter exhorts to be desirous after this milk, saying, “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Peter, 2:2). Of this infant state, Christ told his disciples, when they asked him, saying, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” And Jesus called a child unto him, and set it in the midst of them, and said: “Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:1-3).

Here it becomes us to notice, that the disciples of Jesus, together with the rest of the Jews, expected the Messiah to establish a kingdom on earth, somewhat after the manner of other kingdoms of the earth, and each of them perhaps wished to be greatest in it, as we at another time see that they reasoned among themselves, which of them should be greatest, (Luke 9:46). Again, Jesus asked them, “what was it that ye disputed among yourselves on the way?” But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves who should be the greatest. This erroneous opinion they harbored until the day in which he was taken up, and a cloud received him. As we hear them, just before his taking up, asking him: “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?” And perhaps to the day of Pentecost.

Now as a rebuke to these erroneous ideas of the kingdom of God, and their desire for self exaltation, our Savior told them, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall

not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” As though he would say: “as long as you harbor these notions of my kingdom and your desire is after earthly exultation, and you do not learn of me meekness and lowliness of heart and as newborn babes desire the sincere milk of my word, and be thereby converted to correct ideas of the kingdom of heaven, and drop your ideas of earthly exultation, ye cannot enter into it”. Indeed, all babes in Christ ought to be desirous after the sincere milk of the word, and like Mary, sit down at the feet of their Savior, and hear his word. It being that good part, which, I thank God, is not yet taken away (I mean the opportunity to learn of Jesus).

Now, from this infant state, the new creature grows by the milk of the word, so as to bear stronger diet, or meat, as Paul calls it. And to the will be added the deed. We must not here be alarmed by our weakness, but go ahead by faith. Knowing that he who wrought in us, to will, can also work in us, to do of his good pleasure. Therefore, humbly praying to him for his assistance, the one who can bring us from death unto life, or give us power to put off, concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts. That we may be renewed in the spirit of our minds, and put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness, (Eph. 4:22-24).

Here then the child in Christ, who has learned Christ, or has been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus, lays aside the sinful and heathenish life, and puts on the holy life of Christ. “Wherefore, putting away lying, he speaks the truth with his neighbor, knowing that they are members, one with another”, (verse 25). And of this growth, Peter also speaks, in his first

epistle, saying: “wherefore, laying aside all malice and guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speaking” (1 Peter 2:1). Thus, the faithful children of God, in the first place, grow in knowledge, by “the sincere milk of the word”, (1 Peter, 2:2).

As we further learn from Paul, saying: “Speaking the truth in love may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ” (Eph. 4:15). Again, “that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing. Being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10). Now when this growth in knowledge has taken place, and the new creature is strong, having the word of God abiding in him, and having overcome the wicked one, or put off the old man, then John calls him a young man, (1 John 2:14). Here then is no more lying, the old man with his works is put off, and the new man is put on.

I will now endeavor to show more clearly wherein the growth of the child of God does consist. They increase in the understanding of Godly truths. They pass over from the use of milk to the use of meat. Likewise, they leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection, (Heb. 6:1). A like growth is experienced in faith. Wherefore, the apostles prayed to the Lord Jesus to increase their faith (Luke 17:5). Charity also grows with faith. The following testimony is given of the Thessalonians, “Your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all towards each other aboundeth” (2 Thess 1:3). The more faith and charity grow, the more they show themselves in their fruits, or in the practice of all Christian virtues. Thus, the growing child of God giveth all diligence, and adds to faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge,

temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity (2 Peter, 1:5-7).

The more abundant they bring fruits unto the Lord. The more communion they have with him, and they “abound yet more and more in knowledge, and in all judgment” (Phil. 1:9). That they may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:19). To the end that the child of God might grow in faith, in knowledge, in charity, and in the practice of all the Christian virtues. And also, that many more children might be born. Christ gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ; till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive: But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Eph. 4:11-16). I here repeat that the infant state is that wherein man has knowledge of the will of God (though it is but little). Faith, repentance for past sins, and a sincere desire to be redeemed from his sins, and a will to do the good in which state he may indeed have pardon for his sins.

For repentance and remission of sins was to be preached in the name of Jesus Christ among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47). But man is yet often brought “into captivity to the law of sin which is in his members” (Rom. 7:23). Whereby, he is often distressed and brought to say with Paul, “Oh, wretched man that I am. Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” Or in other words, who shall cleanse me of my evil inclinations, that are seated in my flesh?

The state wherein the child of God may be called a young man, is that wherein the wicked one is overcome. The child of God is made free of the law of sin and death, or in other words, where he has crucified the flesh with its lusts and desires, patterning after Jesus in self-denial, and bearing the cross. But he is still capable of growing in knowledge and experience. As in nature; a young man may still learn.

Before I undertake to show yet more in detail, what manner of being the child of God is, who has grown up to manhood. I mention that the different names which St. John gives, according to age and station, do not so much apply to the different states of the child of God, as those of the other apostles, but may all unite in one, and at the same time, for we see that he applies them equally to all whom he wrote to, without making any distinction (1 John, 2:13-14).

And in going on with the description of the new creature, I turn to St. John, who says: “If ye know that he (the Lord) is righteous, ye know that every one that does righteous, is born of him”. Again, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old

things are passed away: behold all things are become new” (2 Cor. 5:17). And whosoever abideth in him sinneth not (1 John 3:6). Again, “he that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:6). Here we see that those who are in Christ Jesus, are the new creatures, and that those who abide in him sin not. Again, John tells us, that he that committeth sin, is of the devil, for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose, the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8). Again, (verse 9) “Whosoever is born of God, does not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God”. As though he would say he is born of the spirit of God, and made a partaker of the nature of God, and therefore sinneth no more. These things he lays down as marks, whereby distinguishing between the children of God, and the children of the devil. Saying: “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whosoever does not righteousness, is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother”. Here we learn from John, that he that loveth not his brother, is not of God (that is to say, is not born of God). On the other hand, he further tells us, that love is of God; and every one that loveth is of God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love (John 4:7-8). Again, “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God” (1 John 5:1). And with this Paul agrees, saying, “ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26). Here being born of God seems at a slight view to lose some of its importance. But when we come to consider, that faith without works is dead (James 2:26), and that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham

(Gal. 3:7), and that Abraham's children do Abraham's works (John 8:39), then we cannot make a true believer out of anyone, save him who does righteousness by faith. Abraham obeyed (Heb. 11:8), and so do all his children.

John also straightway adds love to faith, saying: "Every one that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him". Again, "by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments: For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous; for whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world. And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God (John 5:1-5). Again, (verse 18) "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not". In this doctrine of strict sanctification, John did abide, for in his second epistle, verses 8 and 9, he saith: "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, has not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he has both the Father and the Son" (1 John 1:8-9).

Here someone might perhaps think, is this not against John that you have said that he which has faith and the will to do the good, is born again, or is a babe in Christ. I think not, for as already shown, John did not speak of newborn babes in Christ, but of young men, who are strong, calling them little children, because they knew the father, young men because they were

strong, and fathers because they knew him, that is, from the beginning. Thus, applying those three names to each of them without making any distinction between them. John therefore speaks altogether of such as have grown up unto manhood, and are therefore strong, having overcome the wicked one, and in whom faith had gained the victory over the world. And among the things which are not of the Father, but of the world, John mentions the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life. Paul tells us what are the fruits of lust, saying: “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelling, and such like” (Gal. 5:18-21). Now all these things are of the world. John speaks of such as had overcome the world and the wicked one, and not of infants in Christ, whose faith is weak, and those who when they would do the good, find evil present with them. I would be rightly understood, even in the infant state, willful sins do cease.

That John saith, that he that is born of God, cannot sin, deserves to be explained a little, in that he saith: “Whosoever is born of God sinneth not”. I must leave it as I left it before. For God is holy, as it is written, “be ye holy, for I am holy”. Therefore, that which is born of him is holy. Even with the babe in Christ, the will is holy, and with those that are grown up, also the performance. That those who are born of God cannot sin, I believe, we should understand in the following light. They cannot sin so undisturbed as others. And John tells us the reason, saying, “his seed remains in him”, that is, the spirit and the word, which

flow from one and are one. They remain in him as a godly seed (I thank God that it is so), and if he is tempted, this godly seed reminds and warns him, and as it were, chastises him beforehand, that he had suffered any such thing even to enter his mind, as to commit sin. It is therefore evident, that they cannot sin so free and undisturbed as others. Blessed is he whose aid the Lord is.

But if we would contend that those who are once born of God, could absolutely sin no more. Then, in the first place, their godly conversation of walk would be compulsion, for they could not do otherwise, they must serve God. And where do we read of such compulsion? The Lord indeed works the will to do, but does not compel. And in the second place, we should need to make out all warnings against falling, as superfluous, as well as all exhortations to the children of God not to sin. And thirdly, we would have to disbelieve the testimony of the fall of those whose fall is recorded in God's word. Among whom I mention David, who though he was a man after God's heart, did fall into great sins. And Peter, who though he had followed his Master in regeneration, afterward denied him. More testimony might be advanced, but I forbear, as it is of but little consequence in our main subject. But, the fact that John saith: "Whosoever is born of God, does not commit sin, serves me yet more clearly to show what manner of being he is, who is born of God. He does not sin.

Now every transgression of the commandments of God, is sin. But sin is of two kinds. First, the sin of commission, in committing, which man does the evil. Second the sin of omission, where man leaves the good undone. That this is also sin, we learn from James, saying, "Therefore, to him that knoweth to do good,

and does it not: to him it is sin” (James 4:17). I do not intend to notice the difference in sins any further. I have only noticed it thus far, that everyone may see what sin is. That I may the easier describe the true child of God, who is born and nourished of God, till he has reached manhood.

He sins not, consequently he keeps all the commandments of God. In the first place, he believes, for faith is also a commandment. “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ”, said Paul to the jailer. Secondly, he has also repented of his sins, for repentance is also a commandment. “Repent ye and believe the Gospel,” said our Savior. Thirdly, he came unto Jesus, and learned of him meekness and lowliness of heart. In short, he loves God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. Wherefore, whatsoever he would that men should do unto him, he does even so unto them. And having charity, he is long-suffering and kind: he envieth not, he vaunteth (boasteth) not himself: he is not puffed up: he does not behave himself unseemly, and in many things he seeketh not his own, but that which is his neighbor’s. For example, he seeks not his own, but his neighbor’s honor. He is not easily provoked. He thinketh no evil (of the objects of his charity). He rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth (I Cor. 13:4-6). He is not conformed to this world, but is transformed by the renewing of his mind, so that he can prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. If he prophesies, he does it according to the proportion of faith. If he has ministry, he waiteth on ministering. If he teaches, he waiteth on teaching, or if he exhorts, on exhortation. When he giveth, he does it with simplicity. If he ruleth, he does it with diligence, and showeth

mercy with cheerfulness. His love is without dissimulation (insincerity). He abhors that which is evil, and cleaves to that which is good. He is kindly affectionate to his brethren in brotherly love. In honor preferring the brethren. He is not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit; serving the Lord. He rejoiceth in hope, and is patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer. He distributes to the necessity of saints, and is given to hospitality. He blesses them which persecute him; he blesses, and curses not. He rejoiceth with them that do rejoice, and weeps with them that weep (Romans 12). If he is reviled, he will bless; if he is persecuted, he suffers it (1 Cor. 4:12). Being defamed, he entreats (verse 13).

There is no other right way, much as we might desire it. For Christ saith, “Abide in me, and I in you” (John’s Gospel 15:4), and “whosoever abideth in him, sinneth not” (1 John 3:6). And again, “He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also to walk, even as he walked” (1 John 2:6). Now, how did Christ walk touching these things? Answer – when he was reviled, he reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously (1 Pet. 2:23). And do we not truly see this through his whole life; but particularly in his sufferings. For what did he do, when nailed to the cross where he was reviled, despised, blasphemed, and subjected to the feeling of the highest wickedness that man is capable of leading into practice against another, both in body and character? Yea, the innocent Lamb was numbered among the wicked, and nailed to the infamous and painful cross. And in this situation, what did he do? Did he revile against those that reviled him? No. Did he threaten

those under whom he suffered? No, but he made the most exalted prayer ever made on earth, for them, to his Heavenly Father. Father, FORGIVE them (mine enemies), for they know not what they do (Luke 23:34). This may in truth be called making intercession for the transgressors (Isaiah 53:12).

Now the true brethren and sisters of Jesus do likewise, who follow him in regeneration, and do the will of God (Matt. 12:50). Yea, the young man in Christ, or the completed child of God, does not resist evil, but if anyone smite him on the right cheek, he turns to him the other also, and if any man will sue him at the law and take away his coat, he leaves him have the coat also, and if any man compel him to go a mile, he goes with him twain. He gives to him that asks him; and from him that would borrow of him, he turns not away. He loves his enemies. He blesses those that curse him. He does good to them that hate him, and prays for those who despitefully use him and persecute him. And in those things which touch on well-doing towards friends and enemies, he is perfect, even as his Father in Heaven is perfect. For even so the Father does, he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. He takes heed that he does not do his alms before men, to be seen of them, for he seeks not the praise of men thereby. And when he prays, he is not like the hypocrites are, for they love to be standing in the synagogues, and at the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men, but enters into his closet, and shuts the door, and prays to his Father which is in secret.

Not that the child of God may not at all pray in public, but when he does it, it is in sincerity, to the glory of God and the

salvation of man, and not to be heard and seen of men. And therefore, in his worship, with much propriety, calls God his Father. He forgives men their faults, even as God forgave him in Christ. He does not lay up for himself treasures upon earth, but is careful to lay up a treasure for himself in Heaven. Knowing that where his treasure is, there will his heart be also. He therefore serves God, and not mammon. He is not over much concerned about meat, drink and raiment, but labors diligently with his hands, casting all his care on God, for he cares for him (1 Peter 5:7) Thus he casts not away his confidence, which has great recompense of reward. He knows that God gave him life, which is more than meat, and a body which is more than raiment. He therefore beholds the fowls of the air, who sow not, neither reap, or gather into barns, and yet are fed by his Heavenly Father, and this strengthens his confidence in his God.

He judges not, that he may not be judged, knowing that with what judgment he judges, he shall be judged (Matt 7:1-2). He enters in at the straight gate. He is aware of false prophets, who come to him in sheep's clothing, but are inwardly ravenous wolves, for he knows that they are to be known by their fruits. He minds not high things, but condescends to men of low estate; neither is he wise in his own conceit. He recompenses to no man evil for evil – and provides things honest in the sight of men. If it is possible, as much as lies in him, he lives peaceable with all men. He therefore follows peace with all men, and holiness, for he knows that without these, no man shall see the Lord (Heb. 12:14). He does not avenge himself, for he knows that vengeance belongs to the Lord. Therefore, if his enemy hunger, he feeds him, if he is

thirsty, he gives him drink. He is not overcome of evil (to avenge himself on his enemies), but overcomes the evil (he receives from them) with good (Rom. 12). He is among those who bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ (Gal. 6:2).

He suffers no corrupt communication to proceed out of his mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers (Eph. 4:29). For he knows that for every idle word that men speak, they must give account in the day of judgment (Matt. 12:36). We hear therefore, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting of him, for he knows that these things are not convenient for him; but rather giving of thanks. His speech is therefore always with grace, seasoned with salt (Col. 4:6). He has no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reproveth them; and sees that he walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as the wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil (Eph. 5:16). He denies himself of all the sinful lusts of the flesh, such as adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like things, knowing that they which do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God (Gal. 5:19-21).

He is subject unto the higher powers (Rom. 13:1) (or the government under which he lives), in all things that are not against the law of God. But if his government should require him to do that which his God prohibits, he cannot yield absolute obedience. Knowing that the powers that be are ordained of God and consequently are not equal or superior, but inferior to God. Wherefore, he most rationally concludes, that the law of God is

paramount to all human laws, and therefore finds himself bound to obey God first. If the government under which he lives should be offended at this his conscientious course, and would inflict punishment on him, he will make no resistance; but if the punishment be intolerable, he will fly to a milder region if he can. And that, by the permission of his master saying, if they persecute you in one city, fly to another. But if he cannot fly, then he is minded like Jesus Christ also was touching these things (Phil. 2:5), and is obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (Phil. 2:8). He presents his body a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, knowing that it is his reasonable service (Rom. 12:1). Thus, he fears God, and honors the King (or the government under which he lives) (1 Peter 2:17). He renders to all their dues (if he can); tribute, to whom tribute is due; custom, to whom custom; fear, to whom fear; honor, to whom honor (Rom. 13:7). And though he cannot always yield absolute obedience to his government, yet he passively submits to all grievances, without rebellion, or violent resistance, and is therefore least of all men to be dreaded by a government.

He strives to owe no man anything but love; knowing that love works no ill to his neighbor, and is therefore the fulfilling of the law (Rom. 13:10). Wherefore, he lets brotherly love continue, and is not forgetful of entertaining strangers. He will be remembering them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being himself also in the body (Heb. 13:1-3). In short, his conversation is without covetousness; and he is content with such things as he has. For the Lord has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee". So that he may boldly

say, “The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me” (Heb. 13:5-6).

If he is married, he keeps marriage honorable, and the marriage bed undefiled (Heb. 13:4). (Let it here be understood, that this reads in German, “Marriage is to be kept honorable by all, and the marriage bed undefiled”). For he knows that God will judge the whoremongers and adulterers. If the young man in Christ is a husband, he loves his wife, even as Christ also loved the Church (Eph. 5:24), and is not bitter against her (Col. 3:19). Yea, he loves her as his own body (Eph. 5:28), being one flesh with her, (verse 31). If she is a wife, she submits herself unto her own husband (at least in all responsible things), as unto the Lord (Eph. 5:22); or as it is fit in the Lord (Col. 3:8). Her adorning is not that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on apparel; but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price (1 Peter 3:3-4).

If the young man, in Christ, is a father, he will not provoke his children unto wrath; but brings them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4). Yea, he provokes them not to anger, lest they be discouraged.

If he is a child, he obeys his parents in all things (Col. 3:20). (Unless they should command in direct opposition to the law of God. For surely, if a parent commands a child, who is also a child of God, to steal, or to commit murder, it ought not to obey, but reason with the parent, and rather suffer death than to yield obedience under such circumstances). He therefore obeys his

parents in the Lord, for this is right, and thus honors his father and mother. For he knows that this commandment is given him with promise (Eph. 6:1-2).

If he is called, being a servant, he cares not for it; but if he may be made free, he uses it the rather (1 Cor. 7:21). He is subject to his master with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank-worthy, if a man, for conscience toward God, endure grief, sufferings wrongfully (1 Peter 2:18-19). He therefore obeys his master, and strives to please him in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity. That he may adorn the doctrine of God, our Savior, in all things (Titus 2:9-10). Not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, and with good will, doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man does, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he is bond or free (Eph. 6:6-8).

If he is a master of servants, he does the same things unto them, forbearing threatening, knowing that his master also is in Heaven, and that there is no respect of person with him (Eph. 6:9). Wherefore he gives unto his servants that which is just and equal (Col. 4:1).

If the regenerated and grown-up child of God is a preacher or pastor, he feeds the flock of God which is entrusted to his care, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lord over God's heritage, but being an example to the flock (1 Peter 5:2-3).

He therefore takes heed unto himself, and to the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made him overseer, to feed the Church of God (Acts 20:28). He studies to show himself approved unto God; a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. He shuns profane and vain babblings, for he knows that they will increase unto more ungodliness (2 Tim. 2:15-16). If he is young, he flees youthful lusts and follows righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart (2 Tim. 2:22). And whether he is old or young, he speaks the things which become sound doctrine; that the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becomes holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine; teachers of good things; that they may teach the young to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet chaste, keepers of home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. He also exhorts the young men to be sober-minded, and in all things shows himself a pattern of good works; in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity; in speech, soundness, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part, may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of him, or his flock (Titus 2:1-8).

Moreover, the young man in Christ is merciful, not only unto man, but also unto beasts, as it is written: "A righteous man regards the life of his beast" (Prov. 12:10). Wherefore, he is careful to provide food for the creatures under his care; and those who are beasts of burden. He will neither overload nor overdrive

willfully; neither does he correct them unmercifully without a serious cause; neither does he abuse them wantonly in any way.

Finally, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any praise, he thinks on these things (Phil. 4:8). And as he that called him, is holy, so he is holy in all manner of conversation (1 Peter 1:15). He takes not the name of the Lord, his God, in vain (Exod. 20:7). Neither does he defraud any man, but rather suffers himself to be defrauded (1 Cor. 6:7-8). For, in his mouth is found guile (Rev. 14:5). For he knows that into the New Jerusalem, which was shown St. John in a vision, there shall in no wise enter anything that defiles; neither whatsoever works abomination, nor makes a lie (Rev. 21:27). Wherefore, he gives all diligence, and adds to his faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity (2 Peter 1:5-7). In short, he is born out of water and spirit, and has the spirit of Christ, his brother, or the spirit of adoption, whereby he cries Abba Father; and this spirit itself bears witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God (Rom. 8:15-16). Wherefore, he is also an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ (verse 17); and knows that if his earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, that he has a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens (2 Cor. 5:1); and that he has passed from death unto life, because he loves the brethren (John 3:14). Yea, he knows that he is of God, and that the whole world lies in wickedness, and that the Son of God is come, and

has given him an understanding, that he may know him that is true; and he is him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ (1 John 5:19-20). Finally, he has put on the whole armor of God, that he may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand, and therefore stands, having his loins girt about him with truth, and having a breast-plate of righteousness, and his feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith he shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, and taking the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, and prays always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit and watching thereunto, with all experience and supplication for all saints (Eph. 6:13-18). And with this armor of God he has fought a good fight: he has brought his course a great way; he has kept the faith; henceforth, there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness; which the Lord, the righteous judge shall give him at that day; and not to him only, but unto all them also that love his appearing (2 Epistle to Timothy 4:7-8). Wherefore, whether he live, he lives unto the Lord; and whether he die, he dies unto the Lord; therefore, whether he live or die, he is the Lord's (Rom. 14:8).

I will now leave off writing of the young man in Christ, where the New Creature is strong, and has overcome the wicked one, and write yet a little about the perfect man, who has reached the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). Here I presume, many will say, thou hast already described a state of perfection not attainable by any man, why wilt thou say yet more? To which I say, that we should make such a state our constant aim; and be running towards it continually, with full

purpose of heart. Whereby, we should certainly get ahead much further, than by standing still, discouraged. For the whole matter has its origin in God, who can work in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. For nothing is impossible with him. As to the possibility of the Christian arriving at such state, wherein he can keep one of the hardest commandments of Christ, namely, love your enemies. I refer the reader to the case of Stephen. For who can suppose that he did not love his enemies when he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin their charge". Again, who can suppose that the apostles did not love their enemies, when they were being reviled, they blessed; and when they were being persecuted, they suffered it (1 Cor. 4:12). They did all in their power for the good of those that persecuted them, so that they might also be partakers of the life which is from God.

It will not do to plead too great a degree of ignorance. For if we have not yet learned the plain duties of a Christian, we are not yet grown up unto young men in Christ. For knowledge is wherein the Christian grows, as much as in anything. Neither will it do to plead in too much weakness, for the young man in Christ is strong, and the word of God abides in him, and he has overcome the wicked one (1 John 2:14). If such a state has not already been reached, then is all boasting of perfection vain. We should much rather consider ourselves as behind the mark, and lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, and run with patience the race that is set before us, looking into Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:1-2).

Now, a little more of that state of perfection wherein the New Creature has reached the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. This is the state wherein man is not only willing to do as well as he knows how to, he has overcome all known sins and sinful lusts, and has crucified the flesh with its lusts and desires, but he is also perfect in knowledge. Of which St. Paul speaks saying, “He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets: and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” Eph. 4:10-14).

Now Paul does not speak of this as already existing, but as a thing of hope or desire. For before Christians can get into unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God, they must be perfect in knowledge. Sincerity alone, though very commendable, can never do it. For I verily believe and know, that the sincere have not yet all come to unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God. But if knowledge was perfect with all the sincere, how natural it would be for them to be of one faith and knowledge of the son of God. This should lead us to have charity and toleration, one for the other, as one being perfect in knowledge. Paul did not even consider himself, for he saith, “For we know in part, and prophesy in part” (1 Cor. 13:9). Here Paul speaks in the plural, saying, “we know in part” evidently including himself. But though neither Paul, nor other believers, had arrived at a state of

perfection in knowledge; nevertheless, the apostles pointed and exhorted them to such a state. Saying “Being of the same mind, one toward another” (Rom. 12:16). Again, “Be ye all of one mind” (1 Peter 3:8). Again, “Brethren, be not children in understanding; howbeit, in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men” (1 Cor. 14:20). Now after Paul says, “We know in part, and we prophesy in part”. He adds, “But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, spoke as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, put away childish things”. With this he would say, when we once come to perfection, we shall put away that which is in part; for now, we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face. Now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. Here it is undeniable, that Paul did not yet consider himself perfect in knowledge, and that he places perfect knowledge in another state of existence, where God’s children shall see him face to face, and shall know even as also they are known.

Paul also speaks of a perfection which he had not yet in possession. Saying, “that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings. Being made conformable unto his death. If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead, not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark

for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:10-14). Here Paul certainly speaks of a perfection which he himself had not yet in possession; and as it appears from the connection of his words, he could not possess, until he was made conformable unto the death of Christ; that he might attain unto the resurrection from the dead. In other particulars, namely, in faithfulness in the performance of every known duty. And complete self-denial of all things sinful, and in that he was ready and willing to suffer stripes and imprisonment, and to offer up his body to the glory of Christ. Paul was a perfect man, and considers himself such, saying further, “Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded” (Phil. 3:15). How minded? Answer: To count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, their Lord; and for him to suffer the loss of all things, even life, rather than disobey or deny; and thus, to press forward for the heavenly prize. This is a glimpse of the perfection whereof he speaks as having already received. On the other hand, that perfection which he looked for once to enjoy and what he expected by the change and practice of his religion, he had not yet in his possession. Neither did he expect it, until he was made conformable unto the death of Christ, and had attained to the resurrection of the dead.

It appears then that perfection in knowledge, and the perfect possession of all blessings, which come through Christ, belonged in another time than that wherein the apostles lived, and has surely not belonged in any time since. Neither in our time, for Christians are yet as little of one mind as ever, and consequently imperfection is yet among them. Therefore, the perfect man, who

has grown up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, (Eph. 4:13) belongs yet into another time; or into the heavens themselves, where the pure in heart may at last see God (Matt. 5:8).

As John also says, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is” (1 John 3:2). Here John sets forth two things, which are further serviceable to me to describe the state of perfect regeneration, both in soul and body.

First – the children of God shall be like God.

Secondly – they shall see him as he is, “they shall see God”. And of both these, David also speaks, in the seventeenth chapter of Psalm, in verse fifteen, saying: “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness” (Psalms 17:15).

Man was originally made in the image of God, and this image the first Adam, or man, lost by transgression. “Wherefore, as by man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so, death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. 5:12). “Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Rom. 5:18). From these two verses I understand Paul, that death came upon all men by Adam, and the resurrection from the dead by Christ. This he shows, yet more clearly, saying, “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by

man came death, by man came also the resurrection from the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall be made alive” (1 Cor. 15:20-22). And the believer in Christ shall rise, “having his vile body changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ” (Phil. 3:21).

Of this change or regeneration of the body, Paul speaks pretty largely about it in the already named fifteenth chapter of his first epistle to the Corinthians. Of which I will only give notice to that which seems to me the most important. Namely, “It is sown a natural body: it is raised a spiritual body” (verse 44). That is, the body is sown or buried into the earth a natural body, and shall rise a spiritual body. The first man is of the earth, earthly. The second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly; we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. It would be folly to conclude here that this image of the heavenly man, or Christ, in which all true believers shall once appear, consists alone in a likeness of spirit. For Paul speaks of the resurrection of the body, and that in a changed state, fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. And further to establish this sort of doctrine, he says, “Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God”. That is, we may not enter into the heavens with a body like unto that which we now are in, but we must be changed. As Paul further says: “Behold I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed”. An insurmountable proof that man cannot enter heaven in a body like he here inhabits; but in a spiritual and changed body like unto the glorious body of Christ. And of the majesty of Christ,

Peter speaks, “For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God, the Father, honor and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice, which came from heaven, we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount” (2 Peter 1:16-18).

Herewith, Peter no doubt has reference to the transfiguration of Christ, at which he was present. As we may learn, “And after six days, Jesus took Peter, James and John, his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain, apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light” (Matt. 17:1). Or as Mark says, “Exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them” (Mark 9:3). Here Jesus Christ made his appearance in his truly heavenly form, in which he will once appear. For we see that it corresponds with his majestic appearance unto St. John on the island of Patmos. John saw one in the midst of the seven candlesticks, like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were like a flame of fire; and his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace (Rev. 1:13-14).

Now all the members of Christ shall once be like unto this transfigured Jesus Christ, and with him be incorruptible, which I think I have sufficiently shown. As we may read of the children of the resurrection, “But they which shall be accounted worthy to

obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage; neither can they die anymore, for they are equal unto the angels, and are children of God, being the children of the resurrection” (Luke 20:35-36). Here we see among other things, that they cannot die, and this agrees with Paul, saying, “This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:53). Thus, we see that the children of God after their resurrection, shall be like unto the angels and Christ, who is the brightness of the glory of God, and the express image of his person (Heb. 1:3). Wherefore, as John says, “We shall be like him” (meaning God) (1 John 3:2). The children of God therefore shall once be like him and see him as he is (1 John 3:2). Wherewith, Paul agrees, saying, “Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part, but then shall I know even as I also am known”. And, here is the perfect man, who is grown up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Now, my friend, who reads this, whoever you are, behold the glory that is set before you. Will you not now be persuaded to lay aside every weight (which may impede thy movement) and the sin (which does so easily beset thee), and to run with patience the race that is set before thee, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of thy faith: who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12:1-2). Now, if you follow him faithfully in regeneration, you may set down with him, and be an heir of God, and joint heir with Christ; and thus, you will be

raised to perfect glory, and holiness forever. Which may the Lord grant, to be both my, and your happy lot.

I should here have closed, were it not that some raise a doctrine which I think is not justifiable. From the second declaration of our Savior to Nicodemus, which reads as follows: “Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”. Now I am persuaded that the first declaration included the whole, and that the second is only explanatory of the first.

Now to proceed – Nicodemus, a ruler among the Jews, came to Jesus by night, and addressed him in the following words: Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou dost, except God be with him. – I believe that this Nicodemus came to Jesus with a sincere heart, truly believing that he was a teacher sent of God. And that this faith moved him to go to Jesus to ask him as a man of God, what he thought of the kingdom of the Messiah, or of Heaven.

Now in order to strengthen his faith, the Savior of the world did not wait for him to ask, but answered to his thoughts. For mark, Jesus answered and said unto him, when Nicodemus had not yet put a question to him. And he also spake unto him of the kingdom of God, saying: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God”. – Nicodemus, who understood this literally, was astonished, saying, “how can a man be born when he is old?” etc. When Jesus further explained it unto him, saying: “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot enter

into the kingdom of God”. “Born of water” from this some do contend, that though a man be immersed into water, and thus born of water, and also of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Let no man say that I here say too much, for they say that Christ here means immersion. Now, if he does here teach immersion, then no man can enter into heaven without it, for understand, he says: “Except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God”. Mankind is too apt to draw Scripture to their own side.

Now, I think if we understand Christ here literally, we are yet too much like Nicodemus, and had better consider that the words of our Savior are spirit, and they are life. (John 6:63). For I cannot think that he here any more means natural water, than he means his own real flesh and blood (John 6:54), but he means his doctrine (or the word of God and the spirit) by which men, as many as truly believe, are regenerated. In proof of which, I will first advance some of what passed between our Savior and the woman of Samaria. Jesus said unto her: “If thou knowest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water”.

Now after talking a little more together, her faith seems to have commenced, and she did actually ask him for this water, though she had not yet a right understanding of it. I think I can show satisfactorily, that Jesus gave it to her (and that in word) by telling her all that she had done. She became convinced that he was a prophet, and as such she laid before him the disputed question, as to where men should worship. On which he taught her

correct ideas of God, and of the place and manner of worshiping. Which caused the woman to say unto him: “I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things”. Jesus said unto her, “I that speak unto thee am he” (John 4:25-26).

Now the words of our Savior were the living water, which he gave her, and of which she partook, and by the spirit, she was born again. No doubt she received the living water, and many more of the Samaritans did. For, we find that she asked them to come and see a man who had told her all that she had done, saying, “Is not this the Christ?”

Now as we find, that by the words of the woman, and of Jesus, many of the Samaritans believed on him. Is there not every reason to conclude that her faith was fully established, and she was born again out of water and spirit. For all are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26). Thus, we see that the water he gave her, consisted of words by which she believed.

Again, Christ says, “He that believeth on me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But thus, spake he of the spirit, which they that believe on him, should receive)” (John 7:38-39). Here in this place, we see clearly, by the explanation which John gives, that by the living water is meant the spirit of true believers.

Now this spirit is not to remain still and quiet in the true believer, but to flow as a river from his belly. Now we know that the spirit that is in man, proceeds forth from his mouth in words, or from his body in actions. So, it is with him that has the spirit of

God, by faith in Jesus, it will be flowing from his body in wholesome words and actions, and if he is called to be a preacher, it will flow from his belly in words, by the way of the mouth, like rivers of living water, giving life to all that truly believe. And thus, it flows again and again, and the fountain is not exhausted, for it is inexhaustible.

Moreover, Paul says, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word” (Eph. 5:25-26). Certainly, this comes very near calling the word water, for the washing was by the word, which is indeed of a cleansing nature. As we read in John, “Now ye are clean through the word of which I have spoken to you” (John 15:3). Again, Isaiah compares the knowledge of the Lord unto water saying, “The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the water covers the sea” (Isaiah 11:9).

And how does the knowledge of the Lord come? Truly, man has not enough in and of himself whereby to know God and his holy will sufficiently; wherefore this must be given to him by revelation from God. Yet, it cannot be given to him without any means, as some would contend that it is, but it is by word. For without words, though they might only exist in thought, there cannot be many ideas coming together, and where there are not many ideas, there cannot be much knowledge. Now we know that it is the way of God to enlighten man by means of a word that may be heard, and this flows from the spirit of God. “For holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21). The word is therefore one with the spirit, though it is

not exactly the spirit, and therefore has life and power. It pricked men to the heart, and it does yet today. “The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword” (Heb. 4:12). “Again, is not my word like a fire? And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces” (Jer. 23:29). Moreover, the Lord promised to “pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground” (Isaiah 44:3). And again, “I give water in the wilderness, and rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen” (Isaiah 43:20). Also, “For in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert, the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water” (Isaiah 35:6-7). Likewise, “And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: In summer and in winter” (Zech. 14:8).

Now what else may we understand by this promised water, but that it is the word of the spirit of God. Whereby, the spirit was also promised, as we see in Isaiah “I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessings upon thine offspring” (Isaiah 44:3). And this promise of the pouring out of the spirit of God is made unto all flesh, “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy,” etc. (Joel 2:28). Wherefore, I think we may (without danger of misrepresenting the word of God) understand the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, when it refers to the waters which Ezekiel saw running from under the threshold of the sanctuary eastward, as having a healing nature. Which, after having ran a thousand cubits, were ankle deep, and at two

thousand, knee-deep, and at three thousand, to the loins, and at four thousand was a river that could not be passed; and this water passed on, as we see, having a healing nature, in Ezekiel chapter forty-seven verse eight. “Then said he unto me, these waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go down into the sea; which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live; and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither; for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it, from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim. There shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof, and the marshes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt” (Ezek. 47:8-11). What a beautiful description of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and its place of beginning, its rapid spread and its healing nature. For we know that the Gospel commenced in Judea, and at Jerusalem. For Jesus said, “Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”.

Now, if this is once granted, and which I think I have shown, that we may, by any expression in God’s word, understand by the word (water), as meaning the word of God, or the Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ. We may and ought to then be able to

do so. There is no more any necessity for understanding him literally (of water and of the spirit), but spiritually, (of word and of the spirit). Which I think I have sufficiently shown in the second part of this work, to be the two all sufficient means of man's regeneration.

Now the promise of God, by Joel to "pour out his spirit upon all flesh", according to Peter was fulfilled on the great day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17). For here the apostles "were all with one accord, in one place". (Acts 2:1). "And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and filled the whole house where they were sitting: And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance". Here we see that it was not a silent spirit, for they began to speak, and that, with other tongues as the spirit gave them utterance.

Now, here they (or the Lord through them) poured out the pure water, the doctrine of the spirit, in such a manner that all who were present could understand it. It was also at a very advantageous time and place, being it was at Jerusalem, a populous city, and on the day of Pentecost when the Jews came from all countries where they were scattered, so that those of all tongues were present. And as we see, when it was noised abroad what happened to the apostles, the multitude came together so that this small pouring out of the word of the spirit and the miracles which happened thereby, might soon be carried far and wide, as a preparing means for the living waters, of Gospel truth, or the doctrine of the spirit (Zech. 14:8). That which the Lord afterward

poured out through the Apostles and other of his servants, upon all people, without making any more distinction between Jews and Gentiles. And mark, this marvelous spirit did not instruct, without any means, all who were present, but by the means of the words of the apostle Peter. Which gives another strong ground for believing that we should understand, by the promised water, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The apostles were now clothed with power from on high. So that when Peter had explained the whole matter (or had poured out the living water of Gospel truth) it was as the fire of the goldsmith, or as the soap of the washerwoman. It had a purifying nature so that they that heard it were pricked to the heart, and said unto Peter, and unto the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” Here we see that it was the doctrine of the spirit which pierced and enlightened them. We also see, that while Peter poured out the living water (the word of the spirit) upon Cornelius and those who had assembled at his house, that the Holy Ghost fell on all them that heard the word while he was yet speaking (Acts 10:44).

But here faith also co-operated; and this Paul says, “comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17); and then the promised spirit by faith. As Paul says, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the spirit through faith” (Gal. 3:13-14). How clearly, we can see the order here. The spirit qualifies certain men to preach the word, which

they pour out as living water over all people without distinction of exception. Those now among all nations who believe from their hearts, receive also the promised spirit through faith. Thus, man is born of water and of the spirit, or of the word and of the spirit, and that through faith.

Here for the first time in a man's life, baptism becomes the duty of the babe in Christ. Baptism was universally received in the days of the apostles, when both men and women came to be believers, where they openly confessed Christ before men, came to him, and held themselves to his flock, in open day and not only by night like this Nicodemus.

I say again, baptism only then becomes the duty of man when regeneration has actually commenced, or man is already a babe in Christ. It is therefore not regeneration itself, as would be the case if we should understand our Savior to mean baptism, when he says, – “Of water and of the spirit”.

Our Savior explained the matter still further to Nicodemus, saying: “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit, is spirit”. It is as though he would say, ye must be born of the spirit of God, receive a spiritual sight, yea, be born spirit of spirit, and be changed from carnal minded to spiritual minded men; and thus, be made New Creatures, or ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God, either in this world, or in that which is to come. For this change is in itself the entrance into the Kingdom of God.

After having read this little book, perhaps some will say, “Thy book is very rigorous, and a poor comforter”.

As to its being rigorous, I say my sincere aim was to make it just as much so as the holy word of God is in itself, when fairly brought together, and no more. That no man through me might be deceived, but rather brought unto the way of life.

As to its being a poor comforter, I think it is not altogether such, for I have allowed to you (if you have faith and the will to do that which is truly good) that you are born of God, though yet but a babe in Christ. I have also shown unto you how you may grow. Use therefore the means, and he who has commenced in you the good work, shall also finish it. If you have no faith at all, then you want no comfort. Surely, if you have not yet the will to do the good and to leave the evil, and you go on willfully in sin; you therefore should not wish for a comforter while going on in this way. And he who does comfort you while in this way, without conditions of repentance and amendment of life, does what I should awful fear to do.

In conclusion, I would yet only say, that the work is principally a work of God; and I am so fully convinced of his perfect righteousness and love to man, that I can go to bed and sleep easy on this account — If I have only done as well as he has given me power to do.

May God in his infinite goodness make this book a true blessing to every one that reads it. AMEN.

O God, whose actions heaven approves,  
Thou art the Father still;  
Of all whom thy own spirit moves,  
To do thy holy will.

By means of thy most holy word,  
When faith in man it bade;  
And of thy spirit's own accord,  
Anew thou hast him made.

The power in deed was not in man  
To create himself anew;  
None but Almighty power can,  
Suffice this work to do.

Go on O Lord in thine own way,  
And multiply thy seed;  
Till all thy new creation may,  
Experience indeed.

And as the will by faith we have,  
Thy holy will to do;  
O do thou us from evil save,  
And work in us "to do"

That we no longer babes may be,  
In Christ our living head;  
But stronger days in him may see,  
And in his footsteps tread.

And overcome the evil one,  
To be no more his slave;  
And then the prize is nearly won,  
When Christ from sin us saves.

O grant us then a faithfulness,  
To endure unto the end;  
That we may prove all thy fullness,  
Ourselves to thee commend.

That when this mortal clay of ours.  
Its animation give;  
To thee, by thy Almighty power,  
Make us again to live.

And rise in the image of Christ,  
To see thee face to face;  
And thus be like our Savior Christ,  
In his most holy place.

To die no more like Christ our King.  
Who's conquer'd death for all;  
But everlasting praises sing.  
To our Redeeming All.