

THE
SPIRIT
OF
LOVE
PART the SECOND.

In DIALOGUES

By *WILLIAM~LAW*. M.A.

LONDON:

Printed for M. Richardson, in *Pater-noster-Row*.

1754

THE
FIRST DIALOGUE
BETWEEN

Theogenes, Eusebius, and Theophilus.

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

[Love-2.1-2] *Theophilus.* My Heart embraces you both with the greatest Affection, and I am much pleased at the Occasion of your Coming which calls me to the most delightful Subject in the World, to help both you and myself to rejoice in that adorable Deity whose infinite Being is an Infinity of mere Love, an unbeginning, never-ceasing, and forever overflowing Ocean of Meekness, Sweetness, Delight, Blessing, Goodness, Patience, and Mercy, and all this as so many blessed Streams breaking out of the Abyss of universal Love, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, a Triune Infinity of Love and Goodness, for ever and ever giving forth nothing but the same Gifts of Light and Love, of Blessing and Joy, whether before or after the Fall, either of Angels or Men.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

and *atoned* by any Thing less than the Death and Sacrifice of the only begotten Son of God.

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-17] Now there are two Things, both of them visible to your outward Senses, which entirely open the *true Ground* and *Nature* of Wrath, and undeniably show what it is in itself, from whence it arises, and wherein its Life, and Strength, and Being consist. And these two Things are, a *Tempest* in the Elements of this World, and a *raging Sore* in the Body of Man, or any other Animal. Now that a Tempest in the Elements is Wrath in the Elements, and a Sore in the Body of an Animal a Wrath in the State of the Juices of the Body, is a Matter, I think, that needs no Proof or Explication. Consider, then, *how* or *why* a Tempest arises in the Elements, or an inflamed Sore in the Body, and then you have the *true Ground* and *Nature* of Wrath. Now a Tempest does not, cannot arise in the

Elements whilst they are in their *right State*, in their *just Mixture* or Union with one another. A Sore does not, cannot break forth in the Body, whilst the Body is altogether in its true State and Temperature of its Juices. Hence you plainly see, that Wrath has its *whole Nature*, and *only Ground* of its Existence, in and by the *Disorder* or bad *State* of the Thing in which it exists and works. It can have no Place of Existence, no Power of breaking forth, but where the Thing has *lost* its proper Perfection, and is not as it ought to be. And therefore no good Being, that is in its *proper State* of Goodness, can, whilst it is in such a State, have any Wrath or Rage in it. And therefore, as a Tempest of any kind in the Elements, is a sure Proof that the Elements are not in their right State, but under Disorder, as a *raging Sore* in the Body is a certain Indication that the Body is *impure* and *corrupt*, and not as it should be; so in whatever Mind, or intelligent Being, Wrath or Rage works and breaks forth, there, there is Proof enough, that the Mind is in that same *impure, corrupt, and disordered State*, as those Elements that raise a Tempest, and that Body which gives forth an inflamed Sore. And now, Gentlemen, what think you of a supposed Wrath, or Rage in God? Will you have such Things to be in the Deity itself as cannot have Place or Existence even in any Creature, until it is become *disordered* and *impure* and has lost its *proper State* of Goodness?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-41] What a mistake is it, therefore, to confine Inspiration to *particular* Times and Occasions, to Prophets and Apostles, and extraordinary Messengers of God, and to call it *Enthusiasm*, when the common Christian looks, and trusts to be *continually led* and inspired by the Spirit of God! For though all are not called to be Prophets or Apostles, yet all are called to be *holy*, as He who has called them is *holy*, *to be perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect*, *to be like-minded with Christ*, to will only as God wills, to do all to his

Honour and Glory, to renounce the Spirit of this World, to have their Conversation in Heaven, to set their Affections on Things above, to love God with all their Heart, Soul, and Spirit, and their Neighbour as themselves.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-48] How firmly our established Church adheres to this Doctrine of the Necessity of the *perpetual Operation* of the Holy Spirit, as the one only Source and Possibility of any Degree of Divine Light, Wisdom, Virtue, and Goodness in the Soul of

Man, how earnestly she wills and requires all her Members to live in the most open Profession of it, and in the highest Conformity to it, may be seen by many such Prayers as these, in her common, ordinary, public Service.

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

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

[Love-2.1-51] The *Faith* of the first *Patriarchs* could not have been in Being; *Moses* and the *Prophets* had come in vain, had not the Christ of God lain in a *State of Hiddenness* in every Son of Man. For *Faith*, which is a Will and Hunger after God, could not have *begun* to be, or have any Life in Man, but because there was something of the Divine Nature *existing* and *hid* in Man. For nothing can have any longing Desire but after its

own Likeness, nor could any Thing be made to Desire God, but that which came from Him, and had the Nature of Him.

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

[Love-2.1-53] But if Christ was to raise a new Life like his own in every Man, then every Man must have had originally, in the inmost Spirit of his Life, a *Seed* of Christ, or Christ as a Seed of Heaven, lying there as in a State of *Insensibility* or *Death*, out of which it could not arise but by the *mediatorial Power* of Christ, who, as a second Adam, was to regenerate that Birth of his *own Life*, which was *lost* in all the natural Sons of Adam the first.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-60] Again, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and thy Neighbour as thyself." Now these two Precepts, given by the written Word of God, are an absolute Demonstration of the *first original* Perfection of Man, and also a full and invincible Proof, that the same original Perfection is not quite *annihilated*, but lies in him as a *hidden, suppressed Seed* of Goodness, capable of being raised up to its first Perfection. For had not this Divine *Unity, Purity, and Perfection* of Love toward God and Man, been Man's *first natural* State of Life, it could have nothing to do with his present State. For had any other Nature, or Measure, or kind of Love begun in the first Birth of his Life, he could only have been called to that. For no Creature has, or can have a Call to be above, or act above its own Nature. Therefore, as sure as Man is called to this Unity, Purity, and Perfection of Love, so sure is it, that it was, at first, his natural, heavenly State, and still has its *Seed, or Remains* within him, as his only Power and Possibility of rising up to it again. And therefore, all that Man is called to, every Degree of a new and perfect Life, every future Exaltation and Glory he is to have from the Mediation of Christ, is a full Proof, that the same Perfection was originally his natural State, and is *still* in him in *such a Seed or Remains* of Existence, as to admit of a perfect Renewal.

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

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

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-66] The *stinking Gum* gives nothing to the Soul, nor brings any Thing into Sensibility but that which was before in the Soul; it has only a Fitness to awaken, and stir up *that State* of the Soul, which *lay dormant before*, and which when brought into Sensibility, is called the Sensation of bad Smelling. And the *odoriferous Gum* hath likewise but the same Power, *viz.*, a Fitness to stir up *that State* of Sensation in the Soul, which is called its delightful Smelling. But both these Sensations are only *internal States* of the Soul, which *appear*, or disappear, are *found*, or not found, just as Occasions bring them into Sensibility.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

therefore nothing can be available, but the *new Creature* called out of its Captivity under the Death and Darkness of Flesh and Blood, into the Light, Life, and Perfection of its first Creation.

[Love-2.1-82] And thus also, you have the fullest Proof in *what* your Salvation precisely consists. Not in any historic Faith, or Knowledge of any Thing absent or distant from you, not in any Variety of Restraints, Rules, and Methods of practising Virtues, not in any *Formality* of Opinion about *Faith* and *Works*, *Repentance*, *Forgiveness* of *Sins*, or *Justification* and *Sanctification*, not in any Truth or Righteousness, that you can have from yourself, from the best of Men or Books, but wholly and solely in the *Life of God*, or Christ of God *quicken*ed and born again in you, or in other Words, in the Restoration and perfect Union of the first *two-fold Life* in the Humanity.

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

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-87] Thus you are told in the *Appeal*, *After these two Falls of two orders of Creatures* (that is, of Angels and Man), *the Deity itself* came to have new and strange *Names*, new and unheard of *Tempers* and *Inclinations* of Wrath, Fury, and Vengeance *ascribed to it*. I call them *new*, because they *began at the Fall*; I call them *strange* because they were *foreign to the Deity*, and could not belong to *God in Himself*. Thus,

God is said to be a consuming Fire. But to whom? To the fallen Angels and lost Souls. But why, and how, is He so to them? It is because those Creatures have lost all that they had from God but the Fire of their Nature, and therefore God can only be found and manifested in them as a consuming Fire. Now, is it not justly said, that God, who is nothing but infinite Love, is yet in such Creatures only a consuming Fire? And though God be nothing but Love, yet they are under the Wrath and Vengeance of God because they have only that Fire in them which is broken off from the Light and Love of God and so can know or feel nothing of God but his Fire of Nature in them. As Creatures, they can have no Life but what they have in and from God; and therefore that wrathful Life which they have, is truly said to be a Wrath or Fire of God upon them. And yet it is still strictly true that there is no Wrath in God Himself, that He is not changed in his Temper toward the Creatures, that he does not cease to be one and the same infinite Fountain of Goodness, infinitely flowing forth in the Riches of his Love upon all and every Life. (Now, Sir, mind what follows, as the true Ground, how Wrath can and cannot be ascribed to God.) God is not changed from Love to Wrath, but the Creatures have changed their own State in Nature, and so the God of Nature can only be manifested in them, according to their own State in Nature. And, N.B., this is the true Ground of rightly understanding all that is said of the Wrath and Vengeance of God in and upon the Creatures. It is only in such a Sense, as the Curse of God may be said to be upon them, not because any Thing cursed can be in or come from God, but because they have made that Life, which they must have in God, to be a mere Curse to themselves. For every Creature that lives must have its Life in and from God, and therefore God must be in every Creature. This is as true of Devils, as of holy Angels. But how is God in them? N.B. Why, only as He is manifested in Nature. Holy Angels have the Triune Life of God, as manifested in Nature, so manifested also in them, and therefore God is in them all Love, Goodness, Majesty, and Glory, and theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-95] For this *Fire* and *Water*, this *Life* and *Death*, are *Nature*, and have their unchangeable State in the *uniform Working* of God in Nature. And therefore, whatever is done by this *Fire* and *Water*, this *Life* and *Death* in any Creature, may, nay, must, in the strictest Truth, be affirmed of God as done by Him. And consequently, every breathing forth of *Fire*, or *Death*, or *Rage*, or *Curse*, wherever it is, or in whatever Creature, must be said, in the Language of Scripture, to be a *provoked Wrath*, or *fiery Vengeance of God*, *poured forth upon the Creature*. And yet, every Thing that has been said in Proof of the Wrath of God shows, and proves to you at the same Time, that it is not a Wrath in the Holy Deity itself.

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

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

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

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

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

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

[Love-2.1-102] *Theophilus*. Nature is a true Manifestation of the hidden, invisible God. But you are to observe, that Nature, as it is *in itself*, in its *own State*, cannot have the least possible Spark, or Stirring of Wrath, or Curse, or Vengeance in it: But, on the contrary, is from Eternity to Eternity, a mere Infinity of heavenly Light, Love, Joy, and Glory; and thus it is a true Manifestation of the hidden Deity, and the greatest of Proofs that the Deity itself can have no Wrath in it, since Wrath only then begins to be in Nature, when Nature has lost its first State.

[Love-2.1-103] *Theogenes*. This is Answer enough. But now another Thing starts up in my Mind. For if the Deity in itself, in its supernatural State, is *mere Love*, and only a *Will* to all Goodness, and if Nature in itself is only a Manifestation of this Deity of Love in heavenly Light and Glory, if neither God nor Nature have, or can give forth Wrath, how then can *Fire* and *Water*, *Life* and *Death* be set before Man? What can they come from, or where can they exist, since God in himself is all Love; and Nature, which is the Kingdom of Heaven, is an Infinity of Joy, Blessing, and Happiness?

[Love-2.1-104] *Theophilus*. I will open to you all this Matter to the Bottom in as few Words as I can.

[Love-2.1-105] Before God began any Creation, or gave Birth to any Creature, He was only manifested, or known to himself in his own Glory and Majesty; there was nothing but Himself beholding Himself in his own Kingdom of Heaven, which was, and is, and ever will be, as unlimited as Himself.

[Love-2.1-106] Nature, as well as God, is and must be antecedent to all Creature. For as no *seeing* Eye could be created, unless there was antecedently to it, a *natural Visibility* of Things, so no Creature could come into a *Sensibility* of any natural Life, unless such a State of Nature was antecedent to it. For no Creature can begin to be in any *World* or *State* of Nature, but by being created out of that World, or State of Nature, into which it is brought to have its Life. For to live in any World, is the same Thing as for a Creature to have all that it is, and has, *in* and *from* that World. And, therefore, no Creature can come into any other Kind of Existence and Life, but such as can be had *out of* that World in which it is to live. Neither can there possibly be any other Difference between created Beings, whether animate or inanimate, but what arises from that out of which they were created. Seeing then, that before the Existence of the first Creatures, there was nothing but God and his Kingdom of Heaven, the first Creatures could receive no other Life but that which was in God, because there was nothing *living* but God, nor any *other Life* but his, nor could they exist in any other Place or outward State, but the Kingdom of Heaven, because there was none else in Existence; and therefore, the first Creatures must, of all Necessity, be Divine and heavenly, both in their inward Life and outward State.

[Love-2.1-107] *Theogenes*. Here then, *Theophilus*, comes my Question. Where is that *Fire* and *Water*, that *Life* and *Death*, that is set before the Creature? For as to these first Creatures, nothing is set before them, nothing is within them, or without them, but God and the Kingdom of Heaven.

[Love-2.1-108] *Theophilus*. You should not have said, There is nothing *within* them, but God and the Kingdom of Heaven. For that which is their own *creaturely Nature* within them, is not God, nor the Kingdom of Heaven.

[Love-2.1-109] It has been already proved to your Satisfaction, that no Creature can be Divine, good, and happy, but by having a *two-fold* Life united in it. And in this two-fold Life of the Creature, is *Fire* and *Water*, *Life* and *Death* unavoidably set before it. For as its Will worketh with either of these Lives, so will it find either *Fire* or *Water*, *Life* or *Death*. If its Will turneth from the Life of God, into the creaturely Life, then it enters into a Sensibility of that which is meant by *Death* and *Fire*, *viz.*, a wrathful Misery. But if the Will keeps steadily given up to the Deity, then it lives in Possession of that *Life* and *Water*, which was its first, and will be its everlasting heavenly Joy and Happiness.

[Love-2.1-110] But to explain this Matter something deeper to you, according to the *Mystery* of all Things opened by God in his chosen Instrument, *Jacob Behmen*.

[Love-2.1-111] You know we have often spoken of *eternal Nature*, that so sure as there is an eternal God, so sure is it, that there is an eternal Nature, as universal, as unlimited as God Himself, and everywhere working where God is, and therefore, everywhere equally

existent, as being his Kingdom of Heaven, or outward Manifestation of the invisible Riches, Powers, and Glories of the Deity.

[Love-2.1-112] Before, or without Nature, the Deity is an entire hidden, shut up, unknown, and unknowable Abyss. For Nature is the only Ground, or Beginning of *something*; there is neither *this* nor *that*, no Ground for *Conception*, no Possibility of *Distinction* or *Difference*; there cannot be a Creature to *think*, nor any Thing to be *thought* upon, till Nature is in Existence. For all the Properties of Sensibility and sensible Life, every Mode and Manner of Existence, all Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Smelling, Feeling, all Inclinations, Passions, and Sensations of Joy, Sorrow, Pain, Pleasure, &c., are not in God, but in Nature. And therefore, God is not knowable, not a Thought can begin about Him, till He manifests himself in, and through, and by the Existence of Nature; that is, till there is *something* that can be seen, understood, distinguished, felt, &c.

[Love-2.1-113] And this *eternal Nature*, or the Out-Birth of the Deity, called the *Kingdom of Heaven*, viz., an Infinity, or boundless Opening of the Properties, Powers, Wonders, and Glories of the hidden Deity, and this not *once done*, but ever doing, ever standing in the *same Birth*, for ever and ever breaking forth and springing up in new Forms and Openings of the abyssal Deity, in the Powers of Nature. And out of this Ocean of manifested Powers of Nature, the Will of the Deity, created Hosts of heavenly Beings, full of the heavenly Wonders introduced into a Participation of the Infinity of God, to live in an eternal Succession of heavenly Sensations, to see and feel, to taste and find new Forms of Delight in an inexhaustible Source of ever-changing and never-ceasing Wonders of the Divine Glory.

[Love-2.1-114] Oh *Theogenes*! What an Eternity is this, out of which, and for which thy eternal Soul was created? What little, crawling Things are all that an earthly Ambition can set before Thee? Bear with Patience for a while the Rags of thy earthly Nature, the Veil and Darkness of Flesh and Blood, as the Lot of thy Inheritance from Father *Adam*, but think nothing worth a Thought, but that which will bring thee back to thy first Glory, and land thee safe in the Region of Eternity.

[Love-2.1-115] But to return. Nothing is before this eternal Nature, but the holy, supernatural Deity; and every Thing that is after it, is *Creature*, and has all its creaturely Life and State in it, and from it, either mediately or immediately.

[Love-2.1-116] This eternal Nature hath seven *chief* or *fountain* Properties, that are the Doers, or Workers of every Thing that is done in it, and can have neither more nor less, because it is a Birth from, or a Manifestation of the Deity in Nature. For the Perfection of Nature (as was before said of every Divine and happy Creature) is an Union of *two Things*, or is a *two-fold State*. It is Nature, and it is God manifested in Nature. Now God is Triune, and Nature is Triune, and hence there arises the Ground of Properties, three and three; and that which brings those three and three into Union, or manifests the Triune God in the Triune Nature, is another Property; so that the glorious Manifestation of the Deity in Nature can have neither more nor less than seven *chief* or *fountain* Properties from which every Thing that is known, found, and felt, in all the Universe of Nature, in

all the Variety of Creatures either in Heaven or on Earth, hath its only Rise, or Cause, either mediately or immediately.

[Love-2.1-117] *Theogenes*. You say, *Theophilus*, that the Triune Deity is united or manifested in *Triune Nature*, and that thence comes the glorious Manifestation of God in seven heavenly Properties called the Kingdom of Heaven. But how does it appear that *this Nature*, antecedently to the Entrance of the Deity into it, is Triune? Or what is this Triune Nature, before God is supposed to be in Union with it?

[Love-2.1-118] *Theophilus*. It is barely a Desire. It neither is, nor has, nor can be any Thing else but a *Desire*. For Desire is the *only Thing* in which the Deity can work and manifest itself; for God can only come into *That* which *wants* and *desires* him.

[Love-2.1-119] The Deity is an infinite Plenitude, or Fullness of Riches and Powers, in and from itself; and it is only want and Desire, that is excluded from It, and can have no Existence in it. And here lies the true, immutable Distinction between God and Nature, and shows why neither can ever be changed into the other; it is because God is a universal all; and Nature or *Desire* is a universal want, *viz.*, to be filled with God.

[Love-2.1-120] Now as Nature can be nothing but a *Desire*, so nothing is in, or done in any natural Way, but as *Desire* does it, because Desire is the *All* of Nature. And, therefore, there is no Strength or Substance, no Power or Motion, no Cause or Effect in Nature, but what is in itself a *Desire*, or the Working and Effect of it.

[Love-2.1-121] This is the true Origin of *Attraction*, and all its Powers, in this material World. It gives Essence and Substance to all that is *Matter* and the Properties of Matter; it holds every Element in its created State; and not only Earth and Stones, but *Light* and *Air* and Motion are under its Dominion. From the Centre to the Circumference of this material System, every Motion, Separation, Union, Vegetation, or Corruption begins no sooner, goes on no further, than as *Attraction* Works.

[Love-2.1-122] Take away Attraction from this material System, and then it has all the Annihilation it can ever possibly have.

[Love-2.1-123] Whence now has Attraction this Nature?

[Love-2.1-124] It is solely from hence; because *all Nature* from its Eternity, hath been, is, and for ever can be only a Desire, and hath nothing in it but the Properties of Desire.

[Love-2.1-125] Now the essential, inseparable Properties of Desire are the *three*, and can be neither more nor less; and in this you have that *Tri-Unity* of Nature which you asked after, and in which the Triune Deity manifesteth itself. I shall not now prove these three Properties of the Desire, because I have done it at large, and plainly enough elsewhere. { *Way to Divine Knowledge; Spirit of Love, Part I* }

[Love-2.1-126] But to go back now to your Question, Where, or how this *Fire* and *Water*, &c., can be found, since God is all Love and Goodness, and his *Manifestation* in Nature is a mere Kingdom of Heaven. They are to be found in the *two-fold State* of Heaven, and the *two-fold State* of every heavenly Creature.

[Love-2.1-127] For seeing that the Perfection of Nature, and the Perfection of the intelligent Creature, consists in one and the *same two-fold State*, you have here the plainest Ground and Reason why and how every good and happy and new created Being, must of all Necessity, have Fire and Water, Life and Death set before it, or put into its Choice.

[Love-2.1-128] Because it has it in its Power to turn and give up its Will to either of these Lives, it can turn either to God, or Nature, and therefore must have Life and Death, Fire or Water in its Choice.

[Love-2.1-129] Now this two-fold Life, which makes the Perfection of Nature and Creature, is, in other Words, signified by the *seven* heavenly Properties of Nature; for when God is manifested in Nature, all its seven Properties are in a heavenly State.

[Love-2.1-130] But in these seven Properties, though all heavenly, lieth the Ground of Fire and Water, &c., because a *Division* or *Separation* can be made in them by the Will of the Creature. For the three first Properties are as distinct from the four following ones, as God is distinct from *That* which *wants* God. And these three first Properties are the Essence or whole Being of that *Desire*, which is, and is called *Nature*, or that which *wants* God.

[Love-2.1-131] When, therefore, the Will of the Creature turns from God into *Nature*, it breaks, or looses the Union of the seven heavenly Properties; because Nature, as distinct from God, has only the three first Properties in it. And such a Creature, having broken or lost the Union of the seven Properties, is fallen into the *three first*, which is meant by *Fire* and *Death*. For when the first three Properties have lost God, or their Union with the four following ones, then they are *mere Nature*, which, in its whole Being, is nothing else but the Strength and Rage of Hunger, an Excess of Want, of Self-Torment, and Self-Vexation. Surely now, my friend, this Matter is enough explained.

[Love-2.1-132] *Theogenes*. Indeed, *Theophilus*, I am quite satisfied; for by this Account which you have given of the Ground of *Nature*, and its true and full Distinction from God, you have struck a most amazing Light into my Mind.

[Love-2.1-133] For if Nature is *mere Want*, and has nothing in it but a *Strength* of Want, generated from the three self-tormenting Properties of a *Desire*, if God is all Love, Joy, and Happiness, an infinite Plenitude of all Blessings, then the Limits and Bounds of Good and Evil, of Happiness and Misery, are made as visibly distinct and as certainly to be known, as the Difference between a Circle and a straight Line.

[Love-2.1-134] To live to *Desire*, that is, to *Nature*, is unavoidably entering into the Region of all Evil and Misery; because *Nature* has nothing else in it. But on the other Hand, to die to *Desire*, that is, to turn from *Nature* to God, is to be united with the infinite Source of all that is good, and blessed, and happy.

[Love-2.1-135] All that I wanted to know, is now cleared up in the greatest Plainness. And I have no Difficulty about those passages of Scripture, which speak of the Wrath, and Fury, and Vengeance of God. Wrath is *his*, just as all Nature is *his*, and yet God is *mere Love*, that only rules and governs Wrath, as He governs the foaming Waves of the Sea, and the Madness of Storms and Tempests.

[Love-2.1-136] The following Propositions are as evidently true, as that two and two are four.

[Love-2.1-137] *First*, That God in his holy Deity is as absolutely free from *Wrath* and *Rage*, and as utterly incapable of them as He is of *Thickness*, *Hardness*, and *Darkness*; because Wrath and Rage belong to nothing else, can exist in nothing else, have Life in nothing else, but in Thickness, Hardness, and Darkness.

[Love-2.1-138] *Secondly*, That all Wrath is Disorder, and can be nowhere but in Nature and Creature, because nothing else is capable of changing from Right to Wrong.

[Love-2.1-139] *Thirdly*, That Wrath can have no Existence even in Nature and Creature, till they have lost their first Perfection which they had from God, and are become *that* which they should not have been.

[Love-2.1-140] *Fourthly*, That all the Wrath, and Fury, and Vengeance, that ever did, or can break forth in Nature and Creature is, according to the strictest Truth, to be called and looked upon as the Wrath and Vengeance of God, just as the *Darkness*, as well as the *Light* is, and is to be called his.

[Love-2.1-141] Oh! *Theophilus*, what a Key have you given me to the right understanding of Scripture!

[Love-2.1-142] For when Nature and Creature are known to be the *only Theater* of Evil and Disorder, and the holy Deity as that governing Love, which wills nothing but the Removal of all Evil from every Thing, as fast as infinite Wisdom can find Ways of doing it, then whether you read of the raining of *Fire* and *Brimstone*, or only Showers of *heavenly Manna* falling upon the Earth, it is only one and the *same Love*, working in such different Ways and Diversity of Instruments, as *Time*, and *Place*, and *Occasion*, had made wise, and good, and beneficial.

[Love-2.1-143] *Pharaoh* with his hardened Heart, and *St Paul* with his Voice from Heaven, though so contrary to one another, were both of them the chosen Vessels of the same God of Love, because both miraculously taken out of their *own State*, and made to do all the Good to a blind and wicked World, which they were capable of doing.

[Love-2.1-144] And thus, Sir, are all the Treasures of the Wisdom and Goodness of God, hidden in the Letter of Scripture, made the Comfort and Delight of my Soul, and every Thing I read turns itself into a Motive, of loving and adoring the wonderful Working of the Love of God over all the various Changings of Nature and Creature, till all Evil shall be extinguished, and all Disorder go back again to its first harmonious State of Perfection.

[Love-2.1-145] Depart from this Idea of God, as an *Infinity of mere Love, Wisdom, and Goodness*, and then every Thing in the System of Scripture, and the System of Nature, only helps the reasoning Mind to be miserably perplexed, as well with the Mercies, as with the Judgments of God.

[Love-2.1-146] But when God is known to be *omnipotent Love*, that can do nothing but *Works of Love*, and that all Nature and Creature are only under the Operation of Love, as a distempered Person under the Care of a kind and skillful Physician, who seeks nothing but the perfect Recovery of his Patient, then whatever is done, whether a severe *Caustic*, or a pleasant *Cordial* is ordered, that is, whether because of its Difference, it may have the different Name of *Mercy* or *Judgment*, yet all is equally well done, because Love is the *only Doer* of both, and does both, from the same Principle, and for the same End.

[Love-2.1-147] *Theophilus*. Oh *Theogenes*, Now you are according to your Name, you are born of God. For when Love is the Triune God that you serve, worship, and adore, the only God, in whom you desire to live and move and have your Being, then of a Truth God dwelleth in you, and you in God.

[Love-2.1-148] I shall now only add this one Word more, to strengthen and confirm your right understanding of all that is said of the Wrath, or Rage of God in the Scriptures.

[Love-2.1-149] The Psalmist, you know, saith thus of God, "He giveth forth *his Ice* like Morsels, and who is able to abide *his Frosts*?" Now, Sir, if you know how to explain this Scripture, and can show how *Ice* and *Frost* can truly be ascribed to God, *as His*, though absolutely impossible to have any Existence in Him, then you have an easy and unerring Key, how the Wrath, and Fury, and Vengeance, that anywhere falls upon any Creature is, and may be truly ascribed to God, *as his*, though Fury and Vengeance are as inconsistent with, and as impossible to have any Existence in the Deity, as lumps of Ice, or the Hardness of intolerable Frosts.

[Love-2.1-150] Now in this Text, setting forth the Horror of God's *Ice* and *Frost*, you have the whole Nature of Divine Wrath set before you. Search all the Scriptures, and you will nowhere find any Wrath of God, but what is bounded in *Nature*, and is so described, as to be itself a Proof, that it has no Existence in the holy supernatural Deity.

[Love-2.1-151] Thus says the Psalmist again, "The Earth trembled and quaked, the very Foundations also of the Hills shook, and were removed, because he was wroth." No Wrath here but in the Elements.

[Love-2.1-152] Again, "There went a Smoke out in his Presence, and a consuming Fire out of his Mouth, so that Coals were kindled at it. The Springs of Water were seen, and the Foundations of the round World were discovered at thy chiding, O Lord, at the blasting of the Breath of thy Displeasure."

[Love-2.1-153] Now every Working of the Wrath of God, described in Scripture, is strictly of a Piece with this, it relates to a Wrath solely confined to the Powers and working Properties of Nature, that lives and moves only in the Elements of the fallen World, and no more reaches the Deity, than *Ice* or *Frost* do.

[Love-2.1-154] The Apostle saith, "Avenge not yourselves, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I Will repay, saith the Lord."

[Love-2.1-155] This is another full Proof, that Wrath or Vengeance is not in the holy Deity itself, as a Quality of the Divine Mind; for if it was, then Vengeance would belong to every Child of God, that was truly born of Him, or he could not have the Spirit of his Father, or be perfect as his Father in Heaven is perfect.

[Love-2.1-156] But if Vengeance only belongs to God, and can only be so affirmed of Him, as *Ice* and *Frost* are *His*, and belong to Him, if it has no other Manner of Working, than as when it is said, "He sent out his Arrows and scattered them, He cast forth Lightnings and destroyed them"; then it is certain, that the Divine Vengeance is only in *fallen Nature*, and its *disordered Properties*, and is no more in the Deity itself, than *Hailstones* and *Coals* of Fire.

[Love-2.1-157] And here you have the true Reason, why Revenge or Vengeance is not allowed to Man; it is because Vengeance can only work in the evil, or disordered Properties of *fallen Nature*. But Man being Himself a *Part* of fallen Nature, and *subject* to its disordered Properties, is not allowed to work with them, because it would be stirring up Evil in himself, and that is his Sin of Wrath, or Revenge.

[Love-2.1-158] God therefore reserves all Vengeance to Himself, not because wrathful Revenge is a Temper or Quality that can have any Place in the Holy Deity, but because the holy supernatural Deity, being free from all the Properties of Nature, whence partial Love and Hatred spring, and being in Himself nothing but an Infinity of Love, Wisdom, and Goodness, He alone knows how to over-rule the Disorders of Nature, and so to repay Evil with Evil, that the highest good may be promoted by it.

[Love-2.1-159] To say, therefore, that Vengeance is to be reserved to God, is only saying in other Words, that all the Evils in Nature are to be reserved and turned over to the *Love* of God, to be healed by his *Goodness*. And every Act of what is called Divine Vengeance, recorded in Scripture, may, and ought, with the greatest strictness of Truth, be called an Act of the Divine Love.

[Love-2.1-160] If *Sodom* flames and smokes with stinking Brimstone, it is the Love of God that kindled it, only to extinguish a *more horrible Fire*. It was one and the same

infinite Love, when it preserved *Noah* in the Ark, when it turned *Sodom* into a burning Lake, and overwhelmed *Pharaoh* in the Red Sea. And if God commanded the Waters to destroy the old World, it was as high an Act of the same infinite Love toward *that Chaos*, as when it said to the first Darkness upon the Face of the Deep, "Let there be Light, and there was Light."

[Love-2.1-161] Not a Word in all Scripture concerning the Wrath or Vengeance of God but directly teaches you these two infallible truths. First, that all the Wrath spoken of worketh nowhere but in the wrathful, disordered Elements and Properties of fallen Nature. Secondly, that all the Power that God exercises over them, all that he doth at any Time or on any Occasion with or by them is only and solely the one Work of his unchangeable Love toward Man.

[Love-2.1-162] Just as the good *Physician* acts from only one and the same *good Will* toward his Patient, when he orders bitter and sour, as when he gives the pleasant Draughts.

[Love-2.1-163] Now, suppose the good Physician to have such intense Love for you, as to disregard your Aversion toward them, and to force such Medicines down your Throat, as can alone save your Life; suppose he should therefore call himself your *severe* Physician, and declare himself *so rigid* toward you, that he would *not spare* you, nor *suffer* you, go where you would, to *escape* his bitter Draughts, till all Means of your Recovery were tried, then you would have a true and just, though low Representation of those bitter Cups, which God in *his Wrath* forceth fallen Man to drink.

[Love-2.1-164] Now as the bitter, *sour, hot, &c.*, in the Physician's Draughts, are not Declarations of any the like Bitterness, Heat, or Sourness in the *Spirit* of the Physician that uses them, but are Things quite distinct from the *State* and *Spirit* of his Mind, and only manifest his *Care* and *Skill* in the right Use of *such Materials* toward the Health of his Patient; so in like Manner, all the Elements of fallen Nature are only so many *outward Materials* in the Hands of God, formed and mixed into Heat and Cold, into fruitful and pestilential Effects, into Serenity of Seasons, and blasting Tempests, into Means of Health and Sickness, of Plenty and Poverty, just as the Wisdom and Goodness of Providence sees to be the fittest to deliver Man from the miserable Malady of his earthly Nature and help him to become heavenly-minded.

[Love-2.1-165] If, therefore, it would be great Folly to suppose *Bitterness*, or Heat, *&c.*, to be in the Spirit of the Physician, when he gives a hot or bitter Medicine, much greater Folly surely must it be, to suppose that Wrath, Vengeance, or any pestilential Quality, is in the Spirit of the holy Deity, when a Wrath, a Vengeance, or Pestilence is stirred up in the fallen Elements by the Providence of God, as a proper Remedy for the Evil of this, or that Time or Occasion.

[Love-2.1-166] Hear these decisive words of Scripture, *viz.*, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." What a Grossness therefore of Mistake is it to conclude, that Wrath must be in the Deity, because He chastens and threatens Chastisement, when you have God's own

Word for it, that nothing but his Love chasteneth? Again, Thus saith the Lord, "I have smitten you with Blasting and Mildew. Your Vineyards, and your Fig Trees, and your Olive Yards, did the Palmer-Worm devour," and then the Love that did this makes this Complaint, "Yet ye have not returned to me." Again, "Pestilence have I sent amongst you; I have made the Stink of your Tents come up even into your Nostrils," &c. And then the same Love that did this, that made this Use of the disordered Elements, makes the same Complaint again, "Yet have ye not returned to me" (Amos 4:9-10).

[Love-2.1-167] Now, Sir, How is it possible for Words to give stronger Proof, that God is mere Love, that he has no Will toward fallen Man but to bless him with Works of Love, and this as certainly, when he turns the Air into a *Pestilence*, as when he makes the same Air rain down *Manna* upon the Earth, since neither the one nor the other are done, but as Time, and Place, and Occasion, render them the fittest Means to make Man return and adhere to God, that is, to come out of all the Evil and Misery of his fallen State? What can infinite Love do more, or what can it do to give greater Proof, that all that it does proceeds from Love? And here you are to observe, that this is not said from human Conjecture, or any imaginary Idea of God, but is openly asserted, constantly affirmed, and repeated in the plainest Letter of Scripture. But this Conversation has been long enough. And I hope we shall meet again To-morrow.

The End of the First D I A L O G U E

[Continue to next Segment](#) || [Return to Spirit of Love Index](#)