

THE
THIRD DIALOGUE
BETWEEN

Theogenes, Eusebius, and Theophilus.

[Love-2.3-1] *Eusebius*. You have shown great Good-will toward us, *Theophilus*, in desiring another Meeting before we leave you. But yet I seem to myself to have no Need of that which you have proposed by this Day's Conversation. For this Doctrine of the Spirit of Love cannot have more Power over me, or be more deeply rooted in me; than it is already. It has so gained and got Possession of my whole Heart, that every Thing else must be under its Dominion. I can do nothing else but love; it is my whole Nature. I have no Taste for any Thing else. Can this Matter be carried higher in Practice?

[Love-2.3-2] *Theophilus*. No higher, *Eusebius*. And was this the true State of your Heart, you would bid fair to leave the World as *Elijah* did; or like *Enoch* to have it said of you, that you lived wholly to love, and *was not*. For was there nothing but this Divine Love alive in you, your fallen Flesh and Blood would be in Danger of being quite burnt up by it. What you have said of yourself, you have spoken in great Sincerity, but in a total Ignorance of yourself, and the true Nature of the Spirit of Divine Love. You are as yet only charmed with the Sight, or rather the Sound of it; its real Birth is as yet unfelt, and unfound in you. Your natural Complexion has a great deal of the animal Meekness and Softness of the *Lamb* and the *Dove*, your Blood and Spirit are of this Turn; and therefore a God all Love, and a Religion all Love, quite transport you; and you are so delighted with it, that you fancy you have nothing in you but this God and Religion of Love. But, my Friend, bear with me, if I tell you, that all this is only the *good Part* of the Spirit of this bestial World in you, and may be in any unregenerate Man, that is of your Complexion. It is so far from being a genuine Fruit of Divine Love, that if it be not well looked to, it may prove a real Hindrance of it, as it oftentimes does, by its appearing to be that which it is not.

[Love-2.3-3] You have quite forgot all that was said in the Letter to you on the Spirit of Love, that it is a *Birth* in the Soul, that can only come forth in its proper Time and Place, and from its proper Causes. Now nothing that is a Birth can be taken in, or brought into the Soul by any notional Conception, or delightful Apprehension of it. You may love it as much as you please, think it the most charming Thing in the World, fancy everything but Dross and Dung in Comparison of it, and yet have no more of its Birth in you, than the blind Man has of that Light, of which he has got a most charming Notion. His Blindness still continues the same; he is at the same Distance from the Light, because Light can

only be had by a *Birth* of itself in seeing Eyes. It is thus with the Spirit of Love; it is nowhere, but where it rises up as a Birth.

[Love-2.3-4] *Eusebius*. But if I am got no further than this, what Good have I from giving in so heartily to all that you have said of this Doctrine? And to what End have you taken so much Pains to assert and establish it?

[Love-2.3-5] *Theophilus*. Your Error lies in this; you confound two Things, which are entirely distinct from each other. You make no Difference betwixt the *Doctrine* that only sets forth the Nature, Excellence, and Necessity of the Spirit of Love, and the *Spirit of Love* itself; which yet are two Things so different, that you may be quite full of the former, and at the same Time quite empty of the latter. I have said every Thing that I could, to show you the Truth, Excellence, and Necessity of the Spirit of Love. It is of infinite Importance to you to be well established in the Belief of this Doctrine. But all that I have said of it, is only to induce and encourage you to buy it, at its own Price and to give all that for it, which alone can purchase it. But if you think (as you plainly do) that you have got it, because you are so highly pleased with that which you have heard of it, you only embrace the Shadow, instead of the Substance, of that which you ought to have.

[Love-2.3-6] *Eusebius*. What is the Price that I must give for it?

[Love-2.3-7] *Theophilus*. You must give up all that you are, and all that you have from fallen *Adam*; for all that you are and have from him is that Life of Flesh and Blood, which cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

[Love-2.3-8] *Adam*, after his Fall, had nothing that was good in him, nothing that could inherit an eternal Life in Heaven, but the *Bruiser of the Serpent*, or the Seed of the Son of God that was reserved, and treasured up in his Soul. Every Thing else in him was *devoted* to Death, that this *incorruptible Seed of the Word* might grow up into a new Name in Christ Jesus.

[Love-2.3-9] All the Doctrine of God's *Reprobation* and *Election* relates wholly and solely to these two Things, *viz.*, the *earthly bestial* Nature from *Adam*, and the *incorruptible Seed* of the Word, or *Immanuel* in every Man.

[Love-2.3-10] Nothing is *elected*, is *foreseen*, *predestinated*, or called according to the Purpose of God, but this Seed of the new Man, because the one eternal, unchangeable *Purpose* of God towards Man is only this, namely, that Man should be a heavenly Image, or Son of God. And therefore nothing can be elected, or called *according to the Purpose* of God, but this Seed of a heavenly Birth, because nothing else is able to answer, and fulfill the *Purpose* of God. But every Thing else that is in Man, his whole earthly, bestial Nature, is from Sin and is *quite contrary* to God's Purpose in the Creation of Man.

[Love-2.3-11] On the other Hand, nothing is *reprobated*, *rejected*, or cast out by God, but the *earthly Nature* which came from the Fall of *Adam*. This is the only *Vessel of Wrath*, the Son of *Perdition*, that can have no Share in the Promises and Blessings of God.

[Love-2.3-12] Here you have the whole *unalterable* Ground of Divine *Election* and *Reprobation*; it relates not to any particular Number of People or Division of Mankind, but solely to the two Natures that are, both of them, without Exception, in every Individual of Mankind. All that is earthly, serpentine, and devilish in every Man, is *reprobated* and *doomed* to Destruction; and the heavenly Seed of the new Birth in every Man, is *That* which is *chosen, ordained, and called* to eternal Life.

[Love-2.3-13] Election therefore and Reprobation, as respecting Salvation, equally relate to every Man in the World; because every Man, as such, hath *That* in him which *only* is elected, and that in him which *only* is reprobated, namely, the earthly Nature, and the heavenly Seed of the Word of God.

[Love-2.3-14] Now all this is evident, from the very Nature of the Thing. As soon as you but suppose Man at his Fall to have a Power of Redemption, or Deliverance from the Evil of his fallen Nature, engrafted into him, you then have the *first unchangeable* Ground of Election and Reprobation; you are infallibly shown what it is that God elects and reprobates, and the absolute Impossibility of any Thing else being reprobated by God, but that *fallen, evil* Nature from which he is to be redeemed, or of any Thing else being elected by God, but that Seed of a new *Birth*, which is to bring forth his Redemption.

[Love-2.3-15] Here therefore you have a full Deliverance from all Perplexity upon this Matter, and may rest yourself upon this great, comfortable, and most certain Truth, that *no other* Election or Reprobation, with regard to *Salvation*, ever did, or can belong to any one individual Son of *Adam*, but that *very same* Election and Reprobation, which *both of them* happened to, and took Place in *Adam's* individual Person. For all that which was in *Adam*, both as *fallen* and *redeemed*, must of all Necessity be in every Son of *Adam*; and no Man can possibly stand in any other Relation to God than *Adam* did, and therefore cannot have either more or less, or any other Divine Election and Reprobation than *Adam* had. For from the Moment of Man's Redemption, which began at the Fall, when the *incorruptible Seed of the Word* was given into *Adam*, every Son of *Adam*, to the End of the World, must come into it, under one and the same Election and Reprobation with Regard to God. Because the whole earthly Nature, from which Man was to be redeemed, and the Seed of the Word, by which he was to be redeemed, were both of them in every Man, one as certainly as the other.

[Love-2.3-16] Now this being the inward, essential State of every Man born into the World, having in himself all that is elected and all that is reprobated by God, hence it is that in order to publish the Truth and Certainty of such Election and Reprobation, and the Truth and Certainty of that two-fold Nature in Man, on which it is grounded, hence it is that the Spirit of God in holy Scripture, represents this Matter to us by such outward Figures, as are yet in themselves not figurative, but real Proofs of it.

[Love-2.3-17] This is first of all done under the Figures of *Cain* and *Abel*, the two first Births from *Adam*, where the one is murdered by the other, hereby demonstrating to us, by this Contrariety and Difference of these two first Births, the inward real State of the

Father of them, namely, that the same two-fold Nature was in him, that discovered itself in these two first Births from him.

[Love-2.3-18] The same Thing is, age after age set forth in Variety of Figures, more especially *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, in *Esau* and *Jacob*. And all this, only further to confirm and establish this great Truth, *viz.*, That such Strife and Contrariety as appeared in the Sons of the same Father, were not only outward Representations, but full Proofs of that inward Strife and Contrariety, which not only existed in their Fathers, but universally in every human Creature. For *Cain* and *Abel* had not come from *Adam*, but because both their Natures were antecedently in him, and in the same State of Opposition and Contrariety to each other. And as *Cain* and *Abel* were no other than the genuine Effects of the two-fold State, which *Adam* as *fallen* and *redeemed*, was then in, so every Man, descended from *Adam*, is in himself infallibly all that which *Adam* was, and has as certainly his own *Cain* and *Abel* within himself as *Adam* had. And from the Beginning to the End of the human Race, all that which came to pass so remarkably in the Births of *Cain* and *Abel*, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, *Esau* and *Jacob*, all that same, some Way or other, more or less, comes to pass in every Individual of Mankind. In one Man, his *own Abel* is murdered by his own *Cain*, and in another, his own *Jacob* overcomes his own *Esau* that was born with him.

[Love-2.3-19] And all the Good or the Evil that we bring forth in our Lives, is from nothing else, but from the Strife of these *two Natures* within us, and their Victory over one another. Which Strife, no Son of *Adam* could ever have known anything of, had not the free Grace and Mercy of God *chosen* and *called* all Mankind to a new Birth of Heaven within them, out of their corrupt and fallen Souls. No possible War, or Strife of Good against Evil, could be in fallen Man, but by his having from God a Seed of Life in him, *ordained* and *predestinated* to overcome his earthly Nature. For that which is put into him by God, as the Power of his Redemption, must be contrary to that from which he is to be redeemed.

[Love-2.3-20] And thus a War of Good against Evil, set up within us, by the free Grace and Mercy of God to us, is the greatest of all Demonstrations, that there is but one Election, and but one Reprobation, and that all that God rejects and reprobates, is nothing else but that *corrupt Nature* which every individual Man, *Abel* as well as *Cain*, has in himself from *Adam* as *fallen*; and that all that God *elects*, *predestinates*, *calls*, *justifies*, and *glorifies*, is nothing else but that heavenly Seed, which every individual Man, *Pharaoh* as well as *Moses*, has in himself from *Adam*, as *redeemed*.

[Love-2.3-21] And thus you have an unerring Key to all that is said in Scripture of the Election falling upon *Abel*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, &c., and of the Reprobation falling upon *Cain*, *Ishmael*, and *Esau*; not because God has Respect to Persons, or that all Men did not stand before him in the same Covenant of Redemption; but the Scriptures speak thus, that the true Nature of God's Election and Reprobation may thereby be made manifest to the World.

[Love-2.3-22] For the *earthly Nature*, which God only reprobates, having broke forth in Predominance in *Cain*, *Ishmael*, and *Esau*, they became proper Figures of that which God

reprobates, and were used by God as such. And the heavenly Seed, which is alone elected to eternal Glory, having broken forth in Predominance in *Abel, Isaac, Jacob, &c.*, they became proper Figures of that which God only elects, and were used by God as such.

[Love-2.3-23] Nothing is here to be understood personally, or according to the Flesh of these Persons on either Side; but all that is said of them is only as they are Figures of the earthly Nature, and heavenly Seed in every Man. For nothing is reprobated in *Cain*, but that very same which is reprobated in *Abel*, viz., the *earthly Nature*; nor is anything elected in *Jacob* but that very same which is equally elected in *Esau*, viz., the *heavenly Seed*.

[Love-2.3-24] And now, Gentlemen, you may easily apprehend, *how* and *why* a God, in whose holy Deity no Spark of Wrath or Partiality can possibly arise, but who is from Eternity to Eternity only flowing forth in Love, Goodness, and Blessing to every Thing capable of it, could yet say of the Children, before they were born, or had done either Good or Evil, ‘Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated. It is because *Esau* signifies the earthly, bestial Nature, that came from Sin; and *Jacob* signifies the *incorruptible Seed of the Word* that is to overcome *Esau* and change his Mortal into Immortality.

[Love-2.3-25] But now I stop, for you may perhaps think that I have here made a Digression from our proposed Subject.

[Love-2.3-26] *Eusebius*. A Digression you may call it, if you please, *Theophilus*, but it is such a Digression, as has entirely prevented my ever having one more anxious Thought about God’s Decrees of Election and Reprobation.

[Love-2.3-27] The Matter now stands in open Daylight, notwithstanding that Thickness of learned Darkness, under which it has been hidden, from the Time of St. *Austin* to this Day. And now, Sir, proceed as you please, to lay open all my Defects, in the Spirit of Love; for I am earnestly desirous of being set right in so important a Matter.

[Love-2.3-28] *Theogenes*. Let me first observe to *Theophilus*, that I am afraid the Matter is much worse with me, than it is with you. For though this Doctrine seems to have got all my Heart, as it is a Doctrine, yet I am continually thrown out of it in Practice, and find myself as daily under the Power of my old Tempers and Passions, as I was before I was so full of this Doctrine.

[Love-2.3-29] *Theophilus*. You are to know, my Friends, that every Kind of Virtue and Goodness may be brought into us by two different Ways. They may be taught us outwardly by Men, by Rules and Precepts; and they may be inwardly born in us, as the genuine Birth of our own renewed Spirit. In the former Way, as we learn them only from Men, by Rules and Documents of Instruction, they at best only change our outward Behaviour and leave our Heart in its natural State, and only put our Passions under a forced Restraint, which will occasionally break forth in spite of the dead Letter of Precept and Doctrine. Now this Way of Learning and attaining Goodness, though thus imperfect, is yet absolutely necessary, in the Nature of the Thing, and must first have its Time, and

Place, and Work in us; yet it is only for a Time, as the *Law* was a Schoolmaster to the *Gospel*. We must first be Babes in Doctrine, as well as in Strength, before we can be Men. But of all this outward Instruction, whether from good Men, or the *Letter* of Scripture, it must be said, as the Apostle saith of the *Law*, "that it maketh nothing perfect;" and yet is highly necessary in order to Perfection.

[Love-2.3-30] The true Perfection and Profitableness of the holy written Word of God is fully set forth by St. *Paul* to *Timothy*: "From a Child," saith he, "thou hast known the Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto Salvation, which is by Faith in Christ Jesus." Now these Scriptures were the *Law and the Prophets*, for *Timothy* had known no other from his Youth. And as they, so all other Scriptures since, have no other Good or Benefit in them, but as they lead and direct us to a Salvation, that is not to be had in themselves, but from Faith in Christ Jesus. Their Teaching is only to teach us, where to seek and to find the Fountain and Source of all Light and Knowledge.

[Love-2.3-31] Of the *Law*, saith the Apostle, "it was a Schoolmaster to Christ:" Of the *Prophets*, he saith the same. "Ye have," says he, "a more sure Word of Prophecy, whereunto you do well, that ye take Heed, as unto a Light that shineth in a dark Place, until the Day dawn, and the Day-Star ariseth in your Hearts." The same Thing is to be affirmed of the *Letter* of the *New Testament*; it is but our Schoolmaster unto Christ, a Light like that of Prophecy, to which we are to take great Heed, until Christ, as the Dawning of the Day, or the Day-Star, ariseth in our Hearts. Nor can the Thing possibly be otherwise; no Instruction that comes under the Form of Words can do more for us, than Sounds and Words can do; they can only direct us to something that is better than themselves, that can be the true Light, Life, Spirit, and Power of Holiness in us.

[Love-2.3-32] *Eusebius*. I cannot deny what you say, and yet it seems to me to derogate from Scripture.

[Love-2.3-33] *Theophilus*. Would you then have me to say, that the *written Word* of God is that Word of God which liveth and abideth forever; that Word, which is the Wisdom and Power of God; that Word, which was with God, which was God, by whom all Things were made; that Word of God, which was made Flesh for the Redemption of the World; that Word of God, of which we must be born again; that Word which lighteth every Man, that cometh into the World; that Word, which in Christ Jesus is become Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification in us; would you have me say, that all this is to be understood of the *written Word* of God? But if this cannot possibly be, then all that I have said is granted, namely, that Jesus is alone *that Word* of God, that can be the Light, Life, and Salvation of fallen Man. Or how is it possible more to exalt the *Letter* of Scripture, than by owning it to be a true, outward, verbal Direction to the one only true Light, and Salvation of Man?

[Love-2.3-34] Suppose you had been a true Disciple of *John* the *Baptist*, whose only Office was to prepare the Way to Christ, how could you have more magnified his Office, or declared your Fidelity to him, than by going from his Teaching, to be taught by that Christ to whom he directed you? The *Baptist* was indeed a *burning and a shining Light*,

and so are the holy Scriptures; "but he was not that Light, but was sent to bear Witness to that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every Man, that cometh into the World."

[Love-2.3-35] What a Folly would it be, to say that you had undervalued the Office and Character of *John the Baptist*, because he was not allowed to be the Light itself, but only a true Witness of it, and Guide to it? Now if you can show, that the written Word in the Bible can have any other, or higher Office, or Power, than such a *ministerial* one as the *Baptist* had, I am ready to hear you.

[Love-2.3-36] *Eusebius*. There is no Possibility of doing that.

[Love-2.3-37] *Theophilus*. But if that is not possible to be done, then you are come to the full Proof of this Point, *viz.*, that there are two Ways of attaining Knowledge, Goodness, Virtue, &c., the one by the Ministry of outward, verbal Instruction, either by Men or Books, and the other by an inward Birth of Divine Light, Goodness, and Virtue, in our own renewed Spirit: and that the former is only in order to the latter, and of no Benefit to us, but as it carries us further than itself, to be united in Heart and Spirit with the Light, and Word, and Spirit of God. Just as the *Baptist* had been of no Benefit to his Disciples, unless he had been their Guide from himself to Christ.

[Love-2.3-38] But to come now closer to our Subject in Hand.

[Love-2.3-39] From this two-fold Light, or Teaching, there necessarily arises a two-fold State of Virtue and Goodness. For such as the Teacher, or Teaching is, such is the State and Manner of the Goodness, that can be had from it. Every Effect must be according to the Cause that produces it. If you learn Virtue and Goodness only from outward Means, from Men, or Books, you may be virtuous and good according to *Time*, and *Place*, and outward *Forms*; you may do Works of Humility, Works of Love and Benevolence, use Times and Forms of Prayer; all this Virtue and Goodness is suitable to this Kind of Teaching, and may very well be had from it. But the *Spirit* of Prayer, the *Spirit* of Love, and the Spirit of Humility, or of any other Virtue, are only to be attained by the Operation of the Light and Spirit of God, not outwardly teaching, but inwardly bringing forth a new-born Spirit within us.

[Love-2.3-40] And now let me tell you both, that it is much to be feared that you as yet stand only under this outward Teaching; your good Works are only done under Obedience to such Rules, Precepts, and Doctrines, as your Reason assents to, but are not the Fruits of a new-born Spirit within you. But till you are thus renewed in the Spirit of your Minds, your Virtues are only *taught Practices*, and grafted upon a corrupt Bottom. Every-thing you do will be a mixture of good and bad; your Humility will help you to Pride, your Charity to others will give Nourishment to your own Self-Love; and as your Prayers increase, so will the Opinion of your own Sanctity. Because, till the Heart is purified to the Bottom, and has felt the Axe at the Root of its Evil (which cannot be done by outward Instruction) every Thing that proceeds from it partakes of its Impurity and Corruption.

[Love-2.3-41] Now that *Theogenes* is only under the Law, or outward Instruction, is too plain from the Complaint that he made of himself. For notwithstanding his Progress in the Doctrine of Love, he finds all the Passions of his corrupt Nature still alive in him, and himself only altered in Doctrine and Opinion.

[Love-2.3-42] The same may well be suspected of you, *Eusebius*, who are so mistaken in the Spirit of Love, that you fancy yourself to be wholly possessed of it, from no other Ground, but because you embrace it, as it were, with open Arms, and think of nothing but living under the Power of it. Whereas, if the Spirit of Love was really born in you from its own Seed, you would account for its Birth, and Power in you, in quite another Manner than you have here done; you would have known the Price that you had paid for it, and how many Deaths you had suffered, before the Spirit of Love came to Life in you.

[Love-2.3-43] *Eusebius*. But surely, Sir, imperfect as our Virtues are, we may yet, I hope, be truly said to be in a State of Grace; and if so, we are under something more than mere outward Instruction. Besides, you very well know, that it is a Principle with both of us, to expect all our Goodness from the Spirit of God dwelling and working in us. We live in Faith and Hope of the Divine Operation; and therefore I must needs say, that your Censure upon us seems to be more severe than just.

[Love-2.3-44] *Theophilus*. Dear *Eusebius*, I censure neither of you, nor have I said one Word by Way of Accusation. So far from it, that I love and approve the State you are both in. It is good and happy for *Theogenes*, that he feels and confesses, that his natural Tempers are not yet subdued by Doctrine and Precept. It is good and happy for you also, that you are so highly delighted with the *Doctrine* of Love, for by this means each of you have your true Preparation for further Advancement. And though your State has this Difference, yet the same Error was common to both of you. You both of you thought, you had as much of the Spirit of Love as you could, or ought to have; and therefore *Theogenes* wondered he had no more Benefit from it; and you wondered that I should desire to lead you further into it. And therefore, to deliver you from this Error, I have desired this Conference upon the practical Ground of the Spirit of Love, that you may neither of you lose the Benefit of that good State in which you stand.

[Love-2.3-45] *Eusebius*. Pray therefore proceed as you please. For we have nothing so much at Heart, as to have the Truth and Purity of this Divine Love brought forth in us. For as it is the highest Perfection that I adore in God, so I can neither wish nor desire any Thing for myself, but to be totally governed by it. I could as willingly consent to lose all my Being, as to find the Power of Love lost in my Soul. Neither Doctrine, nor Mystery, nor Precept has any Delight for me, but as it calls forth the Birth, and Growth, and Exercise of that Spirit, which doth all that it doth, toward God and Man, under the one Law of Love. Whatever therefore you can say to me, either to increase the Power, manifest the Defects, or remove the Impediments of Divine Love in my Soul, will be heartily welcome to me.

[Love-2.3-46] *Theophilus*. I apprehend that you don't yet know what Divine Love is in itself, nor what is its *Nature* and Power in the Soul of Man. For Divine Love is *perfect*

Peace and Joy, it is a *Freedom* from all Disquiet, it is all *Content* and mere *Happiness*; and makes every Thing to rejoice in itself. Love is the Christ of God; wherever it comes, it comes as the Blessing and Happiness of every natural Life, as the Restorer of every lost Perfection, a Redeemer from all Evil, a Fulfiller of all Righteousness, and a Peace of God which passeth all Understanding. Through all the Universe of Things, nothing is *uneasy*, *unsatisfied*, or *restless*, but because it is not governed by Love, or because its Nature has not reached or attained the *full Birth* of the Spirit of Love. For when that is done, every Hunger is satisfied, and all complaining, murmuring, accusing, resenting, revenging, and striving are as totally suppressed and overcome as the Coldness, Thickness, and Horror of Darkness are suppressed and overcome by the breaking forth of the Light. If you ask, why the Spirit of Love cannot be *displeased*, cannot be *disappointed*, cannot *complain*, *accuse*, *resent*, or *murmur*? It is because Divine Love desires nothing but itself; it is its own Good, it has all when it has itself, because nothing is good but itself, and its own working; for Love is God, and he that dwelleth in God, dwelleth in Love. Tell me now, *Eusebius*, are you thus blessed in the Spirit of Love?

[Love-2.3-47] *Eusebius*. Would you have me tell you that I am an Angel, and without the Infirmities of human Flesh and Blood?

[Love-2.3-48] *Theophilus*. No, but I would have you judge of your State of Love by these Angelic Tempers, and not by any Fervour or Heat that you find in yourself. For just so much, and so far as you are freed from the *Folly* of all earthly Affections, from all Disquiet, Trouble, and Complaint about this, or that, just so much, and so far is the Spirit of Love come to Life in you. For Divine Love is a new Life, and new Nature, and introduces you into a new World; it puts an End to all your former Opinions, Notions, and Tempers; it opens new Senses in you, and makes you see high to be low, and low to be high; Wisdom to be Foolishness, and Foolishness Wisdom; it makes Prosperity and Adversity, Praise and Dispraise, to be equally nothing. "When I was a Child," saith the Apostle, "I thought as a Child, I spake as a Child, but when I became a Man, I put away childish Things." Whilst Man is under the Power of Nature, governed only by worldly Wisdom, his Life (however old he may be) is quite childish; every Thing about him only awakens childish Thoughts, and Pursuits in him; all that he sees and hears, all that he desires or fears, likes or dislikes, that which he gets, and that which he loses, that which he hath, and that which he hath not, serve only to carry him from this Fiction of Evil to that Fiction of Good, from one Vanity of Peace to another Vanity of Trouble. But when Divine Love is born in the Soul, all childish Images of Good and Evil are done away, and all the *Sensibility* of them is lost, as the Stars lose their *Visibility* when the Sun is risen.

[Love-2.3-49] *Theogenes*. That this is the true Power of the Spirit of Divine Love, I am fully convinced from my own Uneasiness at finding, that my natural Tempers are not overcome by it. For whence could I have this Trouble, but because that little Dawning that I have of the Spirit of Love in me, maketh just Demands to be the one Light, Breath, and Power of my Life, and to have all that is within me overcome and governed by it. And therefore I find, I must either silence this small Voice of new-risen Love within me, or have no Rest from Complaints and Self-condemnation, till my whole Nature is brought into Subjection to it.

[Love-2.3-50] *Theophilus*. Most rightly judged, *Theogenes*. And now we are fairly brought to the one great *practical Point*, on which all our Proficiency in the Spirit of Love entirely depends, namely, *that all that we are, and all that we have from Adam, as fallen*, must be given up, absolutely denied and resisted, if the Birth of Divine Love is to be brought forth in us. For all that we are by *Nature* is in full Contrariety to this Divine Love, nor can it be otherwise; a Death to itself is its only Cure, and nothing else can make it subservient to Good; just as Darkness cannot be altered, or made better in itself, or transmuted into Light; it can only be subservient to the Light, by being *lost* in it and *swallowed up* by it.

[Love-2.3-51] Now this was the first State of Man; all the natural Properties of his creaturely Life, were hid in God, united in God, and glorified by the Life of God manifested in them, just as the Nature and Qualities of Darkness are lost and hid, when enlightened and glorified by the Light. But when Man fell from, or died to the Divine Life, all the natural Properties of his creaturely Life, having lost their Union in and with God, broke forth in their own natural Division, Contrariety, and War against one another, just as the Darkness, when it has lost the Light, must show forth its own Coldness, Horror, and other uncomfortable Qualities. And as Darkness, though in the *utmost Contrariety* to Light, is yet absolutely necessary to it, and without which no *Manifestation* or *Visibility* of Light could possibly be, so it is with the natural Properties of the creaturely Life; they are in themselves all Contrariety to the Divine Life, and yet the Divine Life cannot be communicated but in them and by them.

[Love-2.3-52] *Eusebius*. I never read, or heard of the Darkness being necessary to Light: It has been generally considered as a *negative* Thing, that was nothing in itself, and only signified an *Absence* of Light. But your Doctrine not only supposes Darkness to be something *positive*, that has a Strength and Substantiality in itself, but also to be *antecedent* to the Light, because *necessary* to bring it into Manifestation. I am almost afraid to hear more of this Doctrine. It Sounds harsh to my Ears.

[Love-2.3-53] *Theophilus*. Don't be frightened, *Eusebius*. I will lead you into no Doctrine, but what is strictly conformable to the Letter of Scripture, and the most orthodox Piety. The Scripture saith, "God is Light, and in Him is no Darkness at all"; therefore the Scripture affirmeth Light to be *superior*, absolutely *separate* from, and eternally *antecedent* to Darkness; and so do I. In this Scripture you have a noble and true Account of Light, what it is, where it is, and was, and always must be. It can never change its State or Place, be altered in itself, be anywhere, or in another Manner, than as it was, and will be, from and to all Eternity. When God said, "Let there be Light, and there was Light," no Change happened to eternal Light itself, nor did any Light then begin to be; but the Darkness of this World then only *began* to receive a Power, or Operation of the eternal Light upon it, which it had not before; or Eternity then began to open *some Resemblance* of its own Glory in the dark Elements, and Shadows of Time, and thus it is, that I assert the *Priority* and *Glory* of Light, and put all Darkness under its Feet, as impossible to be any Thing else but its Footstool.

[Love-2.3-54] *Eusebius*. I am quite delighted with this. But tell me now, how it is that Light can only be manifested in, and by Darkness.

[Love-2.3-55] *Theophilus*. The Scripture saith that "God dwelleth in the Light, to which no Man can approach": Therefore the Scripture teacheth, that Light in itself is, and must be *invisible* to Man, that it cannot be approached, or made manifest to him, but in and by *something* that is not Light. And this is all that I said, and the very same Thing that I said, when I affirmed that Light cannot be manifested, or have any *Visibility* to created Eyes, but in and through and by Darkness.

[Love-2.3-56] Light, as it is in itself, is only in the *Supernatural* Deity; and that is the Reason, why no Man or any created Being, can approach to it, or have any Sensibility of it, as it is in itself. And yet no Light can come into this World, but that in which God dwelt before any World was created. No Light can be in Time, but that which was the Light of Eternity. If therefore the *Supernatural* Light is to manifest *something* of its incomprehensible Glory, and make itself, in *some Degree*, sensible and visible to the Creature, this supernatural Light must enter into *Nature*, it must put on *Materiality*. Now Darkness is the one only *Materiality* of Light, in and through which it can become the Object of creaturely Eyes; and till there is Darkness, there is no possible Medium, or Power, through which the *Supernatural* Light can manifest *something* of itself, or have *any* of its Glory visible to created Eyes. And the Reason why Darkness can only be the *Materiality* of Light, is this, it is because Darkness is the *one only Ground* of all Nature, and of all Materiality, whether in Heaven or on Earth. And therefore every Thing that is creaturely in Nature, that has any Form, Figure, or Substance, from the highest Angel in Heaven to the lowest Thing upon Earth, hath all that it hath of Figure, Form, or Substantiality only and solely from Darkness. Look at the glittering Glory of the *Diamond* and then you see the *one Medium*, through which the Glory of the incomprehensible Light can make *some* Discovery or Manifestation of itself. It matters not, whether you consider Heaven or Earth, eternal or temporal Nature, nothing in either State can be capable of visible Glory, Brightness, or Illumination, but that which standeth in the State of the *Diamond*, and has its *own Thickness* of Darkness. And if the Universe of eternal and temporal Nature is everywhere Light, it is because it has Darkness everywhere for its Dwelling Place. Light, you know, is by variety of modern Experiments declared to be *material*; the Experiments are not to be disputed. And yet all these Experiments are only so many Proofs, not of the *Materiality* of Light, but of our Doctrine, *viz.*, that *Materiality* is always along with *visible* Light, and also that Light can only open, and display something of itself, in and by Darkness, as its Body of Manifestation and Visibility. But Light cannot possibly be material, because *all Materiality*, as such, be it what and where it will, is nothing else but so much Darkness. And therefore to suppose Light to be material, is the same Absurdity, as to suppose it to be Darkness; for so much Materiality is so much Darkness, and it is impossible to be otherwise. Again, All *Matter* has but one Nature; it admits of neither more nor less, but wherever it is, all that is material is equally there. If therefore Light was material, all the Materiality in the World must be Light, and equally so. For no Materiality could be Light, unless Light was essential to Matter, as such, no more than any Materiality could be extended, unless Extension was essential to Matter as such.

[Love-2.3-57] *Eusebius*. What is it then, that you understand by the Materiality of Light?

[Love-2.3-58] *Theophilus*. No more than I understand by the Materiality of the *Wisdom, Mercy, and Goodness* of God, when they are made intelligible and credible to me, by the Materiality of *Paper and Ink, &c.* For Light is as *distinct* from, and *superior* to all that *Materiality*, in and by which it gives forth some *Visibility* of itself, as the *Wisdom, Mercy, and Goodness* of God, are *distinct* from and *superior* to all that *written Materiality*, in and through which they are made in some *Degree* intelligible, and credible to human Minds.

[Love-2.3-59] The incomprehensible Deity can make no *outward Revelation* of his Will, Wisdom, and Goodness, but by *articulate Sounds, Voices, or Letters* written on Tables of Stone, or such-like Materiality. Just so, the invisible, inaccessible, supernatural Light can make no *outward Visibility* of itself, but through such *Darkness of Materiality*, as is capable of receiving its *Illumination*. But as the *Divine Will, Wisdom, and Goodness*, when making *outward Revelation* of themselves, by the *Materiality of Things*, are not therefore material, so neither is the *Light* material when it outwardly reveals something of its invisible, incomprehensible *Splendour and Glory*, by and through the *Materiality of Darkness*.

[Love-2.3-60] All *Light* then, that is *natural, and visible* to the *Creature*, whether in *Heaven, or on Earth*, is nothing else but so much *Darkness illuminated*; and that which is called the *Materiality of Light*, is only the *Materiality of Darkness*, in which the *Light* incorporateth itself.

[Love-2.3-61] For *Light* can be only that *same invisible, unapproachable Thing*, which it always was in *God, from all Eternity*. And that which is called the *Difference of Light*, is only the *Difference of that Darkness*, through which the *Light* gives forth *different Manifestations* of itself. It is the same, whether it illuminates the *Air, Water, a Diamond, or any other Materiality of Darkness*. It has no more *Materiality* in itself, when it enlightens the *Earth*, than when it enlightens the *Mind of an Angel*, when it gives *Colour* to *Bodies*, than when it gives *Understanding* to *Spirits*.

[Love-2.3-62] *Sight and Visibility* is but *one Power* of *Light*, but *Light* is *all Power*; it is *Life* and every joyful *Sensibility* of *Life* is from it. "In Him," says the *Apostle*, "was *Light*, and the *Light* was the *Life* of *Men*." *Light* is all *Things*, and *Nothing*. It is *Nothing*, because it is *supernatural*; it is all *Things*, because every good *Power and Perfection* of every *Thing* is from it. No *Joy, or Rejoicing* in any *Creature*, but from the *Power and Joy* of *Light*. No *Meekness, Benevolence, or Goodness*, in *Angel, Man, or any Creature*, but where *Light* is the *Lord* of its *Life*. *Life* itself begins no sooner, rises no higher, has no other *Glory* than as the *Light* begins it and leads it on. *Sounds* have no *Softness*, *Flowers and Gums* have no *Sweetness*, *Plants and Fruits* have no *Growth*, but as the *Mystery of Light* opens itself in them.

[Love-2.3-63] Whatever is delightful and ravishing, sublime and glorious, in *Spirits, Minds* or *Bodies*, either in *Heaven, or on Earth*, is from the *Power* of the *supernatural*

Light, opening its endless Wonders in them. *Hell* has no Misery, Horror, or Distraction, but because it has *no Communication* with the supernatural Light. And did not the supernatural Light stream forth its Blessings into this World, through the *Materiality* of the Sun, all outward Nature would be full of the Horror of Hell.

[Love-2.3-64] And hence are all the Mysteries and Wonders of Light, in this material *System*, so astonishingly great and unsearchable; it is because the *natural Light* of this World is nothing else but the Power and Mystery of the *supernatural Light*, breaking forth, and opening itself, according to its Omnipotence, in all the various Forms of elementary Darkness which constitute this temporary World.

[Love-2.3-65] *Theogenes*. I could willingly hear you, *Theophilus*, on this Subject till Midnight, though it seems to lead us away from our proposed Subject.

[Love-2.3-66] *Theophilus*. Not so far out of the Way, *Theogenes*, as you may imagine; for Darkness and Light are the *two Natures* that are in every Man, and do all that is done in him.

[Love-2.3-67] The Scriptures, you know, make only this Division: The Works of Darkness are Sin, and they who walk in the Light are the Children of God. Therefore Light and Darkness do every Thing, whether good or evil, that is done in Man.

[Love-2.3-68] *Theogenes*. What is this Darkness in itself, or where is it?

[Love-2.3-69] *Theophilus*. It is everywhere, where there is *Nature* and *Creature*. For all Nature, and all that is *natural* in the Creature, is in itself nothing else but Darkness, whether it be in Soul or Body, in Heaven or on Earth. And therefore, when the Angels (though in Heaven) had lost the *supernatural Light*, they became imprisoned in the Chains of their *own natural* Darkness. If you ask, Why Nature must be Darkness? It is because Nature is not God, and therefore can have no Light as it is Nature. For God and *Light* are as *inseparable*, as God and *Unity* are inseparable. Every Thing, therefore, that is not God, is and can be nothing else in itself but *Darkness*, and can do nothing but in, and under, and according to the *Nature* and *Powers* of Darkness.

[Love-2.3-70] *Theogenes*. What are the Powers of Darkness?

[Love-2.3-71] *Theophilus*. The Powers of Darkness are the Workings of Nature or Self: For *Nature*, *Darkness*, and *Self* are but three different Expressions for one and the same Thing.

[Love-2.3-72] Now every evil, wicked, wrathful, impure, unjust Thought, Temper, Passion, or Imagination, that ever stirred or moved in any Creature; every Misery, Discontent, Distress, Rage, Horror, and Torment, that ever plagued the Life of fallen Man or Angel are the *very Things* that you are to understand by the *Powers* or Workings of Darkness, Nature, or Self. For nothing is evil, wicked, or tormenting, but that which Nature or Self doth.

[Love-2.3-73] *Theogenes*. But if Nature is thus the *Seat* and *Source* of all Evil, if every Thing that is bad is in it and from it, how can such a Nature be brought forth by God who is all Goodness?

[Love-2.3-74] *Theophilus*. Nature has *all* Evil, and *no* Evil in itself. Nature, as it comes forth from God, is Darkness without any Evil of Darkness in it; for it is not Darkness without, or *separate* from Light, nor could it ever have been known to have any Quality of Darkness in it, had it not lost that State of Light in which it came forth from God, only as a Manifestation of the Goodness, Virtues, and Glories of Light. *Again*, it is Nature, *viz.*, a *Strife* and *Contrariety* of Properties for this only End, that the *supernatural Good* might thereby come into *Sensibility*, be known, found and felt, by its taking *all the Evil* of Strife and Contrariety from them, and becoming the *Union, Peace, and Joy* of them all. Nor could the *Evil* of Strife, and Contrariety of Will, ever have had a Name in all the Universe of Nature and Creature, had it all continued in *that State* in which it came forth from God. Lastly, it is *Self, viz.*, an *own Life*, that so, through such an *own Life*, the universal, incomprehensible Goodness, Happiness, and Perfections of the Deity, might be possessed as Properties and Qualities of *an own Life* in creaturely finite Beings.

[Love-2.3-75] And thus, all that is called *Nature, Darkness, or Self*, has not only *no Evil* in it, but is the only true Ground of all possible Good.

[Love-2.3-76] But when the intelligent Creature turns from God to *Self* or Nature, he acts *unnaturally*, he turns from all that which makes Nature to be *good*, he finds Nature only as it is in *itself*, and *without* God. And then it is, that Nature, or Self, hath all Evil in it. Nothing is to be had from it, or found in it, but the Work and Working of every Kind of Evil, Baseness, Misery, and Torment, and the utmost Contrariety to God and all Goodness. And thus also you see the Plainness and Certainty of our Assertion, that Nature or Self hath all Evil, and no Evil in it.

[Love-2.3-77] *Theogenes*. I plainly enough perceive, that *Nature or Self*, without God manifested in it, is all Evil and Misery. But I would, if I could, more perfectly understand the precise Nature of *Self*, or what it is that makes it to be so full of Evil and Misery.

[Love-2.3-78] *Theophilus*. Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath, are the four Elements of *Self, or Nature, or Hell*, all of them inseparable from it. And the Reason why it must be thus, and cannot be otherwise, is because the *natural Life* of the Creature is brought forth for the Participation of some *high supernatural Good* in the Creator. But it could have no *Fitness* or possible *Capacity* to receive such Good, unless it was in itself both an Extremity of *Want*, and an extremity of *Desire* of some high Good. When, therefore, this *natural Life* is deprived of, or fallen from God, it can be nothing else in itself but an Extremity of *Want*, continually *desiring*, and an Extremity of *Desire*, continually wanting. And hence it is, that its whole Life can be nothing else but a Plague and Torment of Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath, all which is precisely *Nature, Self, or Hell*.

[Love-2.3-79] Now Covetousness, Pride, and Envy, are not three different Things, but only three different Names, for the restless Workings of *one* and the *same Will* or Desire, which, as it differently torments itself, takes different Names; for nothing is in any of them, but the working of a *restless Desire*, and all this because the natural Life of the Creature can do nothing else but work as a Desire. And therefore, when *fallen* from God, its *three first Births*, and which are quite inseparable from it, are Covetousness, Envy, and Pride. It must *covet*, because it is a Desire proceeding from *Want*; it must *envy*, because it is a Desire turned to *Self*; it must *assume* and *arrogate*, because it is a Desire founded on a real Want of *Exaltation*, or a higher State.

[Love-2.3-80] Now *Wrath*, which is a *fourth Birth* from these three, can have no Existence, till some or all of these three are *contradicted*, or have something done to them that is *contrary* to their Will; and then it is that *Wrath* is necessarily born, and not till then.

[Love-2.3-81] And thus you see in the highest Degree of Certainty, what *Nature* or *Self* is, as to its essential, constituent Parts. It is the *three* forementioned, *inseparable Properties* of a Desire thrown into a *fourth* of Wrath, that can never cease, because their Will can never be gratified. For these four Properties generate one another, and therefore generate their own Torment. They have no outward Cause, nor any inward Power of altering themselves. And therefore, all *Self*, or *Nature*, must be in this State till some *supernatural Good* comes into it, or gets a Birth in it. And therefore, every Pain or Disorder, in the Mind or Body of any intelligent Creature, is an undeniable Proof that it is in a fallen State, and has lost that *supernatural Good* for which it was created. So certain a Truth is the fallen State of all Mankind. And here lies the absolute, indispensable Necessity of the one Christian Redemption. Till fallen Man is born again from above, till such a *supernatural Birth* is brought forth in him, by the eternal *Word* and *Spirit* of God, he can have no possible Escape or Deliverance from these four Elements of *Self* or *Hell*.

[Love-2.3-82] Whilst Man indeed lives amongst the Vanities of Time, his Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath, may be in a tolerable State, may help him to a Mixture of Peace and Trouble; they may have at Times their Gratifications, as well as their Torments. But when Death has put an End to the Vanity of all earthly Cheats, the Soul that is not born again of the *supernatural Word* and *Spirit* of God, must find itself unavoidably devoured, or shut up in its own, insatiable, unchangeable, self-tormenting Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath. Oh! *Theogenes*, that I had Power from God to take those dreadful Scales from the Eyes of every Deist, which hinder him from seeing and feeling the infinite importance of this most certain Truth!

[Love-2.3-83] *Theogenes*. God give a Blessing, *Theophilus*, to your good Prayer. And then let me tell you, that you have quite satisfied my Question about the Nature of *Self*. I shall never forget it, nor can I ever possibly have any Doubt of the Truth of it.

[Love-2.3-84] *Theophilus*. Let me however go a little deeper in the Matter. All Life, and all Sensibility of Life, is a *Desire*; and nothing can feel or find itself to exist, but as it finds itself to *have* and *be* a Desire; and therefore, all Nature is a *Desire*; and all that

Nature does, or works, is done by the *Working* of Desire. And this is the Reason why all Nature, and the natural Life of every Creature, is a State of *Want*, and therefore must be a State of Misery and Self-Torment, so long as it is *mere Nature*, or left to itself. For every Desire, as *such*, is and must be made up of *Contrariety*, as is sufficiently shown elsewhere. { *Way to Divine Knowledge; Spirit of Love.* } And its essential *Contrariety*, which it has in itself, is the one *only possible* Beginning or Ground of its Sensibility. For nothing can be felt, but because of *Contrariety* to *that* which feels. And therefore no creaturely Desire can be brought into Existence, or have any possible Sensibility of itself, but because *Desire*, as such, is unavoidably made up of *that Contrariety*, whence comes all *Feeling*, and the Capacity of being *felt*.

[Love-2.3-85] *Again*, All natural Life is nothing else but a mere Desire founded in *Want*; now *Want* is contrary to *Desire*; and, therefore every natural Life, *as such*, is in a State of *Contrariety* and *Torment* to itself. It can do nothing but work in, and feel its own *Contrariety*, and so be its own unavoidable, incessant Tormentor.

[Love-2.3-86] Hence we may plainly see, that God's bringing a sensible Creature into Existence is his bringing the *Power* of *Desire* into a *creaturely State*; and the Power and Extent of its own working Desire is the *Bounds* or *Limits* of its own creaturely Nature. And, therefore every intelligent Creature, of whatever Rank in the Creation, is and can be nothing else, in its creaturely or natural State, but a State of *Want*; and the *higher* its natural State is supposed to be, the higher is its *Want*, and the greater its *Torment*, if left only in its *natural State*. And this is the Reason of the excessive Misery and Depravity of the fallen Angels.

[Love-2.3-87] Now the *Contrariety* that is in *Desire*, and must be in it, because it is a Desire, and the only Ground of all Sensibility, is plainly shown you by the most undeniable Appearance in outward or material Nature. All that is done in outward Nature is done by the working of *Attraction*. And all *Attraction* is nothing else but an *inseparable* Combination and *incessant* Working of *three contrary Properties*, or Laws of Motion. It draws, it resists its own Drawing; and from this Drawing and Resisting, which are necessarily *equal* to one another, it becomes an orbicular, or *whirling* Motion, and yet draws and resists, just as it did before.

[Love-2.3-88] Now this *threefold* *Contrariety* in the Motions, or Properties of *Attraction*, by which all the Elements of this material World are held and governed, and made to bring forth all the Wonders in all Kinds of animate and inanimate Things, this *Contrariety*, being the only possible *Ground* of all material Nature, is a full Demonstration, (1) That *Contrariety* is the one only possible Ground of Nature and all natural Life, whether it be eternal or temporal, spiritual or material; (2) That no *other Contrariety* is, or can be in the Properties or Laws of *Attraction* in this material Nature, but *that one* and the *same* *Contrariety*, which was from Eternity in spiritual Nature, is inseparable from it, and can be nowhere but in it. For Time can only partake of Eternity, it can have nothing in it but the Working of Eternity, nor be any Thing but what it is by the Working of Eternity in it. It can have nothing that is its own, or peculiar to it, but its transitory State, and Form, and Nature. It is a mere *Accident*, has only an *occasional*

Existence; and whatever is seen, or done in it, is only so much of the *Working* of Eternity seen and done in it.

[Love-2.3-89] For Attraction, in the material World, has not only nothing material in it, but is impossible to be *communicated* to Matter; or rather Matter has no *possible Capacity* to receive Attraction. It can no more *receive* or *obey* the Laws of Attraction, than it can *make* Laws for Angels. It is as incapable of moving, or stirring itself, as it is of making Syllogisms. For Matter is, in itself, only Death, Darkness, and Inactivity, and is as utterly incapable of moving itself, as it is of illuminating or creating itself; nothing can be done in it, and by it, but that which is done by *something* that is not material.

[Love-2.3-90] Therefore, that which is called the Attraction of Materiality, is in itself nothing else but the Working of the *spiritual Properties* of Desire, which has in itself those *very three* inseparable Contrarieties, which make the three Contrarieties in the Motions of Attraction. Material Nature, being an *accidental, temporary, transitory* Out-Birth from eternal Nature, and having no Power of existing, but *under* it and in Dependence upon it, the spiritual Properties of eternal Nature do, as it were, *materialize* themselves for a Time, in their temporary Out-Birth and *force* Matter to work as they work, and to have the *same contradictory* Motions in it, which are essential to eternal Nature.

[Love-2.3-91] And thus the three inseparable, contrary Motions of Matter, are in the same Manner, and for the same Reason, a true Ground of a material Nature in Time, as the three inseparable, contrary, contradictory Workings of *Desire*, are a true Ground of *spiritual Nature* in Eternity. And you are to observe, that all that is done in *Matter and Time*, is done by the *same Agents*, or spiritual Properties, which do all that is *naturally* done in Eternity, in Heaven or in Hell. For nothing is the Ground of Happiness and Glory in Heaven, nothing is the Ground of Misery, Woe and Distraction in Hell, but the Working of these *same contrary Properties* of Desire, which work Contrariety in the Attraction of Matter and bring forth all the Changes of Life and Death in this material System. They are unchangeable in their Nature, and are everywhere the same; they are spiritual in Hell, and on Earth, as they are in Heaven. Considered as in themselves, they are everywhere equally good and equally bad; because they are everywhere equally the *Ground* and *only* the Ground for either Happiness or Misery. No possible Happiness, or Sensibility of Joy for any Creature, but where these *contrary* Properties work, nor any Possibility of Misery but from them.

[Love-2.3-92] Now *Attraction*, acting according to its three invariable, inseparable Contrarieties of Motion, stands in this material Nature, exactly in the *same Place* and for the same *End*, and doing the *same Office*, as the three first Properties of *Desire* do in eternal or spiritual Nature. For they can be, or do nothing with Regard to Earth and Time, but *that same* which they are, and do in Heaven and Eternity.

[Love-2.3-93] In eternal Nature, the three contrary Properties of Desire, answering exactly to the three contrary Motions of material Attraction, are in themselves only *Resistance, Rage, and Darkness*, and can be nothing else, till the *supernatural* Deity

kindles its Fire of *Light* and *Love* in them; and then all their raging Contrarieties are changed into never-ceasing Sensibilities of Unity, Joy, and Happiness.

[Love-2.3-94] Just so, in this material System, suppose there to be nothing in it but the *contrary Motions* of Attraction, it could be nothing else but Rage against Rage in the Horror of Darkness.

[Love-2.3-95] But when the *same supernatural Light*, which turns the *first fighting* Properties of Nature into a Kingdom of Heaven, gives forth *something* of its Goodness into this World, through the kindled Body of the Sun, then all the fighting, contradictory Motions of Attraction, serve only to bring new Joys into the World, and open every Life, and every Blessing of Life, that can have Birth in a System of transitory Matter.

[Love-2.3-96] *Theogenes*. Oh *Theophilus*, you quite surprise me by thus showing me, with so much Certainty, how the Powers of Eternity work in the Things of Time. Nothing is done on Earth, but by the unchangeable Workings of the same spiritual Powers, which work after the same Manner, both in Heaven and in Hell. I now sufficiently see how Man stands in the midst of Heaven and Hell, under an absolute Necessity of belonging wholly to the one, or wholly to the other, as soon as this Cover of Materiality is taken off from him.

[Love-2.3-97] For *Matter* is his only Wall of Partition between them, he is equally nigh to both of them; and as Light and Love make all the Difference there is between Heaven and Hell, so nothing but a Birth of Light and Love in the Properties of his Soul, can possibly keep Hell out of it, or bring Heaven into it.

[Love-2.3-98] I now also see the full Truth and Certainty of what you said of the *Nature* and *Power* of Divine Love, *viz.*, "that it is perfect Peace and Joy, a Freedom from all Disquiet, making every Thing to rejoice in itself; that it is the Christ of God, and wherever it comes, it comes as the Blessing and Happiness of every natural Life; as the Restorer of every lost Perfection; a Redeemer from all Evil; a Fulfiller of all Righteousness; and a Peace of God, which passes all Understanding." So that I am now, a thousand Times more than ever, athirst after the Spirit of Love. I am willing to sell all, and buy it; its Blessing is so great, and the Want of it so dreadful a State, that I am even afraid of lying down in my Bed, till every working Power of my Soul is given up to it, wholly possessed and governed by it.

[Love-2.3-99] *Theophilus*. You have Reason for all that you say, *Theogenes*; for were we truly affected with Things, as they are our real Good or real Evil, we should be much more afraid of having the *Serpents* of Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath, well nourished and kept alive within us, than of being shut up in a Pest-house, or cast into a Dungeon of venomous Beasts. On the other Hand, we should look upon the lofty Eloquence, and proud Virtue of a *Cicero*, but as the Blessing of Storm and Tempest, when compared with the heavenly Tranquillity of that meek and lowly Heart, to which our Redeemer has called us.

[Love-2.3-100] I said the *Serpents* of Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath, because they are alone the *real, dreadful, original* Serpents; and all earthly Serpents are but transitory, partial, and weak Out-Births of them. All evil, earthly Beasts, are but short-lived Images, or creaturely Eruptions of that hellish Disorder, that is broken out from the fallen spiritual World; and by their manifold Variety, they show us that *Multiplicity* of Evil, that lies in the Womb of that Abyss of dark Rage, which (N.B.) has *no Maker*, but the three first Properties of Nature, fallen from God, and working in their Darkness.

[Love-2.3-101] So that all evil, mischievous, ravenous, venomous Beasts, though they have no Life, but what begins in and from this material World, and totally ends at the Death of their Bodies, yet have they no Malignity in their earthly, temporary Nature, but from those *same wrathful* Properties of fallen Nature, which live and work in our eternal fallen Souls. And therefore, though they are as different from us, as Time from Eternity, yet wherever we see them, we see so many infallible Proofs of the *Fall* of Nature, and the *Reality* of Hell. For was there no Hell broken out in spiritual Nature, not only no evil Beast, but no bestial Life, could ever have come into Existence.

[Love-2.3-102] For the Origin of Matter, and the bestial, earthly Life, stands thus. When the Fall of Angels had made their Dwelling-Place to be a dark Chaos of the first Properties of Nature left to themselves, the infinite Wisdom and Goodness of God created, or compacted this spiritual Chaos into a *material* Heaven, and a *material* Earth, and commanded the Light to enter into it. Hence this Chaos became the Ground, or the *Materiality* of a new and temporary Nature, in which the heavenly Power of Light, and the Properties of Darkness, each of them *materialized*, could work together, carrying on a War of Heaven against Earth; so that all the evil Workings of fallen spiritual Nature, and all the Good that was to overcome it, might be equally manifested both by the good and bad State of outward Nature, and by that Variety of good and bad living Creatures, that sprung up out of it; to stand in this State, *viz.*, of a *spiritual Chaos* changed into a *Materiality* of Light striving against Darkness, till the omnipotent Wisdom and Goodness of God, through the Wonders of a *first* and *second Adam*, shall have made this *Chaotic Earth* to send as many Angels into the highest Heaven, as fell with *Lucifer* into the hellish Chaos.

[Love-2.3-103] But to return. I have, I hope, sufficiently opened unto you the malignant Nature of *that Self*, which dwells in, and makes up the *working Life* of every Creature that has lost its *right State* in God; *viz.*, that all the Evil that was in the first Chaos of Darkness, or that still is in Hell and Devils, all the Evil that is in material Nature and material Creatures, whether animate, or inanimate, is nothing else, works in, and with nothing else, but those *first Properties* of Nature, which drive on the Life of fallen Man in Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath.

[Love-2.3-104] *Theogenes*. I could almost say, that you have shown me more than enough of this Monster of *Self*, though I would not be without this Knowledge of it for half the World. But now, Sir, what must I do to be saved from the Mouth of this *Lion*, for he is the Depth of all Subtlety, the *Satan* that deceiveth the whole World. He can hide himself under all *Forms* of Goodness, he can watch and fast, write and instruct, pray

much, and preach long, give Alms to the Poor, visit the Sick, and yet often gets more Life and Strength, and a more immovable Abode, in these Forms of Virtue, than he has in Publicans and Sinners.

[Love-2.3-105] Enjoin me therefore whatever you please; all Rules, Methods, and Practices, will be welcome to me, if you judge them to be necessary in this Matter.

[Love-2.3-106] *Theophilus*. There is no need of a Number of Practices, or Methods in this Matter. For to die to Self, or to come from under its Power, is not, cannot be done by any *active* Resistance we can make to it by the Powers of Nature. For Nature can no more overcome or suppress itself, than Wrath can heal Wrath. So long as Nature acts, nothing but natural Works are brought forth; and therefore the more Labour of this Kind, the more Nature is fed and strengthened with its own Food.

[Love-2.3-107] But the *one true* Way of dying to Self is most *simple* and plain, it wants no Arts or Methods, no *Cells, Monasteries, or Pilgrimages*, it is equally practicable by every Body, it is always at Hand, it meets you in every Thing, it is free from all Deceit, and is never without Success.

[Love-2.3-108] If you ask, What is this one true, simple, plain, immediate and unerring Way? It is the Way of *Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation* to God. This is the *Truth and Perfection* of dying to Self; it is nowhere else, nor possible to be in any Thing else, but in this State of Heart.

[Love-2.3-109] *Theogenes*. The Excellence and Perfection of these Virtues I readily acknowledge; but alas, Sir, how will this prove the Way of *overcoming Self* to be so *simple, plain, immediate, and unerring*, as you speak of? For is it not the Doctrine of almost all Men, and all Books, and confirmed by our own woeful Experience, that much Length of Time, and Exercise and Variety of Practices and Methods are necessary, and scarce sufficient to the Attainment of *any one* of these four Virtues?

[Love-2.3-110] *Theophilus*. When Christ our Saviour was upon Earth, was there any Thing more simple, plain, immediate, unerring, than the Way to Him? Did Scribes, Pharisees, Publicans, and Sinners, want any Length of Time, or Exercise of Rules and Methods, before they could have Admission to him, or have the Benefit of Faith in him?

[Love-2.3-111] *Theogenes*. I don't understand why you put this Question; nor do I see how it can possibly relate to the Matter before us.

[Love-2.3-112] *Theophilus*. It not only relates to, but is the very *Heart and Truth* of the Matter before us: It is not appealed to, by Way of Illustration of our Subject, but is our Subject itself, only set in a truer and stronger Light. For when I refer you to *Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God*, as the one simple, plain, immediate, and unerring Way of dying to Self, or being saved from it, I call it so for no other Reason, but because you can as *easily and immediately*, without Art or Method, by the mere Turning

and Faith of your Mind, have all the Benefit of these Virtues, as Publicans and Sinners, by their turning to Christ, could be helped and saved by him.

[Love-2.3-113] *Theogenes*. But, good Sir, would you have me then believe, that my *turning* and *giving* up myself to these Virtues is as certain and immediate a Way of my being directly possessed and blessed by their good Power, as when Sinners turned to Christ to be helped and saved by him? Surely this is too short a Way, and has too much of Miracle in it, to be now expected.

[Love-2.3-114] *Theophilus*. I would have you strictly to believe all this, in the fullest Sense of the Words, and also to believe, that the Reasons why you, or any others are for a long Time vainly endeavouring after, and hardly ever attaining these First-rate Virtues, is because you seek them in the Way they are not to be found, in a *Multiplicity* of human Rules, Methods, and Contrivances, and not in that *Simplicity* of Faith, in which, those who applied to Christ, immediately obtained that which they asked of Him.

[Love-2.3-115] "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you." How short and simple and certain a Way to Peace and Comfort, from the Misery and Burden of Sin! What becomes now of your Length of Time and Exercise, your Rules and Methods, and round-about Ways, to be delivered from Self, the Power of Sin, and find the redeeming Power and Virtue of Christ? Will you say, that turning to Christ in Faith was *once* indeed the Way for Jews and Heathens to enter into Life, and be delivered from the Power of their Sins, but that all this Happiness was at an End, as soon as *Pontius Pilate* had nailed this good Redeemer to the Cross, and so broken off all *immediate* Union and Communion between Faith and Christ?

[Love-2.3-116] What a Folly would it be to suppose, that Christ, after his having finished his great Work, overcome Death, ascended into Heaven, with all Power in Heaven and on Earth, was become less a Saviour and gave less certain and immediate Helps to those, that by Faith turn to him now, than when he was clothed with the Infirmary of our Flesh and Blood upon Earth? Has He less Power, after he has conquered, than whilst he was only resisting and fighting our Enemies? Or has He less good Will to assist his Church, his own Body, now he is in Heaven, than he had to assist Publicans, Sinners, and Heathens before he was glorified, as the Redeemer of the World? And yet this must be the Case, if our *simply turning* to Him in Faith and Hope, is not as sure a Way of obtaining immediate Assistance from him now, as when he was upon Earth.

[Love-2.3-117] *Theogenes*. You seem, Sir, to me to have stepped aside from the Point in Question, which was not, Whether my turning or giving myself up to Christ, in Faith in him, would not do me as much Good as it did to them, who turned to him when He was upon Earth? But whether my turning in Faith and Desire, to *Patience*, *Meekness*, *Humility*, and *Resignation* to God, would do all that as fully for me now, as Faith in Christ did for those who became his Disciples?

[Love-2.3-118] *Theophilus*. I have stuck closely, my Friend, to the Point before us. Let it be supposed, that I had given you a Form of Prayer in these Words. *O Lamb of God*, that

takest away the Sins of the World; Or, O *Thou Bread that camest down from Heaven*; Or, Thou *that art the Resurrection, and the Life, the Light and Peace* of all holy Souls, help me to a living Faith in Thee. Would you say, that this was not a Prayer of Faith in and to Christ, because it did not call Him *Jesus, or the Son of God*? Answer me plainly.

[Love-2.3-119] *Theogenes*. What can I answer you, but that this is a most true and good Prayer to Jesus, the Son of the living God? For who else but He was the *Lamb* of God, and the *Bread* that came down?

[Love-2.3-120] *Theophilus*. Well answered, my Friend. When therefore I exhort you to give up yourself in Faith and Hope, to *Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God*, what else do I do, but turn you directly to *so much* Faith and Hope in the true Lamb of God? For if I ask you, what the Lamb of God is, and means, must you not tell me, that it is, and means, the *Perfection* of Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God? Can you say, it is either more or less than this? Must you not therefore say, that a Faith of Hunger and Thirst, and Desire of these Virtues, is in Spirit and Truth, the one *very same* Thing, as a Faith of Hunger and Thirst, and Desire of Salvation through the Lamb of God? And consequently, that every sincere Wish and Desire, every inward Inclination of your Heart, that presses after these Virtues, and longs to be governed by them, is an *immediate direct* Application to Christ, is *worshipping* and *falling down* before him, is *giving up* yourself unto him, and the very *Perfection* of Faith in him?

[Love-2.3-121] If you distrust my Words, hear the Words of Christ himself. "Learn of me," says He, "for I am meek and lowly of Heart, and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls." Here you have the plain Truth of our two Points fully asserted, *First*, That to be *given up to*, or stand in a *Desire* of, Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God, is strictly the *same Thing*, as to learn of Christ, or to have Faith in Him. *Secondly*, That this is the *one simple, short, and infallible* Way to overcome, or be delivered from all the Malignity and Burden of *Self* expressed in these Words, "and ye shall find Rest unto your Souls."

[Love-2.3-122] And all this, because this simple Tendency, or inward Inclination of your Heart to *sink down* into Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God, is truly giving up all that you are, and all that you have from fallen *Adam*; it is perfectly leaving all that you have, to follow and be with Christ, it is your highest Act of Faith in him and Love of Him, the most ardent and earnest Declaration of your cleaving to him with all your Heart, and seeking for no Salvation but in him, and from him. And therefore all the Good, and Blessing, Pardon, and Deliverance from Sin that ever happened to anyone from any Kind, or Degree of Faith and Hope, and Application to Christ, is sure to be had from this State of Heart, which stands continually *turned to him* in a Hunger, and Desire, of being led and governed by his Spirit of Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God. Oh *Theogenes*, could I help you to perceive or feel what a Good there is in this State of Heart; you would Desire it with more Eagerness, than the thirsty Hart desireth the Water-Brooks, you would think of nothing, desire nothing, but constantly to live in it. It is a Security from all Evil, and all Delusion; no Difficulty, or Trial, either of Body or Mind, no Temptation either within you, or without you, but what has its full Remedy in

this State of Heart. You have no Questions to ask of any Body, no new Way that you need inquire after; no Oracle that you need to consult; for whilst you shut up yourself in Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God, you are in the very Arms of Christ, your whole Heart is his Dwelling-Place, and He lives and works in you, as certainly as he lived in, and governed that Body and Soul, which he took from the Virgin *Mary*.

[Love-2.3-123] Learn whatever else you will from Men and Books, or even from Christ Himself, besides, or without these Virtues, and you are only a poor Wanderer in a barren Wilderness, where no Water of Life is to be found. For Christ is nowhere, but in these Virtues, and where they are, there is He in his own Kingdom. From Morning to Night, let this be the Christ that you follow, and then you will fully escape all the religious Delusions that are in the World, and what is more, all the Delusions of your own selfish Heart.

[Love-2.3-124] For to seek to be saved by Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God, is truly coming to God through Christ; and when these Tempers live and abide in you, as the Spirit and Aim of your Life, then Christ is in you of a Truth, and the Life that you then lead, is not yours, but it is Christ that liveth in you. For this is following Christ with all your Power: You cannot possibly make more Haste after Him, you have no other Way of walking as he walked, no other Way of being like Him, of truly believing in him, of showing your Trust in him, and Dependence upon him, but by wholly giving up yourself to *That*, which He was, *viz.*, to Patience, Meekness, Humility, and Resignation to God.

[Love-2.3-125] Tell me now, have I enough proved to you, the short, simple, and certain Way of destroying that Body of Self, which lives and works in the four Elements of *Covetousness, Envy, Pride, and Wrath?*

[Love-2.3-126] *Theogenes*. Enough of all Reason. But as to *Covetousness*, I thank God, I cannot charge myself with it, it has no Power over me, nay I naturally abhor it. And I also now clearly see, why I have been so long struggling in vain against other selfish Tempers.

[Love-2.3-127] *Theophilus*. Permit me, my Friend, to remove your Mistake. Had Covetousness, no Power over you, you could have no other *selfish* Tempers to struggle against. They are all dead, as soon as Covetousness has done working in you. You take Covetousness to relate only to the Wealth of this World. But this is but *one single* Branch of it, its Nature is as large as Desire, and wherever selfish Desire is, there is all the evil Nature of Covetousness.

[Love-2.3-128] Now Envy, Pride, Hatred, or Wrath, can have no Possibility of Existence in you, but because there is *some selfish Desire* alive in you, that is not *satisfied*, not *gratified*, but *resisted* or *disappointed*. And therefore so long as any selfish Tempers, whether of Envy, Uneasiness, Complaint, Pride, or Wrath, are alive in you, you have the fullest Proof, that all these Tempers are *born* and *bred* in and from your *own*

Covetousness, that is, from that same *selfish bad Desire*, which when it is turned to the Wealth of this World is called Covetousness. For all these four Elements of Self, or fallen Nature, are tied together in one inseparable Band, they mutually generate, and are generated from one another, they have but one common Life, and must all of them live, or all die together. This may show you again the absolute Necessity of our *one simple* and *certain* Way of dying to Self, and the *absolute Insufficiency* of all human Means whatever to effect it.

[Love-2.3-129] For consider only this, that to be *angry* at our own Anger, to be *ashamed* of our own Pride, and *strongly* resolve not to be *weak*, is the Upshot of all *human Endeavours*; and yet all this is rather the Life, than the Death of Self. There is no Help, but from a *total Despair* of all human Help. When a Man is brought to such an inward full Conviction, as to have no more Hope from all human Means, than he hopes to see with his Hands, or hear with his Feet, then it is, that he is truly prepared to die to Self, that is, to give up all Thoughts of having or doing any Thing that is good, in any *other Way* but that of a meek, humble, patient, total Resignation of himself to God. All that we do before *this Conviction*, is in great Ignorance of ourselves, and full of Weakness and Impurity. Let our Zeal be ever so wonderful, yet if it begins sooner, or proceeds further, or to any other Matter, or in any other Way, than as it is led and guided by this Conviction, it is full of Delusion. No Repentance, however long or laborious, is *Conversion* to God, till it falls into this State. For God must do all, or all is nothing; but God cannot do all, till all is expected from Him; and all is not expected from Him, till by a true and *good Despair* of every human Help, we have no Hope, or Trust, or Longing after any Thing but a patient, meek, humble, total Resignation to God.

[Love-2.3-130] And now, my dear Friends, I have brought you to the very Place for which I desired this Day's Conversation; which was, to set your Feet upon sure Ground, with Regard to the *Spirit of Love*. For all that Variety of Matters through which we have passed, has been only a Variety of Proofs, that the *Spirit* of Divine Love can have no Place, or Possibility of Birth in any fallen Creature, till it wills and *chooses* to be dead to *all Self*, in a patient, meek, humble Resignation to the good Power and Mercy of God.

[Love-2.3-131] And from this State of Heart also it is, that the *Spirit* of Prayer is born, which is the Desire of the Soul turned to God. Stand, therefore, steadfastly in *this Will*, let nothing else enter into your Mind, have no other Contrivance, but everywhere, and in every Thing, to nourish and keep up *this State* of Heart, and then your House is built upon a Rock; you are safe from all Danger; the Light of Heaven, and the Love of God, will begin their Work in you, will bless and sanctify every Power of your fallen Soul; you will be in a Readiness for every Kind of Virtue and good Work, and will know what it is to be led by the Spirit of God.

[Love-2.3-132] *Theogenes*. But, dear *Theophilus*, though I am so delighted with what you say, that I am loath to stop you, yet permit me to mention a Fear that rises up in me. Suppose I should find myself so overcome with my own Darkness and selfish Tempers, as not to be able to *sink* from them into a Sensibility of this meek, humble, patient, full

Resignation to God, what must I then do, or how shall I have the Benefit of what you have taught me?

[Love-2.3-133] *Theophilus*. You are then at the very Time and Place of receiving the fullest Benefit from it, and practicing it with the greatest Advantage to yourself. For though this patient, meek Resignation is to be exercised with Regard to all outward Things, and Occurrences of Life, yet it chiefly respects our own inward State, the Troubles, Perplexities, Weaknesses, and Disorders of our own fallen Souls. And to stand *turned* to a patient, meek, humble Resignation to God, when your own Impatience, Wrath, Pride, and Irresignation, attack yourself, is a higher and more beneficial Performance of this Duty, than when you stand turned to Meekness and Patience, when attacked by the Pride, or Wrath, or disorderly Passions of other People. I say, *stand turned* to this patient, humble Resignation, for this is your true Performance of this Duty at that Time; and though you may have no comfortable *Sensibility* of your performing it, yet in this State you may always have *one full Proof* of the Truth and Reality of it, and that is, when you seek for Help no other Way, nor in any Thing else, neither from Men nor Books, but wholly leave and give up yourself to be helped by the Mercy of God. And thus, be your State what it will, you may always have the *full Benefit* of this short and sure Way of resigning up yourself to God. And the greater the Perplexity of your Distress is, the nearer you are to the greatest and best Relief, provided you have but *Patience* to expect it *all* from God. For nothing brings you so near to Divine Relief, as the *Extremity* of Distress; for the Goodness of God hath no other *Name* or *Nature*, but the Helper of all that wants to be helped; and nothing can possibly hinder your finding this Goodness of God, and every other Gift and Grace that you stand in Need of; nothing can hinder or delay it, but your *turning from* the only Fountain of Life and living Water, to some cracked Cistern of your own Making; to this or that *Method, Opinion, Division, or Subdivision* amongst Christians, carnally expecting some mighty Things either from *Samaria, or Jerusalem, Paul or Apollos*, which are only and solely to be had by worshipping the Father in Spirit and in Truth, which is then only done, when your whole Heart and Soul and Spirit trusts *wholly and solely* to the *Operation* of that God within you, in whom we live, move, and have our Being. And be assured of this, as a most certain Truth, that we have neither more nor less of the Divine Operation within us, because of this or that outward Form, or Manner of our Life, but *just and strictly* in that Degree, as our Faith, and Hope, and Trust, and Dependence upon God, are more or less in us.

[Love-2.3-134] What a Folly then to be so often perplexed about the Way to God? For nothing is the Way to God, but our Heart. God is nowhere else to be found; and the Heart itself cannot find Him, or be helped by any Thing else to find Him, but by its *own Love* of Him, *Faith* in Him, *Dependence* upon Him, *Resignation* to Him, and *Expectation* of all from Him.

[Love-2.3-135] These are short, but full *Articles* of true Religion, which carry Salvation along with them, which make a true and full Offering and Oblation of our whole Nature to the *Divine Operation*, and also a true and full Confession of the Holy Trinity in Unity. For as they look wholly to the *Father*, as blessing us with the *Operation* of his *own Word*,

and *Spirit*, so they truly confess, and worship the *holy Trinity* of God. And as they ascribe all to, and expect all from this Deity *alone*, so they make the *truest* and *best* of all Confessions, that there is no God but one.

[Love-2.3-136] Let then *Arians*, *Semi-Arians*, and *Socinians*, who puzzle their laborious Brains to make Paper-Images of a Trinity for themselves, have nothing from you but your Pity and Prayers; your Foundation standeth sure, whilst you look for all your Salvation through the *Father*, working Life in your Soul by his *own Word*, and *Spirit*, which dwell in Him, and are one Life, both in Him and you.

[Love-2.3-137] *Theogenes*. I can never enough thank you, *Theophilus*, for this good and comfortable Answer to my scrupulous Fear. It seems now, as if I could always know how to find full Relief in this humble, meek, patient, total Resignation of myself to God. It is, as you said, a Remedy that is always at hand, equally practicable at all Times, and never in greater Reality, than when my own Tempers are making War against it in my own Heart.

[Love-2.3-138] You have quite carried your Point with me. The God of Patience, Meekness, and Love, is the one God of my Heart. It is now the whole Bent and Desire of my Soul, to seek for all my Salvation in and through the *Merits* and *Mediation* of the meek, humble, patient, resigned, suffering Lamb of God, who alone hath Power to bring forth the blessed Birth of these heavenly Virtues in my Soul. He is the Bread of God, that came down from Heaven, of which the Soul must eat, or perish and pine in everlasting Hunger. He is the *Eternal Love* and *Meekness*, that left the Bosom of his Father, to be Himself the Resurrection of Meekness and Love in all the darkened, wrathful Souls of fallen Men. What a Comfort is it, to think that this Lamb of God, Son of the Father, Light of the World, who is the Glory of Heaven, and Joy of Angels, is as near to us, as truly in the midst of us, as he is in the midst of Heaven; and that not a Thought, Look, and Desire of our Heart, that presses toward Him, longing to catch, as it were, one small Spark of his heavenly Nature, but is in as sure a Way of finding Him, touching Him, and drawing Virtue from Him as the Woman who was healed, by longing but to touch the Border of his Garment.

[Love-2.3-139] This Doctrine also makes me quite weary and ashamed of all my own natural Tempers, as so Many Marks of the Beast upon me; every Whisper of my Soul that stirs up Impatience, Uneasiness, Resentment, Pride, and Wrath within me, shall be rejected with a *Get thee behind me, Satan*, for it is his, and has its whole Nature from him. To rejoice in a Resentment gratified, appears now to me to be quite frightful. For what is it, in reality, but rejoicing that my *own Serpent* of Self has new Life and Strength given to it, and that the precious Lamb of God is denied Entrance into my Soul. For this is the strict Truth of the Matter. To give into Resentment, and go willingly to gratify it, is calling up the Courage of your own Serpent, and truly helping it to be more stout and valiant, and successful in you.— On the other Hand, to give up all Resentment of every Kind, and on every Occasion, however artfully, beautifully, outwardly coloured, and to sink down into the Humility of Meekness under all Contrariety, Contradiction, and Injustice, always turning the other Cheek to the Smiter, however haughty, is the best of

all Prayers, the surest of all Means to have nothing but Christ living and working in you, as the Lamb of God, that taketh away every Sin that ever had Power over your Soul.

[Love-2.3-140] What a Blindness was it in me, to think that I had no Covetousness because the Love of Pelf *{money or gain}*, was not felt by me! For to covet, is to desire. And what can it signify whether I desire This or That? If I desire any Thing but that which God would have me to be and do, I stick in the Mire of Covetousness, and must have all that Evil and Disquiet living and working in me, which robs *Misers* of their Peace both with God and Man.

[Love-2.3-141] Oh sweet Resignation of myself to God, happy Death of every selfish Desire, blessed Unction of a holy Life, the only Driver of all Evil out of my Soul, be thou my Guide and Governor wherever I go! Nothing but thou can take me from myself, nothing but thou can lead me to God; Hell has no Power where thou art; nor can Heaven hide itself from thee. Oh may I never indulge a Thought, bring forth a Word, or do any Thing for myself or others, but under the Influence of thy blessed Inspiration!

[Love-2.3-142] Forgive, dear *Theophilus*, this Transport of my Soul; I could not stop it. The Sight, though distant, of this heavenly *Canaan*, this *Sabbath* of the Soul, freed from the miserable Labour of Self, to rest in Meekness, Humility, Patience, and Resignation under the Spirit of God, is like the joyful Voice of the Bridegroom to my Soul, and leaves no Wish in me, but to be at the Marriage Feast of the Lamb.

[Love-2.3-143] *Theophilus*. Thither, *Theogenes*, you must certainly come, if you keep to the Path of Meekness, Humility, and Patience, under a full Resignation to God. But if you go aside from it, let the Occasion seem ever so glorious, or the Effects ever so wonderful to you, it is only preparing for yourself a *harder Death*. For die you must to all, and every Thing that you have worked or done under any other Spirit, but that of Meekness, Humility, and true Resignation to God. Every Thing else, be it what it will, hath its Rise from the Fire of *Nature*, it belongs to nothing else, and must of all Necessity be given up, lost, and taken from you again by *Fire*, either here or hereafter.

[Love-2.3-144] For these Virtues are the only *Wedding Garment*; they are the *Lamps* and *Vessels* well furnished with Oil.

[Love-2.3-145] There is nothing that will do in the Stead of them; they must have their *own full* and *perfect* Work in you, if not before, yet certainly after the Death of the Body, or the Soul can never be delivered from its fallen wrathful State. And all this is no more than is implied in this Scripture Doctrine, *viz.*, that there is no Possibility of Salvation, but in and by a Birth of the meek, humble, patient, resigned Lamb of God in our Souls. And when this Lamb of God has brought forth a real Birth of his own Meekness, Humility, and full Resignation to God in our Souls, then are our Lamps trimmed, and our Virgin-hearts made ready for the Marriage Feast.

[Love-2.3-146] This *Marriage Feast* signifies the *Entrance* into the highest State of *Union*, that can be between God and the Soul, in this Life. Or in other Words, it is the

Birth-Day of the Spirit of Love in our Souls, which whenever we attain it, will feast our Souls with such Peace and Joy in God, as will blot out the Remembrance of every Thing, that we called Peace or Joy before.

[Love-2.3-147] In the *Letter* on the Spirit of Love, you have been shown, according to the *Mystery* of all Things opened by the Goodness of God in the blessed *Behmen*, the *Time* and *Place* of its Birth. That it neither does, nor can possibly begin any sooner, than at the *Entrance* or *Manifestation* of the Divine Light, in the *three first* wrathful, self-tormenting Properties of Nature, which are and must be the Ground of every natural Life, and must be Darkness, Rage, and Torment, till the Light of God, breaking in upon them, changes all their painful working into the strongest Sensibilities of Love, Joy, and Triumph, in the Perception and Possession of a new Divine Life.

[Love-2.3-148] Now all that we have said To-day of the Necessity of the fallen Souls *dying to Self*, by *Meekness, Patience, Humility, and full Resignation to God* is strictly the same Thing, and asserted from the *same Ground* as when it was then said, that the *three first* Properties of Nature must have their wrathful Activity taken from them, by the Light of God breaking in upon them, or manifesting itself in them. Now this was always the State of Nature, it never was a State of Wrath, because it never was without the Light of God in it. But the natural, creaturely Life, having a Possibility of falling, and having actually fallen from God, has found and felt what never ought to have been found and felt, *viz.*, what Nature is in itself, without the Manifestation of the Deity in it.

[Love-2.3-149] Therefore, as sure as the Light of God, or the Entrance of the Deity into the *three first* Properties of Nature, is absolutely necessary to make Nature to be a heavenly Kingdom of Light and Love, so sure and certain is it, that the creaturely Life, that is fallen from God under the wrathful *first Properties* of Nature, can have no Deliverance from it, cannot have a Birth of heavenly Light and Love, by any other possible Way, but that of dying to Self, by Meekness, Humility, Patience, and full Resignation to God.

[Love-2.3-150] And the Reason is this. It is because the *Will* is the Leader of the creaturely Life, and it can have nothing but *that* to which its Will is *turned*. And therefore it cannot be saved from, or raised out of the Wrath of Nature, till its Will *turns* from Nature, and wills to be no longer driven by it. But it cannot *turn* from Nature, or show a *Will* to come from under its Power, any *other Way*, than by turning and giving up itself to that Meekness, Humility, Patience, and Resignation to God, which so far as it goes, is a *leaving, rejecting, and dying* to all the Guidance of Nature.

[Love-2.3-151] And thus you see, that this *one simple Way* is, according to the immutable Nature of Things, the *one only possible* and absolutely *necessary* Way to God. It is as possible to go two contrary Ways at once, as to go to God any other Way than this. But what is best of all, this Way is absolutely *infallible*; nothing can defeat it. And all this infallibility is fully grounded in the two-fold Character of our Saviour (1) As he is the *Lamb of God*, a Principle, and Source of all Meekness, and Humility in the Soul, and

(2) As he is the *Light of Eternity*, that blesses eternal Nature, and turns it into a Kingdom of Heaven.

[Love-2.3-152] For in this two-fold Respect, he has a Power of redeeming us, which nothing can hinder; but sooner or later, he must see all his and our Enemies under his Feet, and all that is fallen in *Adam* into Death must rise and return to a Unity of an Eternal Life in God.

[Love-2.3-153] For, as the Lamb of God, he has *all Power* to bring forth in us a *Sensibility* and a Weariness of our own wrathful State, and a Willingness to fall from it into Meekness, Humility, Patience, and Resignation to that Mercy of God which alone can help us. And when we are thus weary and heavy laden, and willing to get Rest to our Souls, in meek, humble, patient Resignation to God, then it is, that He, as the *Light of God* and Heaven, joyfully breaks in upon us, turns our Darkness into Light, our Sorrow into Joy, and begins that Kingdom of God and Divine Love within us which will never have an End.

[Love-2.3-154] Need I say more, *Theogenes*, to show you how to come out of the Wrath of your evil earthly Nature, into the sweet Peace and Joy of the Spirit of Love? Neither Notions, nor Speculations, nor Heat, nor Fervour, nor Rules, nor Methods can bring it forth. It is the *Child* of Light, and cannot possibly have any Birth in you, but only and solely from the *Light* of God rising in your own Soul, as it rises in heavenly Beings. But the Light of God cannot *arise*, or be *found* in you, by any Art or Contrivance of your own, but *only* and *solely* in the Way of that Meekness, Humility, and Patience, which waits, trusts, resigns to, and expects all from the inward, living, life-giving Operation of the Triune God within you, creating, quickening, and reviving in your fallen Soul that Birth and Image, and Likeness of the Holy Trinity, in which the first Father of Mankind was created.

[Love-2.3-155] *Theogenes*. You need say no more, *Theophilus*; you have not only removed that Difficulty which brought us hither, but have, by a Variety of Things, fixed and confirmed us in a full Belief of that great truth elsewhere asserted, namely "That there is but one Salvation for all Mankind, and that is the *Life of God* in the Soul. And also, that there is but *one possible* Way for Man to attain this Life of God, not one for a *Jew*, another for a *Christian*, and a third for a *Heathen*. No, God is one, and the Way to it is one, and that is, the *Desire* of the Soul turned to God."

[Love-2.3-156] Therefore, dear *Theophilus*, adieu. If we see you no more in this Life, you have sufficiently taught us how to seek, and find every kind of Goodness, Blessing, and Happiness, in God alone.

The End of the Third DIALOGUE

FINIS.

Acknowledgment

This 1997 HTML version began with Warner White's painstakingly transcribed text edition (see below) but its formatting and emphatic use have been revised by PTW Services to return the manuscript to its "close-to-original" formatting and wording as it was published in an **1893** reprint of the 1752 edition of Part I and the 1754 edition of Part II. White's text edition was meticulously compared to the older published versions of Law's work. Those typographical errors and omissions that were discovered during this preparation, have also been corrected here as well.

The electronic ASCII version of William Law's *The Spirit of Love in Two Parts*, etc. was transcribed in 1995 by Warner White working from the 1974 Georg Olms Verlag (Hildesheim NewYork) edition of *The Works of the Reverend William Law*.

According to White, "All of the works of William Law dated from 1737 and on have also been typed up and are being made available electronically. Notations have been added at the beginning of each paragraph containing the abbreviated title (in this case "Love") and the paragraph number to facilitate reference without depending upon a particular pagination. There is no copyright notice on the title pages (or backs of the title pages) of the volumes from which these have been typed; so presumably they are in the public domain and may be freely circulated and used. 6/6/95"



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