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COMMENTARIES

COMMENTARY ON THE
NEW TESTAMENT, VOL 2
1 JOHN

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COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT

VOL 2 HEBREWS-JUDE

HEBREWS (Apollos) — Perfection

JAMES — Practice

PETER — Fire

JOHN — Love

JUDE — Lightning

BY

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PREACHER," ETC.*

1ST, 2ND, AND 3RD JOHN

PROLOGUE

John, the beloved junior apostle, is said to have been powerfully converted under the preaching of John the Baptist. This evinces from the enthusiasm which characterized his espousal of our Savior's call and the deep burning love he constantly manifested during his discipleship. He is the only apostle to escape bloody martyrdom. Matthew suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia; Mark in Alexandria, Egypt; Luke was hung on an olive tree in Greece; Paul beheaded at Rome; Peter crucified; James the First beheaded by Herod at Jerusalem; James the Less precipitated from a pinnacle of the temple; Andrew crucified in Armenia; Philip in Asia Minor; Bartholomew skinned alive in Phrygia; Matthias martyred in Abyssinia, Africa; Jude shot full of arrows in Tartary; Thomas pierced through with a cruel iron bar in India, and John, having been miraculously delivered from martyrdom when cast into the soap caldron at Rome, and afterward banished to the Isle of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea, where he witnessed the wonderful Apocalyptic visions, spent the closing years of his life at Ephesus; history following him down to age of 101, when he was translated to heaven alive, as testified by Justin Martyr, Jerome and other Christian Fathers, and solidly believed by John Wesley. Of course, we have no inspired record of his translation, as he himself was the last writer. John was truly the Patriarch of the Apostolic Church, surviving all the other apostles a whole generation, standing alone in the heroic grandeur of his solitude. Awaiting his translation, he did all of his writing, the gospel, epistles, and apocalypse, away down at the end of his long and eventful life, doubtless dictating them all to an amanuensis. His early conversion and call to the apostleship, extraordinary fellowship with Jesus, wonderful sanctification, thrilling, miraculous deliverances, ineffable heavenly visions on the Isle of Patmos, great longevity and coming translation, doubtless to him spiritually adumbrating his approaching transfiguration, all conduced to flood him with unparalleled spiritual illumination and make him, more significantly than any other inspired writer, the personification of love, which literally inundates especially his epistles with a sea bottomless and shoreless.

1 JOHN

CHAPTER 1

ARGUMENT 1

CHRIST THE INCARNATION OF LIFE

1. Here John's personal testimony to the literal, actual and unmistakable incarnation of Christ.
2. Life is original with none but God. Hence the presence of God is the inalienable condition of life. Where there is no probation involved, in case of all vegetables and animals, the abiding presence of God, bestowing and perpetuating life, is the normal and invariable condition. In case of intelligent probationers, the divine presence is determined by the volition. So long as Adam's will was true to God, He abode with him, sustaining and perpetuating his spiritual life. When Adam deflected from God under Satan's influence He departed from him, spiritual life simultaneously evanescing, leaving him a dead soul, still retaining animal life. The incarnation of Christ was absolutely necessary to the clear, ostensible and unmistakable manifestation of the life principle to the world.
3. This is the solution of Christian fellowship, *i.e.*, the innate congeniality and universal brotherhood of all beings, human and angelic, possessing spiritual life; the same spiritual fellowship reaching up and appropriating the divine Fatherhood and brotherhood.
4. *"Truly we write these things in order that our joy may be complete."*
The man who does not freely, fully and heroically proclaim by speech or pen the whole truth as it is in Jesus, cuts down his own reward and plucks the stars from his own crown. I know millions will regret in heaven that they were not as bold, clear, and outspoken in the proclamation of God's

truth as they might have been. Good Lord, help us all to be candid as martyrs and true as angels.

ARGUMENT 2

GOD IS LIGHT

5. *“That God is light, and there is no darkness in Him.”* From this beautiful scripture we see that light, like life, is original only in God, and imparted pursuant to His sovereign will. The light of the material world, illuminating irresponsible beings, both animate and inanimate, is a fixture of the divine administration. Meanwhile, with all responsible probationary intelligences, as in case of life, it is dependent on the divine presence, and determined by the free and untrammelled volition of the recipient.

6. Pursuant to these great cardinal facts of life and light, John here gives us a grand and convincing antithetical argument; verses 6, 8 and 10 revealing the sin side of the antithesis, while 7 and 9 set forth the grace side, the two standing out in vivid contrast, sin and darkness, light and salvation being inseparable concomitants.

7. Of course all who are in the light are the children of God, having been truly regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and saved not only from condemnation, but from the commission of sin. Now if such will walk in all the light God gives them, revealing their inbred sin, pursuant to their humble, doubtless faith, the blood cleanseth them from all original sin, surviving justification. This is a glorious latitudinous truth, extending to every human being in heathendom as well as Christendom, promising not only pardon but purity to every human being walking in all the light God gives.

8. *“If we may say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”* This verse, with the sixth and tenth, has been appropriated by many foolish people as an apology for sin, to their own destruction; whereas it simply reveals the sin side of the antithesis, to the magnification of the grace side. You see this verse forever sweeps Zinzendorfianism from the field, anathematizing the man who says he has no remaining sin to be

removed by the cleansing blood after conversion, as a “*liar*,” deceiving himself and destitute of truth.

9. Here we have the whole plan of salvation focalized in a nutshell, the Holy Ghost promising us pardon and purity on the isolated condition of a full confession of our sins, actual and original. Such a confession involves repentance, faith, prevailing prayer and obedience.

10. This verse drops back on the sin side of the antithesis, convicting every human being who has reached responsibility unregenerated, and anathematizing all gainsayers as “liars,” destitute of God’s Word.

CHAPTER 2

1. You must learn to read your Bible without the slightest reference to chapters and verses, so far as the truth is concerned. Here the chapter division breaks into the apostle's antithesis, cutting off this verse, which is the counterpart of verse 10 in the preceding chapter. *"My little children, I write these things unto you that you may not sin."* "Little children" are young converts, the weakest of all Christians. Even they have grace to keep them from committing any known or willing sin. Of course, it is pre-eminently true of all other Christians. *"If any one may sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."* All are liable to sin, so long as we are in this world. But if we have the misfortune to sin and thus get out of the kingdom, falling under condemnation, we should not give up in despair, because our Advocate still loves us, and is ready, waiting to deliver us out of all our troubles, restoring us again to divine favor. I have heard this beautiful passage shamefully perverted by Satan's preachers, restricting the Advocate to the pales of their bogus organizations, called "the Church," and vociferating it as an incentive to all the people to come and join them, so they would have an Advocate with the Father, at the same time positively asserting that no sinner has access to this Advocate. Of course, all such preaching is the very quintessence of Satan's sectarianism, hatched in hell, having the impudence actually to take away the sinner's Advocate, his only hope, and blasphemously subsidize Him to their own selfish aggrandizement.

2. Here we have the glorious problem of universal atonement settled forever, beyond the possibility of controversy.

3. *"In this we know that we do know Him if we may keep His commandments."* No one can keep His commandments and commit any sin, for they would be a flat contradiction, as committing sin is diametrically opposite to keeping the commandments. As these two states are irreconcilable antipodes, they can not possibly co-exist. The existence of one necessarily precludes the other.

4. *"He that says, 'I know Him,' and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."* This is a deadener against sinning religion.

No one can keep the commandments and sin. The conclusion from this verse is irresistible. The man who claims to be a sinning Christian is here anathematized as a *“liar,”* and *“the truth is not in him.”* There is no possible evasion of the conclusion.

5. *“Whosoever may keep His Word truly, the love of God has been perfected in him.”* While regeneration saves us from committing sin, there are many commandments on the plane of entire sanctification which are not fulfilled in our time, e.g., “Be ye holy,” “Be perfect,” “Be filled with the Spirit,” which we do not verify. They are not the moral commandments alone, but they are the divine *logos*, which God requires, and must be satisfied if we are going up to Him in heaven. The divine *agapee* must be perfected by the thorough expurgation of the heart from all inbred sin. In regeneration God’s love is poured into a heart corrupted by the fall. That corruption must be eliminated by the cleansing blood and our love made perfect, i.e., pure from all antagonisms, before we go up to heaven.

6. *“Christ Himself is our only exemplar.”* Regeneration saves us from diabolical, and sanctification from human leadership, turning us over to God alone for time and eternity.

ARGUMENT 3

NEW COMMANDMENT

7, 8. Here is an apparent contradiction. Verse 7 says, *“I do not write unto you a new commandment, but an old one.”* Verse 8 says, *“I write unto you a new commandment.”* An infidel here finds a difference and rejects the Bible. These enigmas frequently occurring in Scripture are exceedingly helpful to our spiritual understanding, sharpening our wits, illuminating our perspicacity and intensifying our assiduity. What is this commandment which is not new but old, and still new and never old? It is, “Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself, with divine love.” Human love gets old and stale. Divine love is the nature of God and always new. *“Old”* means infirmity. God and angels never get old. When we receive transfiguration we will

never get old, but bloom in immortal youth forever. Divine love, like God, never gets old. Hence it is new through all eternity. How is it “old”? This commandment was given in the Old Testament, hence it is historically “old,” but experimentally “new,” and will always be new and fresh, like the manna in the golden pot in the *sanctum sanctorum*.

9-11. These verses follow a legitimate sequence from the definition of divine law in contradistinction to human. God loves His enemies enough to die for them. So do you when you have His nature unencumbered with depravity.

ARGUMENT 4

SANCTIFICATION AND GROWTH GRACE

12. *“I write unto you as infants,”* i.e., newly converted people, the weakest of all Christians.

13. *“I write unto you fathers,”* i.e., spiritual fathers, soul-savers, who have never backslidden, but would go on into sanctification and still into the higher experiences. *“I write unto you young men,”* i.e., persons who have advanced out of spiritual infancy, i.e., been sanctified and grown into stalwarts, so that they have conquered the devil. *“I write unto you lads and lasses,”* i.e., persons intermediate between spiritual infancy and manhood, *“because you know the fathers,”* i.e., you have passed all the wilderness fogs and smoke and crossed over into Beulah land.

14. John congratulates the fathers in Israel, mighty in wisdom, and the young, i.e., spiritual stalwarts, redoubtable in conflict, because the *“Word of God”* abides in them, the old men are mighty in the Scriptures and the young men invincible on the battlefield. *“You have conquered the wicked one,”* i.e., the devil.

15. People in the enjoyment of divine love are here warned not to love the world. It did not mean the material, but the fallen world.

16. *“All that which is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, are not of the Father but of this world.”* This verse

forever settles the world problem. When the devil conquered the world in Eden, he turned it over to the unholy trinity:

- (1) the lust of the flesh, *i.e.*, all carnal appetites;
- (2) the lust of the eyes, *i.e.*, the admission of evil through the sense, and
- (3) the pride of this life, *i.e.*, ambition, selfish aggrandizement.

These three hellish demons have ruled the world ever since the fall. The Holy Spirit everywhere anathematizes the world, *i.e.*, the unholy trinity of carnal and sensual lust and pride, as utterly and hopelessly irreconcilable to God. Then what is to be done? These lusts are to be utterly consumed with Holy Ghost fire. God's method with sin is destruction. ^{ROM}Romans 6:6. *Hagiazoō*, to sanctify, is from *alpha*, not, and *gee*, the world. Hence it means to take the world out of you, *Ecclesia*, church, is from *ek*, out, and *kaleo*, to call. Hence it means the called, *i.e.*, the souls who have heard the call of the Holy Ghost and came out of the world and separated themselves to God. Oh, how plain and simple is visible truth? You see from these facts regeneration takes you out of the world. Sanctification takes the world out of you. The Church and the world are irreconcilable antipodes. You can not be in both at the same time. The world is Satan's passport to hell. The Church is God's balloon to waft you to heaven.

17. *"The world passeth away and its lusts; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."* The devil's world, *i.e.*, all the sin in this world, with its effects will be utterly consumed in the fiery baptism destined to come on this world to sanctify it. Meanwhile the renewed and celestialized earth will survive (Romans 11:1), the celestial abode of saints and angels constituting a constituent member of the glorious heavenly universe, through the flight of eternal ages.

ARGUMENT 5

LAST ANTICHRIST AND THE LORD'S COMING

18. *"Little children, it is the last hour, and as ye have heard that Antichrist cometh, and now many Antichrists are here; then we know that it is the last*

hour.” On the dark eclipse of the bright Eden day Satan’s dark night set in. ^{<630>}Romans 13:12. As the Gentile age is the last of Satan’s night of ten thousand years, symbolized by the six days of toil preceding the glorious millennial Sabbath. If John was in the last hour of Satan’s night eighteen hundred years ago, surely we are in the last minute! Glory to God! I believe it, and hail with rapture the millennial dawn! Antichrist means a counterfeit Christ, or an opponent of Christ, as *anti* means instead of and also means against. As the Jewish element was still in the leadership of the Church, doubtless the Antichrists in John’s day were Jews, who either claimed to be Christ themselves, or because they were unconverted were the practical opponents of Christ. At the present day the Pope is the great Antichrist who, doubtless, during the Tribulation will usurp the throne of Christ, both political and ecclesiastical, raising the floodgate of persecution. The present age is literally flooded with Antichrists, *i.e.*, counterfeit preachers unacquainted with God, preaching a sinning religion, which is Satan’s, arrogating to themselves the power to have sins remitted in baptism, and teaching salvation by human works, ecclesiastical tyrants usurping the throne of Christ, claiming the right to rule a church, which belongs to Christ alone. The Holy Ghost is the spiritual successor of the personal Christ (^{<630>}John 16:7), and has the sole right to rule the Church of Christ, all His rivals occupying the attitude of Antichrist.

19. The great trouble with this multitude of Antichrist, *i.e.*, counterfeit, preachers is their personal ignorance of experimental salvation.

20. *“Truly you have an unction from the Holy One, and you all know.”* The common reading of the English, *“You know all things,”* has led to fanaticism, discarding human teachers.

21. The Bible is the grand *thesaurus* of inspired truth, containing all things essential to life and godliness.

22, 23. There is but one God, with three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. As these three persons are all identical in the divine unity, yet separate and distinct in their offices, perfecting the plan of salvation, radical heresy relative to either person apostatizes into the Antichristhood. Some of the Antichrists of the present day reject the divinity of Christ; but most of them reject the office and works of the Holy Ghost. Satan is now in his last ditch, prosecuting his final campaign against God. Having

been defeated both in the dispensation of the Father and Son, he is now using all of his artillery, laying under contribution earth and hell against the divine personality, office, work and administration of the Holy Ghost, leading forth his millions of Antichristian preachers, who are doing their utmost to usurp the throne of the Holy Ghost, take the Church into hand and rule over it.

24-26. The great salient fact of Gospel grace is the eternal divine life, imparted by the Holy Ghost in regeneration and made to abound in sanctification.

27. *“The unction which you receive from Him abideth in you, and you have no need that any one may teach you, but as this unction teacheth you concerning all things, and is true and no falsehood, and as He has taught you, abide in Him.”* Oh, the grandeur and the majesty of the redemptive scheme! Fortifying us at every point of Satan’s compass, giving us complete victory throughout, making us safe in life’s probation, as in heaven, if we faithfully utilize the means of grace. He first gives us His own eternal life in regeneration. Then He destroys all of our inward enemies in entire sanctification, filling us with the Holy Ghost, our infallible Guide in all things. This heavenly unction is our fortification against these Antichrists, *i.e.*, the devil’s preachers, who will do their utmost to get us to follow and obey them instead of the Holy Ghost. Verily, they are almost sure to succeed with all who are not fortified and guided by the unction of the infallible One. Worldly ones follow Satan down to hell, while church members follow these Antichrists to the same dismal doom. It is not understood that this holy unction precludes human teaching by speech and pen. On the contrary, the Holy Ghost pursuant to this wonderful unction utilizes holy men, women and babes as His faithful teachers. Two hundred millions of martyrs have sealed their faith with their blood. Guided by the infallible unction they shouted in the fire and triumphed over the grim monster.

28. *“And now, little children, abide in Him, in order that if He may appear we may have holiness and not shrink with embarrassment from Him in His presence.”* The true attitude of New Testament saintship is entire sanctification, the fullness of the Spirit and constant expectancy of the personal Jesus. When He went away He left the Holy Ghost in charge to

prepare His people for His glorious return and millennial reign. When we are really emptied of sin and filled with the divine unction, we are ready to go forth to meet Him with a shout. “*Coming,*” in this verse, is *parousia*, and means presence, corroborating the prophecies of His coming to stay and reign forever; doubtless, as in His former presence on the earth, anon appearing and disappearing in different parts of the world.

ARGUMENT 6

REGENERATION INDUCES SANCTIFICATION ANTICIPATORY OF TRANSFIGURATION

29. *“If you know that He is righteous you know that every one who doeth righteousness has been born of Him.”* This verse sweeps Antichristianity, *i.e.*, salvation by human works, forever from the field. True religion is the work of God; and false, that of men. You see from this verse that is utterly impossible for an unregenerated person to do righteousness. You must receive righteousness from the Holy Ghost before you can possibly do it.

CHAPTER 3

1. *“Behold what wondrous divine love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we may be called the children of God, and we are.”* This world is wiser than we think. They generally call things what they are. It is a significant fact that the people who believe and profess entire sanctification by a second work of grace after regeneration, are alone in all the world this day called “holy” by the people of the world. Others claim to be holy, and to have received it in conversion. But the world does not so recognize them, nor call them holy.
2. John had witnessed our Savior’s transfiguration and beheld His glory on the mount. He here assures us that when our Lord shall appear His saints who fill the above description, *i.e.*, emptied of sin and endued with the holy unction, so they will not “shrink with embarrassment in His presence,” shall all be transfigured like our Lord when he saw Him on the mount and when He ascended up to heaven.
3. *“Every one having this hope on Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure.”* Certainly all the truly regenerate entertain the hope of seeing Jesus in His glory. John makes no compromise with a bogus Christianity, but assures us that all true Christians do press forward into entire sanctification, *i.e.*, “purify themselves, even as Christ is pure.” This is certainly a high standard of Christian purity. Holiness is original in God and imparted to us, so that we actually have the holiness of our Savior. Hence we see that the popular churchism which fights the doctrine of purity can not be God’s regeneration, but it is Satan’s counterfeit. Every time Christian takes the purity of Christ as his standard, and presses unto it at every conceivable sacrifice. “Let God be true and every man a liar.”
4. John gives two clear definitions of sin, *i.e.*, a *“transgression of the law,”* which is actual sin, and must be removed by pardon, and *“unrighteousness,”* which is inbred sin, and must be expurgated by the cleansing blood.
5. The great mission for which Christ came into the world was to take away sin.

6. *“Every one abiding in Him sinneth not; every one sinning doth not see Him nor know Him.”* This verse forever refutes the nonsensical heresy of Satan’s preachers, who stand in the pulpit and preach a sinning religion to the people. If you are not in Christ, you are in Satan. No one can possibly abide in Christ and commit a known and willing sin. Criminals find dark places in which to perpetrate their crimes. Here it says positively that no one who sees or knows God commits any sin. All sin belongs to Satan’s darkness. It is never committed in the light of the Divine Presence.

ARGUMENT 7

THE GRANDEUR OF REGENERATION

7. *“Little children, let no one deceive you.”* John solemnly warns young converts and all other Christians against these Antichrists who teach a sinning religion, lest they deceive them to their eternal ruin. Oh, how pertinent this warning today, when the world is flooded with sinning religion.

8. *“He that committeth sin is of the devil; because the devil sinneth from the beginning.”* This needs no comment; a simpleton can understand it. Your preacher, standing in the pulpit, says, “I sin every day.” Dare to believe God. Your preacher belongs to the devil, preaches his gospel, and will lead you to hell if you follow him. *“For this the Son of God was made manifest, that He may destroy the works of the devil.”* You see how these Antichrists do their utmost to defeat the work of Christ, *i.e.*, the destruction of sin. Oh, how grossly they falsify Christ by telling the people they can not get rid of sin, when Christ came into the world for this very achievement, *i.e.*, the extermination of our sins.

9. *“Every one who has been born of God doth not sin because His seed remaineth in him; and he is not able to sin because he has been born of God.”* The advocates of sinning religion wage an exterminating war against sanctification on the hypothesis that none can live without committing sin. See how blindly they utterly unchristianize themselves, because it does not take sanctification to stop all sinning, but you see from this verse that regeneration settles the question of committing sin. So long as you have the

divine seed, *i.e.*, the life of God, the holy *agapee*, in your heart, you can not sin. The seed is planted in regeneration, the ground purified from all indigenous filth in sanctification, and the golden harvest reaped by the angels in glorification.

10. *“In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil,”* *i.e.*, the latter commit sin and the former do not. Oh, how easy to draw the line between God’s people, who live a holy life and commit no sin, and Satan’s people, who commit sin, whether church members or worldlings!

11. John constantly pours his burning emphasis on this divine love, the heavenly exotic from the heart of God, poured into our hearts by the Holy Ghost in regeneration and delivered from all carnal antagonisms in sanctification; meanwhile it not only extends up to God whence it came, but reaches forth its Briarean arms, encircling the world in its loving embrace, regardless of race, sect or color.

12. Cain was the great antediluvian patriarch of a bloodless, sinning religion. Cain’s religion was so popular that it finally crowded out Abel’s bloody experience, perpetuated by Seth and his followers, and filled the world, thus provoking the indignation of Heaven and bringing on the flood.

13, 14. *“We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren with divine love: he that loveth not with divine love abideth in death.”* What a deplorable pity the English Scripture does not bring out the difference between the divine *agapee*, the nature of God, and *philia*, the carnal love, peculiar to fallen humanity. For ages churches have been filled up with people joining on a profession of love to God and the brethren, which in millions of cases has proved by their lives to be nothing but their own natural carnal love, which never did have anything to do with salvation, only to be purified by it. How can I discriminate between the human and divine love? This heavenly *agapee*, *i.e.*, divine love, is identical in the heart of God, angels and human beings, reaching out indiscriminately to all created intelligences, pouring floods of sympathy on the entire animate creation. So when you have it, you love the black Hottentot, the tawny Mongolian and the beautiful Caucasian all alike, no longer discriminating between your enemies and your friends, but like God, who loves his enemies enough to die for them, you speed to make reconciliation with every foe and girdle the world in your arms. This is regeneration.

Sanctification has plenty still left to do in the complete expurgation of the spiritual organism from all hereditary ailment.

15. This verse is confirmatory of the preceding, affirming the dismal turpitude of unregenerated nature, pronouncing every misanthropist a guilty murderer in the sight of God. “Man looks at the outside, but God looks on the heart.” Hatred is the spirit of murder, involving actual guilt. This divine *agapee*, the essence of regeneration, supersedes all hatred in the heart of the recipient, inundating him with love for his vilest enemy.

16. This divine love brought Jesus from the glorified throne to die on Calvary for a world who hated Him. The effect of it in our hearts is to make us love not only our friends but even our enemies, sufficient to die for them.

17. While human love, which is natural in the fallen heart, goes out and belts the globe with its philanthropic enterprises, of course divine love, its tremendous superior, can not be delinquent in needed benefactions. While the unregenerated will discriminate in this philanthropy, actuated only by human love, the regenerated recipient of this heavenly *agapee* will overflow with philanthropy in behalf of the suffering, whether friends or foes.

18. We are here warned that profession and possession are different words.

ARGUMENT 8

A PURE CONSCIENCE THE CONDITION OF PREVAILING PRAYER

Heart is the word here used, the generic for the specific, the heart, spirit or soul consisting of the conscience, which is the voice of God in the soul; the will, which is the king of humanity, and the affections, the quintessence of all loves and hates.

19... *“And we will reconcile our hearts in His presence,”* i.e., our conscience, which is God’s own voice in the soul, will seal us with its perfect approval.

- 20.** *“Because, if our heart [conscience] condemn us, God is greater than our heart [conscience] and knows all things.”* The tribunal of our own conscience, when enlightened by the Word and Spirit, is an infallible miniature of the great white throne before which we soon must stand.
- 21.** *“Beloved, if our heart [conscience] condemn us not we have holiness with God.”*
- 22.** *“And we receive whatever we ask of Him, because we keep His commandments and do the things pleasing in His sight.”* This Scripture brings to light a momentous reality, *i.e.*, that a pure conscience, perfectly responsive to God’s Word and Spirit, is the grand secret of prevailing prayer. God wants to make us miracles of His grace and flood us with the wonders of His love. If you do not prevail with God in prayer, receiving into your own heart the unutterable transformations of His Spirit and enduements of His grace, it is simply because your heart is not perfectly responsive to the divine will. Of course, these wonderful promises receive their primary fulfillment in our own heart and life. We must remember that in case of others, their will must co-operate. You want your prodigal son saved. Take hold of God for his conviction. If your heart is pure and perfectly responsive to the divine will, in answer to your prayer God will send the Holy Ghost to convict him. He can yield to this conviction or resist it, grieving away the Holy Spirit. Never pray for his conversion, but constantly for his conviction, till you have reason to believe that he is convicted. Then lay hold on God for his conversion. In answer to your prayers, the Holy Spirit will convert his soul if he does not resist. We must learn “rightly to divide the Word of truth,” lest we waste much time and opportunity in haphazard prayer and labor.
- 23.** The two hemispheres in salvation, the human and the divine, are represented by faith and love. We exercise the faith in God’s promises, and He gives us the love. These two graces absorb all others, constituting the complete globe of human salvation.
- 24.** This mutual abiding, we in God and He in us, evolving the glorious reality of experimental salvation, is attended by the Holy Spirit. Hence no one need be in doubt.

CHAPTER 4

ARGUMENT 9

REJECTION OF THE FALSE PROPHETS

1. *“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, because many false prophets have come out into the world.”* We are to try and prove the spirits, excarnate and incarnate, and especially the latter, *i.e.*, the spirits which are in the living bodies. My spirit is writing these pages in the using of my bodily instrumentality. You hear a man preach; his spirit speaks through his body. The false prophets in this chapter are identical with the Antichrists in Chapter 2. Hence you are to try them by the Word of God, and if so you will utterly discard them.

2. *“In this know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, is of God.”*

3. *“Every spirit that confesseth not Jesus is not of God. This is the spirit of Antichrist, whom you have heard, that he cometh and now is already in the world.”* John, in his second epistle says, “Confesseth that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh.” Then he exhorts us not to receive them into our houses nor to bid them God speed. “For he that biddeth them God speed is partaker of their evil deeds.” These scriptures plainly reveal the attitude and character of these Antichrists, or false prophets, against whom John gives us this solemn warning. Their peculiar differentia is that they do not bring with them the great doctrine of the Christhood.

(a) The omnipotent spiritual Christ has always been in the world (entering immediately after the fall), in the Old Testament known as Jehovah, the Excarnate Christ, and in the Gospel dispensation as the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, the successor of the risen Christ, to prepare the world for His return.

(b) The God-man Christ came on the earth, expiated the guilt of the world on the cross and ascended up to heaven, receiving the perfect

and satisfactory approval of the Father, who enthroned Him Mediatorial King at His right hand, to reign till the Father makes His enemies His footstool. Then He will descend on the throne of His glory, cast out Satan, and reign over this world forever. Daniel 7. As God out of Christ can show no mercy to His fallen subjects, the entire plan of salvation in all ages is involved in the Christhood which the Holy Ghost is sent to reveal and its benefits to impart. The Holy Ghost came on the day of Pentecost as the successor of the risen Christ, to remain in charge till his return, having the sole right to rule the Church. Satan, having suffered defeat in the Father's dispensation, and in that of the Son, is now fighting in his last ditch, stirring earth and hell against the Holy Ghost, the Representative of the Christhood. Hence you see that the men who do not preach the work of Christ and the Holy Ghost are Antichrists, *i.e.*, opponents of Christ or supplanters of Christ, and false prophets, *i.e.*, do not "preach with the Holy Ghost come down from heaven." The Gospel preacher preaches that Christ has come and redeemed the world by His blood, and that He will come and reign over it, casting out Satan. He also preaches the glorious work of the Holy Ghost in regenerating the sinner, sanctifying the believer, and transfiguring the saints. All others are to be discarded, having failed to satisfy the tests of the Christhood.

4. John congratulates the children of God because they have conquered these false prophets and Antichrists.
5. These are the carnal preachers, so popular with the world. Their name is legion today. Look out and try them by the Word of God. Do they preach the great truths of the Christhood, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven?
6. How significantly is this prophecy verified this day. If a man preaches the truth with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, only the sainted few will hear. Let him come forth with carnal eloquence, pomp and power, the world will bear him. Popular churches will be thrown open, and all agape to swallow down Satan's bait. God help us all to obey this command, "Try the spirits, if they be of God," as the world is full of false prophets leading millions into hell.

ARGUMENT 10

GOD IS LOVE

7-9. The attributes of God are omnipotence, omnipresence and omniscience, but the essence of the divine nature is love, *i.e.*, the heavenly *agapee*, which is utterly alien from human love, so positively heterogeneous as in no way to be comparable with it. This same *agapee*, divine love, constitutes the sum and substance of the Christian religion. As this love is only native in the heart of God, none but God, *i.e.*, the Holy Ghost, can confer it. Holiness is simply another name for Holy Ghost religion. Hence all antiholiness religion is essentially diabolism from beginning to end, and can lead only to hell. The *agapee*, divine love, is imparted in regeneration (⁴⁶¹⁶Romans 6:5) and made perfect when all of its antagonisms are removed in entire sanctification. It is like the wheat in the stock, intrinsically clean and pure, but extrinsically encumbered with chaff, straw, dirt and other impurities, till the steam thresher sweeps them all away. So the regenerated man needs the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire to consume all the trash Satan put in him at the fall, and leave the heavenly *agapee* to reign without a rival.

10. This indefinable *agapee* came all the way from heaven to die for a lost world.

ARGUMENT 11

PERFECT LOVE

11. “*Beloved, if God so loved us with divine love we ought to love one another with divine love.*” This purely unselfish love to all mankind is the universal test of a Christian character.

12. “*No one hath ever seen God [with the physical eye, but we see Him, i.e., perceive Him, with our spiritual senses]. If we love one another with divine love, God abideth in us and His love has been perfected in us.*” The Greek present tense means constancy and perpetuity, which only obtain

in case of perfect love, the malevolent affections being utterly expurgated, so they no longer rise and interrupt the constant flow of love.

13. The clear testimony of the indwelling Holy Spirit must settle every problem in Christian experience. He never fails to witness to His own work. When He imparts this divine love, He speaks to your heart and tells you so. When He sanctifies you, making perfect your love, His testimony is never delinquent. Here you can detect false religion. It has no witness of the Spirit.

14. While the Holy Spirit is our witness, we are the world's witnesses.

15. This does not mean a buncombe confession made by wicked people, manipulated by demagogues, but the experimental testimony which none can have till Jesus saves them.

16. *“God is divine love: he that abideth in divine love abideth in God.”* All this follows as a logical sequence from the fact that the divine *agapee* is the nature of God. Hence you see the transparent fallacy of all Satanic efforts to counterfeit God's religion. He would as well undertake to counterfeit God. Surely with his own people he does constantly counterfeit both God and his religion, but he signally fails every time with God's true people.

17. Here you see perfect love, *i.e.*, entire sanctification, is absolutely necessary to prepare us for the judgment. “As He is so are we in this world.” Perfect love makes us like Jesus, even while in this world. Her false religions all stumble. If we live in this world like Jesus we will certainly meet Him with a shout when He comes.

18. *“There is no fear in divine love.”* The fear is the depravity, which is destroyed in sanctification, leaving us perfectly free from fear. Perfect love casts out fear. Fear is here used in its universal sense, and means all fear. If you have perfect love you fear neither poverty, scandal, persecution, death, judgment nor eternity.

19. *“We love Him because He first loved us.”* If He had not so loved as to come and save us by putting His love in us, it would have been as impossible for us to love Him as for a devil.

20. *“If any one may say, ‘I love God,’ and may hate his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother, whom he has seen, how is he able to*

love God whom he has not seen?" Our physical senses assist our spiritual, meanwhile this divine *agapee* is the same in the heart of God, angel or man, intuitively reaching out after every object in which it can rest. Hence the very fact that we do not love men with divine love whom we see with our physical eyes, is demonstrative proof that we do not love God, who is only discernible by our spiritual senses.

21. *"And we have this law from Him, that whosoever loveth God with divine love loveth also his brother with divine love."* This law is indefragable as the divine nature. Love can not keep from loving, just as light can not keep from shining. It is the nature of this love to be drawn toward every human being, as the magnet to the pole. Hence the very fact that you do not love the entire human race with an ardent human love, homogeneous to that which brought Jesus down to die, is demonstrative proof that you are destitute of this divine love, and no Christian. After receiving this wonderful *agapee* in regeneration, it will be antagonized in your heart more or less by the malevolent affections, till utterly destroyed in sanctification. Then the divine love in your heart, as in the heart of Jesus, will move out on eagle's wings to every human being in all the world. John Fisher, a devout preacher of the Gospel, having been arrested by the edict of Bloody Mary, and imprisoned in the Tower of London, when led out to the scaffold to have his head cut off, fortuitously opening his Greek Testament, with a simultaneous prayer, "Oh God, direct my eye to the Scripture you want to comfort me in this awful hour," lit on this beautiful paragraph, expository of perfect love. Having read it he closed the book saying, "Glory to God! It is enough for time and eternity." In a moment the bloody axe-man severed his head from his body, his heroic spirit, encircled by angels, winging its flight to heaven.

CHAPTER 5

ARGUMENT 12

FAITH OUR VICTORY

1. Here faith and divine love are set forth as inseparable concomitants, like Siamese twins, living and dying together, constituting the two hemispheres of the beautiful celestial globe of human salvation, faith our side, and love God's counterpart.

2. Our profession of love to God and His people must be confirmed by keeping His commandments.

3. *“And His commandments are not heavy.”* The world is full of disobedient, sinning religion. It is all the devil's delusive hoax to blind the eyes, chloroform the conscience and lead to hell. God's religion is this divine love which delights in obedience in all its forms and phases. Satan is always lying to the people, telling them God is a hard Master. Entire sanctification makes all burdens light, and all obedience a delight.

4. *“Everything that has been born of God conquers the world.”* No one can possibly commit sin while he has victory over the world, for all sin is the service of Satan, “the god of this world.” ~~2~~ 2 Corinthians 4:4. Hence you see the very hypothesis of a sinning religion, even in the lowest type (which is regeneration), flatly contradicts the Word of God. “This is the victory which conquers the world, our faith.” The solution of our victory is plain and easy. We hold to Jesus by faith, and He conquers for us the world, the flesh and the devil. The people of Jericho had nothing to do but shout. God leveled down the walls. So the shout of faith will smash every Jericho encountered in your earthly pilgrimage.

5. As the Christhood of Jesus, revealed by the Holy Ghost, is the great salient fact of revelation, it constitutes the grand truth to be constantly received, appropriated and utilized by our faith.

ARGUMENT 13

GOD'S TRIPLE, TESTIMONY

6. *“This is the One having come through water and blood, Jesus Christ; not only by water, but by water and blood.”* Throughout the Bible the great prevailing symbolic meaning of water is regeneration. This is pertinent from the fact that water is indispensable to animal life. Consequently it is a suitable and instructive representative of spiritual life. Blood, in the Bible, means redemption. As we actually receive redemption from sin in sanctification, administered by the Holy Ghost through the blood of Christ, blood becomes the constant symbol of purification.

7, 8. *“There are three who bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, and these three are one.”* We receive the water of life in regeneration and the cleansing blood in sanctification, both being attested by the Holy Ghost. Hence God in His great mercy has made to us these three wonderful, glorious and unmistakable experimental revelations, *i.e.*, regeneration, sanctification and the gift of the Holy Ghost, as an indwelling Illuminator, Guide and Comforter. I know perfectly well my regeneration forty-seven years ago and my sanctification twenty-eight years ago. They are especial revelations made to my soul by divine intervention. These memorable epochs, never to be forgotten, are past and gone. But the Holy Spirit dwells in my heart night and day, my constant witness to my acceptance with God, and my everlasting Comforter. Oh, the unutterable goodness of God in giving us these three grand, glorious and harmonious witnesses that we are His, born from above, sanctified wholly and kept by the power of the indwelling Spirit.

9. We constantly receive human testimony in all the interests of life, jurisprudence and litigation, with fewer and less reliable witnesses than these three who fortify the great problem of salvation, revelatory and experimental.

10. *“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.”* “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” ⁶¹⁰⁰ Romans 10:10. Intellectual faith, exercised by wicked men and devils, has no power to save. This is the faith peculiar to popular churches where neither preachers

nor people know the Lord. Hell is full of it. If it had power to save, the pandemonium would be evacuated in a hurry. Saving faith is not intellectual, but spiritual, inspired by the Holy Ghost and bringing the human spirit to God. Since the Holy Ghost always witnesses to His own work and faith is the infallible human condition, both of regeneration and sanctification, therefore every believer receiving according to his faith, is attested by the Holy Spirit. Consequently the Christian religion is the most luminous and intelligent reality in the universe. Popular religion has always been full of fog, because Satan and his people dwell in darkness.

11. All spiritual life is in the Christhood, as God out of Christ is a “consuming fire.” ^{<SD18>}Hebrews 12:18.

12. *“Whosoever hath the Son hath life; whosoever hath not the Son of God hath not life.”* Unitarianism is worse than heathenism, as the former will be judged by the whole Bible, revealing their wicked rejection of Christ, while the latter will only be judged by the laws of nature. So is all anti-Holy Ghost religion more damnable than paganism, because the Holy Ghost is the Successor and Revelator of Christ. Hence the rejection of the Holy Ghost is identical with the Unitarian heresy of repudiating Christ. The millions going down to hell with open Bibles in their hands will sink to the deepest depths of woe.

ARGUMENT 14

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN

13. The great end of all Scripture is that all human beings may have eternal life, which is only in the Son of God, the Second Adam, who represents the entire human race in redemption, just as Adam the first represented all in condemnation. When the countless millions of Adam’s race shall assemble before the great white throne all will be in Adam the first or Adam the Second, the latter all acquitted with full approval, and the former all turned away into hopeless doom.

15. Here we have another grand and glorious confirmation of prevailing prayer. It is the transcendent privilege of God’s saints to be so cleansed by

the blood and led by the Spirit as actually to come in touch with God so as to prevail in prayer, like Elijah.

16... *“There is a sin unto death: I do not say you may ask concerning it.”*

17. *“All unrighteousness is sin, and there is a sin not unto death.”* Here we find John’s second definition of sin, *“unrighteousness,”* which means inbred sin, his first definition, *“transgression,”* meaning actual sin. ⁴⁰¹ John 2:4. Now what is this sin for which we are not to pray for pardon, since there is no pardon possible in the case? This question is abundantly answered in the general trend of the epistle. The great solvent fact of Gospel truth presented in this letter is the Christhood, out of which salvation is utterly impossible, since God out of Christ is a consuming fire. Consequently this unpardonable sin is the following after those Antichrists, or false prophets, so conspicuously exposed and scathingly anathematized in this letter. When people reject the Christhood, it is useless to pray for them, because they can not be saved in their present attitude. If you can prevail on them to forsake their un-Christly heresies, then they are open to conviction, subjects of prevailing prayer and candidates for salvation. This same great, though sad, truth is brought out by Christ (⁴⁰² Matthew 12:31, 32) in the blasphemy of the Holy Ghost, denominated the unpardonable sin. Since the Holy Ghost is the Successor and Revelator of the risen and glorified Christ, it is utterly impossible for any one to receive the benefit of the Christhood without the office of the Holy Spirit in illumination, conviction, regeneration, sanctification and glorification. Hence, the unpardonable sin is following Antichrist and blaspheming the Holy Ghost.

18. *“... The wicked one toucheth Him not.”* All committing of sin is under the direct administration of the devil. He must get his hand on you before he can work you. This verse certifies that no regenerated person commits sin, since Satan is not permitted so much as to touch the soul that is born of God. That soul must voluntarily go over to him before he can muster him into service.

19. *“We know that we are of God and the world lieth in the wicked one.”* Since all the world is in the devil, and under his control, worldly churches are simply Satan’s greased planks over which to slide people into hell. All of God’s people belong to the divine *Ecclesia* (Church), *i.e.*, the called out,

consisting of those who, responsive to the call of the Holy Ghost, have left the devil and the world and separated themselves unto God. While regeneration takes us out of the world, sanctification takes the world out of us.

20. Oh, what burning emphasis John constantly pours forth descriptive and expository of the Christhood.

21. *“Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”* After people are well sanctified and established in holiness, there is very little probability of their deflection into idolatry. Young converts need constant vigilance and admonition lest they be led away on some line of worldliness, all of which is idolatry.