

# The Generation of Jesus Christ - Part 2

by G.W. North

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*Jesus' birth is a new birth, a birth from sin to sanctity, from self to God, and it sets forth a perfect pattern of God's ways with men in new birth.*

**Scripture:** John 3:3, Galatians 4:4

**Topics:** "Identity in Christ", "New Birth"

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## Description

G.W. North emphasizes the significance of the birth of Jesus Christ as a transformative event that allows believers to experience a new birth into the family of God. He explains that just as Jesus was born of Mary, believers must also undergo a spiritual rebirth to become children of God, characterized by righteousness and love. North draws parallels between Mary's faith and the believer's response to God's call, highlighting that true sonship involves a life that reflects the nature of Christ. He asserts that this new birth is essential for overcoming sin and living a life that mirrors Jesus, who is the way, the truth, and the life. Ultimately, the sermon calls for believers to embrace their identity as part of the generation of Jesus Christ, living out the divine nature bestowed upon them.

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## Transcript

### The birth of the Sons

In the eternal life and order of God the Lord Jesus became for us a man, that He might bring us by His own birth into the family of God. For by His grace we too may know a similar kind of birth, a new birth entirely. A birth from sin to sanctity, from self to God, from vileness to spotless virginity, for Jesus is plainly spoken of as the 'First-born among many brethren' who all must bear His image and grow up into the very same likeness. For God chose each one of them in Christ before the foundation of the world, and predestined them to this through Jesus Christ to Himself that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love. This they shall be if they will believe and entrust themselves to Him as He Himself also did to that blessed virgin of whom God took hold in the Beginning. We shall ever call her blessed who yielded herself to God beyond what she knew, who, when the realisation of what 'He that is mighty' had done dawned on her, said that we all who afterward understood would know how blessed she was. And how rightly she spoke, for we see most clearly that God wrought in her physical frame that which He would most dearly love to do within our own, though in a different way, should we let Him.

Mary is a type, a picture, a promise to us of the Lord's power and purposes in this age. As we so often see in scripture, the natural is an analogy of the spiritual, and fulfils the Bible dictum 'First that which is natural

and then that which is spiritual.' Even so it must be, for these are eternal in God, for with Him both natural and spiritual are one. God is Spirit and naturally so (Galatians 4: 8). This is how and why the Holy Spirit could so tenderly inscribe within the scripture His sacred story of Jesus' conception and birth, wherein both the Spiritual and the natural by a supernatural act could and did become one in the Son. Because this is so, we will examine the account of the sacred story of Jesus' birth under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, confessing that any such examination must be conducted in lowliest reverence and deepest humility, for its holiness is as the holiness of heaven, even the 'holiest of all', and its intimacy is unspeakable unto tears. It is a mountain that burns with fire, the womb of the morning whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, primeval, untouchable, believable only. Set forth in unguarded and unguardable light, in plainest language for all to approach unto, its solitary grandeur prohibits and precludes all but those who would die to live the holy life of God on the earth. It needs no flaming sword to keep the way; the angel came and went. God needs no protector, just a messenger, so that all who hear may believe and enter in. His Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Calvary need no more protection than His eternal throne.

So unbelievable was it that Joseph himself, who later learned of his fiancée's condition, just could not accept it to be true until reassured personally by God. He need not have worried about his espoused bride; she had not been unfaithful nor played the harlot, but had given herself wholly to God regardless of all that Joseph or any one else thought or said or did. It was just as though Mary had 'married' God; throwing away all her earthly prospects of marriage, her response to God's desires was complete. Borrowing the language of Hebrews 11 it could be written of her, 'By faith, Mary, when she was approached by the angel yielded to God, reckoning the reproach of Christ greater than all earthly pleasures that she might bring forth the Son of God, and the scripture was fulfilled which saith, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.' So through Mary, the seed the devil had sired into the human race via Eve was counteracted, his headship superseded, and the way prepared for the Seed that God fathered into the race to overcome and destroy the devil.

Thus in our Head from heaven did the Godhead become man-head, even the Head of the Church which is His body, that whole company of Sons which is the generation of Jesus Christ. And so the saying of Jesus which He spake in the guest chamber prior to His crucifixion is explainable and its meaning understood: 'I am; the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by Me.' He did not say, 'No man goeth to heaven when he dies except by what I accomplish at Calvary ' -- true as that is -- but, 'No man cometh unto the Father but by Me.' 'I am the way, the truth and the life. I am a man; I was born; I came forth unto the Father through Mary from Bethlehem' (Micah 5 : 2). From days of eternity He had been going forth in His Father's name doing His Father's work, but never before had He been born as a man in order to do so.

And then His Father had chosen to beget Him as a man, first through Mary in the flesh that He might come forth unto the Father, and then through Himself in His own death by resurrection; so now must we also come forth from God unto God by a new birth. Jesus is the way, and the way He became the man Jesus is the only way for every one who would know Him as the Way. If this is not our own experience we can never be truth and life unto God and man, but only read about it and talk and believe about it. We cannot, of course, be made The Way to any man; Jesus our Lord alone can and must be that to every single person seeking eternal life. But we can be an example of the Way before man, and thus fulfil the scripture which says, 'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me.' If it be true that Jesus' will and the Father's good pleasure is that we should be with Him where He is, it is equally true that we should be what and as He is also. Into

this perfect relationship and blessed life Jesus was born and lived and died and rose again to bring us.

As in His life and works the Lord Jesus perfectly sets forth the pattern of life for us, so we find also that in His birth is set forth a similar kind of pattern. Jesus Christ is all. He is made everything to us. As His death must be mine because He has graciously made my death His, and His life must be mine as He powerfully makes my life His, so also is His birth mine as He tenderly makes my birth His. This is why He said to Nicodemus, 'Ye must be born again' (or anew, from above). It is absolutely unavoidable. Every man must, just simply must be born again. If he is at all going to become what God wants him to be -- a son of God -- there is no other way. It is quite impossible to enter into life except by birth, for this is that one and only strait gate. To enter into man's life Jesus had to be born of a woman, and to enter into God's life every man must be born of God. So when Jesus said, 'Ye must be born again,' He was not advancing some highly questionable idea; nor was He introducing a new set of terms for some long-established, well-known and perfectly understood dogmas; neither was He being merely authoritarian; He was simply telling the truth.

It was an amazingly new truth, but then Jesus was an amazingly new person. No-one like Him had ever been on the earth before; the method by which He came here was entirely new even for Him. When He was born, and before that, when He was being formed within Mary, He embarked upon an entirely new experience; He had never before been born. But of course, if God wanted a completely new type of man on the earth something like this had to be done; only He could create Him, no-one else could -- so create Him He did. His plan had been long maturing, but bringing events and time to fulfilment, and finding the right person in Mary, God at last, as an age was ending, sent His angel Gabriel to visit the virgin of Nazareth with the good news. God was about to be born in order to create the new Man by developing, working out and maturing the Life of the Eternal Spirit in a human body as a perfect Soul.

God is an artist. His work is perfect. Imaginative conception, delicate perception, eternal perspective, historical harmony, emotional balance, superlative execution, everything is there in the wondrous virgin birth of Jesus Christ. We cannot compliment God but we can worship Him, inadequate as our praises are. The whole was carried out in a perfection of which we glimpse but little, yet it is sufficient to lift our marvelling minds to a new plane of love, seeking only to be led into all truth. A comparison at this point will serve to strengthen our wondering adoration.

There are many women named Mary in the scriptures, and for our purpose we shall select one from the Old Testament. At first glance it does not appear that she does bear the name, for Mary is the Greek form of the Hebrew Miriam. Miriam was the sister of Moses and Aaron, and the record of an incident of which she was the central figure shows to perfection the difference between the two Marys in the day of their visitation. They were both virgins in the sight of man, and Miriam in a much more exalted and privileged position among her people than Mary, but because of Miriam's dreadful presumption, God likened His conduct towards her to that of a father spitting in his daughter's face because he was ashamed of her. Because of this she became a leper and was shut out from the camp for seven days, white as snow with leprosy because of God's anger toward her. Virgin of body, she was ruined in soul through pride.

But the Father did not send the angel of His presence to spit in Mary's face; on the contrary, it was to plant the Seed of God in her womb. For this she was found willing to be mistaken for a spiritual leper; to use scriptural language that she never knew (all the faithful fulfil one spiritual truth), this woman was prepared to 'go forth unto Him without the camp bearing His reproach.' Thirty or more long years later, that which God did to her that day still lay upon her as a stigma which never died out of men's evil hearts; they never

allowed her to forget what to their perverted minds was her great blasphemy. Derisively and reproachfully they said to Jesus, 'We be not born of fornication,' and thus openly accused her of sin whilst sneering at her son. Mary had conceived Him out of wedlock, and it was her chiefest joy and greatest faith. They did not believe He was God's only begotten Son of woman -- but He was.

Mary co-operated with God to allow Him to be the Father of her son. She sought nothing for herself, but just believingly yielded herself only to Him. She consented to allow the Holy Ghost to be the real Mother in her motherhood, even as God was the Father of her son. She let God, the blessed triune God, take her right over for His own use and purposes. It all happened so beautifully, just as Luke simply records it for us in his Gospel.

The story he relates in the first chapter is wondrous in its classic realism. No sentiment, and little of human emotion is revealed. Not a word of professional journalism is to be found, just the honest statements of the plain truth. Analysed, the account reveals these facts:

[1] vvs. 28 and 30 -- She was 'highly favoured,' she had 'found favour with God.'

[2] vvs. 27 and 34 -- She was virgin; she did not 'know' any man.

[3] vvs. 29 and 34 -- She was troubled and fearful and completely baffled in mind as to how it could all be true and possible.

[4] vs. 31 -- She sought no thrills or satisfaction for the flesh; the angel said she would conceive in her womb only.

[5] vs. 35 -- The Holy Ghost came upon her and the power (Gk. *Dunamis*) of the Highest overshadowed her.

[6] vvs. 38 and 45 -- She believed and conceived the word of God which was spoken directly to her.

In these six points we have set forth for us the perfect pattern of God's ways with men in new birth, for this was the new birth in very truth. No-one else had ever been conceived in this manner before. She had conceived God's Seed by faith; Elisabeth later told her so (Luke 1: 45).

At the same time as this was taking place Gabriel also broke the news to Mary that her cousin was now expecting her first child. Such exciting news sent Mary hastening off to share with Elisabeth in the mutual joy, but enquiry soon established the fact that although the dumb Zacharias and the abashed Elisabeth were indeed looking forward to the arrival of their firstborn, everything about its conception and expected birth was absolutely normal. Although it was a miracle and most exciting, it was not a new one. There was nothing unique about it, nothing that God had not done before. The history of Israel practically began with such wonderful happenings. God had done it with Abraham and Sarah, and Jacob and Rachel, and Samuel, the mighty prophet born and destined to restore Israel and anoint their first kings, was just such another child. Now it was Zacharias and Elisabeth who were enjoying a similar favour of God.

History was repeating itself and, of course, John would be a special child and a great man as were Isaac and the sons of Rachel, and Samuel. God had always done it like this. Through someone He would produce a son in a miraculous way, through whom He would change the established order of things and alter the whole course of history. The miracle every time was that ever they were born, because barrenness and/or age had rendered it quite impossible naturally. The miracle of Jesus' birth, however,

was an entirely new one. This was not repetition, but reproduction. God was introducing Himself into human flesh. Made in the likeness of men, Jesus was the image of God -- God's Son.

Zacharias and Elisabeth and John, their son, were a representative family. In them God finalised and headed up His 'birth' dealings under the Old Covenant, and showed them to be inferior and preparatory to the New. The great miracle man John ushered and heralded in the greater miracle man Jesus. For, taking hold of Mary, God bridged the gap between the Old and New Covenants, and in doing so typified in natural flesh the pattern of His birth dealings throughout the entire length of the new order.

What took place between Mary and God in order that Jesus could be formed in and born through her flesh must also take place in our spirits or we shall never know new birth. Apart from the fact that she had angelic ministry and we have human, there can be no difference in the pattern. Angels are only heavenly men, and though we hear the gospel from men who by their first birth are of the earth, earthy, they are nevertheless by their second birth completely heavenly. Such are sent from God to us to preach the gospel word that we might be born of God. God begot Jesus Christ by the Word. Mary conceived that in her womb and thereby Jesus was the Word made flesh. We too are born again of that same incorruptible seed, through the word, after we have 'conceived' it within us by the same means as she. As soon as the angel procured her consent the transaction was completed. Her words, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word,' expressed her humble, grateful acquiescence to and willing co-operation with God, so he departed. He had spoken the word of faith to her and she received it, thus allowing the law of faith to operate in her.

It was done; she had conceived Jesus by faith alone on her part. The Holy Ghost had come upon her in Highest power to overshadow and enable her to do the will of God, and it is always like this throughout the length of the entire age. We cannot become the Sons of God by the will of man or the will of the flesh; man and flesh are right out of this. Mary in her ignorance thought that what God said was impossible of accomplishment because she did not 'know' any man. On the contrary, it was the only way it could possibly happen. Until men are prepared to become absolutely virgin to God, so that they look not to anything a man can do and least of all to their own fleshly manhood for help, they never can be born of God. Mary's 'How?' was answered by God's 'The Holy Ghost.' The Holy Ghost is God's 'How'. He always has been, still is, and ever shall be God's 'How'. He is how God does everything -- God's means. In this connection the blessed Trinity may be respectfully related thus: the Father is the doer, the Holy Ghost is how He does it, and the Son is the thing done. It was thus in the beginning of creation: God the Father spoke the word, the Holy Ghost fluttering over the deep upon the face of the waters in the dark heard and received it, and light was. Jesus, the Lamb, is the Light.

Because this is the only order God knows and the law upon which He works, Jesus told Nicodemus he must be born of water and of the Spirit. Hearing this Nicodemus was completely baffled, and as Mary had earlier said to the angel so he also said to Jesus, 'How can this thing be?' Mary's difficulty was concerning (a) man -- 'I know not a man'; Nicodemus' problem was bound up with (a) woman -- 'Can a man enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born?' But neither are needed for this great new birth. We have to be born from above to be born again of God, for this second birth is not of man and woman at all. If we wish our spirits to be born we must be born of the Holy Spirit, for that which is born of the flesh is only flesh. The spirit of man died to God in the 'faith' transaction between Satan and Adam via Eve in Eden. Since that occasion every individual person has become dead to God. And though in natural birth flesh is alive by reason of spirit indwelling it, that spirit is nevertheless dead to God. It neither knows Him, nor communes with Him, nor serves Him, nor loves Him, nor worships Him, nor acknowledges Him to be the

Lord. It is not alive as Jesus was alive, but quite dead, and until it undergoes an experience from above whereby it is born it will remain dead; and this death is everlasting unless 'these things' take place within us.

This life which we receive at new birth is eternal, that is, it is exactly the same quality of life that is in Christ Jesus. He expressed it thus many times, 'I am the life'; 'I am come that ye might have life more abundantly'; 'Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood ye have no life in you'; 'I am the resurrection and the life'; 'Behold I am alive for ever more.' He has therefore made careful provision that we might have His life. Such provision is it, and so readily available to us all, that no man can live a life different in nature and quality and manifestation from His and yet claim to have eternal life, for it is His life in us. The only thing you can do with life is live it; what and how you live is your life. Christianity is not a religion, it is a life. Indeed, it is THE life -- life itself; in this world men are either dead or alive according to whether or not they have received and live this life, and not according to whether or not they accept and believe certain beliefs or practise a certain religion. It is quite as possible to be dead holding all known Christian beliefs, as holding Buddhist or Brahmin or Islamic beliefs. To be sure, it is better to believe the Bible than the Koran, or any other so called sacred writings, but doing so does not bring life. 'Ye must be born again' -- Jesus says so.

### The life of the Sons

In this new birth many vital spiritual and psychological changes take place in a man. In fact, all the fundamental alterations required by God to make a man acceptable to Him as an eternal being are made at that time. Laws of spiritual being are changed. God puts His laws into our minds and writes them in our hearts so that we all (can) know Him and not our (old) selves, as the originators of humanistic philosophy vainly advise us. This inward change is an absolute necessity, for apart from this taking place it is quite impossible to be a new person. The only long term proof a man can have that he is born again is that he is becoming an entirely new person, and that the new personality being developed and revealed in him is none other than Jesus Christ's. There are, however, certain immediate and immediately recognisable features of new birth that every man must expect to find within himself when he is born again.

Speaking to His ancient people, Israel, through Ezekiel chapter 36: 26, 27, God sets forth some salient features of the new birth which some time in the future was to happen to them as a nation, when they were to be 'born in a day'. When that takes place these three things will happen within each individual. God will give to each one: (1) a new heart, (2) a new spirit, (3) His Spirit. They will happen spontaneously and synchronously so that they appear to be but one thing. Other things must happen prior to and as a consequence of these three major things, but these three must take place in every new birth at whatever time in history the miracle happens.

In these days of advanced medical knowledge ante-natal investigations of any natural birth always include, indeed major upon, the discovery of the heart beat. No heart beat -- no life. Ante-natal life has begun when a heart starts to beat. So in new birth, God starts with the renewal of the heart. There can be no new life from an old heart. God says that it is impossible to get a clean thing out of an unclean thing, and it is equally impossible to get an unclean out of a clean. Born of unclean flesh it is not possible for any man to have a clean heart and live a pure life: born of the Holy Spirit it is impossible to have an unclean heart and life. In order to live a new clean life we must have a new clean heart and spirit. God says He gives new hearts for old, hearts of flesh for hearts of stone, as of course only He can and must, if He would have us for His children.

The Old Covenant was written upon stone. This in itself, as in everything God does, was of symbolic significance, for it typified exactly what was taking place; the hearts to which God was giving the law were as hard as stone, and the Covenant was a superimposition upon cold, resistant, unresponsive flint, a law enforcement to which the carnal mind must bow but which the heart could never receive. The New Covenant must be written within by the Spirit of God on the fleshy tables of the heart and put (given) into the mind, so that the law of being may supersede the law of doing. Thus the law of commandments becomes the law of life, not so much in the first instance by willing obedience, as by natural function which gives rise to the willing obedience. The law of God's being must become the law of my being -- mind and heart law by which my life is governed naturally and develops normally into a life of simple obedience to God.

In this act of God I am reconstituted in the nature of God that I may grow as a person and develop a personality like Jesus in the image of God. I am reconstituted righteous, made the righteousness of God in new birth. Constitutional law is greater than institutional law. What God is constitutionally, that is, those qualities by which He is naturally God, so that because of them we recognise and acknowledge and confess Him to be God, He in measure adapted and projected from Himself as a law, instituting and commanding it under the hand of Moses as a code of life for His people. Even Moses himself saw and said that though this was so, God had not given the people a new heart. They had to keep the law for righteousness, but God had not reconstituted them so that they were functionally righteous within, and confession can not be made unto salvation until the heart has believed unto this righteousness. A man's heart has to be reconstituted righteous, made entirely new within, before he can live a new life, for the life must be basically righteous to be called life at all. The law of righteousness and life must take the place of the law of sin and death ere a man can live.

The heart is the most vital, basic and powerful piece of 'machinery' in the whole human being, and as it is in the natural so is it in the spiritual being. The reconstituted heart is the 'machinery' for living the new life, but even so, important as it is, it is not the whole new man, but only his heart. The new man himself is the new spirit God puts within him. As in the first creation God made everything in perfect functional order before He created the man, so in the new spiritual order: the heart first, then the spirit (man) to use it. It was like this in the beginning. God formed man out of the dust of the ground in perfect working order and then breathed spirit into him so that man could be a living soul. Now God says, 'A new spirit will I give you,' and oh, how vital this is, for this is that inward man who is told, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,' and hearing it, with joy he now cries, 'Of course, I shall!' It is no longer conceived or imagined to be a commandment of authority to be understood despairingly as 'I must love God because He says so,' but an empowering from His will -- 'I shall, of course I shall, because He has enabled me.' 'Thou shalt' is thus shown to be an utterance from supreme knowledge rather than from a superior power, though bearing that power in mind, and intending to act from it. Hence God is not so much commanding obedience as commanding life.

This inward man, being spirit, is either old or new according to whether it has been born from above, and being by first birth born dead, the inward man is not able to recognise himself or know his state, nor does he know how to act responsively and responsibly in this matter of new birth. That is why the gospel must be preached to us with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, for unless this is so there can be no all-powerful generation. Dead spirits remain unresponsive, totally unable to act, unconscious of need, and ignorant of how to enter into life. Aware of self and sin, unregenerate man is dead toward God. Loving sin, he engages in and practises it as in his natural element, so that he believes such a state to be his only

possible way of life.

Yet it is to this part of man, the real I, that God appeals. His gospel is addressed to it and His new birth is for it. This is that part that has to be born again, the spirit; and it only can be born again when it rises up within and responds wholeheartedly to God's word. Just as a man has lusted after, gone after, engaged in and practised many abominable things within himself, though outwardly he has never done them, so, exactly so must he reach out and desire after Jesus as the word of God is spoken to him. He must not remain passively believing, but must actively receive. His whole self must be in it. He must engage in a personal transaction with Jesus Christ just as really as when, perhaps lying bodily passive in bed or sitting totally inactive in a chair, without moving a muscle outwardly, yet with unbridled passion, he inwardly engages with some other absent person or persons in some form of sin. Such sin does not require the bodily presence of another person; the imagination and desires and emotions of the man are quite sufficient to make others very, very real to him indeed. Such sins, though often never actually committed by the outward man are, nevertheless, the most real of things a person ever does.

Because this is so, God requires that in regeneration, the greatest thing that can happen to a man on this earth, that same part must act in the transaction of new birth. With affection, and emotion, and desire, and intellect, and imagination, and will, the whole inward man must believe and receive. Then he will become a new spirit-man. It cannot be too strongly urged upon a man that he must so believe God that he arises with all his manhood, and transacts with Jesus Christ earnestly and personally. Such an act no more requires the actual physical presence of Jesus Christ than do the sins spoken of above -- it is the spirit that commits the sin or comes to Christ in either case.

The third thing specified in this one great birth is, 'I will put My Spirit within him.' A man must consciously receive the Holy Spirit when he believes, so that should an apostle of Jesus Christ ask him the vital question Paul asked of the Ephesians, he could answer unequivocally, 'Yes.' In our concern to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ in order that we shall be saved, we must not neglect to receive the Holy Spirit also. The Lord Jesus who said, 'Come unto Me ..... I will give you rest,' also said, 'Come unto Me and drink ..... this spake He of the Spirit which they that believe on Him should receive.' Just because He said these two things upon two different occasions, He did not mean or say that He was speaking of two different 'comings' or experiences. It was clearly impossible for Him to say everything all at once or every time He opened His mouth, so it was as the occasion warranted, or the conditions afforded, or the needs demanded, or the media required that He spoke of different effects resulting from coming to Him. Each was related to the purpose in His mind when He spoke, therefore whilst what the Lord said was amply suited to each particular situation, it was nevertheless but partial in expression, and could not be otherwise. When this is clearly understood, many things mistakenly said to be different are at once seen to be distinctions only and not differences at all.

The gospel is now completely revealed as it never was whilst Jesus yet spake on the earth, for even He lived on the Old Testament side of Calvary and Pentecost. The New Covenant was then in His unshed blood; this had yet to be both shed and presented in heaven before the New Covenant could commence. But the redemptive offering being now complete and His precious blood presented in heaven, no heart need believe restrictively for partial things. Men today must believe on Jesus Christ unto the reception of the Holy Ghost. We must come to Jesus drinking and God will put His Spirit within us. The Holy Spirit must dwell forever within my spirit in my new heart. It will then keep new and I shall be the living soul God intends me to be -- a thing entirely impossible apart from the miracle taking place as outlined above. This then is what basically takes place in every new birth, and in such a way that a man is unmistakably aware

of the tremendous and eternal change that has taken place in him.

We have used the Old Covenant scriptures as a basis of analysis of the miracle of the New Birth which is, as yet, a future experience for the nation of Israel. Written prophetically, it could not then be testified to experimentally by any man. For a further fuller and additional exposition of the truth we will now examine the New Covenant scriptures, whose authors were all men who had been born again. These all could write from experience of that new birth which had taken place in them, as well as from the Holy Ghost. Inspiration flowing through experience speaks the most powerful word of all. Among these authors the apostle John was singled out to be the last contributor to the sacred canon and, as one who could look back over a long life filled with evidence of the things which he wrote, he was well qualified for the task. His first epistle is a blessed and vital statement of things he knew from God and from life. Spokesman for all the apostles as well as the whole unnamed company designated 'the sons of God', he sets forth for all time, for God and for us, the things commonly recognised as the marks of the new birth.

Examining his epistle we find the phrase he most often uses is the simple, positive affirmation 'We know'; this expression is doubled unto us in one place and with the triumph of complete assurance it becomes uttermost conviction, 'We do know that we know.' Such knowledge is rest, unassailable and profound; it is language such as the blessed Trinity themselves could be expected to use; it is life beyond doubt; as it is in God, so it is in us. Indeed, we find this very thing written into the letter, 'Which thing is true in Him and in us.' Into such a state of life the new birth is designed immediately to bring us, and it is testified to and declared so plainly that only sheerest unbelief could possibly deny it.

Taking the simple words 'born of God', or 'of God' as our ground of unerring truth, we will gather from this letter what God says are the unchanging marks or indications of whether or not a man is His child. There are seven proof signs:

[1] ch. 2, vs. 29 -- He practises righteousness.

[2] ch. 3, vs. 9 -- He does not commit sin.

[3] ch. 4, vs. 2 -- He confesses that Jesus Christ is (now) come in flesh.

[4] ch. 4, vs. 4 -- He overcomes them (that are in the world) because greater is He that is in him than he that is in the world.

[5] ch. 4, vs. 7; ch. 5, vs. 1 -- He loves, and thereby proves that he loves God.

[6] ch. 5, vs. 4 -- He overcomes the world and the victory is his faith.

[7] ch. 5, vs. 18 -- He keeps himself and the devil does not touch him.

In these seven things the Spirit through John speaks most plainly and powerfully to our hearts concerning His eternal life. Moreover, the letter is specifically written to the sons of God whom He classifies thus: dear (little) children (2 :12), fathers (2 :13), young men (2 :13), young (little) children (2 : 13), brethren (2 : 7), beloved (4:1). The whole is written to them as God's sons, each one of them a dear child; some are young children, others are young men, while yet others are fathers -- but all are brethren and His beloved. Whilst all need to know everything their Father has to say, some need particular instruction directed specially to their individual state so that each may know His will and yet all together love and live.

The whole reason for new birth is that by it we all may live the life of God. Therefore, as long as we live our lives on this earth, we must expect the proof signs as listed to appear clearly in all that we are and say and do. This is why John, as He begins the letter, so emphatically draws our attention to the life: 'That which was from the beginning.' It is intriguingly startling how he couches his language so as to avoid a name -- that is, Jesus -- and to emphasise life, 'the life was manifested.' Of course it was Jesus the apostles saw and heard and looked upon and handled, but John says it was the 'Word of life', and it is the same in whomsoever it is found. That is the purpose for the writing of the book -- the insistence is on the life of God manifest in the flesh; whether in the Son or in the Sons it is identical, recognisable, unmistakable, provable. This was the amazing thing to those men who followed Jesus -- the state of being in which the Father and the Son eternally existed was manifested on the earth. God's life; eternal life; Life; just that, the Life. There is no other, nor can be. Other states of existence there are and shall be for ever, but these are not the Life. That Life was manifested on earth in order that we by a new miracle birth might have it; and when we have it, it is eternal; and having it we may with those for whom John writes, who first experienced it in succession to Jesus Christ, enter into the fellowship of the Father and the Son. It is utterly ludicrous to say we have eternal life if we do not live this life for it is the only one there is.

To John, God in trinity is a Fellowship, seeing, hearing and handling each other in perfect love, and this is Light. God is (the) Light, there is no darkness at all in Him. The motives of each member in the Fellowship are absolutely pure, therefore is God Holy. Each member of that Trinity is holy, and so all around Him is light. Because God is Light there is light, light to walk in and be -- and we have to walk in this light exactly as He is. As He is Light so must we be; then shall we consciously be in the true eternal Fellowship, with the Father and with His Son. Only as this is so shall we be able to walk in the light and have fellowship one with another also.

Fellowship can only exist in the family of the Father, and it can exist in no other than these three basic things: (1) being, (2) relationship, (3) progression. It is only therein that the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, continues its work of consistent cleansing which is one of the chief purposes for which it was shed. It was never conceived, nor intended, neither was it promised by God, that the blood of His Son should initially cleanse, and go on cleansing anybody who would not come to the Light, and in that light believe in the Light, and become a child of Light, and go on walking in the light; and neither does it, nor can it do, all-powerful though it is. Everyone who chooses to remain in the darkness of his own death-existence can never be forgiven or cleansed. But whosoever comes to Jesus, the Light, commences at that moment to move into the light and shall soon believe in and know the Light Himself whose grace forgives, and whose blood cleanses from all sin whatsoever.

Seeing then that it is into this Fellowship we are called as one family with the Father and the Son, it is most important that we be able openly to trace those seven signs of the eternal life of Jesus within us and about our lives and upon our works. We must be able fully and openly to confess Jesus Christ come in flesh. The perfect participle 'come' used here reveals a fullness of truth which often at first reading we easily miss, believing devoutly that it refers back to the incarnation only, whereas it means 'Jesus Christ having come and now coming in the flesh.' God is here telling our hearts that one of the major purposes of His Son's birth on earth whereby the Word was made flesh, was that He may also come into flesh today -- our flesh. This is what we are told so clearly in the Hebrews' letter; the writer says that Jesus partook of flesh and blood precisely because the children (of God) are partakers of it -- just for that reason. And if we are born of God the Spirit of God will make our spirit confess that Jesus Christ is come in(to) our flesh also. This being so, we see immediately why he that is born of God doth not commit sin. Why, with God's

seed abiding in him so that Jesus Christ is come in(to) his flesh, he cannot do that!

Mary, during the incarnation, only had God's seed within her for a few months, but we receive it to abide within us for ever. God's purpose in taking flesh from (or through) Mary was in order that He might exist on the earth distinct and apart from her; but in regeneration Jesus takes our flesh as His own, to dwell in it on the earth and be identified with us in it. How then can we go on to sin? A man does not go on sinning when he is born of God, for sinning is the devil's life and work, not God's. Satan has sinned unbrokenly from the beginning, and being our spiritual father by our first or natural birth, he continues to do exactly the same in every one born of man.

But Jesus is not a sinner, nor can be; He has not sinned from all eternity and will not do so in any one who is born of God, for the purpose of the new birth is that the life and works of Jesus should be reproduced in us. God intends that, as a result of this birth, the sin and sinfulness of Satan's usurpation of God's headship of the human race should be eliminated, and that men should be restored to a sonship above that from which Adam fell. For his sonship was in innocence, but ours is to be in righteousness and true holiness.

Therefore in us the Lord Jesus will do righteousness, the absolute opposite from sin; and we know that it is he that doeth righteousness who is righteous, and he alone. A man cannot live and do sin and be righteous at the same time. Since sin is neither the nature nor the habit of the Seed within, it cannot characterise the life of the person in whom that Seed is now come. Not that by this a man is rendered incapable of sinning, for if a man loses power to sin he also loses power to do anything else, with the result that he would become an automaton and salvation would be a farce.

On the contrary, it is that he now has power not to sin, or to sin not. Therefore, he does not go on sinning; he chooses not to, and being born of God he is no longer irresistibly forced to do so against his will. One of the most powerful elements of the new birth is its complete elimination of the compulsive power to sin from the heart of the 'born one'. The reconstituted heart has the law for/of righteousness written in it, and its genius and power lies in its irresistible drawings to holiness, so that a man may live free from sin whereas once he was its slave.

This is because the change of paternity has robbed the devil of his power to dominate the will, and sin cannot therefore be the habit of the new nature -- it can only occur as an accident', an irregularity in the life, and not recur inevitably according to law, as the norm of experience. The old law of sin and death has given way to the new law of righteousness and life, and so glorious is the enjoyment of the fellowship of God, and so great and many are the privileges of sonship, and so wondrous the holiness and purity of the new life, that to sin is unthinkable.

When the temptation to do so comes, as it surely does -- the suggestion made, the offer given, the allurements unavoidably there -- and the pressure is on, a man says, 'I cannot sin because I am born of God; I cannot do it.' That is how deeply the blood is cleansing him. He knows he must not and he is not bound to, and does not want to, and feels he cannot sin and grieve his Father. As a man born of God stands firm on this ground, fully believing the plainly written truth, refusing to give in to the strong urge and great pressure of the temptation, he will not sin but taste the sweets of the victory which overcometh the world.

Moreover, and greater still, he will soon joyfully discover that what appears still to be rising within him as latent sin is none other than a temptation skilfully disguised and subtly presented from without, and this is

one of the most blessed moments of his life. Sin, we are told, is a deceitful thing, but even more deceitful is the deceiver, the devil, who tries by all means to deceive the son of God into believing the lie. To realise that one is able to detect the subtlety of the serpent in the temptation is one of the sweetest of realisations, as is to know that God does not expect His people to sin.

But He is not unmindful that they may do so, and has graciously and logically made provision so that if they do there can be immediate forgiveness and cleansing and restoration to His life. But not the absence of sin -- nothing so negative -- but the presence and practice of righteousness is a more positive sign of new life from God, for this is the basic quality which marks it out as new and different.

The righteousness of God is that He acts consistently with His moral nature, and it can be no different with us. If a man acts out of character with his morality he is unmoral, unrighteous, not right but wrong. Because this is so in God it is an unbreakable law, a moral principle of first magnitude. So primal is it that John says, 'Little children, let no man deceive you, he that doeth righteousness is righteous even as He is righteous.' We know the difference between the children of God and the children of the devil not by whether or not a man believes in imputed or even imparted righteousness, but by whether or not a man practises, commits, does righteousness. If he does not, he is not of God, whatever his claims or beliefs may be.

Further, and because it is of great importance at this point, let us distinguish between good works and doing righteousness. There are so many works a man may do which are easily recognised as being good as opposed to evil, but it is utterly impossible to classify righteous works because they partake of moral and inward states, not seen by any eye but God's. Anyone may think he can see whether or not I love my brother by the works I do, but fail utterly in assessing the righteousness of those same acts simply because he cannot weigh my motives. In all his works a man must know his own heart before God.

The man that is born of God must be as God, and he will be so in all the normal everyday acts of his whole life, which will be consistent with the acts of God, that is, they will have the same moral quality and spiritual power about them. Of course, all the works that God does are infinitely and incomparably greater in power and scope and number than ours can ever be, even as He is incomparably greater than we are or ever shall be, but the righteousness is the same. Whether in the providential acts of every day to everyone without respect of persons, or in the special deeds of grace to the few -- as He is, so are we in this world. If a man 'does sin,' that is, practises it as the normal conduct of life, it is because he has a nature of, and disposition to, sin; similarly, if a man 'does righteousness,' that is, practises it as the normal conduct of life, it is because he has that nature and disposition. Apart from having this nature he cannot do it; he must act consistently with his nature or ultimately become a hypocrite.

Hypocrisy does not lie in trying to be what you are not, neither does it lie in an occasional failure to act according to what you are; it lies in deliberately deceiving people into believing you are what you are not. Unfortunately most of us at some time or another try to be what we are not. Not that by this we attempt to deceive people -- though at times we may deceive ourselves in the process. It usually only occurs as we see a higher goal and seek to attain unto it. Alas in Christian circles this is the result of ignorance of God's ways and/or wrong teaching resulting from such ignorance. But such action only becomes hypocrisy when, being recognised as wrong, it is persisted in with a view to masking an underlying condition of unrighteousness.

Still further and because of the foregoing, he that is of God will both overcome the world and also all the other antichrist spirits that are in it. These spirits are not necessarily demons, but human. Careful reading will substantiate the fact that these verses are not there primarily to be used as 'demon detectors' but were written for a higher purpose. They may have another use but their true function is to inform us of the sure ways of the Spirit of God in establishing the bona fides of His own children. Every spirit of man that cannot confess Jesus Christ come in flesh is an antichrist spirit. It is against Him and not of Him; without exception every un-born-again spirit is an antichrist spirit; it is of the world and of him that is in the world, says John. Anyone purporting to be, or who is thought to be a prophet, and yet is not able to make the great confession that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, is false. Here again let us pause to note the importance of this word confession. Actually it is a word rather more to do with morality than intellect, and must in this connection be consistent with the whole life. A man may talk about anything, but he can only confess what he knows. Knowledge in this sense largely comes to us from without by the means John mentions in the beginning of his letter, by seeing and hearing and handling. To this is added later another faculty, the unction or anointing by which we know all things, and John speaks so conclusively about this latter that we are bound to admit its infallibility. Given these abilities, correct conclusions leading to true confession can be made about all things. No-one and nothing is exempt.

As we have seen that every man not yet believing on Jesus Christ is an antichrist spirit, that is, he is against God's purpose(s) through Christ for him in this world, so must we also see that everyone who is born of God is a Christ-spirit. He is indwelt by Christ, and has already partially fulfilled God's ultimate purpose for him in this world, which is that he should grow and mature into the perfect image of Jesus Christ as time and opportunity allow.

Among those who are naturally children of Satan and not permanently indwelt by Jesus Christ, there are those who are specially indwelt for the devil by an evil spirit. Such are capable of substituting false claims for true confessions, but God is not deceived by them, and His children are not long in doubt either. Greater is He that is in us than he that is in them, and He has overcome them and laid the foundation for all to be overcomers who can make the great confession that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. He is the great and true Prophet and has overcome the false prophet, even Satan who deceived our first parents Adam and Eve in the garden, saying, 'Ye shall be as gods.' Now with full assurance we confess by the Spirit this true confession of the sons of God, and know that 'as He is so are we in this world'; we are not as gods, but as He. The true Prophet has overcome the false, the Seed in us has overcome the seed in them, 'We are of God little children.' Even the youngest babe of God has in him this victory that overcometh the world; this very thing is our faith that is born of God.

In almost heavenly conditions on earth in Eden long ago Satan, with prophetic power, lied a false confession into the heart and mind of mankind using God as his authority, 'God doth know . . . ye shall be as gods.' Now, in the near hell-like state of the world because of sin's maturing development on the earth under the curse of God, the true Prophet by His Spirit causes all God's sons to know and confess the only perfect God-like condition possible to man -- 'As He is.' This is the only true faith that is born of God. It overcometh the present evil state of the world at this stage of its history, as well as all spirits in it; and it enables the true life to be lived and the true confession to be made, and wonderful and thrilling indeed it is.

In commencing His ministry to Israel of old, Jesus came from Jordan to them by water only. John Baptist was specially prepared and sent by God with his watery baptism to call all men to him, that he might present Jesus by that same watery baptism to the nation. Jesus Himself came up out of the water to see the heavens open to Him, and to feel the dove alight upon Him, and to hear the voice announcing Him. He

had come to them by water as the people's Messiah. But at the conclusion of His life on the earth, whilst hanging on the cross in death and in response to the spear-thrust into His side, the water and the blood flowed out that by these He might come to us by the Spirit. Miracle of miracles, victory of victories -- by and with this He comes to us that we all may be God's true sons.

Moreover, we know that he that is born of God keepeth himself and that wicked devil toucheth him not. The child of God, not now bound to commit sin nor even to fall into it, keepeth himself from it, and consequently the devil cannot touch him. Not that he would not like to; he would, but he cannot. Not that he does not attempt to; he does, but he cannot touch him. Not that he does not tempt him; he does but he cannot touch him. All the while a man keeps himself from sin the devil is powerless to touch him. The devil does not want us to believe that, but God does. Satan wants us to believe that he is almighty, but he is not -- God is! It is important for us to know that Satan cannot have any more power over and in our lives than what we allow him by believing in him. Satan must not be believed in but believed about. That is, a man must believe about him but not believe in him -- he must believe in Christ.

A man may always keep himself from the wicked one. Even at the worst times, when the greatest weights are upon him and he feels least like it, he can still preserve his total purity. The Lord Jesus is the prime example of this. Just before He left the guest chamber with His disciples for the garden of Gethsemane the Lord said, 'The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me.' He knew the devil was coming but He also knew he could not touch Him because He had no sin in Him. Not even when He bore our sins in His own body on the tree and was made sin for us, could the devil touch Him. It was God who made Him to be sin for us -- to do so was beyond the devil's power. Even in His great extremity, resisting unto blood and striving against the sin He was bearing, He kept His spirit so pure that He could send it winging home to His Father as spotless, and clear, and perfect and free from sin as in the beginning, so that His Father may in turn give it to all the sons He should afterwards beget. The devil could not touch Him, He had kept Himself. The wicked one had attacked Him, hurt Him, tortured Him, crucified Him, but he had not touched Him. As with Him, so with us. Tempted, attacked, hurt, maligned, brutalised, anything, everything except sin, and the devil cannot touch us. Hallelujah! While we sin not but walk in the light in the Fellowship of the Three who are Light, with all those who are the children of light, we are untouchable. Nor shall we need the many panaceas or theories being proffered these days on every hand as 'guaranteed' ways to defeat the devil. The victory God gives us is the victory over the devil, and if we keep ourselves as God instructs and intends us to keep ourselves, we are safe.

A man is indeed happy if all these marks of the new life are in him, but he cannot afford to rest even in such a state, for beyond all this the best is yet to be made known to him. 'Every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God.' Deliverance from sin and darkness and the world and the devil and all else of evil would be in vain if a man could not or did not love. God's purpose has achieved its ultimate in us when He has made us lovers as He is a Lover, for His love must be perfected in us. Because He loves us, God sees and hears and handles us into the place and condition where we can see and hear and handle Him in spirit. Indeed, this is the fellowship into which we are invited and exhorted by the apostle John and the Holy Ghost -- the real and stated reason why the epistle was written. John, speaking for an unspecified group, states the means of the fellowship he and they enjoyed with that Life, and openly invites us into it that our joy may be full. And oh, how full it can be as we enter into and abide in this love, this fellowship with the Father and the Son, by this means of communion and communication.

To be in love is the greatest, simplest and most normal condition of life as it is in God; and the promise commanded into us to be the substance and law for life is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all .....' --

and this we do. But God wants us to understand that included in loving Him is the command to love one another also, and this is in order that we should by the latter prove the former. Nothing is genuine apart from this. It is quite impossible to love God unless we love one another also; likewise it is impossible to love God and no-one else. We must love Him exclusively as God and worship Him as no other, but doing that we must also love the brethren inclusively -- though as individuals -- 'one another' is the command, not 'en masse'. In response to His first love He must have our first love, and the brethren must have our first quality love. To Him it is quality plus degree, to others it is the same quality but with less degree.

God says we are to dwell, live all the time, in love; that is, we are to be in love with one another all the time, and this is to be shown along unmistakable and well defined lines immediately recognised by all. Perhaps the greatest discovery a man ever makes is that God loves him individually, and then from that knowledge graduates to know that God is Love. The phrase 'God is love' occurs twice in this epistle. The first time it is a statement of fact -- information given us by the Holy Ghost -- albeit through a man who has lived to prove it. The second time it is the confession of one who as a result, and in the ways set forth in the intervening verses, has discovered it for himself and confesses that God is love. We are virtually told we cannot be God's children if we do not know this. We must see and testify and know and believe the love God has to us. It is a wonderful thing when 'God is love' is a testimony upon a man's lips, the confession of a discovery and not the repetition of an inspired quotation.

John was not just quoting it; he had never heard anyone say it. In the whole of the Hebrew scriptures with which he was familiar, it was never found upon anyone's lips. Even upon the memorable occasion in the guest chamber when he, together with the other apostles, had been Jesus' guest, it had come to him rather differently -- 'I have loved you.' Their Lord and Master had invited them to this last supper, and it was a love feast if ever there was one, for Jesus' heart was brimming over with endless love to them -- they could feel it, and John's heart just craved to become one with it. But there was no-one there equal to the love in Jesus' heart. He wanted to wash their feet in preparation for the meal and journey ahead, but there was no slave of God's love there with Him to do it so He got down and washed their feet Himself. They were absolutely bewildered; humbled and chastened. The unspeakable honour He did them utterly confused them, but it was by such things that John made both the greatest discovery and the great confession. It had always been like that since he had first seen, and then met and followed and heard this Man. John found God's love in a man. At the time he did not know He was the God-Man, but he knew this Man loved him, aye, and loved him in deed and in truth. Jesus never told him He loved him, yet John just knew He did, and he loved to think of himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved -- not more than anyone else, only as much as everyone else of course -- but he knew Jesus to be Love. Jesus loves in deed -- not just one or two deeds, not an isolated act, or gesture, or occasional look, for that would not have been in truth; Jesus loved him in life, all of it.

The truth of a thing is the consistency of it; that alone gives substance to honesty and correctness, making them reality. This Man was the same all through, all the time -- love in deed and in truth. It was the Light He was that first attracted John, but it was the Love he discovered Him to be that held him. Light drew him, love held him -- held him so tightly and so closely that he lay on His breast feeling it was heaven, until one morning he received the Holy Ghost in the dawn of a new day, and the love of God was shed abroad in his own heart, and he became all one with that love and knew God within himself as all Love.

In the end a man must become love; in himself he must be love as God is Love. He cannot know God is Love until he himself is love; he can hear it, believe it, calculate it from scripture or because he has partaken of it in some providential or special manner, and all these are essential prerequisites unto the

end in view, but he must be love as God is Love ere he can know God's state of love and confess it. This is but the beginning of a life which in development is love perfected in him, so that fellow men may know it by the power of apprehension placed within them for this very thing, viz., seeing, hearing, handling. It is of no use expecting a man to believe he is loved just because he is told so. God did not expect it. He did not merely announce His love from heaven. He did not invent and send a wireless or television set, or a printing press; He sent His Son to see and hear and handle people, and that man may see and hear and handle Him and know what eternal life really is. As it was with the Father, so it was among men -- and this because He loved us so -- and thus it must be with us also.

John says, 'We know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren.' Lovelessness is death, the state of complete inability; and the thing over which God grieves most is not a man's inability to walk or work or to do His will, but his utter inability to love. God lives the eternal life of love, and reading John's words it could almost be that we are overhearing the conversation of the blessed Father, Son and Holy Ghost in fellowship saying, 'Beloved, let us love one another for love is.' Perfect love uses words but needs none; its language is attitudes, disposition, deeds, looks, deportment, patience, long-suffering, compassion, tenderness, and all the host of other indescribable and unnameable virtues, great and small, that support its claim or express its fullness. These each appear singly or in needful combination momentarily as an opportunity arises or a situation requires, and then disappear from recognition to lose themselves again in the whole virtuous nature of which they are but a part. Of itself each has no glory save as an expression of all, gathering up and focussing for a while the beauty of the whole, and then subsiding to blend into the composite glory that must shine out eternally as, and in, and through each with equal power as it is in turn revealed.

Seldom, if at all, do we hear of one of the precious Three directly telling the other He loved Him, or Them. Father and Son each wanted the other to know they were conscious of the other's love and that they loved each other, but they never descended to romantic or sentimental expressions; to them it was the deep, abiding, eternal security of Life. It is surely one of the most wonderful facts of scripture that it shows most clearly that only from human lips did Jesus seek to extract the confession of love: 'Lovest thou Me?'

As He is

These then are some of the basic proofs of a man's sonship with Jesus. They are not set forth as an end in view, or as a mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, but as simple 'first principles' of divine life to be found in any man who calls himself a son of God. If any man sins, or at any time acts unrighteously, or fails at some point to overcome the world, or finds himself not loving his brother as he should, or in some way or measure ceases to be light as and in the fellowship of Light, he does not automatically thereby lose his sonship. The true son, however, will speedily repent of and rectify the condition, and then restoration to all the former divine favours and fellowship will be surely granted by his Father. But let a man believe and abide and walk in the truth as here set, forth and he need never sin, nor fall short, nor stumble in the way. God has generated him with and into the generation of Jesus Christ, and it is not a generation in or unto sin but in and unto righteousness and love, so that we may say with confidence, 'As He is so are we in this world.'

The veriest babe in God's family must know this. He may not know the scriptural statements about it, having yet to learn them; but he must know it within himself, even though he cannot analyse it. That is why God has given to us of His own Spirit, because it is by the Spirit that we know. This knowledge is inward certainty of truth, not intellectual grasp of fact. All God's children have it without exception, for this

constitutes part of the new spiritual life, of being as He is. God's children may never be nor can be who He is, but all must be as He is. Every human babe is as much a human being as the parents who begot the child. So we by divine promise and workmanship are made partakers of the divine nature. This was perfectly outworked in the birth of Jesus Christ -- He was born of the divine promise. So are we -- 'Repent and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost for the promise is unto you and as many as the Lord our God shall call.' So they on the day of Pentecost were, and so now may we be made partakers of the new divine nature.

Having thus been born of God, and finding this same nature within us, we now belong to the generation of Jesus Christ. Being now made sons by regeneration, we must in all things also be made like unto the Son. This must be our sole reason for living, for no lesser reason is acceptable to our Father. The Holy Ghost, Who has come forth from the Father through the Son, is under command to accomplish this very thing. His work is to glorify Jesus by reproducing His nature and personality in each of God's other sons. Jesus Christ is the Seed accepted for a generation, and each one of that generation is demonstrably of Him -- clearly and firmly, marked out of God as belonging to the generation of Jesus Christ.

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