

~Other Speakers G-L: William Law:

Discovering the true Way of turning to God, and of finding the Kingdom of Heaven,
the Riches of Eternity in our Souls

[Pryr-1.2-1] Thou hast seen, dear Reader, the Nature and Necessity of Regeneration, be persuaded therefore fully to believe, and firmly to settle in thy Mind this most certain Truth, that all our Salvation consists in the Manifestation of the Nature, Life, and Spirit of Jesus Christ, in our inward new Man. This alone is Christian Redemption, this alone delivers from the Guilt and Power of Sin, this alone redeems, renews, and regains the first Life of God in the Soul of Man. Every Thing besides this, is Self, is Fiction, is Propriety, is own Will, and however coloured, is only thy old Man, with all his Deeds. Enter therefore with all thy Heart into this Truth, let thy Eye be always upon it, do every Thing in View of it, try every Thing by the Truth of it, love Nothing but for the Sake of it. Wherever thou goest, whatever thou dost, at Home, or Abroad, in the Field, or at Church, do all in a Desire of Union with Christ, in Imitation of his Tempers and Inclinations, and look upon all as Nothing, but that which exercises, and increases the Spirit and Life of Christ in thy Soul. From Morning to Night keep Jesus in thy Heart, long for Nothing, desire Nothing, hope for Nothing, but to have all this within Thee changed into the Spirit and Temper of the Holy Jesus. Let this be thy Christianity, thy Church, and thy Religion. For this new Birth in Christ thus firmly believed, and continually desired, will do every Thing that thou wantest to have done in Thee, it will dry up all the Springs of Vice, stop all the Workings of Evil in thy Nature, it will bring all that is Good into Thee, it will open all the Gospel within Thee, and thou wilt know what it is to be taught of God. This longing Desire of thy Heart to be one with Christ will soon put a stop to all the Vanity of thy Life, and nothing will be admitted to enter into thy Heart, or proceed from it, but what comes from God and returns to God: thou wilt soon be, as it were, tied and bound in the Chains of all holy Affections and Desires, thy Mouth will have a Watch set upon it, thy Ears would willingly hear nothing that does not tend to God, nor thy Eyes be open, but to see, and find Occasions of doing Good. In a Word, when this Faith has got both thy Head and thy Heart, it will then be with thee, as it was with the Merchant who found a Pearl of great Price, it will make thee gladly to sell all that thou hast, and buy it. For all that had seized and possessed the Heart of any Man, whatever the Merchant of this World had got together, whether of Riches, Power, Honour, Learning, or Reputation, loses all its Value, is counted but as Dung, and willingly parted with, as soon as this glorious Pearl, the new Birth in Christ Jesus, is discovered and found by him. This therefore may serve as a Touchstone, whereby every one may try the Truth of his State; if the old Man is still a Merchant within thee, trading in all sorts of worldly Honour, Power, or Learning, if the Wisdom of this World is not Foolishness to thee, if earthly Interests, and sensual Pleasures, are still the Desire of thy Heart, and only covered under a Form of Godliness, a Cloak of Creeds, Observances, and Institutions of Religion, thou mayest be assured, that the Pearl of great Price is not yet found by thee. For where Christ is born, or his Spirit rises up in the Soul, there all Self is denied, and obliged to turn out; there all carnal Wisdom, Arts of Advancement, with every Pride and Glory of this Life, are as so many heathen Idols all willingly renounced, and the Man is not only content, but rejoices to say, that his Kingdom is not of this World.

[Pryr-1.2-2] But thou wilt perhaps say, How shall this great Work, the Birth of Christ, be effected in me? It might rather be said, since Christ has an infinite Power, and also an infinite Desire to save Mankind, how can anyone miss of this Salvation, but through his own unwillingness to be saved by Him? Consider, how was it, that the Lame and Blind, the Lunatic and Leper, the Publican and Sinner, found Christ to be their Saviour, and to do all That for them, which they wanted to be done to them? It was because they had a real Desire of having That which they asked for, and therefore in true Faith and Prayer applied to Christ, that his Spirit and Power might enter into them, and heal That which they wanted, and desired to be healed in them. Everyone of these said in Faith and Desire, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole." And the Answer was always this, "According to thy Faith, so be it done unto Thee." This is Christ's Answer now, and thus it is done to every one of us at this Day, as our Faith is, so is it done unto us. And here lies the whole Reason of our falling short of the Salvation of Christ, it is because we have No Will to it.

[Pryr-1.2-3] But you will say, Do not all Christians desire to have Christ to be their Saviour? Yes. But here is the Deceit; all would have Christ to be their Saviour in the next World, and to help them into Heaven when they die, by his Power, and Merits with God. But this is not willing Christ to be thy Saviour; for his Salvation, if it is had, must be had in this World; if He saves Thee, it must be done in this Life, by changing and altering all that is within Thee, by helping thee to a new Heart, as He helped the Blind to see, the Lame to walk, and the Dumb to speak. For to have Salvation from Christ, is nothing else but to be made like unto Him; it is to have his Humility and Meekness, his Mortification and Self-denial, his Renunciation of the Spirit, Wisdom, and Honours of this World, his Love of God, his Desire of doing God's Will, and seeking only his Honour. To have these Tempers formed and begotten in thy Heart, is to have Salvation from Christ. But if thou wilt not to have these Tempers brought forth in thee, if thy Faith and Desire does not seek, and cry to Christ for them in the same Reality, as

the Lame asked to walk, and the Blind to see, then thou must be said to be unwilling to have Christ to be thy Saviour.

[Pryr-1.2-4] Again, Consider, How was it, that the carnal Jew, the deep-read Scribe, the learned Rabbi, the Religious Pharisee, not only did not receive, but crucified their Saviour? It was because they willed, and desired no such Saviour as He was, no such inward Salvation as He offered to them. They desired no Change of their own Nature, no inward Destruction of their own natural Tempers, no Deliverance from the Love of themselves, and the Enjoyments of their Passions; they liked their State, the Gratifications of their Old Man, their long Robes, their broad Phylacteries, and Greetings in the Markets. They wanted not to have their Pride and Self-love dethroned, their Covetousness and Sensuality to be subdued by a new Nature from Heaven derived into them. Their only Desire was the Success of Judaism, to have an outward Saviour, a temporal Prince, that should establish their Law and Ceremonies over all the Earth. And therefore they crucified their Dear Redeemer, and would have none of his Salvation, because it all consisted in a Change of their Nature, in a new Birth from above, and a Kingdom of Heaven to be opened within them by the Spirit of God.

[Pryr-1.2-5] Oh Christendom, look not only at the old Jews, but see thyself in this Glass. For at this Day (Oh sad Truth to be told!) at this Day, a Christ within us, an inward Saviour raising a Birth of his own Nature, Life and Spirit within us, is rejected as gross Enthusiasm, the learned Rabbi's take Counsel against it. The Propagation of Popery, the Propagation of Protestantism, the Success of some particular Church, is the Salvation which Priests and People are chiefly concerned about.

[Pryr-1.2-6] But to return. It is manifest, that no one can fail of the Benefit of Christ's Salvation, but through an unwillingness to have it, and from the same Spirit and Tempers which made the Jews unwilling to receive it. But if thou wouldst still further know, how this great Work, the Birth of Christ, is to be effected in thee, then let this joyful Truth be told thee, that this great Work is already begun in every one of us. For this Holy Jesus, that is to be formed in thee, that is to be the Saviour and new Life of thy Soul, that is to raise thee out of the Darkness of Death into the Light of Life, and give thee Power to become a Son of God, is already within thee, living, stirring, calling, knocking at the Door of thy Heart, and wanting nothing but thy own Faith and good Will, to have as real a Birth and Form in thee, as He had in the Virgin Mary. For the eternal Word, or Son of God, did not then first begin to be the Saviour of the World, when He was Born in Bethlehem of Judea; but that Word which became Man in the Virgin Mary, did, from the Beginning of the World, enter as a Word of Life, a Seed of Salvation, into the first Father of Mankind, was inspoken into him, as an ingrafted Word, under the Name and Character of a Bruiser of the Serpent's Head. Hence it is, that Christ said to his Disciples, "the Kingdom of God is within you"; that is, the Divine Nature is within you, given unto your first Father, into the Light of his Life, and from him, rising up in the Life of every Son of Adam. Hence also the holy Jesus is said to be the "Light, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World." Not as He was born at Bethlehem, not as He had an human Form upon Earth; in these Respects he could not be said to have been the Light of every Man that cometh into the World; but as He was that eternal Word, by which all Things were created, which was the Life and Light of all Things, and which had as a second Creator entered again into fallen Man, as a Bruiser of the Serpent; in this Respect it was truly said of our Lord, when on Earth, that "He was that Light which lighteth every Man, that cometh into the World." For he was really and truly all this, as He was the Immanuel, the God with us, given unto Adam, and in him to all his Offspring. See here the Beginning and glorious Extent of the Catholic Church of Christ, it takes in all the World. It is God's unlimited, universal Mercy to all Mankind; and every human Creature, as sure as he is born of Adam, has a Birth of the Bruiser of the Serpent within him, and so is infallibly in Covenant with God through Jesus Christ. Hence also it is, that the Holy Jesus is appointed to be Judge of all the World, it is because all Mankind, all Nations and Languages have in him, and through him been put into Covenant with God, and made capable of resisting the Evil of their fallen Nature.

[Pryr-1.2-7] When our blessed Lord conversed with the Woman at Jacob's Well, he said unto her, "If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that talketh with thee, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given Thee living Water." How happy (may anyone well say) was this Woman of Samaria, to stand so near this Gift of God, from whom she might have had living Water, had she but vouchsafed to have asked for it! But, dear Christian, this Happiness is thine; for this Holy Jesus, the Gift of God, first given into Adam, and in him to all that are descended from him, is the Gift of God to Thee, as sure as thou art born of Adam; nay, hast thou never yet owned him, art thou wandered from him, as far as the Prodigal Son from his Father's House, yet is he still with Thee, he is the Gift of God to Thee, and if thou wilt turn to Him, and ask of Him, he has living Water for Thee.

[Pryr-1.2-8] Poor Sinner! consider the Treasure thou hast within Thee, the Saviour of the World, the eternal Word of God lies hid in Thee, as a Spark of the Divine Nature, which is to overcome Sin and Death, and Hell within Thee, and generate the Life of Heaven again in thy Soul. Turn to thy Heart, and thy Heart will find its

Saviour, its God within itself. Thou seest, hearest, and feelest nothing of God, because thou seekest for Him abroad with thy outward Eyes, thou seekest for Him in Books, in Controversies, in the Church, and outward Exercises, but there thou wilt not find him, till thou hast first found Him in thy Heart. Seek for Him in thy Heart, and thou wilt never seek in vain, for there He dwelleth, there is the Seat of his Light and Holy Spirit.

[Pryr-1.2-9] For this turning to the Light and Spirit of God within Thee, is thy only true turning unto God, there is no other Way of finding Him, but in that Place where he dwelleth in Thee. For though God be everywhere present, yet He is only present to Thee in the deepest, and most central Part of thy Soul. Thy natural Senses cannot possess God, or unite Thee to Him, nay thy inward Faculties of Understanding, Will, and Memory, can only reach after God, but cannot be the Place of his Habitation in Thee. But there is a Root, or Depth in Thee, from whence all these Faculties come forth, as Lines from a Centre, or as Branches from the Body of the Tree. This Depth is called the Centre, the Fund or Bottom of the Soul. This Depth is the Unity, the Eternity, I had almost said, the Infinity of thy Soul; for it is so infinite, that nothing can satisfy it, or give it any Rest, but the infinity of God. In this Depth of the Soul, the Holy Trinity brought forth its own living Image in the first created Man, bearing in Himself a living Representation of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and this was his Dwelling in God and God in him. This was the Kingdom of God within Him, and made Paradise without Him. But the Day that Adam did eat of the forbidden earthly Tree, in that Day he absolutely died to this Kingdom of God within Him. This Depth or Centre of his Soul having lost its God, was shut up in Death and Darkness, and became a Prisoner in an earthly Animal, that only excelled its Brethren, the Beasts, in an upright Form, and serpentine Subtlety. Thus ended the Fall of Man. But from that Moment that the God of Mercy inspoke into Adam the Bruiser of the Serpent, from that Moment all the Riches and Treasures of the Divine Nature came again into Man, as a Seed of Salvation sown into the Centre of the Soul, and only lies hidden there in every Man, till he desires to rise from his fallen State, and to be born again from above.

[Pryr-1.2-10] Awake then, thou that Sleepest, and Christ, who from all Eternity has been espoused to thy Soul, shall give Thee Light. Begin to search and dig in thine own Field for this Pearl of Eternity, that lieth hidden in it; it cannot cost Thee too much, nor canst thou buy it too dear, for it is All, and when thou has found it, thou wilt know, that all which thou hast sold or given away for it, is as mere a Nothing, as a Bubble upon the Water.

[Pryr-1.2-11] But if thou turnest from this heavenly Pearl, or tramplest it under thy Feet, for the sake of being Rich, or Great, either in Church or State, if Death finds Thee in this Success, thou canst not then say, that though the Pearl is lost, yet something has been gained instead of it. For in that parting Moment, the Things, and the Sounds of this World, will be exactly alike; to have had an Estate, or only to have heard of it, to have lived at Lambeth twenty Years, or only have twenty Times passed by the Palace, will be the same Good, or the same Nothing to Thee.

[Pryr-1.2-12] But I will now show a little more distinctly, what this Pearl of Eternity is. First, it is the Light and Spirit of God within Thee, which has hitherto done Thee but little Good, because all the Desire of thy Heart has been after the Light and Spirit of this World. Thy Reason, and Senses, thy Heart and Passions, have turned all their Attention to the poor Concerns of this Life, and therefore thou art a Stranger to this Principle of Heaven, this Riches of Eternity within Thee. For as God is not, cannot be truly found by any Worshipers, but those who worship Him in Spirit and in Truth, so this Light and Spirit, though always within us, is not, cannot be found, felt, or enjoyed, but by those whose whole Spirit is turned to it.

[Pryr-1.2-13] When Man first came into Being, and stood before God as his own Image and Likeness, this Light and Spirit of God was as natural to him, as truly the Light of his Nature, as the Light and Air of this World is natural to the Creatures that have their Birth in it. But when Man, not content with the Food of Eternity, did eat of the earthly Tree, this Light and Spirit of Heaven was no more natural to him, no more rose up as a Birth of his Nature, but instead thereof, he was left solely to the Light and Spirit of this World. And this is that Death, which God told Adam, he should surely die, in the Day that he should eat of the forbidden Tree.

[Pryr-1.2-14] But the Goodness of God would not leave Man in this Condition. A Redemption from it was immediately granted, and the Bruiser of the Serpent brought the Light and Spirit of Heaven once more into the human Nature, not as it was in its first State, when Man was in Paradise, but as a Treasure hidden in the Centre of our Souls, which should discover, and open itself by Degrees, in such Proportion, as the Faith and Desires of our Hearts were turned to it. This Light and Spirit of God thus freely restored again to the Soul, and lying in it as a secret Source of Heaven, is called Grace, Free Grace, or the Supernatural Gift, or Power of God in the Soul, because it was something that the Natural Powers of the Soul could no more obtain. Hence it is, that in the greatest Truth, and highest Reality, every stirring of the Soul, every Tendency of the Heart towards God and Goodness, is justly and necessarily ascribed to the Holy Spirit, or the Grace of God. It is because this first Seed of Life, which is sown into the Soul, as the Gift or Grace of God to fallen Man, is itself the Light and Spirit of

God, and therefore every Stirring, or Opening of this Seed of Life, every awakened Thought or Desire that arises from it, must be called the Moving, or the Quickening of the Spirit of God; and therefore that new Man which arises from it, must of all Necessity be said to be solely the Work and Operation of God. Hence also we have an easy and plain Declaration of the true Meaning, solid Sense, and certain Truth, of all those Scriptures, which speak of the Inspiration of God, the Operation of the Holy Spirit, the Power of the Divine Light, as the sole and necessary Agents in the Renewal and Sanctification of our Souls, and also as being Things common to all Men. It is because this Seed of Life, or Bruiser of the Serpent, is common to all Men, and has in all Men a Degree of Life, which is in itself so much of the Inspiration, or Life of God, the Spirit of God, the Light of God, which is in every Soul, and is its Power of becoming born again of God. Hence also it is, that all Men are exhorted not to quench, or resist, or grieve the Spirit, that is, this Seed of the Spirit and Light of God that is in all Men, as the only Source of Good. Again, the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh. By the Flesh and its Lustings, are meant the mere human Nature, or the natural Man, as He is by the Fall; by the Spirit is meant the Bruiser of the Serpent, that Seed of the Light and Spirit of God, which lieth as a Treasure hid in the Soul, in order to bring forth the Life that was lost in Adam. Now as the Flesh has its Life, its Lustings, whence all sorts of Evil are truly said to be inspired, quickened, and stirred up in us, so the Spirit being a Living principle within us, has its Inspiration, its Breathing, its Moving, its Quickening, from which alone the Divine Life, or the Angel that died in Adam, can be born in us.

[Pyr-1.2-15] When this Seed of the Spirit, common to all Men, is not resisted, grieved, and quenched, but its Inspirations and Motions suffered to grow and increase in us, to unite with God, and get Power over all the Lusts of the Flesh, then we are born again, the Nature, Spirit, and Tempers of Jesus Christ are opened in our Souls, the Kingdom of God is come, and is found within us. On the other Hand, when the Flesh, or the Natural Man has resisted and quenched this Spirit or Seed of Life within us, then the works of the Flesh, Adultery, Fornication, Murders, Lying, Hatred, Envy, Wrath, Pride, Foolishness, worldly Wisdom, carnal Prudence, false Religion, hypocritical Holiness, and serpentine Subtlety, have set up their Kingdom within us.

[Pyr-1.2-16] See here in short, the State of Man as redeemed. He has a Spark of the Light and Spirit of God, as a Supernatural Gift of God given into the Birth of his Soul, to bring forth by Degrees a New Birth of that Life which was Lost in Paradise. This Holy Spark of the Divine Nature within Him, has a natural, strong and almost infinite Tendency, or Reaching after that eternal Light and Spirit of God, from whence it came forth. It came forth from God, it came out of God, it partaketh of the Divine Nature, and therefore it is always in a State of Tendency and Return to God. And all this is called the Breathing, the Moving, the Quickening of the Holy Spirit within us, which are so many Operations of this Spark of Life tending towards God. On the other Hand, The Deity as considered in itself, and without the Soul of Man, has an infinite, unchangeable Tendency of Love, and Desire towards the Soul of Man, to unite and communicate its own Riches and Glories to it, just as the Spirit of the Air without Man, unites and communicates its Riches and Virtues to the Spirit of the Air that is within Man. This Love, or Desire of God towards the Soul of Man, is so great, that He gave his only begotten Son, the Brightness of his Glory, to take the human Nature upon him, in its fallen State, that by this mysterious Union of God and Man, all the Enemies of the Soul of Man might be overcome, and every human Creature might have a Power of being born again according to that Image of God, in which he was first created. The Gospel is the History of this Love of God to Man. Inwardly he has a Seed of the Divine Life given into the Birth of his Soul, a Seed that has all the Riches of Eternity in it, and is always wanting to come to the Birth in him, and be alive in God. Outwardly he has Jesus Christ, who as a Sun of Righteousness, is always casting forth his enlivening Beams on this inward Seed, to kindle and call it forth to the Birth, doing that to this Seed of Heaven in Man, which the Sun in the Firmament is always doing to the vegetable Seeds in the Earth.

[Pyr-1.2-17] Consider this Matter in the following Similitude. A Grain of Wheat has the Air and Light of this World enclosed, or incorporated in it: This is the Mystery of its Life, this is its Power of Growing, by this it has a strong continual Tendency of uniting again with that Ocean of Light and Air, from whence it came forth, and so it helps to kindle its own Vegetable Life.

[Pyr-1.2-18] On the other Hand, That great Ocean of Light and Air, having its own Offspring hidden in the Heart of the Grain, has a perpetual strong Tendency to unite, and communicate with it again. From this Desire of Union on both Sides, the Vegetable Life arises, and all the Virtues and Powers contained in it.

[Pyr-1.2-19] But here let it be well observed, that this Desire on both Sides cannot have its Effect, till the Husk and gross Part of the Grain falls into a State of Corruption and Death, till this begins, the Mystery of Life hidden in it, cannot come forth. The Application here may be left to the Reader. I shall only observe, that we may here see the true Ground, and absolute Necessity, of that dying to ourselves, and to the World, to which our Blessed Lord so constantly calls all his Followers. An universal Self-Denial, a perpetual Mortification of the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not a Thing imposed upon us by the mere Will of God, is not

required as a Punishment, is not an Invention of dull and monkish Spirits, but has its Ground and Reason in the Nature of the Thing, and is absolutely necessary to make Way for the New Birth, as the Death of the Husk and gross Part of the Grain, is necessary to make Way for its vegetable Life.

[Pryr-1.2-20] But Secondly, this Pearl of Eternity is the Wisdom and Love of God within Thee. In this Pearl of thy Serpent Bruiser, all the Holy Nature, Spirit, Tempers, and Inclinations of Christ, lie as in a Seed in the Centre of thy Soul, and Divine Wisdom and heavenly Love will grow up in Thee, if thou givest but true Attention to God present in thy Soul. On the other Hand, There is hidden also in the Depth of thy Nature the Root, or Possibility of all the hellish Nature, Spirit, and Tempers of the fallen Angels. For Heaven and Hell have each of them their Foundation within us, they come not into us from without, but spring up in us, according as our Will and Heart is turned either to the Light of God, or the Kingdom of Darkness. But when this Life, which is in the midst of these two Eternities, is at an End, either an Angel, or a Devil will be found to have a Birth in us.

[Pryr-1.2-21] Thou needest not therefore run here, or there, saying, Where is Christ? Thou needest not say, Who shall ascend into Heaven, that is, to bring down Christ from above? Or who shall descend into the Deep, to bring Christ from the Dead? For behold the Word, which is the Wisdom of God, is in thy Heart, it is there as a Bruiser of thy Serpent, as a Light unto thy Feet and Lanthorn unto thy Paths. It is there as an Holy Oil, to soften and overcome the wrathful fiery Properties of thy Nature, and change them into the humble Meekness of Light and Love. It is there as a speaking Word of God in thy Soul; and as soon as thou art ready to hear, this eternal speaking Word will speak Wisdom and Love in thy inward Parts, and bring forth the Birth of Christ, with all his Holy Nature, Spirit, and Tempers, within Thee. Hence it was (that is, from this Principle of Heaven, or Christ in the Soul) hence I say it was, that so many eminent Spirits, Partakers of a Divine Life, have appeared in so many Parts of the heathen World; glorious Names, Sons of Wisdom, that shone, as Lights hung out by God, in the midst of idolatrous Darkness. These were the Apostles of a Christ within, that were awakened and commissioned by the inward Bruiser of the Serpent, to call Mankind from the blind Pursuits of Flesh and Blood, to know themselves, the Dignity of their Nature, the Immortality of their Souls, and the Necessity of Virtue to avoid eternal Shame and Misery. These Apostles, though they had not the Law, or written Gospel to urge upon their Hearers, yet having turned to God, they found, and preached the Gospel, that was written in their Hearts. Hence one of them could say this divine Truth, viz., That such only are Priests and Prophets, who have God in themselves. Hence also it is, that in the Christian Church, there have been in all Ages, amongst the most illiterate, both Men and Women, who have attained to a deep Understanding of the Mysteries of the Wisdom and Love of God in Christ Jesus. And what wonder? Since it is not Art or Science, or Skill in Grammar or Logic, but the Opening of Divine Life in the Soul, that can give true Understanding of the Things of God. This Life of God in the Soul, which for its Smallness at first, and Capacity for great Growth, is by our Lord compared to a Grain of Mustard Seed, may be, and too generally is suppressed and kept under, either by worldly Cares, or Pleasures, by vain Learning, Sensuality, or Ambition. And all this while, whatever Church, or Profession any Man is of, he is a mere Natural Man, unregenerate, unenlightened by the Spirit of God, because this Seed of Heaven is choked, and not suffered to grow up in him. And therefore his Religion is no more from Heaven than his fine Breeding; his Cares have no more Goodness in them than his Pleasures; his Love is worth no more than his Hatred; his Zeal for this, or against that Form of Religion, has only the Nature of any other worldly Contention in it. And thus it is, and must be with every mere natural Man, whatever Appearances he may put on, he may, if he pleases, know himself to be the Slave, and Machine of his own corrupt Tempers and Inclinations, to be enlightened, inspired, quickened and animated by Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking, which is the only Life, and Spirit of the mere natural Man, whether he be Heathen, Jew, or Christian.

[Pryr-1.2-22] On the other Hand, wherever this Seed of Heaven is suffered to take Root, to get Life and Breath in the Soul, whether it be in Man, or Woman, young or old, there this new born inward Man is justly said to be inspired, enlightened, and moved by the Spirit of God, because his whole Birth and Life is a Birth from above, of the Light and Spirit of God; and therefore all that is in him, has the Nature, Spirit, and Tempers of Heaven in it. As this regenerate Life grows up in any Man, so there grows up a true and real Knowledge of the whole Mystery of Godliness in himself. All that the Gospel teaches of Sin and Grace, of Life and Death, of Heaven and Hell, of the New and Old Man, of the Light and Spirit of God, are Things not got by Hearsay, but inwardly known, felt and experienced in the Growth of his own new born Life. He has then an Unction from above which teaches him all Things, a Spirit that knoweth what it ought to pray for, a Spirit that prays without ceasing, that is risen with Christ from the Dead, and has all its Conversation in Heaven, a Spirit that hath Groans and Sighs that cannot be uttered, that travaileth and groaneth with the whole Creation, to be delivered from Vanity, and have its glorious Liberty in that God, from whom it came forth.

[Pryr-1.2-23] Again, Thirdly, this Pearl of Eternity is the Church, or Temple of God within Thee, the consecrated Place of Divine Worship, where alone thou canst worship God in Spirit, and in Truth. In Spirit, because thy Spirit is that alone in Thee, which can unite, and cleave unto God, and receive the Workings of his Divine Spirit upon

Thee. In Truth, because this Adoration in Spirit, is that Truth and Reality, of which all outward Forms and Rites, though instituted by God, are only the Figure for a Time, but this Worship is Eternal. Accustom thyself to the Holy Service of this inward Temple. In the midst of it is the Fountain of Living Water, of which thou mayest drink, and live forever. There the Mysteries of thy Redemption are celebrated, or rather opened in Life and Power. There the Supper of the Lamb is kept; the Bread that came down from Heaven, that giveth Life to the World, is thy true Nourishment: all is done, and known in real Experience, in a living Sensibility of the Work of God on the Soul. There the Birth, the Life, the Sufferings, the Death, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, are not merely remembered, but inwardly found, and enjoyed as the real States of thy Soul, which has followed Christ in the Regeneration. When once thou art well grounded in this inward Worship, thou wilt have learnt to live unto God above Time, and Place. For every Day will be Sunday to thee, and wherever thou goest, thou wilt have a Priest, a Church, and an Altar along with Thee. For when God has all that He should have of thy Heart, when renouncing the Will, Judgment, Tempers and Inclinations of thy old Man, thou art wholly given up to the Obedience of the Light and Spirit of God within Thee, to Will only his Will, to Love only in his Love, to be Wise only in his Wisdom, then it is, that every Thing thou doest is as a song of Praise, and the common Business of thy Life is a conforming to God's Will on Earth, as Angels do in Heaven.

[Pyr-1.2-24] Fourthly, and Lastly, this Pearl of Eternity is the Peace and Joy of God within Thee, but can only be found by the Manifestation of the Life and Power of Jesus Christ in thy Soul. But Christ cannot be thy Power and thy Life, till in Obedience to his Call, thou deniest thyself, takest up thy daily Cross, and followest Him, in the Regeneration. This is peremptory, it admits of no Reserve or Evasion, it is the one Way to Christ and Eternal Life. But be where thou wilt, either here, or at Rome, or Geneva, if Self is undenied, if thou livest to thine own Will, to the Pleasures of thy natural Lust and Appetites, Senses and Passions, and in Conformity to the vain Customs, and Spirit of this World, thou art dead whilst thou livest, the Seed of the Woman is crucified within Thee, Christ can profit thee Nothing, thou art a Stranger to all that is holy and heavenly within Thee, and utterly incapable of finding the Peace and Joy of God in thy Soul. And thus thou art Poor, and Blind, and Naked, and Empty, and livest a miserable Life in the Vanity of Time; whilst all the Riches of Eternity, the Light and Spirit, the Wisdom and Love, the Peace and Joy of God are within Thee. And thus it will always be with Thee, there is no Remedy, go where thou wilt, do what thou wilt, all is shut up, there is no open Door of Salvation, no Awakening out of the Sleep of Sin, no Deliverance from the Power of thy corrupt Nature, no Overcoming of the World, no Revelation of Jesus Christ, no Joy of the New Birth from above, till dying to thy Self and the World, thou turnest to the Light, and Spirit, and Power of God in thy Soul. All is fruitless, and insignificant, all the Means of thy Redemption are at a Stand, all outward Forms are but a dead Formality, till this Fountain of living Water is found within Thee.

[Pyr-1.2-25] But thou wilt perhaps say, How shall I discover this Riches of Eternity, this Light, and Spirit, and Wisdom, and Peace of God, treasured up within me? Thy first Thought of Repentance, or Desire of turning to God, is thy first Discovery of this Light and Spirit of God within Thee. It is the Voice and Language of the Word of God within Thee, though thou knowest it not. It is the Bruiser of thy Serpent's Head, thy Dear Immanuel, who is beginning to preach within Thee, that same which He first preached in public, saying, "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand." When therefore but the smallest Instinct or Desire of thy Heart calleth Thee towards God, and a newness of Life, give it Time and Leave to speak; and take care thou refuse not Him that speaketh. For it is not an Angel from Heaven that speaketh to Thee, but it is the eternal speaking Word of God in thy Heart, that Word which at first created Thee, is thus beginning to create Thee a second Time unto Righteousness, that a new Man may be formed again in Thee in the Image and Likeness of God. But above all Things, beware of taking this Desire of Repentance to be the Effect of thy own Natural Sense and Reason, for in so doing thou lovest the Key of all the Heavenly Treasure that is in Thee, thou shuttest the Door against God, turnest away from Him, and thy Repentance (if thou hast any) will be only a vain, unprofitable Work of thy own Hands, that will do Thee no more Good, than a Well that is without Water. But if thou takest this awakened Desire of turning to God, to be, as in Truth it is, the coming of Christ in thy Soul, the Working, Redeeming Power of the Light and Spirit of the holy Jesus within Thee, if thou dost reverence and adhere to it, as such, this Faith will save Thee, will make Thee whole; and by thus believing in Christ, though thou wert dead, yet shalt thou live.

[Pyr-1.2-26] Now all dependeth on thy right Submission and Obedience to this speaking of God in thy Soul. Stop therefore all Self-activity, listen not to the Suggestions of thy own Reason, run not on in thy own Will, but be retired, silent, passive, and humbly attentive to this new risen Light within Thee. Open thy Heart, thy Eyes, and Ears, to all its Impressions. Let it enlighten, teach, frighten, torment, judge, and condemn Thee, as it pleaseth, turn not away from it, hear all it says, seek for no Relief out of it, consult not with Flesh and Blood, but with a Heart full of Faith and Resignation to God, pray only this Prayer, that God's Kingdom may come, and his Will be done in thy Soul. Stand faithfully in this State of Preparation, thus given up to the Spirit of God, and then the Work of thy Repentance will be Wrought in God, and thou wilt soon find, that He that is in Thee, is much

greater than all that are against Thee.

[Pryr-1.2-27] But that thou mayest do all this the better, and be more firmly assured, that this Resignation to, and Dependence upon the working of God's Spirit within Thee, is right and sound, I shall lay before Thee two great, and infallible, and fundamental Truths, which will be as a Rock for thy Faith to stand upon.

[Pryr-1.2-28] First, That through all the whole Nature of Things, nothing can do, or be a real Good to thy Soul, but the Operation of God upon it. Secondly, that all the Dispensations of God to Mankind, from the Fall of Adam, to the preaching of the Gospel, were only for this one End, to fit, prepare, and dispose the Soul for the Operation of the Spirit of God upon it. These two great Truths well and deeply apprehended, put the Soul in its right State, in a continual Dependence upon God, in a Readiness to receive all Good from Him, and will be a continual Source of Light in thy Mind. They will keep Thee safe from all Errors, and false Zeal in Things, and Forms of Religion, from a Sectarian Spirit, from Bigotry, and Superstition; they will teach Thee the true Difference between the Means and End of Religion; and the Regard thou showest to the Shell, will be only so far, as the Kernel is to be found in it.

[Pryr-1.2-29] Man, by his Fall, had broken off from his true Centre, his proper Place in God, and therefore the Life and Operation of God was no more in Him. He was fallen from a Life in God into a Life of Self, into an animal Life of Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking in the poor perishing Enjoyments of this World. This was the Natural State of Man by the Fall. He was an Apostate from God, and his natural Life was all Idolatry, where Self was the great Idol that was worshipped instead of God. See here the whole Truth in short. All Sin, Death, Damnation, and Hell is nothing else but this Kingdom of Self, or the various Operations of Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking, which separate the Soul from God, and end in eternal Death and Hell.

[Pryr-1.2-30] On the other Hand, all that is Grace, Redemption, Salvation, Sanctification, Spiritual Life, and the New Birth, is nothing else but so much of the Life and Operation of God found again in the Soul. It is Man come back again into his Centre or Place in God, from whence he had broken off. The Beginning again of the Life of God in the Soul, was then first made, when the Mercy of God inspoke into Adam a Seed of the Divine Life, which should bruise the Head of the Serpent, which had wrought itself into the human Nature. Here the Kingdom of God was again within us, though only as a Seed, yet small as it was, it was yet a Degree of the Divine Life, which if rightly cultivated, would overcome all the Evil that was in us, and make of every fallen Man a new born Son of God.

[Pryr-1.2-31] All the Sacrifices and Institutions of the ancient Patriarchs, the Law of Moses, with all its Types, and Rites, and Ceremonies, had this only End; they were the Methods of Divine Wisdom for a Time, to keep the Hearts of Men from the Wanderings of Idolatry, in a State of Holy Expectation upon God, they were to keep the first Seed of Life in a State of Growth, and make Way for the further Operation of God upon the Soul; or, as the Apostle speaks, to be as a Schoolmaster unto Christ, that is, till the Birth, the Death, the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, should conquer Death and Hell, open a new Dispensation of God, and baptize Mankind afresh with the Holy Ghost, and Fire of Heaven. Then, that is, on the Day of Pentecost, a new Dispensation of God came forth; which on God's Part, was the Operation of the Holy Spirit in Gifts and Graces upon the whole Church; and on Man's Part, it was the Adoration of God in Spirit and in Truth. Thus all that was done by God, from the Bruiser of the Serpent given to Adam, to Christ's sitting down on the right Hand of God, was all for this End, to remove all that stood between God and Man, and to make Way for the immediate and continual Operation of God upon the Soul; and that Man, baptized with the Holy Spirit, and born again from Above, should absolutely renounce Self, and wholly give up his Soul to the Operation of God's Spirit, to know, to love, to will, to pray, to worship, to preach, to exhort, to use all the Faculties of his Mind, and all the outward Things of this World, as enlightened, inspired, moved and guided by the Holy Ghost, who by this last Dispensation of God, was given to be a Comforter, a Teacher, and Guide to the Church, who should abide with it forever.

[Pryr-1.2-32] This is Christianity, a spiritual Society, not because it has no worldly Concerns, but because all its Members, as such, are born of the Spirit, kept alive, animated and governed by the Spirit of God. It is constantly called by our Lord the Kingdom of God, or Heaven, because all its Ministry and Service, all that is done in it, is done in Obedience and Subjection to that Spirit, by which Angels live, and are governed in Heaven. Hence our blessed Lord taught his Disciples to pray, that this Kingdom might come, that so God's Will might be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven; which could not be, but by that same Spirit, by which it is done in Heaven. The short is this: The Kingdom of Self is the Fall of Man, or the great Apostasy from the Life of God in the Soul; and everyone wherever he be, that liveth unto Self, is still under the Fall and great Apostasy from God. The Kingdom of Christ is the Spirit and Power of God dwelling and manifesting itself in the Birth of a new inward Man; and no one is a Member of this Kingdom, but so far as a true Birth of the Spirit is brought forth in him. These two Kingdoms take in all Mankind, he that is not of one, is certainly in the other; Dying to one is Living to

the other.

[Pryr-1.2-33] Hence we may gather these following Truths: First, Here is shown the true Ground and Reason of what was said above, namely, That when the Call of God to Repentance first ariseth in thy Soul, thou art to be retired, silent, passive, and humbly attentive to this new risen Light within thee, by wholly stopping, or disregarding the Workings of thy own Will, Reason, and Judgment. It is because all these are false Counselors, the sworn Servants, bribed Slaves of thy fallen Nature, they are all Born and Bred in thy Kingdom of Self; and therefore if a new Kingdom is to be set up in thee, if the Operation of God is to have its Effect in thee, all these natural Powers of Self are to be silenced and suppressed, till they have learned Obedience and Subjection to the Spirit of God. Now this is not requiring thee to become a Fool, or to give up thy Claim to Sense and Reason, but is the shortest Way to have thy Sense and Reason delivered from Folly, and thy whole rational Nature strengthened, enlightened, and guided by that Light, which is Wisdom itself.

[Pryr-1.2-34] A child that obediently denies his own Will, and own Reason, to be guided by the Will and Reason of a truly wise and understanding Tutor, cannot be said to make himself a Fool, and give up the Benefit of his rational Nature, but to have taken the shortest Way to have his own Will and Reason made truly a Blessing to him.

[Pryr-1.2-35] Secondly, Hence is to be seen the true Ground and Necessity of that universal Mortification and Self-denial with regard to all our Senses, Appetites, Tempers, Passions and Judgments. It is because all our whole Nature, as fallen from the Life of God, is in a State of Contrariety to the Order and End of our Creation, a continual Source of disorderly Appetites, corrupt Tempers, and false Judgments. And therefore every Motion of it is to be mortified, changed and purified from its natural State, before we can enter into the Kingdom of God. Thus when our Lord saith, "Except a Man hateth his Father and Mother, yea, and his own Life, he cannot be my Disciple"; it is because our best Tempers are yet carnal, and full of the Imperfections of our fallen Nature. The Doctrine is just and good; not as if Father and Mother were to be hated; but that Love, which an unregenerate Person, or natural Man, hath towards them, is to be hated, as being a blind Self-love, full of all the Weakness and Partiality, with which fallen Man loves, honours, esteems, and cleaves to himself. This Love, born from corrupt Flesh and Blood, and polluted with Self, is to be hated and parted with, that we may love them with a Love born of God, with such a Love, and on such a Motive, as Christ has loved us. And then the Disciple of Christ far exceeds all others in the Love of Parents. Again, Our own Life is to be hated; and the Reason is plain, it is because there is nothing lovely in it. It is a Legion of Evil, a monstrous Birth of the Serpent, the World, and the Flesh; it is an Apostasy from the Life and Power of God in the Soul, a Life that is Death to Heaven, that is pure unmixed Idolatry, that lives wholly to Self, and not to God; and therefore all this own Life is to be absolutely hated, all this Self is to be denied and mortified, if the Nature, Spirit, Tempers and Inclinations of Christ are to be brought to Life in us. For it is as impossible to live to both these Lives at once, as for a Body to move two contrary Ways at the same Time. And therefore all these Mortifications and Self-denials have an absolute Necessity in the Nature of the Thing itself.

[Pryr-1.2-36] Thus when our Lord further saith, unless a Man forsake all that he hath, he cannot be my Disciple; the Reason is plain, and the Necessity absolute. It is because all that the natural Man hath, is in the Possession of Self-love, and therefore this Possession is to be absolutely forsaken, and parted with. All that he hath, is to be put into other Hands, to be given to Divine Love, or this natural Man cannot be changed into a Disciple of Christ. For Self-love in all that it hath, is earthly, sensual, and devilish, and therefore must have all taken away from it; and then to the natural Man all is lost, he hath nothing left, all is laid down at the Feet of Jesus. And then all Things are common, as soon as Self-love has lost the Possession of them. And then the Disciple of Christ, though having nothing, yet possesseth all Things, all that the natural Man has forsaken, is restored to the Disciple of Christ an hundred-fold. For Self-love, the greatest of all Thieves, being now cast out, and all that he had stolen and hidden thus taken from him, and put into the Hands of Divine Love, every Mite becomes a large Treasure, and Mammon opens the Door into everlasting Habitations. This was the Spirit of the first Draught of a Christian Church at Jerusalem, a Church made truly after the Pattern of Heaven, where the Love that reigns in Heaven reigned in it, where Divine Love broke down all the selfish Fences, the Locks and Bolts of me, mine, my own, &c., and laid all Things common to the Members of this new Kingdom of God on Earth.

[Pryr-1.2-37] Now though many Years did not pass after the Age of the Apostles, before Satan and Self got footing in the Church, and set up Merchandise in the House of God, yet this one Heart, and one Spirit, which then first appeared in the Jerusalem Church, is that one Heart and Spirit of Divine Love, to which all are called, that would be true Disciples of Christ. And though the Practice of it is lost as to the Church in general, yet it ought not to have been lost; and therefore every Christian ought to make it his great Care and Prayer, to have it restored in himself. And then, though born in the Dregs of Time, or living in Babylon, he will be as truly a Member of the first heavenly Church at Jerusalem, as if he had lived in it, in the Days of the Apostles. This Spirit

of Love, born of that celestial Fire, with which Christ baptizes his true Disciples, is alone that Spirit, which can enter into Heaven, and therefore is that Spirit which is to be born in us, whilst we are on Earth. For no one can enter in Heaven, till he is made heavenly, till the Spirit of Heaven is entered into him. And therefore all that our Lord hath said of denying and dying to Self, and of his parting with all that he has, are Practices absolutely necessary from the Nature of the Thing.

[Pryr-1.2-38] Because all turning to Self is so far turning from God, and so much as we have of Self-love, so much we have of a hellish, earthly Weight, that must be taken off, or there can be no Ascension into Heaven. But thou wilt perhaps say, If all Self-love is to be renounced, then all Love of our Neighbour is renounced along with it, because the Commandment is, only to love our Neighbour as ourselves. The Answer here is easy, and yet no Quarter given to Self-love. There is but one only Love in Heaven, and yet the Angels of God love one another in the same manner, as they love themselves. The Matter is thus: The one supreme, unchangeable Rule of Love, which is a Law to all intelligent Beings of all Worlds, and will be a Law to all Eternity, is this, viz., That God alone is to be loved for himself, and all other Beings only in Him, and for Him. Whatever intelligent Creature lives not under this Rule of Love, is so far fallen from the Order of his Creation, and is, till He returns to this eternal Law of Love, an Apostate from God, and incapable of the Kingdom of Heaven.

[Pryr-1.2-39] Now if God alone is to be loved for Himself, then no Creature is to be loved for itself; and so all Self-love in every Creature is absolutely condemned.

[Pryr-1.2-40] And if all created Beings are only to be loved in and for God, then my Neighbour is to be loved, as I love myself, and I am only to love myself, as I love my Neighbour, or any other created Being, that is only in and for God. And thus the Command of loving our Neighbour as ourselves, stands firm, and yet all Self-love is plucked up by the Roots. But what is loving any Creature, only in, and for God? It is when we love it only as it is God's Work, Image, and Delight, when we love it merely as it is God's, and belongs to him, this is loving it in God, and when all that we wish, intend, or do to it, is done from a Love of God, for the Honour of God, and in Conformity to the Will of God, this is loving it for God. This is the one Love that is, and must be the Spirit of all Creatures that live united to God. Now this is no speculative Refinement, or fine-spun Fiction of the Brain, but the simple Truth, and a first Law of Nature, and a necessary Band of Union between God and the Creature. The Creature is not in God, is a Stranger to Him, has lost the Life of God in itself, whenever its Love does not thus begin and end in God.

[Pryr-1.2-41] The Loss of this Love, was the Fall of Man, as it opened in him a Kingdom of Self, in which Satan, the World, and the Flesh, could all of them bring forth their own Works. If therefore Man is to rise from his Fall, and return to his Life in God, there is an absolute necessity that Self, with all his Brood of gross Affections, be deposed, that his first Love in and for which he was created, may be born again in him. Christ came into the World to save Sinners, to destroy the Works of the Devil. Now Self is not only the Seat and Habitation, but the very Life of Sin. The Works of the Devil are all wrought in Self, it is his peculiar Workhouse, and therefore Christ is not come as a Saviour from Sin, as a Destroyer of the Works of the Devil in any of us, but so far as Self is beaten down, and overcome in us. If it is literally true, what our Lord said, That his Kingdom was not of this World, then it is a Truth of the same Certainty, that no one is a Member of this Kingdom, but he that in the literal Sense of the Words renounces the Spirit of this World. Christians might as well part with half the Articles of their Creed, or but half believe them, as really to refuse, or but by halves enter into these Self-denials.

[Pryr-1.2-42] For all that is in the Creed, is only to bring forth this Dying and Death to all and every Part of the old Man, that the Life and Spirit of Christ may be formed in us.

[Pryr-1.2-43] Our Redemption is this new Birth; if this is not done, or doing in us, we are still unredeemed. And though the Saviour of the World is come, He is not come in us, He is not received by us, is a Stranger to us, is not ours, if his Life is not within us. His life is not, cannot be within us, but so far as the Spirit of the World, Self-love, Self-esteem, and Self-seeking, are renounced, and driven out of us.

[Pryr-1.2-44] Thirdly, Hence we may also learn the true Nature and Worth of all Self-denials and Mortifications. As to their Nature, considered in themselves, they have nothing of Goodness or Holiness, nor are any real Parts of our Sanctification, they are not the true Food or Nourishment of Divine Life in our Souls, they have no Quickening, Sanctifying Power in them; their only Worth consists in this, that they remove the Impediments of Holiness, break down that which stands between God and us, and make Way for the Quickening, Sanctifying Spirit of God to operate on our Souls. Which Operation of God is the one only Thing that can raise the Divine Life in the Soul, or help it to the smallest Degree of real Holiness, or Spiritual Life. As in our Creation, we had

only that Degree of a Divine Life, which the Power of God derived into us; as then all that we had, and were, was the sole Operation of God in the Creation of us; so in our Redemption, or regaining that first Perfection, which we have lost, all must be again the Operation of God; every Degree of the Divine Life restored in us, be it ever so small, must and can be nothing else but so much of the Life and Operation of God found again in the Soul. All the Activity of Man in the Works of Self-denial has no Good in itself, but is only to open an Entrance for the one only Good, the Light of God, to operate upon us.

[Pryr-1.2-45] Hence also we may learn the Reason, why many People not only lose the Benefit, but are even worse for all their Mortifications. It is because they mistake the whole Nature and Worth of them. They practice them for their own Sakes, as Things good in themselves, they think them to be real Parts of Holiness, and so rest in them, and look no further, but grow full of Self-esteem, and Self-admiration, for their own Progress in them. This makes them Self-sufficient, morose, severe Judges of all those that fall short of their Mortifications.

[Pryr-1.2-46] And thus their Self-denials do only that for them, which Indulgences do for other People, they withstand and hinder the Operation of God upon their Souls, and instead of being really Self-denials, they strengthen and keep up the Kingdom of Self.

[Pryr-1.2-47] There is no avoiding this fatal Error, but by deeply entering into this great Truth, that all our own Activity and Working has no Good in it, can do no Good to us, but as it leads and turns us in the best Manner to the Light and Spirit of God, which alone brings Life and Salvation into the Soul. Stretch forth thy Hand, said our Lord to the Man that had a withered Hand; he did so, and it was immediately made whole as the other.

[Pryr-1.2-48] Now had this Man any Ground for Pride, or a high Opinion of himself, for the Share he had in the Restoring of his Hand? Yet just such is our Share in the Raising up of the Spiritual Life within us. All that we can do by our own Activity, is only like this Man's stretching out his Hand; the rest is the Work of Christ, the only Giver of Life to the withered Hand, or the dead Soul. We can only then do living Works, when we are so far born again, as to be able to say with the Apostle, "Yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me." But to return, and further show, how the Soul that feels the Call of God to Repentance is to behave under it, that this stirring of the Divine Power in the soul may have its full Effect, and bring forth the Birth of the new Man in Christ Jesus. We are to consider it (as in Truth it is) as the Seed of the Divine Nature within us, that can only grow by its own Strength and Union with God. It is a Divine Life, and therefore can grow from nothing but Divine Power. When the Virgin Mary conceived the Birth of the holy Jesus, all that she did towards it herself, was only this single Act of Faith and Resignation to God; "Behold the Handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy Word." This is all that we can do towards the Conception of that new Man that is to be born in ourselves. Now this Truth is easily consented to, and a Man thinks he believes it, because he consents to it, or rather, does not deny it. But this is not enough, it is to be apprehended in a deep, full, and practical Assurance, in such a Manner as a Man knows and believes that he did not create the Stars, or cause Life to rise up in himself. And then it is a Belief, that puts the Soul into a right State, that makes room for the Operation of God upon it. His Light then enters with full Power into the Soul, and his holy Spirit moves and directs all that is done in it, and so Man lives again in God as a new Creature. For this Truth thus firmly believed, will have these two most excellent Effects: First, It will keep the Soul fixed, and continually turned towards God, in Faith, Prayer, Desire, Confidence, and Resignation to Him, for all that it wants to have done in it, and to it; which will be a continual Source of all Divine Virtues and Graces. The Soul thus turned to God must be always receiving from Him. It stands at the true Door of all Divine Communications, and the Light of God as freely enters into it, as the Light of the Sun enters into the Air. Secondly, It will fix and ground the Soul in a true and lasting Self-denial. For by thus knowing and owning our own Nothingness and Inability, that we have no other Capacity for Good, but that of receiving it from God alone, Self is wholly denied, its Kingdom is destroyed; no room is left for spiritual Pride and Self-esteem; we are saved from a Pharisaical Holiness, from wrong Opinions of our own Works and good Deeds, and from a Multitude of Errors, the most dangerous to our Souls, all which arise from the Something that we take ourselves to be either in Nature or Grace. But when we once apprehend but in some good Degree, the All of God, and the Nothingness of ourselves, we have got a Truth, whose Usefulness and Benefit no Words can express. It brings a Kind of Infallibility into the Soul in which it dwells; all that is vain, and false, and deceitful, is forced to vanish and fly before it. When our Religion is founded on this Rock, it has the Firmness of a Rock, and its Height reaches unto Heaven. The World, the Flesh, and the Devil, can do no hurt to it; all Enemies are known, and all disarmed by this great Truth dwelling in our Souls. It is the Knowledge of the All of God, that makes Cherubims and Seraphims to be Flames of Divine Love. For where this All of God is truly known, and felt in any Creature, there its whole Breath and Spirit is a Fire of Love, nothing but a pure disinterested Love can arise up in it, or come from it, a Love that begins and ends in God. And where this Love is born in any Creature, there a Seraphic Life is born along with it. For this pure Love introduces the Creature into the All of God; all that is in God is opened in the Creature, it is united with God, and has the Life of God manifested in it.

[Pryr-1.2-49] There is but one Salvation for all Mankind, and that is the Life of God in the Soul. God has but one Design or Intent towards all Mankind, and that is to introduce or generate his own Life, Light, and Spirit in them, that all may be as so many Images, Temples, and Habitations of the Holy Trinity. This is God's good Will to all Christians, Jews, and Heathens. They are all equally the Desire of his Heart, his Light continually waits for an Entrance into all of them, his Wisdom crieth, she putteth forth her Voice, not here, or there, but everywhere, in all the Streets of all the Parts of the World.

[Pryr-1.2-50] Now there is but one possible Way for Man to attain this Salvation, or Life of God in the Soul. There is not one for the Jew, another for a Christian, and a Third for the Heathen. No; God is one, human Nature is one, Salvation is one, and the Way to it is one; and that is, the Desire of the Soul turned to God. When this Desire is alive and breaks forth in any Creature under Heaven, then the lost Sheep is found, and the Shepherd has it upon his Shoulders. Through this Desire the Poor prodigal Son leaves his Husks and Swine, and hasteth to his Father: it is because of this Desire, that the Father sees the Son, while yet afar off, that he runs out to meet him, falleth on his Neck, and kisseth him. See here how plainly we are taught, that no sooner is this Desire arisen, and in Motion towards God, but the Operation of God's Spirit answers to it, cherishes and welcomes its first Beginnings, signified by the Father's seeing, and having Compassion on his Son, whilst yet afar off, that is, in the first Beginnings of his Desire. Thus does this Desire do all, it brings the Soul to God, and God into the Soul, it unites with God, it co-operates with God, and is one Life with God. Suppose this Desire not to be alive, not in Motion either in a Jew, or a Christian, and then all the Sacrifices, the Service, the Worship either of the Law, or the Gospel, are but dead Works, that bring no Life into the Soul, nor beget any Union between God and it. Suppose this Desire to be awakened, and fixed upon God, though in Souls that never heard either of the Law or the Gospel, and then the Divine Life, or Operation of God, enters into them, and the new Birth in Christ is formed in those who never heard of his Name. And these are they "that shall come from the East, and from the West and sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, in the Kingdom of God."

[Pryr-1.2-51] Oh my God, just and good, how great is thy Love and Mercy to Mankind, that Heaven is thus everywhere open, and Christ thus the common Saviour to all that turn the Desire of their Hearts to thee! Oh sweet Power of the Bruiser of the Serpent, born in every Son of Man, that stirs and works in every Man, and gives every Man a Power, and Desire, to find his Happiness in God! O holy Jesus, heavenly Light, that lightest every Man that cometh into the World, that redeemeth every Soul that follows thy Light, which is always within Him! O Holy Trinity, immense Ocean of divine Love in which all Mankind live, and move, and have their Being! None are separated from thee, none live out of thy Love, but all are embraced in the Arms of thy Mercy, all are Partakers of thy Divine Life, the Operation of thy holy Spirit, as soon as their Heart is turned to Thee! Oh plain, and easy, and simple Way of Salvation, wanting no Subtleties of Art or Science, no borrowed Learning, no Refinements of Reason, but all done by the simple natural Motion of every Heart, that truly longs after God. For no sooner is the finite Desire of the Creature in motion towards God, but the infinite Desire of God is united with it, co-operates with it. And in this united Desire of God and the Creature, is the Salvation and Life of the Soul brought forth. For the Soul is shut out of God, and imprisoned in its own dark Workings of Flesh and Blood, merely and solely, because it desires to live to the Vanity of this World. This Desire is its Darkness, its Death, its Imprisonment, and Separation from God.

[Pryr-1.2-52] When therefore the first Spark of a Desire after God arises in thy Soul, cherish it with all thy Care, give all thy Heart into it, it is nothing less than a Touch of the Divine Loadstone, that is to draw Thee out of the Vanity of Time into the Riches of Eternity. Get up therefore and follow it as gladly, as the Wise Men of the East followed the Star from Heaven that appeared to them. It will do for Thee, as the Star did for them, it will lead Thee to the Birth of Jesus, not in a Stable at Bethlehem in Judea, but to the Birth of Jesus in the dark Centre of thy own fallen Soul.

[Pryr-1.2-53] I shall conclude this first Part, with the Words of the heavenly Illuminated, and blessed Jacob Behmen.

[Pryr-1.2-54] "It is much to be lamented, that we are so blindly led, and the Truth withheld from us through imaginary Conceptions; for if the Divine Power in the inward Ground of the Soul was manifest, and working with its Lustre in us, then is the whole Triune God present in the Life and Will of the Soul, and the Heaven, wherein God dwells, is opened in the Soul, and There, in the Soul, is the Place where the Father begets his Son, and where the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son.

[Pryr-1.2-55] "Christ saith, I am the Light of the World, he that followeth me, walketh not in Darkness. He directs us only to himself, He is the Morning Star, and is generated and riseth in us, and shineth in the Darkness of our Nature. O how great a Triumph is there in t