depends on internal considerations, how completely the whole glorious sentence is  
marred and disjoined by the substitution  
of the word GOD, found in the A. V., and  
so strenuously, even to this day, upheld by  
some. It is not the objective fact of *God  
being manifested,* of which the Apostle is  
speaking, but *the life of God lived in the  
church,*—the truth, of which the congregation of believers is the pillar and basement, —as identical [John xiv. 6] with  
Him who is its centre and heart and stock  
—as unfolded once for all in the unfolding  
of Him. The intimate and blessed link,  
furnished by the relative pronoun WHO,  
assuring the Church that it is not they  
that live, but Christ that liveth in them,  
is lost, if we understand *the mystery* merely  
as a fact, however important, historically  
revealed. There is hardly a passage in the  
New Test. in which I feel more deep personal thankfulness for the restoration of  
the true and wonderful connexion of the  
original text)**—who** (thus, and not ‘which,’  
nor ‘He who,’ should we render, preserving  
the same transition, from the mystery, to  
Him of whom now all that follows is spoken.  
*Who* is, as stated in Ellicott, “a relative to  
an omitted though easily recognized antecedent, viz. Christ”) **was manifested in  
the flesh** (it has been often maintained of  
late, that these sentences, from their parallelism and symmetry, are taken from some  
hymn or confession of the ancient church.  
We cannot absolutely say that it may not  
have been so: but I should on all grounds  
regard it as very doubtful. I can see no  
reason why the same person who wrote the  
rhetorical passages, Rom. viii. 38, 39; xi.  
33—36: 1 Cor. xiii. 4—7, and numerous  
others, might not, difference of time and  
modified mental characteristics being allowed for, have written this also. Once written, it would be sure to gain a place  
among the choice and treasured sayings of  
the Church, and might easily find its way  
into liturgical use: but I should be most:  
inclined to think that we have here its  
first expression. The reason which some  
of the above Commentators adduce for their  
belief,—the abrupt insulation of the clauses  
disjoined from the thought in the context,  
has no weight with me: I on the other  
hand feel that so beautiful and majestic a  
sequence of thoughts springing directly  
from the context itself, can hardly be a  
fragment pieced in, but must present the  
free expansion of the mind of the writer  
in the treatment of his subject. On the  
sense of this clause, compare John i. 14,—  
and 2 Tim.i.10. This is put first in the  
rank, as being the preliminary to all the  
rest. It is followed by the next clause,  
because the assertion and assurance of  
Christ’s perfect unsinning righteousness  
was the aim of his manifestation in our  
flesh all those thirty years which preceded  
His public ministry : see below), **was justified** (i.e. approved to be righteous,—according to the uniform Pauline usage:  
not as De W., al., ‘proved to be what he  
was.’ The Apostle is following the *historical order of events during the manifestation of our Lord on earth.* That this  
is so, is manifest by the final clause including the Ascension. I take these events then in their order, and refer this to our  
Lord’s baptism and temptation, in which  
His righteousness was approved and proved)  
**in the Spirit** (He was dwelt on by the  
Spirit in His baptism—led up by the Spirit  
to His great trial, and *in the Spirit,* His  
Spirit, that of which he said “the spirit  
indeed is willing but the flesh is weak,”  
He was proved to be righteous and spotless and separate from evil and its agent.  
See Rom. i. 3, 4, where another proof of  
this His spiritual perfection is given, viz.  
the great and crowning one of the Resurrection from the dead. Some have thought  
of that proof here also: others, of the continued course of His miracles, *especially*  
the Resurrection: some of the Resurrec-  
tion and Ascension, by which He entered  
into His glory: others, in other ways. But I  
prefer keeping the historical order, though  
I would by no means limit the *justification*  
to that time only: *then* it was chiefly and  
prominently manifested), **was seen by angels** (viz. by means of His Incarnation, and  
specifically, when they came and ministered  
to Him after His temptation. This seems  
to be regarded as the first, or at all events  
is the first recorded occasion on which they  
ministered to Him. Theodoret says: “For  
even they saw not His invisible Godhead,  
but when He was incarnate, they beheld  
Him.” This, one of the particulars of the  
glory and manifestation of the incarnate  
Saviour, is, though not immediately