Christ], ch. iii. 1, 9; iv. 7; v. 1, 4, 18, &c.  
If on the other hand they are said of God,  
“it seems strange that after a change of reference   
from the preceding “*Him*,” another  
subject should be expressed in ch, iii. 1  
by the words “*the Father*.” In consequence   
of these difficulties, some have referred   
**he is righteous** to Christ, and *of*  
**Him** to God; which cannot well be. It  
would be possible, doubtless, to understand  
the whole of Christ, without change of  
subject from ver. 28; and to leave the words  
**is born of Him** as we find them. If it  
occurs nowhere else in reference to Christ,  
there is in it nothing abhorrent from our  
Christian ideas. And in St. John’s sense  
of the intimate union between the Father  
and Son, he who is born of the Father  
might be said to be born of the Son also.  
But after all, the other view, which is that  
of most ancient expositors, must, I apprehend,   
be adopted. The analogy of the passage,  
as shewn in ch, iii. 1, 2, 9, 10, fixes  
the words **is born of Him** to birth from  
God: and the absence in the original of a  
new expressed subject in the words *is*  
*righteous* must be accounted for by remembering   
that this verse, as ch, i. 5, is the  
opening, and general statement, of a new  
section of the Epistle. And the essential  
unity of the Father and the Son comes in  
on this side also: so that the judgment  
alluded to ver. 28, which shall be executed  
by the Son, being judgment committed to  
Him by the Father, brings to mind the  
justice and righteousness in which that  
judgment is founded): **ye know that also  
every one who doeth righteousness** (literally, **the righteousness**,

i.e. the righteousness which is implied in the word “*righteous*” above:

if it were not too strong, we  
might almost say, “that righteousness :”  
the article showing that there is no other.  
**doeth**, for all righteousness is energetic: it  
springs out of holiness, truth, love), **is born**  
(hath been begotten) **of Him** (God: see  
above: *for the righteous begetteth righteous progeny.*   
The inference here must  
be carefully kept to the Apostle’s words  
and obvious sense. And those require that  
we should understand it thus: God is  
*righteous*. This is our axiom, from which  
we set out, And if so, then the *source of*  
righteousness. When therefore a man  
doeth righteousness, *we know*, we apprehend, we collect, from our previous knowledge of these truths, that the source of his  
righteousness is God: that in consequence  
he has acquired by new birth from God,  
that righteousness which he had not by  
nature. We argue from his *doing righteousness* to his *having been begotten of  
God*. And the right apprehension of this  
is the more important because the whole  
mass of Socinian and Pelagian Commentators have reversed the members of the  
argument, and made it conclude that *doing*  
*righteousness* is the condition, on our part,  
of *becoming* a child of God. And the Roman-Catholic expositors, while they avoid  
this error, yet go equally wrong, in understanding “*hath been begotten*” not as the  
statement of a past and abiding fact, but as  
the ground of a confidence as to the future).

**CHAP. III. 1–10.**] *The true and distinguishing signs of the children of God  
and the children of the devil*.

**1–3.**] The foundation and source of all righteousness in us is, the essential righteousness of  
God. All our doing of righteousness is a  
mere sign that He has begotten us anew—  
that we are His children. And what great  
things are contained in this name—how  
precious treasures of faith, of hope, of love!  
On this thought the Apostle now enters.  
He places the whole glory of the children  
of God before his readers. The being  
righteous as He is righteous, is the token  
of that new birth, and the measure of the  
life which began with it: the striving to  
perfect and mature this token, to fill up  
this measure, is an additional proof that a  
man is of God.

**1.**] **Behold** (as in  
John i. 29; xix. 5, does not express the  
Writer’s own astonishment, but directs the  
attention of those who are addressed. But  
there immediately follows upon us, the  
communicative address, so that in fact the  
Apostle does in a manner include himself  
among those addressed in **behold**), **what  
manner of** (including “how great,” “how  
free,” “how precious”—in fact, all the  
particulars which are afterwards brought  
out respecting this love: see ver. 16, ch.  
iv. 9, 16) **love** (is **love** here, joined  
as it is with the verb “*hath bestowed*,”