of the thought and the life of sin: the  
tempter to sin: the fountain out of which  
sin has come, as God is the fountain out  
of which has come righteousness. See on  
this subject, my Sermons on Divine Love,  
Serm. v. pp. 68 ff, “the First Sinner”).  
**To this end was the Son of God manifested**

(viz. in His incarnation, pregnant  
with all its consequences), **that He might  
destroy** (do away, break up, pull down:  
the word is used of a building, or a law,  
or an organized whole) **the works of the  
devil** (what are these? Clearly, in the  
first place, works whereof the devil is the  
*author*: not merely *devilish works*. And  
then, are we to include in the list not only  
sins, which manifestly belong to it, but  
also the consequences of sin—pain, sorrow,  
death? The *fact* would be true if we  
did: for Christ hath abolished death  
[2 Tim. i. 10]. But the context seems  
to require that we should at all events  
keep death and the results of sin in the  
background, as no mention is made of  
them here, and sinful works are clearly in  
the Apostle’s mind. These works the whole  
*manifestation* of Christ. went directly to  
nullify: more especially His Death, in  
which His power over Satan reached its  
highest point,—the bruising of His heel, in  
which He bruised the Enemy’s head:—for  
it was in that, that He won for us that  
acceptance which is sealed by His glorification,

and in virtue of which the Holy Spirit  
is given us, of whose work in us it is said  
that we *“by the Spirit mortify (put to  
death) the deeds of the body.”* Rom. viii.  
13).

**9, 10.**] *The contrast taken up again*,  
and from the converse: he that is born  
of God cannot sin: he that does not  
righteousness, is not of God: i.e. is a  
child of the devil. Then we have the  
usual new particular, to give the transition

note to that which is to follow,—  
including in this last category him that  
loveth not his brother. **Every one that  
is begotten of God, doeth not sin** (the  
meaning of this declaration has been  
treated of above, ver. 6. Here we meet  
it in its barest and plainest form—the  
two states, being begotten of God, and  
sin, absolutely excluding one another),  
**because His seed abideth in him** (i. e.  
because that new principle of life from  
which his new life has unfolded, which  
was God’s seed deposited in him, abides  
growing there, and precludes the development

of the old sinful nature. Some of  
the ancients understood it of the *word*  
of God, as in the parable of the sower,  
Matt. xiii, 3 ff. This last interpretation  
has been impugned by all the moderns,  
but I cannot see that they have mado  
good their objection: the force of which  
amounts to this ; that the word of God is  
not so much the *Seed*, as *the means  
whereby the begetting to the new life  
takes place*. But whether we regard the  
generation of plants, or animal procreation,

which latter is more in question  
here, what words can more accurately  
describe the office of the seed than these?  
and what is the word of God but the continually

abiding and working seed of the  
new life, in the child of God? Nay, it  
seems to be that exactly of which we are  
in search: not the Holy Spirit, the personal agent;

not the power of the new  
life, the thing begotten; but just that  
which intervenes between the two, the  
word, the utterance of God—dropped into  
the soul of man, taking it up by divine  
power into itself, and developing the new  
life continually. This is in the

most precise and satisfactory sense the *seed of  
God* : and on this all Scripture symbolism  
is agreed: compare 1 Pet. i. 23, James i.  
18. In fact the very passage which is the  
key to this, is John v. 38, “ *Ye have not  
His word abiding in you*.” Nor should  
any exception have been taken to the  
comparison with the parable of the Sower,  
for though the attendant circumstances of  
generation are different, the analogy is the  
same); **and he cannot sin** (no explaining

away of this declaration must be at-  
tempted, as is done by Cornelins-a-lapide,  
who understands it of *deadly* sin; by  
Augustine and Bede, who confine the *to*