Jan. 31. 1884

My dear Child

First, tell your brother from me that his writing is good & clear. You also could write very well if you would carefully form every letter. I can read what people are by their hand writing. So take care.

The 77 page of Sin ______ does sufficiently answer your last question.

But the book must be read from the beginning, for each chapter arises out of the last: & needs it. The question you put I have answered in the course of the book. And I have quoted S. John's word. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, & cannot.”

This does not mean that he has not the power but that he has not the will to commit sin. It would go against his new nature and his new will.

There is no doubt that by God’s help we could avoid all sin: but it is certain that none do so except great Saints—& they are few. But every child of God can avoid mortal sin.

People from want of light do not see sin in themselves, unless it be very grave or gross for many reasons.

1. Want of light
2. Want of self knowledge
3. Want of knowledge of sin, as in temper, & thought.
4. Want of knowledge of God. It is in His light that we see light, & in that light we see ourselves.

This is where you have to begin. Take the questions on the 10 Commandments in the Church Manual. Remember that these are sins

1. Of deed
2. Of word
3. Of thought
4. Sins of commission
5. Sins of omission

Now these things can be fully known only by knowing the holiness of God. “His eyes are as a flame of fire”—He weigheth the spirits.

The works of the flesh, Gal. V.20.21, are chiefly spiritual. But it is those spiritual sins that many people commit without regarding them.

Try yourself by these lists, & write to me what you find in yourself.

I hope you are well, & bearing up patiently & cheerfully. Gods will is always best.

Always yours very sincerely,

H. E. C. A.

[Transcription developed by Leslie Dees]

[Transcription edited by Jared Beverly]