

# The Epistle of John

*An In-depth Study*

The original language of the Old Testament was Hebrew, and the original language of the New Testament was Greek. When the Bible was translated into other languages, certain words from the original language could not be properly translated because there was not an exact equivalent word. So, the translators used the best word that they could to translate the original word.

Under certain scriptures you will notice Hebrew or Greek word definitions that are taken from the original language. These definitions are inserted to add more clarity to the verse.

These notes can be used for preaching, teaching, personal study, and can be copied.

*Mat 10:8 "...freely ye have received, freely give..."*

Teacher Rev. Alex S. Delpercio

## 1 John 1:1-4

**1 John 1:1** *“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;”*

*1 John 1:1a* “from the beginning”

John does not specify what beginning he is talking about.

The beginning is not just referring to when the disciples first saw Jesus. John is speaking of two beginnings:

1. The “*beginning*” that John sees before creation.

John attributes the glory that is being manifested in Christ as being from the “*beginning*”, before creation. Jesus held prior glory before He became flesh and before creation.

*John 17:5* “And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”

This is confirmed by *1 John 1:2* (“...which was with the Father...”).

John had revelation concerning Jesus’ former glory, and he gives us a glimpse of the Godhead before the world was.

*John 1:1* “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

2. The “*beginning*” John also saw was Jesus with glory, as He walked among men.

This glory was manifested to the disciples, and seen by them, because they followed Jesus.

John says in *1 John*:

*v1* “heard... seen...handled”

This was literally true. John and the others did hear, see, and handle Jesus literally, in the natural. This is not just referring to what took place in the natural, but also to what took place in spirit.

He is speaking out from what took place in his heart and was given to him by revelation.

John is talking about the glory that was in Christ and was manifested, which he saw.

John saw the glory in:

- What Jesus said (*Luke 8:25; John 7:14,46*).
- What He did, that is, His manner of living (*Luke 7:39*).
- The miracles Jesus performed (*John 2:9-11; Mark 6:49; Mat 12:22, 15:30, 21:14; John 9:1,6-7*).
- In Jesus (*Mat 17:1-2*).

**1 John 1:2** *“For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;”*

Our reading what John has seen is no guarantee that we will see or know the Lord in the same way.

Example:

The children of Israel heard the commandments of God. They saw the miracles and they handled the manna, but never saw God, His glory, or life (*1Cor 10:1-4*).

They did not perceive the glory or the life that God had for them. We can have the life of God manifested before our eyes and never really see.

**1 John 1:2a** *“For the life was manifested...”*

The Greek expresses the fact that God did this. He was responsible for the manifestation of life.

Out from the glory that Jesus portrayed, life is manifested.

In the scriptures, life and glory are related and mentioned together often: *Col 3:4; 2 Pet 1:3; John 17:3,5; Rom 2:7.*

One reason the glory of God is manifested is to bring life. And life gives us access to more of His glory. Believing on Jesus can be a result of the manifestation of His glory (*John 2:11*).

*1 John 2:8* “Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.”  
“shineth” is the same Greek word translated “manifested” in *1 John 1:2*.

***1 John 1:2c “and was manifested to us”***

Jesus, the Light and the Life, was manifested on a personal level.

In *verse 2*, “manifested” in the Greek means: visible or known, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way.

Seeing the manifestation is based upon one’s heart condition. Many will never see (*John 2:1-11*). The purpose of the glory and life may or may not be achieved.

*1 Tim 6:19* “that they may lay hold on”

*1 John 5:13* “ye may know”

(These underlined phrases are translated from Greek verb. Most Greek verbs have a tense, voice, and mood that can give insight into what a verse is saying. These words are in the subjunctive mood. The subjunctive mood is the mood of possibility and potentiality. The action described may or may not occur, depending upon circumstances.

The condition that must be met in *1 Tim 6:19* to lay hold of life is, “*laying up a good foundation.*”

The condition in *1 John 5:13* that must be met to know that you have eternal life is, “*believe on His name.*” So, the Greek verb is saying that these conditions must be met in order to obtain the promise.)

Why is the life manifested?

1. To bring us into it.
2. That we may progress further in life.
  - a. To have life (*John 10:10*).
  - b. To have it “*more abundantly*” (*John 10:10*).(“*more abundantly*” means: over and above, something further, more excellent.)
3. That we would see what life is.

*John 17:3* “*And this is life eternal, that they might know thee*” (a greater knowing).

4. So that the glory may also be in us (*Rom 8:18*).

Hearing, seeing, and handling gives John the insight to: “*show*” (v2) and “*declare*”( v3).

Because John saw the life and experienced it, he now can trace its path:

- v2 “*was manifested*” meaning: to make apparent, visible, to know the unknown<sup>3</sup>.  
(The life was communicated to him.)
- v2 “*we have seen it*”  
They perceived life. They understood it, or they grasped in spirit, and came to know in the inner man.

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<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

- v2 “bear witness” John is giving testimony to what he knows (We can only witness to what we know.)  
He knows because he has been taught by divine revelation and is bearing witness of the inner witness.

This was evidenced by the change in the disciples’ manner of living. What they once valued (fishing industry), they no longer valued. This is the test of seeing the life.

What they now value is the result of life being manifest to and in them. Now they can correctly show forth eternal life.  
(Remember, it must be seen within before it can be shown.)

*1 Tim 1:7 “Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.”*

They don’t know nor understand; hence, they cannot show forth life.

- v2 - “show” John shows what he sees from the place where he is.  
The closer one dwells to the Lord, the more accurately they can show others this life.  
Jesus taught with authority and accuracy because of His closeness to the Father.

The life had brought about a manifestation in and out from the Apostles that enabled them to show forth what they saw and experienced.

What are they going to show? “...that eternal life...” (v2)

How would the disciples show eternal life?

They would show it through the testimony of their lips. But, more so, they would show it through the change that had taken place in them, which would be seen through their manner of living.  
(The testimony of the mouth means nothing without the life showing forth a change.)

*1 John 2:6 “the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.” – NAS*

***1 John 1:3 “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”***

When a person comes to Christ, they have life. But, that is no guarantee that they will experience more abundant life. The purpose for John declaring what he has “seen and heard” is so that the Christian may experience life more abundantly.

“may have” John is showing that it is possible. He is not saying that he is declaring this and that all Christians will automatically come into this fellowship.

It is possible that we would move into it, but not all Christians will.

The fellowship that John has come face to face with is what he desires others to come into (the richness of life).

The purpose of the declaration is fellowship (v3b)

He is not declaring doctrine, but life. John is not saying that this fellowship is in doing works or in church activities. It is not in personal prophecy, twenty-four hour prayer watch, or in church doctrine, but life.

John intensely desires that others may be brought into fellowship with them in that life. Remember that John is speaking from a place of fullness in Christ.

*1 John 1:3c “and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ”.*

***1 John 1:4 “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”***

This joy is a true work of God within, which is the result of a higher quality of life than was experienced at initial salvation.

*Ps 16:11 "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."*

"In thy presence" literally means: before thy face, which indicates close relationship<sup>2</sup>.

John was writing so that their joy might "be full" (complete). That is, he is writing so that the readers would move into this life, and the glory that Christ has for them.

### 1 John 1:5-7

#### **I John 1:5-7**

John comes to the message:

#### **v5 "God is light".**

Do you have a desire to walk in the light? If you do, the Lord will bring the light to you.

*John 1:4 "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."*

The life gives direction and the light illuminates the way. If there is a desire to follow the way, the blessings are attainable.

*John 3:20 "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved."*

This applies to the Christian and to those who are not Christians.

Men love darkness (*John 3:19*) and by nature gravitate toward it.

Not all Christians desire to walk in the light that the Lord is giving them.

*John 3:21 "But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."*

This is how this verse reads with the Greek verb meanings inserted:

*John 3:21 "He that doeth (is carrying out or executing) truth (a continuous thing) has at that time come to the light, that his deeds (inner doing or source) may be made manifest, that they are wrought (what they are carrying out is) in God (the true source; that this has come out from God)"*

#### **John 1:6 "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:"**

John is saying that the Christian can walk in darkness. He is not saying that these Christians are not saved. Christians associate darkness with being unsaved, but that is not always accurate.

"If we say" John is writing to Christians and includes himself in this phrase.

The Christian can be walking in darkness and think they have fellowship with Christ.

Everyone views things from their own perspective, and think that they are correct, and that they are in the light.

Jesus said:

*"Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness (Luke 11:35)."*

One of the most dangerous things to a Christian is to think that you spiritually are where you are not.

Someone once said, David sinned committing adultery with Bathsheba and recovered.

They assumed that they were spiritually where David was. What they said was to justify their own adultery. That statement showed the darkness in them.

Another dangerous thing is to think that, because we understand a scripture, we have attained to what it says.

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<sup>2</sup> Brown-Drivers-Brigg's Hebrew Lexicon definitions

Remember, what I understand and what I am are different (1 Cor 13:2).

Luke 11:35 “take heed” in the Greek means: to contemplate; to direct one’s attention to; to observe.

The Greek verb is in the form of a command to the hearers.

This light within would be an ungodly light, an impure or tainted light, something assumed to be godly light. That is why Jesus is saying, “take heed.”

Jesus is telling them how this supposed light is not the godly light.

Luke 11:34 “The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when thine eye is evil, thy body also is full of darkness.”

The eye is the light of the body, and if your eye is single or pure, light will enter the heart.

True light is gathered or collected in purity.

“Single” in the Greek means: clear<sup>1</sup>.

The eye is to be focused upon that which is pure.

That which is gathered in unrighteousness (without the focus upon the pure) may be considered light; a person may think it’s light. That is why false prophets are false, because of their impurity in gathering light.

Those in cults read the Bible but gather darkness.

Mat 6:23 “But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!”

An example of an evil eye would be having anything against another brother.

If, in our hearts, we hate, ridicule, or want to push our brother down, we have an evil eye. And, with an evil eye toward your brother, you will be full of darkness.

If you gather true light, and you are gathering it with an evil eye, you are gathering darkness.

It does not matter the substance of what is gathered. The light can be true, but because of the heart, that which is received is darkness.

The Word preached can be pure, but it can become darkness because of how it is brought into the heart.

1 Pet 2:2 “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”

“Desire” the Greek verb is a command.

“Sincere” in the Greek means: pure<sup>3</sup>.

Desire the unpolluted (unmixed) milk of the word.

We can mix all types of pollutants with the milk, and it will do us no good.

“That ye may grow thereby” “ye may grow” means proper and godly growth.

Note:

1) The person teaching can be giving the polluted word.

2) The word may be pure, but the receiving heart can be mixing impurity with the word.

***1 John 1:5 “...God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”***

In Him is the place of light.

True light always resides in Him, so the place where we need to be is in Him.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

If we are hidden in Him, darkness cannot penetrate into that place. Darkness cannot get to you if you are in Him.

Remember, it is not what you know, it's where you live.

To live in Him means that you are going to become of that same character. We do not see Christ's character growing in all Christians.

If we are going to walk in the light, we must be in agreement with Jesus.

*Luke 11:35* "take heed" that you stay in agreement with the Lord.

The believer who is outside of God is more apt to walk in darkness than the light, or more prone to shift back and forth. This can be taking place with a Christian without them knowing it. We don't want to be shifting back and forth between light and darkness.

*Jam 1:8* "A double minded man is unstable in all his ways"

A double-minded man never comes to fullness in God!

*Mat 6:23* "...if thine eye be evil..."

This can be the main characteristic in a Christian, resulting in darkness being gathered.

- We can gather from satanic sources.
- We can gather from the worldly source, which is also satanic.
- We can gather from the Bible for our own desires and motives, our own glory, or to have knowledge.

*Prov 23:6* "Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats:"

Don't spiritually eat or feed from him (the selfish man). Why? You do not want that characteristic to become part of you or influence you.

*Prov 28:22* "He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye."

You see this impure quality within this individual. The enemy of our soul opposes the light, and he will do what he can to cause you to gather the Word impurely.

In this verse the word "evil" means: disagreeable<sup>2</sup>. There is disagreement with God or His word. Another meaning is: malignant, which is dangerous to health.

*Matt 13:19* "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart."

There is no understanding because of what is in the heart. There is no pure desire and no single eye.

Some believers have an evil eye toward their brother. They may have evil motives, talk their brother down, be envious, jealous, or they may want the preeminence (3 John 9).

It does not matter how much of the Word is in you. If an evil eye is the main characteristic in you, or envy is in you, darkness will be gathered. That is not living in God, but in evil.

*Gal 6:8* "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption (ruin)."

If a Christian walks in disobedience, he is, at that time, gathering darkness.

*Deut 28:15*-The context is disobedience:

v54 "So that the man that is tender among you..."

The man who is least susceptible (very tender, least vulnerable, least liable), when he walks in disobedience, will have an evil eye toward his brother.

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<sup>2</sup> Brown-Drivers-Brigg's Hebrew Lexicon definitions

v56 “the tender and delicate woman...”

And the woman who walks in disobedience will also have an evil eye toward her brother.

A believer can walk in darkness.

***1 John 1:6 “If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:”***

John is including himself in this as being vulnerable if he moves in disobedience.

*1 John 2:9 “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.”*

He has an evil eye toward his brother.

John is not saying that the believer is not saved, but that he is in darkness.

“Is in darkness” - “Is” is in the present tense. This means that this Christian is presently walking in darkness.

“Now” means that he is doing this at this very moment.

*1 John 2:10-11*

*“10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.”*

He is not going to have an evil eye; he is going to avoid certain pit falls.

*11 “But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.”*

If the hatred continues, this Christian will be walking in the darkness instead of walking in the Spirit.

***1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”***

Fellowship is not based upon being saved!

We can have fellowship in the common faith, the common grace, the common indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the common gifts, and a common enemy (the devil).

This fellowship will be very limited and is not the true basis for fellowship.

*John 1:7 “If we walk”* this is a Greek verb of potentiality or possibility. The result “...fellowship...”, will depend upon whether or not the condition is met.

Walking in the light is necessary for:

1) **Fellowship.** *1 John 1:7b*

Fellowship is mentioned in relationship to light and darkness in various scriptures.

*2 Cor 6:14 “...what communion hath light with darkness?”*

v18 God being our Father is based upon walking in the light (v16-17). Fellowship will entail agreement with the Lord and pure desires (v17). Then, He can be a true Father, and one can be brought into sonship.

*Eph 5:11* Do not be a part of the worthless deeds of evil and darkness.

v9 Purity must be present within to acquire pure fruit and right fellowship.

How do I walk in the light?

*2 Pet 1:19 “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:”*

We walk in the light by taking heed to the light that is given.

“Take heed” means: to pay attention to (to monitor, discern).

You are to walk in the light as it relates to your life.

2) **Cleansing.** *1 John 1:7c*

Walking in the light will enable the Holy Spirit to keep sin from setting up shop in your heart. Sin cannot get a foothold in your heart because the blood of Jesus “cleanseth us from all sin.” “Cleanseth” means: clean or purify<sup>3</sup>.

If we walk (presently, present tense) in the light, as we see Him (presently), we have:

- A) Fellowship, one with another (present tense).
- B) The blood of Jesus Christ that presently (present tense) cleanseth us from all sin (all forms of sin).

Whenever sin tries to set up camp within your heart, it will be removed or washed. Evil cannot build on anything because the blood of Christ keeps washing it out. You do not claim this; you walk in the light, and it occurs automatically.

If there is sin, the Holy Spirit honors your desire to walk in the light and cleanses it away. This is an automatic thing only for those who walk in the light. Only those who walk in the light experience these results.

This is not true of every believer.

Any believer who experiences this has progressed from a place of darkness to a place of living in the light and walking in the light. Then the person becomes an expression of the light (remember the condition).

If you have been brought into the light, and the light has been brought into you, “*the day dawns and the day star arises in your heart*” (2 Pet 1:19).

*2 Pet 1:19 “We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:”*

“Day star” is the Greek word: phosphoros<sup>1</sup>. Phos means light, and phoros means carrying. You carry the light.

*Matt 5:16 “Let your light (phos) so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*

*Rev 21:24,23* This city is speaking of the bride.

*Matt 5:14 “Ye are the light (phos) of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.”*  
“Ye are” is present tense – that is, if the qualities from v3-11 are found in you.

*Phil 2:15 “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;”*

“Ye shine” – this is in the passive voice, which means that Jesus does the shining through us. He is the one that shines forth, not us.

### **1 John 1:7-10**

*1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”*

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<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

***1 John 1:9 “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”***

Comparing v7 to v9:

*“If we walk”* It is possible for us to walk in the light, but it is not a sure thing.

We can choose to walk in the light, or we can choose not to. If we meet the condition, we will also receive the results, which would be fellowship and cleansing.

v7 *“But if we walk (presently) in the light, as he (Jesus) is (presently) in the light...”*

The fact is that if we walk in the light, one of the results would be cleansing.

As we walk in this world, many things can affect our spirits. Worldliness, attitudes, pride, the sins of others, etc. can make inroads into our hearts. They can cause spiritual problems that we may not even be aware of. As we walk in the light, we are cleansed from the sin that would get a stronghold in our heart.

If you desire to walk in the light, God will honor that desire and will not allow sin to get a grip in your heart. This cleansing is mainly of unknown sins. As we walk in the light, this cleansing takes place without our being mindful of it. Cleansing occurs automatically because we are walking in the light.

See *Ps 19:12*.

v9 *“If we confess our sins...”* – This is in the present tense.

The Lord is at work here bringing before us the sin that He would like to correct.

At that time, we have the choice whether to confess our sin or not. *“If”* means that the possibility of the action could occur. But the action of confessing must take place on our part for us to receive forgiveness.

We cannot confess what we do not know. So, this must be talking about known sins, which the Lord is bringing to our attention.

*“Confess”* in the Greek means: to agree<sup>3,9</sup>, acknowledge<sup>5</sup>, or yield.

Confession (agreement with the Lord) will bring forgiveness for our current sins and will cleanse us from the sins that would affect our character, which would hinder us from being like the Lord.

Confession of sin is a result of *“walking in the light”*.

*Prov 28:13 “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”*

*“Forsake”* means: relinquish, give up<sup>1,4</sup>.

The Lord wants us to confess and forsake our sin.

Read 2 *Sam 11*.

In 2 *Sam 12:1-9*, God sends the light.

*Psalms 51:1-3* - This is when Nathan the prophet came to David after David went in to Bathsheba. David was ready to confess and forsake his sin.

If we do our part, God will do His. *1 John 1:9b* – The Lord is *“faithful”*.

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<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

<sup>9</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary

<sup>5</sup> Louw and Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>4</sup> Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament

So, there is cleansing by the blood and by confession.

In v9 two things occur “*if we confess our sins*”:

1. We receive forgiveness.
2. We are cleansed from all unrighteousness, (*1 John 1:9c*).

“*Unrighteousness*” is not the same Greek word as “*sin*”.

“*Unrighteousness*” means: wrongfulness of character<sup>1</sup>, what is done in an unjust manner<sup>5</sup>.

Unrighteousness is referring to the result of sin in the Christian’s life that would hinder godly character being built within.

***1 John 1:8 “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”***

There are three areas of deception:

1. The Devil deceives.  
*Rev 12:9; Rev 20:3,10*
2. Man deceives.  
In many places in the Bible, we are told not to let men deceive us.  
*Mat 24:4-5,11,24; Mark 13:5-6; Rom 16:18; Eph 4:14; 2 Thes 2:3; 1 John 3:7*
3. Self-deception.  
*1 Cor 3:18; Eph 5:6*. Self-deception can be willingly or not willingly.  
*1 John 1:7* is self-deception.

If we say that we do not have this need for this cleansing (*1 John 1:9*), we deceive ourselves (v8). When the Lord brings the light to us, if we are in disagreement with what He is showing us about ourselves, we deceive ourselves. Self-deception can be very difficult to recover from.

The purpose of the Lord bringing the light is to uncover what is in the heart. The light brings us to a point of decision. Will I agree with the Lord that what He has uncovered is sin? Or will I make excuses and willfully deceive myself?

*1 John 1:8* - We have wrong views about our character.

The deception may not necessarily be willful, but the fact is that deception exists.

If a man thinks he is perfectly pure, then he does not know himself.

If we are in agreement with the Lord as He judges sin in us, we have forgiveness.

We see His faithfulness to forgive us.

***1 John 1:10 “If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”***

*Rom 3:23 “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”*

One can admit to the truth in *1 John 1:8-9* but not admit to their personal sin.

v10 We make Him a liar if we do not agree with Him as He uncovers our sins.

“...and his word is not in us”

If we are not in agreement with the Lord, His word is not in us (it is not received into our hearts).

v8 “...have no sin...” refers to our condition.

v10 “...have not sinned...” refers to a definite act.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

The importance of walking in the light:

1. The light will bring automatic cleansing from sins.
2. The light will shine on our sin.
3. The light will show us if we are in agreement with the Lord.
4. It will bring the opportunity to agree with the Lord about our sin.
5. It will show our need to confess our sin.
6. It will bring forgiveness.
7. It will cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

### 1 John 2:1-4

John tells them the objective for what he has been saying:

**1 John 2:1a** “*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.*”

To “*sin not*” is the purpose. And, if it is the purpose, we should desire to meet this objective.

This is dealing with willful sin.

“*that ye sin not*” – The Greek definition is: to miss the mark or to be without a share in<sup>1,9</sup>.

In the Greek, “ye sin not” is a verb that offers the possibility that this may occur.

It is possible that we sin not, or John would not have said this.

*Rom 6:15* “*What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*”

The law forbids sin but being under grace pardons sin. Because the Christian is under grace should he feel free to sin? Paul’s answer is no, because one does not have to sin.

*Rom 6:1-2*

“*1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*”

*Tit 2:11-14*

v14 “*...redeem us from all iniquity...*”

“*...zealous of good works*”

“*...eager to do what is right*” – NIV

To meet this desired goal in *1 John 2:1*, to “*sin not*”, there must be a pure desire for this.

*Ps 24:3-5*

“*3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who shall stand in his holy place? 4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. 5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.*”

*Ps 15:1-5*

“*1 LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? 2 He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart 3 and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman, 4 who despises a vile man but honors those who fear the LORD, who keeps his oath even when it hurts, 5 who lends his money without usury and does not accept a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken.*” – NIV

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>9</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary

If the Christian thinks he can ascend without holiness, he is deceived. To ascend and dwell in the holy hill will necessitate purity. If there is a desire not to sin, the Lord can work to fulfill that desire.

*James 3:17 "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable..."*

It is first pure because the Lord through wisdom wants to produce that quality in you.

That is why we read:

*Rev 21:18 "And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass."*

*Rev 21:21 "...and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."*

*Revelation 21* is talking about the bride of Christ (v2, 9).

These qualities will be found in the bride: pure desire, motives, thinking, direction, etc.

All of those attributes were tested and that is what qualifies one to be the bride of Christ.

In the pure heart sin will not dwell (continue) because sin will not be the focus.

The focus is upon that which is pure (Jesus).

***1 John 2:1b "And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:"***

John is not saying that we must sin a little each day, as some people teach.

Sinning does not have to take place. He says that if we do sin, Jesus is there for us.

John is holding the standard (Jesus) before us.

"Advocate" means: intercessor, pleading with God<sup>1,3</sup>.

*Heb 7:25 "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."*

*1 John 2:1b "... But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One." – NIV*

If the Christian sins, or misses the mark, provision has already been made.

***1 John 2:2 "And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."***

He is now the propitiation for our sins.

"Propitiation" in the Greek means: atonement or one who pays for our sin.

v1 – Jesus is intercessor for us if we sin. v2 – He is the atonement for our sins.

v1 "if any man sin" The word "sin" is singular. This is dealing with us individually or an individual sin in one's life.

v2 "propitiation for our sins" The word "sins" is plural, meaning many or all of the sins that one may commit.

As you can see, all the provisions have been made for the Christian.

***1 John 2:2b "...and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"***

This gives us some idea of the scope of God's provisions for man. The plan of God provides for the Christian and for "the whole world." His plan is far reaching.

God's arrangement takes our total needs into consideration, and He meets them.

***1 John 2:3 "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments."***

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

John gives the individual Christian a test.

“*Hereby*” in the Greek means: by this or in this<sup>1</sup>.

By this or in this we know Him. By what do we know Him? We know Him if we keep His commandments.

“*If we keep*” The possibility exists that the Christian will not keep, or not want to keep, what the Lord is commanding.

If the Christian will not keep what God is presently saying, then John says that he does not know Him.

So, in this scripture, John equates knowing Him with keeping His sayings.

By keeping His sayings, we are brought into a greater knowing of Him.

*1 John 2:3 “We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands.” – NIV*

Do we know Him?

- *Mat 5:20 “For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”*  
The scribes and Pharisees based their righteousness on tradition, religious activity, and their own understanding of the scriptures, rather than on keeping the Lord’s sayings.
- *Mat 7:21-23* The setting for this is *Mat 5:1-2*, the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus is speaking primarily to His disciples (*Luke 6:20*).  
In *Mat 7:21-28*, Jesus is talking about the foundation of a Christian’s life.  
What one builds upon is important and will determine the direction of their life.  
The type of foundation a Christian has will determine what can be placed upon it. Sometimes the foundation needs to be rebuilt because things are not quite right (*Jer 23:29*).

*Mat 7:21-23*

v21 Entering the kingdom of God is determined by whether the person is presently doing the will of God or is doing His sayings. One can be saved and not be doing the Lord’s will, which hinders them from moving forward in the kingdom. They are not entering the place that the Lord desires for them to enter.

v23 “*I never knew you*”

I thought the Lord knew everyone? He does not know everyone alike. Some He knows very well because of their closeness to Him.

v23 “*I will profess*” (future tense). When these individuals stand before Him, Jesus will say, “*I never knew you*”. When you were living your life and making the assumption that, because you did all these wonderful works, that all was well, I didn’t know you.

Jesus did not say that they were not saved. But He brings out the fact they did not do the will of the Father. They did not act upon what the Lord was saying to them. Instead they prophesied, cast out devils, and did many wonderful works.

It is hard to understand that one can do these seemingly good things and have the Lord say, “*I never knew you*”.

So, keeping His sayings become paramount.

- *John 17:3 “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

If you were to ask a group of Christians, ‘What does eternal life mean?’, you would receive many different answers. Jesus prays that His disciples might know what eternal life is. He is referring to Christians when He says, “...that they might know thee.” For us to move into a greater knowing, we must be obedient to His sayings.

We cannot know Him if we walk in darkness (*1 John 1:6, 5*).

***1 John 2:3 “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.”***

Or, ‘If we keep what the Lord prescribes, hereby we know that we know Him.’  
Keeping His sayings will bring us into knowing Him more fully.

*1 John 3:24a “And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him.”*

“keepeth” This verb in the Greek means: to presently, continually do what the Lord is saying<sup>3,9</sup>.

*John 15:5*

The one who is keeping His commandment:

- 1) Abideth (“dwelleth”) in Him.
- 2) He (the Lord) abideth in that one, which is the guarantee for fruit-bearing.

So, there will be no knowing Him (in the way that He desires) without keeping His commands.  
Keeping the letter of the law will not help (*2 Cor 3:6*).

Keeping His commandments means that we are not keeping our own desires. So we must leave our self-desires and self-fulfillment.

***1 John 2:4 “He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”***

John is speaking here to the one who says, “I know him”.

There can be a large gap between knowing Him and saying (confessing), “I know Him”.

What one says does not determine relationship. Knowing entails more than just saying.

The true saying is what the life is saying. If one is going to know Him in this way, their life must line up.

Evidently there were those who did this (*1 John 2:4,6,9*).

***1 John 2:4 “... is a liar, and the truth is not in him.”***

If one says that they know Jesus in this way without keeping His commandments, John says that they are “a liar”. They are deceived concerning their spiritual condition.

***1 John 2:4 “...the truth is not in him”***

What truth? The truth that we really don’t know Him and the personal truth about oneself.

So, keeping His commandments leads to knowing, and knowing Him will constrain the heart to do what the Lord says. This leads to the testimony that we know Him!

### **1 John 2:5**

***1 John 2:5 “But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”***

*1 John 2:5 “But whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected.” – NASB*

*1 John 2:15 “Love not the world...”*

*1 John 3:11 “...love one another.”*

*1 John 3:14 ...love the brethren.”*

*1 John 4:8 “...God is love.”*

The word “love” is mentioned more than 38 times in the Epistles of John. In order to understand what John is saying, it will help to understand what the word “love” means in the Greek.

The following teaching on Agape love was largely taken from the teaching of Rev. Charles Haun.

Do all Christians love God?

The English word love does not define what type of love one is talking about: passion; affection for an object; sexual intercourse; love for a sweetheart; or the score of zero in tennis.

In *1 John 2:5*, the word “*love*” is a translation of the Greek word: agape. Most define agape as God’s unconditional love; this is true but limited.

The verb form of the word “*love*” is: agapao. The noun form of the word “*love*” is: agape. They are used over 38 times in the Epistles of John.

Much of the teaching in Christianity says that you received agape when you were born again. But Scripture indicates that agape is given to man at creation.

*Luke 11:43* “*Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love (agapao) the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.*”

The Pharisees were not saved, but they had agape.

*John 12:43* “*For they loved (agapao) the praise of men more than the praise of God.*”

It appears that we are born with agape; it is a gift of God through creation.

It is passed on to us unbeknownst to us.

Agape can be used correctly or incorrectly.

In the unregenerate heart (e.g. Pharisees), it will mostly move toward self. That is because of the carnal nature that has not been changed to allow the opportunity for it to be used correctly.

#### **Look at some characteristics of agape:**

- Agape always has direction.

Some examples of incorrect direction:

*Luke 11:43* The Pharisees are moving in their own desires.

*John 12:43* Agape is directed toward self.

*2 Pet 2:15* These false teachers “...loved the wages of unrighteousness”.

In these examples, agape moves toward self, which is a direction contrary to what God wants. Some teach that agape is God’s love given to the Christian. But agape is not limited to those in God.

*John 3:19* “*And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved (agapao) darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*”

Those that do not believe in Jesus generally direct their love (agape) in the wrong direction.

Some examples of correct direction:

*John 3:16* God’s love is directed toward the whole world.

*John 13:1* “*Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved (agapao) his own which were in the world, he loved (agapao) them unto the end*”.

What is the direction of Jesus’ love? Toward His own, His disciples.

*Mark 12:30* “*And thou shalt love (agapao) the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*”

This is the first commandment, which is to direct love (agape) toward God.

*John 13:34 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."*

It is no longer an eye for an eye. The new commandment is that the disciples will direct their love toward one another, as Jesus directed His love toward them.

*Mat 22:39 "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."*

The direction that love takes matters!

- There is dedication in love (agape).

The word "love" (agape) can probably be best translated as: dedication.

*John 3:16* God loves us, and He is dedicated to us. Hence, we are to be dedicated to one another.  
*John 15:17 "These things I command you, that ye love one another."*

'Dedication' means: selfless devotion.

*I John 3:11 "For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."*

Different things can interfere with our dedication:

- If we hate our brother.
- If we have self-love.
- If we want the preeminence.
- If we are dedicated to someone or something more than the Lord.

*I John 2:15 "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."*

If the direction of our love is the world, we cannot love the Lord in the way that He has commanded because we are dedicated to the world.

If the heart is dedicated to the world, the godly qualities of agape are not within. There is no sacrifice for others, no correct dedication, no faithfulness to the Lord, etc.

- This love (agape) is separated from emotion:

*Matt 5:46 " For if ye love ( agapao) them which love (agapao) you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?"*

The context for this scripture is v44 "...love your enemies...". There is no reward if you only love those who love you. Jesus tells His disciples to love those who hate you. How can this occur if you base your love on your emotions?

Agape is not a word of emotion. Love is to flow out from the heart to others unhindered by emotions.

*Luke 6:27 "But I say unto you which hear, love (agapao) your enemies, do good to them which hate you,"*

If we do not like our enemies, that makes no difference. We are commanded to love them regardless of how we feel about them.

When Peter says, "*Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended,*" he was speaking out from his emotions, not out from love (agape). This type of love has nothing to do with emotions; rather, we choose to love our enemies.

- Agape is of the will.

You do not love because you feel like it, but because you have decided to.

*John 14:15 "If ye love me, keep my commandments."*

We may not feel like loving the Lord in this way, so we choose to love Him out from our will. We decide to love Him by keeping His commandments.

We must choose to love!

- Agape makes choices.

*Mark 10:21 " Then Jesus beholding him loved (agapao) him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me."*

Jesus makes the choice to love him, regardless of His feelings, or this man's lack of response.

*Mat 22:37 "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love (agapao) the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."*

Initially, we must make this choice. Then the Lord helps us to accomplish it.

*Matt 22:39 "And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love (agapao) thy neighbour as thyself."*

We decide to love our neighbor even if we do not like them.

- Love (agape) is faithful to the choices or decisions it makes.

*2 Pet 2:15* They were faithful to the object of their love, which was unrighteousness.

The Pharisees took that which is good and used it in a way that moved them further from the Lord (*Luke 11:43; John 12:43*).

*John 13:1* Jesus was faithful to His disciples, who were the object of His love.

*John 15:9 "As the Father hath loved (agapao) me, so have I loved (agapao) you: continue ye in my love (agape)."*

Jesus says that, because the Father was faithful in His love toward Jesus, so Jesus is faithful in His love toward us.

Agape will be faithful to the object of one's choice: either self or others.

- Agape sacrifices.

There is always some sort of sacrifice involved in this love.

See *John 3:16; 1 John 3:16; 1 John 4:9*

*John 15:12 "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."*

*John 13:34 "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."*

Why was this a new commandment? Because the law said, “Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot”, and did not produce the dedication or sacrifice for your neighbor that the Lord was looking for.

*Gal 5:6 “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”*

Faith and love are mentioned together in many scriptures.

*1 John 2:5 “But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”*

“Perfected” in Greek means: to add what is yet lacking in order to render a thing full; to complete; to accomplish<sup>1,3</sup>.

Keeping His word will bring one’s dedication and sacrifice to a fuller place.

### **1 John 2:9-19**

***1 John 2:19 “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would not doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”***

Because one leaves a church does not mean that this scripture applies to them.

One may leave a church for different reasons, for example:

- Being out of the will of God.  
They may not like certain things they see. They may not agree with the pastor. Or they may have some other reason for leaving the church.  
When God calls an individual to a particular place, they are to stay there until God says to leave. Just because they find some area of disagreement does not mean that they should leave the church. It is much better to learn submission to God and the leadership!
- They are not given the preeminence (*3 John 9*).
- They may have some self-centered desire.
  - 1) They may have a desired goal that outweighs their desire to do will of the Lord.
  - 2) They may convince themselves that the Lord is in their desired goal.
- Their drive to fulfill some self-centered desire.  
They act upon some desire that they have that takes them “*out from us*”, as John says.
- Self-love.
- Or, they may leave, being in the will of God, keeping attached to the church.  
They may be sent out from the church to minister to others.

When John says, “*they went out from us*”, this is speaking of a spiritual place where John and the other disciples were. Those who left, first left that spiritual place, and then physically left their presence.

The setting for *1 John 2:19* shows us the core reason for their leaving (*1 John 2:9,11*).

***1 John 2:9 “He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.”***

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

The word “*hate*” in Greek means: to detest very strongly, to have contempt for, to be malicious toward, to have unjustifiable feelings towards others.

A Christian may say: I don’t hate my brother that way.  
Another meaning in the Greek for the word “*hate*” is: to love less<sup>1</sup>.

Let us insert that definition in this verse:  
“*He that saith he is in the light, and loves his brother less (than himself) is (presently) in darkness.*”

The absence of love toward our brother is equal to hating our brother.

*3 John 1:9 “I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.”*

Diotrephes was fond of having the preeminence, or ambitious to be first. By elevating himself, he loved the brethren in the churches less than himself. In reality, by desiring the preeminence, he hated his brothers.

*Col 1:18 “And he (Jesus) is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”*

We are to give the Lord the preeminence in all things. Diotrephes did not do that; rather he desired to be first in the church.

***1 John 2:11 “But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.”***

The Greek tense for the verb translated “*is*” means: presently.

The Christian who hates, or loves his brother less than himself, presently walks in darkness.

He abides and finds his expression in darkness. He presently walks in darkness and does not even understand his condition, “*because that darkness hath blinded his eyes*”. He has no spiritual understanding in regard to his condition.

John does not say that he is not saved, but that he is in darkness. When the Christian is presently in darkness, the Lord works to bring light into that situation. If that is unsuccessful, they will remain in a state of darkness and will begin to walk in darkness (“*...is in darkness, and walketh in darkness...*”). What occurs is that they are not progressing in God and growth lacks. And it does not matter if they are used of God (*Mat 7:22*), because darkness becomes their expression instead of the will of the Father.

*Verse 10* is in contrast to *verse 9* and *11*.

***1 John 2:10a “He that loveth his brother abideth in the light...”***

*“...loveth...abideth...light...”*

He that “*loveth*”, or has sacrificial dedication toward his brother, abides in the light. Or, ‘The one who continually loves abides in the light.’

Loving others becomes the expression of their life, thus fulfilling agape, which makes abiding in the light possible.

John does not say, ‘he that sayeth,’ but “*he that loveth*.” This indicates love in action, not just words.

“*Abideth*” emphasizes permanent relationship.

Jesus said, “*he that abideth in me...brings forth much fruit*” (*John 15:5*).

You cannot have fruit without light, even in the natural.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

So abiding in the light brings about growth, which is evidenced by fruit bearing.

*John 15:10 "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love."*

Keeping His sayings causes us to abide in His love.

*1 John 2:10 "He that loveth his brother is abiding in the light."*

So, keeping the Lord's commandments is proof that one is abiding in love and the light. Then, one's life expression will be out from the abiding place.

Love is the evidence that the Christian is abiding in the light.

**1 John 2:10b "...and there is none occasion of stumbling in him."**

In the one who loves correctly, there is nothing in him that causes himself or others to stumble. In contrast, the one who does not love causes him and others to stumble.

**1 John 2:13 –14 "...fathers...young men...little children..."**

John is writing to those of different spiritual levels of growth.

*1 John 2:13-14*

*"13 I am writing to you who are mature because you know Christ, the one who is from the beginning. I am writing to you who are young because you have won your battle with Satan.*

*14 I have written to you, children, because you have known the Father. I have written to you who are mature because you know Christ, the one who is from the beginning. I have written to you who are young because you are strong with God's word living in your hearts, and you have won your battle with Satan." – New Living Translation*

"*Fathers*", or mature ones, are those who have matured and have had worked into them the ability to father others.

"*Young men*", or young ones, are those in whom growth is apparent because they have overcome various temptations and tests.

"*Little children*" are those who are at a beginning stage, whether they are new Christians or have been Christians for years.

There is to be progression from children toward being spiritual fathers. So the normal progression for a Christian is spiritual growth into greater light.

There can be progression into darkness, just as there can be a progression into light (*Chapter 2:15-18*).

**1 John 2:15-16** John points out some things that take one in the direction of darkness:

- If our love is moving toward the world.  
We can be thinking like the world and value what the world values. We may be attached to the world system (which is darkness) and loving the things that are temporal.
- The lust of the flesh, and the eyes, and the pride of life will move us toward darkness.

**1 John 2:17** Life is transient! No matter how hard man tries to hold on to the things of this world, they will pass away. None of the things man has desired and accrued (riches and treasures of this life) can be taken along at death, because death is the great divider. But those that are doing the will of God will abide forever. There will never be separation from the word of God in the heart.

**1 John 2:18** He is primarily addressing "*little children*" because they are the most vulnerable to walking in darkness.

v18 shows different levels of darkness. It shows those who have matured in darkness and those walking toward that goal.

- “*Antichrist* (singular) *shall come...*”  
This is referring to the person of antichrist who is said to come.  
(2 Thes 2:3) “*The man of sin*”  
In him there is fullness of darkness, or maturity in darkness.
- “*Many anti-christs...*” (plural)  
“*Antichrist*” means: one who opposes Christ or resists Him<sup>5,9</sup>.  
There are differing degrees of darkness in them.

The unsaved many times oppose Christ outwardly and inwardly.

Someone who is saved also can oppose or resist Christ.

One opposes Christ coming into their heart; the other can oppose Christ’s lordship of their heart.  
2 Tim 2:25 “...*oppose themselves...*”

Those who are saved can move in darkness and can be in opposition to what Christ wants to work in them. They can progress down that road into greater darkness concerning God and the ways of God. Mat 25:30 “...*unprofitable servant into outer darkness...*” There is no understanding of the ways of God and no movement into richness, because they are in darkness.

***1 John 2:22 “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”***

In the Greek, the word “*denieth*” means: to contradict<sup>1,9</sup>.  
This is not self-denial but denying the Lord to work in the heart.  
You see the false prophets and false teachers contradicting the Truth (Jesus).

2 Pet 2:1 “*But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.*”

They are contradicting the teaching of Jesus as applied to their personal life. This contradicting is what makes the false prophets and false teachers false.

II John 1:7 “*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.*”

1 John 4:3 “...*the spirit of antichrist...*”

There is the spirit of antichrist that is in the world and can be seen by the Christian. The full range of darkness can be seen in those who have that spirit.  
Some are beginning in darkness, others are progressing, and still others are far, far into darkness.

***1 John 2:19 “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”***

“*They*” is referring to those who were in the light but have stumbled because they have put themselves before their brother, or because of some other area of darkness moving in their heart.

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<sup>5</sup> Louw and Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

<sup>9</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary

<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

“They went out from us,” John says. Their spirits were now different from before and they left the presence of the disciples because they no longer wanted to be around the light.  
2 Cor 6:14 “...what communion hath light with darkness?”

The only darkness they may have been in is that they “*hateth*”, or love their brother less. That is serious enough to cause them to eventually walk in darkness.

Jesus is faithful in seeking those who are in darkness.

2 Thess 3:1-3

“1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: 2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. 3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.”

### 1 John 2:16, 20-29

**1 John 2:16 “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”**

The believer can set their heart toward the world (v15), and the desires of their flesh will move them far from the Father. Being distanced from the Father is a place of vulnerability. The devil will attempt to tempt man, and will use the avenues mentioned in (v16) “*the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life*”.

“The lust of the flesh”

- The children of Israel

Num 11:33-34

“33 And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague. 34 And he called the name of that place Kibroth-hattaavah: because there they buried the people that lusted”

Ps 81:12 “So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.”

“The lust of the eyes”

- David

2 Sam 11:2 “...and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.”

- Lot

Gen 13:10 “And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan”.

This does not appear wrong or sinful, but Lot looked to this fertile land and not toward God, and this led to his living in Sodom.

- Eve

Gen 3:6 “And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”

“The pride of life”

- Pharaoh

Pharaoh is an example of having the pride of life. He saw the twelve plagues (miracles), yet his pride kept him from yielding to God in Moses.

- Samson  
*Judges 14:3* The devil appeals to Samson's stubborn pride.
- Jonah  
*Jonah 1:2-3* Jonah's pride does not allow him to preach to Nineveh. He thinks he is better than them and that they deserve God's judgment.

*Mark 7:22-23* "...pride, foolishness: 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

The methods that the devil uses to tempt man will fall under the lust of the flesh and eyes, and the pride of life. Jesus is tempted in each of these areas:

*Mat 4:3* "...command these stones be made bread:" (the lust of the flesh)

The devil was trying to appeal to Jesus' self desires.

*Mat 4:6* "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone." (the pride of life)

In this instance, the appeal is to any pride that may be in Jesus.

*Mat 4:8-9* 8 "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (the lust of the eyes)

Here, Satan tempts Jesus in the area of sight. He offers Him all the kingdoms of the world.

These are the areas where man is weak:

- What the sinful self desires (the lust of the flesh).
- What people see and want (the lust of the eyes).
- The boastful pride and vainglory of life (the pride of life).

Apart from God working in the Christian to kill the carnal nature in him, Satan will succeed in drawing him away from Christ.

*James 1:14* "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

In contrast to the "...the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life...", we have *1 John 2:20* where we have the ointment of the Holy Spirit smeared on us.

***1 John 2:20* "But ye have an unction from the Holy One and ye know all things."**

"Uction" means: to smear on; ointment<sup>1,3</sup>.

The spirit of antichrist is very powerful and pervades the world system. In *1 John 2:19*, "...they went out from us...", took place because they were influenced by the spirit of antichrist.

In contrast to that, we have an anointing.

If the Christian has the ointment smeared on him, he is able to resist and overcome the spirit of antichrist. Jesus has been victorious over lusts and pride so that the Christian can be victorious through Him.

"...and ye know all things." You know all the things that are necessary to keep you from the spirit of the world and all things that are necessary for you to stay on the correct way.

God has provided all that is needed!

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

**1 John 2:21 “I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth.”**

John gives two reasons why he is saying this:

1. “*Because ye know the truth*”

The truth has been communicated in the inner man to those that John is addressing. That truth has God as its source and strengthens one against the spirit of antichrist and against self-desires.

2. “*And because that no lie is of the truth*”

Any lie does not have God as its source, but it comes from the devil. The lie tries to make its way into the heart in order to disrupt the anointing.

**1 John 2:22 “Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”**

Jesus always comes to the Christian with the truth, specifically the truth about one’s heart. The one who is the liar is the one who contradicts the truth that Jesus is revealing to them about their heart. He is of the spirit of antichrist.

“*Denieth*” in the Greek means: to contradict<sup>1,9</sup>.

This verb means: to presently continually contradict.

That one is anti (against) Christ or is opposed to the truth. He is in opposition to the Father and the Son’s work in him. One reason truth is opposed is because that person will have to change and allow Christ to have His way.

**1 John 2:23 “Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.”**

This verse shows that things can go either way. If the Christian contradicts the Son, he does the same to the Father. But if the Christian presently agrees with the personalized truth that Jesus brings, he has the Father also.

His agreement brings reconciliation to the Father and allows God’s work in the heart to continue.

**1 John 2:24 “Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.”**

Give place to the Lord in your life and value the word that He brings to you.

The words “*abide*”, “*shall remain*”, and “*shall continue*” are all the same Greek word.

If the truth remains (“*abides*”) in you, you shall remain (“*abide*”) in the Son and in the Father.

**1 John 2:25 “And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life.”**

*John 17:3 “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God...”*

So the promise of eternal life is that we might perceive, recognize, become acquainted with, and understand the Father. Knowing Him can occur as we abide in the truth and the truth abides in us.

This knowing is beyond initial salvation and is available to the Christian who abides in Him and He abides in us (*John 15:5*).

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>9</sup> Vine's Exp[ository Dictionary

**1 John 2:26 “These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.”**

The seduction is that we would be drawn astray from the truth and knowing the Father (*James 1:14*).

We are always seduced away from knowing the Father.

**1 John 2:27 “But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”**

When we come to Christ, we are brought into the light and given an anointing there. Walking in the light is to continue so that the anointing may teach us. We don't need anyone to tell us what is true because, as we walk in the light, the Holy Spirit will tell us the truth. John is not saying that man should never teach us, because teachers are gifts to the church (*Eph 4:11*). Rather, he is saying that being divinely taught is always better and being taught by man should agree with what the Spirit is teaching us.

Being taught by the Spirit is impossible if we are not abiding in the light (*1 John 2:10*).

**1 John 2:28 “And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.”**

“Confidence” means: openness<sup>1,9</sup>.

Are we open to God today, or are our hearts closed?

**1 John 2:29 “If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him.”**

Those who are birthed from above should reflect the righteousness of Christ. That is one reason why Jesus works to purify the hearts of His people.

Those who reflect the character of Jesus are of Him and He in them.

### **1 John 3:1-10**

**1 John 3:1 “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”**

Behold the character of agape the Father has given that “we should be called” the sons of God.

“We should be called” is a Greek verb that means: becoming the sons of God may occur.

It is possible to be called the sons of God by God, but not all will be.

As with so many other scriptures in the Bible, there are conditions that must be met to obtain the promise.

*2 Pet 1:4 “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature.”*

“Ye might be” is referring to conditions that will have to be met, whatever they may be, to partake of the divine nature (purity, holiness, hunger, etc.).

When we come to Christ, we become children of God and are potentially sons.

Are there conditions that must be met for a child of God to inherit what a mature son would?

Would we hand adult responsibility to our ten year-old that has not matured? What if he is twenty and still never matured.

*1 Tim 3:6 “ Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>9</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary

God does not give spiritual responsibility to the immature.

Becoming sons of God seems to be the result of meeting certain conditions, and Christians may or may not direct their lives to meet those conditions.

In the Bible, inheritance comes with conditions.

The Lord promised the Israelites that were delivered from Egypt that they would inherit the land (*Ex 23:29-30*). Even though that promise was theirs, they never did inherit because they did not meet the conditions that would have made the promise come to pass (*Num 14:26-30*).

*Isa 1:19-20* “If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20 But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.”  
The condition for eating the best of the land is to be willing and obedient.

*Matt 5:44-45*

v45 in the King James Version says, “That ye may be the children of your Father”.

The Greek word “*children*” should be translated sons. Some other translations translate this word as “*son*”.

*Matt 5:45* “That you may be sons of your Father in heaven.” – NIV

v45 The Greek verb translated “...*may be*...” means that the possibility exists.

In these scriptures, the condition for becoming sons in character, as in seen in v44, is “*love your enemies*”.

*Mat 5:5* “*Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*”

The condition to inherit the earth is meekness.

*Mat 25:33-34*

“33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:”

Inheriting the kingdom was not based upon what the sheep did or did not do, but what they were. The qualities the king saw were the qualities that make them sheep. So the basis for inheritance was intrinsic characteristics.

*Mark 10:17-21*

v17 A certain ruler came to Jesus and asked, “*what must I do that I may inherit eternal life*”.

v21 Jesus says, “*go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor...and come, take up the cross, and follow me*”.

The conditions to inherit are seen in v21.

The same account in *Mat 19:21* has the same conditions to inherit.

*Mat 19:21* “*Jesus said...If thou wilt be perfect*” or, ‘If thou would be complete in growth and character,’ meet the conditions.

The condition is to do what Jesus says!

This ruler was looking at the fruit in Jesus’ life but did not see the process that brought about this fruit.

The purpose of salvation is inheritance!

*Rev 21:7* “*He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*”

The condition to inherit all things is overcoming.

*Mat 19:29 "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."*

The condition for inheritance is to forsake.

"*Inherit*" in the Greek means: to be an heir<sup>1</sup>; to become a partaker of<sup>3</sup>.

Remember, there are conditions to be a partaker.

To mature from a child to a son is a process.

In the natural, one is born a child and grows to be a man. Some physically grow up but never mature and become the men they should become.

To become in the scriptures is a process!

The dictionary definition for the word 'become' is: to be turned into; to be worthy of; to be suitable.

Synonyms are: mature; develop; progress, grow; and change.

*John 1:12 "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."*

"*Power*" in the Greek means: capacity; privilege<sup>1</sup>.

"*To become*" in the Greek means: to be made; to come to pass.

Those who receive Jesus are given the capacity to be made sons of God. What they need to do is what Jesus is saying to them. They are to meet the condition that is laid before them.

*Mark 1:17 "And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men."*

Being fishers of men is a process, just as becoming a mature son is a process.

*Rom 4:18 "Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be."*

Abraham had to mature and believe God for this promise to come to pass.

*Psalms 17:15 "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."*

We don't know what we will become, but when He shall appear we shall be similar to Him.

*Mat 8:11-12*

*11 "And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline {at the table} with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;*

*12 but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." – NAS*

They were potentially sons but did not mature and progress in light and become sons in reality.

*Gal 4:1-5*

*v1* Though the son is appointed by his father's will the heir of all his father's possessions, yet until he arrives at the legal age, he is master of nothing and does not differ from a servant.

*Gal 4:5 "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."*

"*We might receive*" In the Greek, this verb means the possibility exists that we will receive.

"*Adoption*" in Greek means: sonship<sup>1</sup>; placing in the position as a son<sup>9</sup>. This does not mean that God disowns us, but maturity is necessary in kingdom principles.

*Gal 4:5 " To redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons." -NIV*

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

<sup>9</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary

Gal 4:6 *Because we are sons potentially, God sent forth his spirit to encourage our development, for the Spirit cries out to the Father.*

Gal 4:7 As we mature, we are no longer servants, but sons and heirs.

Another condition is placed upon being sons of God:

Rom 8:14 *“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”*

If the Spirit is not able to lead the Christian, are they sons or children? The one who is a son of God is led by the Spirit!

1 John 3:1 The manner or quality of agape given to us will lead, help, draw and commit to us in order to bring us from children to the inheritance of sons.

Wuest Translation – *“to the end that we may be named sons of God”.*

John sees the fulfillment of agape, which works in us to become what we are to become.

v1 says we have the potential to come into inheritance.

v2 John addresses them as though they have come into being an heir. He is addressing them as if they have met the conditions and have become sons.

**1 John 3:2 *“Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”***

Those who are moving along in their development are becoming more like Jesus.

*“...it doth not yet appear what we shall become...”*

We don't see the Christ-likeness of others because the work has not been made known.

1 Cor 15:49 *“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”*

**1 John 3:2 *“...we shall be like him...”***

*“Like”* in the Greek means: similar<sup>1</sup>; resemble<sup>3</sup>.

Rom 8:29 *“For those whom He foreknew [of whom He was aware and loved beforehand], He also destined from the beginning [foreordaining them] to be molded into the image of His Son [and share inwardly His likeness].” – AMP*

*“When”* should be translated: if<sup>1,3</sup>.

The Greek verb translated *“shall appear”* also means that His appearance is possible.

We know that this cannot refer to the rapture or Jesus' second coming because that is certain, so it must be referring to something different.

**1 John 3:2 *“...now we are the sons of God...”***

We are cooperating with the Lord and are in the process of maturing. If the Lord comes and manifests Himself to us, we shall be like Him to some degree because we are cooperating with Him in our lives. We are abiding in Him and are confident and unashamed before Him as He comes to us (1 John 2:28).

**1 John 3:3 *“And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”***

If we have the hope that we shall be like Him, then we will allow Him to do what He wants to do in our lives.

Our surrender to Jesus brings purification to our life. This purification depends first on us and becomes our goal because we see Jesus.

**1 John 3:4 *“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”***

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

*I John 3:4 “Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness” – New American Standard  
“Practices lawlessness” – That is, they are not coming under certain restrictions that would bring purification.*

***I John 3:5 “And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.”***  
His sacrifice was enough to take away our sin, but we must be willing to come to Him.

***I John 3:6 “Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.”***

If we are going to dwell in Him and make Him our home, then we will not stay in our sin. If our life’s expression is sin, then we do not see, nor do we know Him in the way that the Lord desires, and we remain in darkness.

*I John 2:6 “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”*  
If we abide in Him, our life’s expression will be light.

***I John 3:7 “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous.”***

If righteousness is the direction of one’s heart, then they will be righteous.

*I John 3:7 “...the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;” – New American Standard*

***I John 3:8 “He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.”***

John is talking about the source of one who continues in sin. The devil’s nature is to continually sin. If the Christian is following that path, he will begin to take on the nature of the devil because that nature is seen in the devil from the beginning.

Jesus was manifested for the purpose of destroying the works of the devil. “*He might destroy*” means that the possibility exists that Jesus will destroy the works of the devil, if the Christian repents and the continuation of sin is broken in them. The purpose for which the Son of God was manifested was to destroy the works of the devil in the heart. Jesus looks for a heart that will surrender to Him, giving Him the opportunity to bring about this good destruction.

***I John 3:9 “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”***

The one who is born of God will not want to practice sin because God’s seed or God’s life is in him. The Holy Spirit is there convicting the heart so that the new life will control him and lead him away from sin.

*I John 3:10 “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”*

#### **1 John 3:11-24**

***I John 3:10 “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”***

The one who does not do righteousness is not of God. What is being manifested from the individual reveals the source (virtue, purity, obedience, anger, lust, etc.). Righteousness and unrighteousness exhibit certain characteristics, which expose the source of each.

***I John 3:11 “For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.”***

This love is others-centered and is contrary to sin. Sin is self-centered, never considers others, but considers what self wants and brings forth selfish fruit – jealousy, envy, hatred, greed, lust, etc.

A Christian may not manifest this type of evil fruit but still must choose whether he will love his brother or love himself more. It is always easier to receive love than to give love.

The line is drawn, and Christians will have to choose on which side of the line they will stand. God desires that we would choose love, "...that we should love one another...". Self-centeredness must go, being replaced by love for our brother. There is no self-centeredness in love.

***1 John 3:12 "Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."***

Cain's offering was not accepted because of the heart that offered it (*Gen 4:5,7*). God rejected Cain's offering because of his heart, because an unrighteous heart brings an unrighteous offering. His actions showed that his works were evil.

The worldly spirit in Cain was set against the life of God in Able. The righteous works of Able testified against Cain and against what was in Cain's heart.

*John 3:19 "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."*

***1 John 3:13 "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."***

Even if we are very nice to everyone, we cannot avoid having those who hate us. The world is the enemy of God (*Jam 4:4*), and if we are in God, there will be those who will be opposed to us. In the realm of the spirit, the spirit of the world in others is set against you and will try to kill the life of God in you. So, do not be surprised when others come against you for no apparent reason.

***1 John 3:14 "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death."***

Love toward your brother is a sign of life because it testifies to the character of God. If dedication and self-sacrifice are present in the heart, loving our brother is easy.

*John 3:16* Christ's sacrifice demonstrated God's dedication to the world, which was selfless. The life of God is never self-centered!

***1 John 3:15 "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."***

John is not saying that hatred is the same as murder. One, who has the spirit of hatred, if he would continue in it, could be led to murder. The spirit that leads to murder is in him.

***1 John 3:16 "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."***

In *verse 14* and *16* of *1 John*, John talks about love for our brother. Having love toward our brother helps us in different ways:

- It is a safeguard against hate.  
If we truly love our brother, it will be impossible for hate to get a foothold in the heart.
- It gives us direction.  
It takes our thoughts off of ourselves and redirects us. No longer are we limited to our small world, for now we see the needs of others (*1 John 3:17, Jam 1:27*).  
Our goal is changed, and now our love moves toward the object of our love, which are the brothers.
- It gives us opportunity.

Because the goal of the heart has been changed from self to others, the opportunity exists for us to be faithful to the object of our love. Now, we can become faithful to God and to those who we are commanded to love.

- The care of others can be entrusted to us.  
God cannot trust all Christians with the care of people. The lack of faithfulness, desire, ability, obedience, and other such things can hinder the arm of the Lord from being extended through the Christian. But there are those in whom the Lord has worked in such a way that they become the fulfillment of the love of God to others.
- It brings us into understanding.  
Man's wisdom cannot comprehend the 'why' of love (*1 Cor 3:19*). Why would I even try to love the unlovable? Why waste my time on others, when I can spend my time on me? As love finds its expression through us, wisdom and understanding will be experienced (*Prov 3:13, Prov 4:7*).

In *verse 14*, the word "loveth" indicates that we are to presently, continually love our brother. We will always have the occasion to sacrifice for others in some way.

***1 John 3:17 "But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"***

If there is no compassion for our brother, how does the love (agape) of God dwell in us (*Jam 2:14-16*)?

The love of God is to be devoid of self-centeredness. If we are self-centered, the love of God does not dwell in us in the way that God intends.

***1 John 3:18 "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."***

There is a vast difference between loving in word and loving in deed. Christians can say many things and speak wonderful words, but if there is no corresponding action, the word means nothing (*Jam 2:20*). Though sometimes the opportunity to do the deed is not available, if the heart desires to do the action, it is counted as the same as doing.

***1 John 3:19 "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him."***

"Hereby" is referring to *v18*, loving in deed and truth rather than in word. This is how we can perceive that we are of the truth. It is by our action that we know that we are living in the truth.

***1 John 3:20 "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things."***

The heart (conscience) is not always a reliable source in correctly determining what is true. The heart may not condemn us, or it may say to us that we have done wrong (*1 Tim 4:2*). Our hearts may be deceived; He cannot be deceived. God is greater than the heart and can accurately reveal the truth because He knows all things.

*1 John 3:21 "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."*

If, in our heart, we know that we have been sincere and have desired purity, then we will be secure in our approach to God.

***1 John 3:22 "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."***

For this to work as John states, our desires must line up with the Lord's desires. We must be obedient and move in a way that pleases Him.

There are certain things in the scriptures that hinder answered prayer: sin (*Psa 66:18; Isa 59:2; Jer 14:10-12*), disobedience (*Prov 28:9*), hypocrisy and insincerity (*Isa 29:13*), wrong motives (*Mat 6:5-6; Luke 18:11-14; Jam 4:3*), lack of faith (*Heb 11:6; Jam 1:6-7*), marital problems (*1 Pet 3:7*), etc.

**1 John 3:23 “And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.”**

Remember, John is addressing Christians when he says to believe on Jesus’ name. Believing on His name is not a one-time thing that is done at initial salvation. Rather, we are challenged to continue to believe on His name. We are to put our faith and trust in and adhere to and rely on the name (character) of His Son Jesus Christ. As Jesus personally comes to give us direction, we are to trust and rely on His character, believing that He understands and knows what is best.

**1 John 3:24 “And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.”**

Presently keeping His commandments brings about a dual abiding, the Christian in Him and Jesus in them. This dual abiding is the guarantee that the Lord will bring forth fruit (*John 15:5*) and assures us that our relationship with Jesus is continuing and growing.

### 1 John 4:1-5

**1 John 4:1 “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God...”**

“Beloved” is a form of the Greek word ‘agape.’ John is addressing those in whom agape is correctly found.

“Beloved” means: valued by God because of one’s relationship to Him<sup>5</sup>.

Is relationship is a necessary element in being able to see what spirits are of God?

“Believe” means: to adhere to; cleave to; to trust; to have faith in; to rely on<sup>3,5</sup>.

We are to “believe not” (not place trust in; don’t adhere to; or not cling to) every spirit.

There are those who say that they are saved, but we are not to trust what every spirit says.

“Try” in the Greek is a command.

“Try” means: to test; examine; scrutinize; examine for genuineness; prove; discern<sup>1,3</sup>.

To try the spirits, the first step must be an on-going reception of the things of the Spirit (*1 Cor 3:12*). This will place us in a position to be able to discern spiritual things (*1 Cor 3:15*).

Why are we to test the spirits? Because there are many spirits that are not of God.

Many times, the assumption is made that if miracles or success in numbers are seen, the person or ministry is of God.

John tells us how to try the spirits:

**1 John 4:2-3a “Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: 3a And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God...”**

John is talking about spirit, not about what a person says (“...every spirit that confesseth...”).

There is a spirit behind everything that is said and done, but what spirit is it?

There is the Spirit of God. There is the spirit of man, which can be influenced by God or the devil. Then, there is the spirit of the devil, and the spirit of the world, which is a tool of the devil.

1) What is the spirit behind what is said?

2) What is that spirit saying?

Example:

Balaam (*Num 22:1-25:5; 31:8,16; Jos 13:22; Rev 2:14*)

What spirit was behind what he did, and what was the spirit saying?

The spirit behind what Balaam did was the spirit of greed.

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<sup>5</sup> Louw and Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

Each time Balak told Balaam that he wanted to “*promote*” Balaam, Balak meant that he wanted to give him a monetary gift and/or position (*Num 22:17; 22:37; 24:11*).

The reason Balaam told Balak how to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel was because of greed.

His spirit was confessing his lust for money, even though he did not curse Israel.

Was the spirit of Balaam testifying that Jesus Christ came in the flesh? Was his spirit agreeing with the ways of the Lord?

It does not matter what his mouth was saying, but rather what his spirit was confessing?

Balaam’s spirit was confessing something different than the Spirit of Christ.

He was denying or contradicting what the Spirit of Christ was saying. How? By his life.

Greed was what he was confessing with his spirit, and his actions agreed with that (*Jude 11*).

This spirit may not have been seen at first, but eventually did come to the surface where it could be seen.

The Bible calls Balaam a prophet (*2 Pet 2:15-16*).

But, he had this false thing within him, which makes him a false prophet.

What is inspiring a person? Is it God, Satan, or self?

Is the person walking in the light or shifting back and forth?

*Acts 20:29-30*

*29 “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”*

In *1 John 2:19*, those that “*went out*,” confessed something different in spirit than they once did.

They went out from the spiritual place that John and the other Apostles dwelled.

One meaning in the Greek for the word “*went out*” is: to go out of an assembly<sup>3</sup>.

The assembly is to be a place where self is destroyed, and that occurs as one loves their brother more than they love themselves. God has intended that this love should be expressed through the Christian’s spirit. If they go out, self will not be destroyed, and the opportunity to love the brothers is missed.

What is the spirit confessing?

*2 John 1:7 “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”*

They become “*deceivers*” to those who only focus their attention on what is being said with the mouth.

*Rev 16:14 “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”*

“*The spirits of devils*” have no expression in the world but through man.

Every spirit will confess or declare what it is and from what source it comes.

This begins in spirit and finds its expression out from there.

This expression will eventually come forth from a false prophet, false teacher, or another who has yielded to the spirit that is not of God. Certain qualities will eventually come forth that will identify the spirit behind the expression, for example: wanting the preeminence, no submission to

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<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

authority, having another agenda, being self-willed, to be controlling of others through forced submission, full of anger, etc.

Christians have problems because they look at the expression without properly identifying the source.

*Mat 24:11* "...shall rise..." They are able to "rise" because of the lack of discernment in others. One thing is confessed with the mouth, and something else is going on in the spirit of the individual. With some people, it is easy to see what spirit they are of, but with others it is very difficult to see.

*Acts 20:30* "...out from among yourselves shall men arise..."

How can this be? That which would alert other believers is kept hidden in their hearts.

Just as the glory is hidden in the Christian, so too this falseness is hidden in those who are false. A false prophet can say, that Jesus came in the flesh, or a person can say, 'I know Jesus and I know that He came in the flesh.' That does not mean that they are of God.

What will it take for a false prophet, teacher, or ungodly spirit to be exposed?

1) Faithfulness

It will entail faithfully walking close to the Lord and having a receptive heart. This helps one to qualify as being spiritual and being able to "judge" (discern) all things (*1 Cor 2:15*).

2) Patience

*1 John 4:1* "Try" has no time limitations to it. It may take time before the true spirit in a person is visible. "Try" is to be a continual thing that the Christian does.

3) A watchful eye

Eventually, certain things will come forth, and there will be some evidence as to the source.

As the heart is filled with ungodliness, falseness, or worldliness, eventually that abundance will be spoken forth.

*Luke 6:45* "...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh".

"Abundance" in the Greek means: in which one delights<sup>3</sup>; that which fills the heart.

What Diotrephes had in his heart in abundance was the desire to be first. That eventually came forth in his words (*3 John 10* "...malicious words...") and was seen in his life (*3 John 9-10*).

This principle applies to the Christian and also to false prophets, false teachers, evil spirits, etc.

It is important to remember that it is what the spirit in the person is confessing, not just what their mouth is saying.

*1 John 4:2* "Confesseth" means: to agree with; not to refuse<sup>3</sup>.

Jesus was confessing (expressing or agreeing) with the Father in godliness, purity, selflessness, always looking for the benefit of others, etc.

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<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

If Jesus is not the Lord of one's life, then their expression will not reflect light, and they are not confessing that Jesus is come in the flesh.

*1 John 1:5 "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."*

***1 John 4:3b "...and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."***

If the spirit is not confessing Jesus, John says that it is the spirit of antichrist. "Antichrist" in Greek means: opposed to Christ<sup>5</sup>.

We know that the world opposes Christ, but can a Christian oppose Him? A Christian can oppose Christ's lordship and rule and refuse to submit in areas in which they disagree with the Lord, and that resistance can increase in their hearts. This opposition can continue and cause further problems in their lives. They eventually can become like the world, which has the spirit of antichrist (*Rom 12:2a*).

***1 John 4:4-5a "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. 5 They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them."***

This overcoming does not take place just because one is a Christian. One must deal with the circumstance, emotion, desire, or problem successfully.

We overcome:

- 1) When we confess that Jesus has come in the flesh, with our life (spirit).
- 2) By surrendering to Christ, which is opposite of being antichrist.

"Overcome them..." The "them" refers to those whose life is in opposition to Christ and who are confessing something different.

We overcome by surrender to the Lord, not by confessing the name of Jesus.

"*He that is in the world*" means the devil and the spirit of antichrist are not in surrender to Christ in any way. Yielding to the ways of Christ will bring us out from under that spirit and make us overcomers.

***1 John 4:6 "We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error."***

Everyone who is truly acquainted with the Lord "*heareth us*." Those who know God have an inner knowing of the character of God that is recognized by other believers.

The spirit of error has no place or desire for the closeness of relationship that Jesus desires for His own.

#### **1 John 4:5-21**

***1 John 4:5-6***

***5" They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.***

***6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us".***

The speech of the false prophets is in harmony with the spirit of the world. They tell the people lies and deceive them for their own benefit (honor, position, money, etc.).

*Jer 5:31 "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so..."*

*Mic 2:11 "If a liar and deceiver comes and says, 'I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,' he would be just the prophet for this people!" – NIV*

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<sup>5</sup> Louw and Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

2 Tim 4:3 “For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.” – NIV

The worldly heart speaks a worldly language that is heard by those who are carnal. The carnal man delights in hearing carnal words.

John 3:31 “...he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth...”  
John 8:23 “...ye are from beneath...”

What is valued by those who are carnal is totally different than what is valued by those walking with God.

Everyone who is truly familiar with the character of God “heareth us”.  
John 17:14 “I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”

**1 John 4:7 “Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.”**

John comes back to the pureness of love. Allow God’s love to flow from you to your brother, for God is the source of this love.

In the Greek, “loveth” is a present participle that means: to presently, continually love.  
If the Christian is presently, continually loving his brother, John says that he knows God.

We are responsible to move in love. God is responsible to develop that love in us.  
Why would we want to have love developed in us?

- 1) If we love one another, we continue to dwell in Him.
- 2) God loves us and we have experienced His love.
- 3) It is the very nature of God.

1 John 4:7 “...Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.” – New International Version

**1 John 4:8 “He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.”**

If one’s love is not correct, that one does not know God. John is not saying that they are not saved, but rather that they lack understanding.

Those who do not love do not experience the character of God, which is a giving heart. The absence of love keeps a Christian in darkness where they will never understand the virtue of giving.

**1 John 4:9 “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.”**

“In this...” means in how His love was flowing correctly to us, unhindered and continual.  
Through this, the love of God toward us was manifested.

**1 John 4:10 “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”**

Love is usually seen as being governed by mutuality.  
But “herein”, or in God’s dedication to us, He sent His Son. When the Lord sent His son, He was not concerned about reciprocation.

Out from the heart of God comes what He knows is best for and needed by us.  
Love initiates.

**1 John 4:11 “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”**

Our realization of God's love is to become the incentive to love one another.

Because of how love came to us, we should not only receive it but also give it in the same way; with no consideration for self; with sacrifice for others; and being dedicated to the object of love.

***1 John 4:12 "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us."***

No man has seen God, but He does become visible. If we love one another, we become the visible picture of God.

He dwells in us and is seen by the love in and coming forth from the Christian.

If we love one another, the result is that "God dwelleth in us".

So, love (agape) causes us to know the indwelling of God, whom we do not see with our eyes.

And His love finds completion through bringing maturity in us.

The word "perfected" means: to be complete in character.

***1 John 4:13 "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit."***

The Holy Spirit that was given to us is additional evidence to the Christian that he dwells in God.

The Spirit has been given and testifies that we dwell in Him (we experience the Holy Spirit's love, peace, joy, etc.).

We have a consciousness of His indwelling because He has sent His Spirit.

***1 John 4:14 "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world."***

The testimony that John has is the result of the love of the Father and the willingness of the Son.

***1 John 4:15 "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."***

The confession is that which comes from the individual's spirit; we are to "try the spirits" (1 John 4:1).

This confession of the deity of Jesus Christ implies surrender and obedience, not just speaking with the mouth.

*1 Cor 12:3 "Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit." – New International Version*

This speaking should not just be with the mouth, but out from a heart that is surrendered to the Lord.

If one's life does not agree with what they are saying, they are not speaking by the Spirit of God.

The words line up with the inner life.

*Rom 10:6-8*

*"But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, "Who will ascend into heaven?" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the deep?" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart," that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming" – New International Version*

"The word of faith" is not just confessed with the mouth. The mouth and heart are to agree.

Rom 10:9 “That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” – New International Version

If the mouth and the heart are moving together, you will be saved.

*This confession (if genuine) is proof of fellowship with God.*

1 John 1:3 “That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

That which John saw and heard resulted in a changed life, which agreed with what he said.

**1 John 4:16 “And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”**

God’s love is toward us, but He has placed it in us. “To us” literally means: in us<sup>1,3,5</sup>.

Rom 5:5 “And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” – New American Standard

Remember that God’s love is not self-centered. If the Christian is self-centered, it indicates that he is not dwelling in God.

**1 John 4:17 “Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world.”**

Having “love made perfect” covers quite a bit.

It encompasses what John previously said, for example:

- Abiding in Christ (1 John 2:6).
- No desire to continue in sin (1 John 3:6).
- Having fellowship with the Father and with Jesus (1 John 1:3).
- Keeping His commandments (1 John 2:3).
- Remaining separate from the world (1 John 2:15-17).
- Abiding in the truth (1 John 2:24).
- Having love for others (1 John 2:10).

Bringing love to fulfillment in us will be a work of God that, when accomplished, will give us confidence in the Day of Judgment. We will have no fear because of our Christ-likeness, “because as He is, so are we in this world”.

**1 John 4:18 “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”**

If we surrender to Jesus and allow love to be perfected in us, we will not fear His judgment because perfect love, or love perfected in us, will cast out any possible fear. We will have confidence before Him.

**1 John 4:19 “We love him, because he first loved us.”**

We are able to love the Lord because of the work He has done in our heart. No one can take the credit for the love in his or her heart because “He first loved us.” Jesus has changed our hearts from self-centeredness to hearts that are God- and others-centered.

This work has made our love toward Him possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

<sup>5</sup> Louw and Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

**1 John 4:20** *“If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?”*

How can a Christian say that they love God if they have wrong feelings, wrong motives, and wrong desires toward a brother? These things in the heart cancel out love and make it ineffective. It is more reasonable to expect someone to love his or her brother, who can be seen, than to love God, who cannot be seen.

**1 John 4:21** *“And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.”*

If a Christian loves God, it will be evidenced by his love toward his brother.

### 1 John 4:15

**1 John 4:15** *“Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God”.*

When we are saved, are we, at that instant, in Christ? Is every Christian in Him? Can a Christian be in Him at one time and not be in Him another time? What does it mean to be in Him? What assures the Christian that he is in Him?

In the Bible, we see the need for being in Him, but seeing the need alone is not enough.

- **Being in Him is fulfilled through redemption.**

*2 Cor 5:17* *“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”*

At initial salvation, we became new creations and were placed in Christ. Being in Christ became a reality through which we enjoy the salvation of God.

*1 Cor 1:30* *“It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus...”* – New International Version

*Eph 1:7* *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace”*

*Col 1:14* *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins”.*

In Christ, our redemption was realized.

“*In whom*” – that is, in Christ we have been delivered from the powers of darkness that have kept us in bondage to our carnal nature and now begin a new life that was hidden to us before.

*Eph 2:13* *“But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”*

Once we were far away from God but now, through salvation, we are in Christ, which makes nearness to the Father possible.

- **Can the Christian move out from the place of being in Him?**

*1 John 1:5* *“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”*

If we hate our brother, we walk in darkness (*1 John 2:11*). If we walk in darkness, we cannot be in Him because in Him is no darkness.

*1 John 1:6* *“If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth”*

Walking in darkness is the opposite of walking in the Spirit (*Gal 5:16,19-21*).

*Phil 3:9* “And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

The Greek verb “*be found*” means that some uncertainty exists. The Christian may or may not be found in Him. The condition that must be met is found in v8 “*count all but loss... and ...suffer the loss of all things.*” Paul placed these two conditions upon being “*found in Him.*”

*Col 2:6* “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:”*

The Greek verb “*walk*” is a command. If the Christian is commanded to walk in Christ, then it must be possible not to walk in Him.

*I John 2:28* “*And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming.*”

The Greek verb “*abide*” is a command. If being and remaining in Christ were automatic, it would not necessitate a command.

The shame comes if the Christian has lived a large part of their life not abiding in Christ and is in that condition when the Lord comes.

*I John 3:5* “*And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.*”

“*...In him is no sin.*”

The Christian who is abiding in Him will not be able to habitually sin because that cannot continue in Christ.

*I John 3:6* “*Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.*”

No one who lives in Him keeps on sinning. Those who continue to sin have neither seen Him, nor known Him in the manner that the Lord desires.

*I John 3:24* “*And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.*”

Keeping His commandments assures the Christian of both dwelling in Christ and Christ dwelling in them.

*John 16:33* “*These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace.*”

Peace is not at question but being in Him is.

*I John 2:6* “*He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*”

The Christian who claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did. If the Christian is not walking as the Lord, their being in Christ is questionable.

- **What does it mean to be in Him?**

To be in Him means that the Christian will have to become of the same character as Christ, which entails being changed to some degree. There is to be a slow transformation in the heart that can only take place as the believer abides in Christ.

*Rom 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."*

God foreordained, or He appointed beforehand, that we be conformed to Christ's image. This transformation continues as we live in Christ.

*1 John 3:2 "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."*

Seeing Him will be the result of the process of being transformed. So, living in Him means that we will have to surrender to the process of being changed and become like Jesus in character.

*1 John 2:28 "And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."*

The reason these individuals are not ashamed is:

- 1) Because they abide in Him.
- 2) Because there is a change taking place in them.

*1 John 2:27 "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."*

One of the things the anointing teaches is that we should abide in Him. The anointing is not given to make us feel good, but to bring about the change that would reflect Christ in and through the Christian.

- **Look at some benefits of being in Christ.**

Some Christians need to see the benefits of being in Christ as an incentive to direct their lives in that direction (*Psa 91:1-4*):

No condemnation

*Rom 8:1 "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."*

Those who are in Christ are not visible to the devil, therefore he cannot lay condemnation on them.

Freedom from the law of sin and death

*Rom 8:2 "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."*

*Gal 2:4 "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty (freedom) which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage."*

Inseparable love.

*Rom 8:39 "Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

We form one body in Christ.

*Rom 12:5 "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another."*

*Gal 3:28; Eph 1:10*

Wisdom, righteousness, etc.

*1 Cor 1:30 “ But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:”*

Continual victory.

*2 Cor 2:14 “Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”*

Blessed with all spiritual blessings.

*Eph 1:3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:”*

*Eph 2:6 “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”.*

Fellow heirs and partakers of His promise.

*Eph 3:6 “That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:”*

*Eph 1:11 “In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will”.*

Becoming the dwelling place of God.

*Eph 2:21-22*

*“21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”*

A high standing and boldness.

*1 Tim 3:13 “For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*

*Eph 3:12 “In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.”*

Spiritual circumcision.

*Col 2:11 “In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ”.*

Life and the opportunity to move into abundant life.

*John 1:4 “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”*

*John 10:10 “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”*

The fulfillment of God’s promises.

*2 Cor 1:20 “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”*

You have agreement and finality of the promises in Christ.

• **The call of God to the Christian resides in Christ.**

1) Our calling is in Him.

*Phil 3:14 “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”*

*2 Tim 1:9 “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”*

*1 Thes 5:24 “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”*

*Eph 1:4 "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:"*

2) The call is to take us to Him.

*Mat 22:14 "...many are called but few are chosen."*

*Col 2:3 "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*

*1 Thess 2:12 "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."*

3) In Him is all that is necessary to bring us to the fulfillment that God desires. The potential that God has intended can be reached in Christ.

*Eph 3:19 "And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."*

*2 Pet 1:3 "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue"*

*Eph 2:22 "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."*

*Col 2:3 "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge".*

- **John says that we, as Christians, can know that we are in Christ.**

*1 John 2:5 "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him."*

*1 John 3:24 "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."*

Keeping His word and what He commands brings the knowledge to the Christian that he is in Christ.

*1 John 4:15 "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God."*

- **We are to be in Him and stay in Him.**

*John 15:5 "I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."*

*Col 2:6 "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him:"*

The Greek verb "walk ye" is a command.

Nothing of any eternal value will be found outside of Christ. There may be other interests and pursuits but none that will produce spiritual value.

*John 6:56 "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."*

Obeying Christ's sayings is proof of dwelling in Him. The intent in this scripture is the assimilation of Christ into our being.

*Acts 17:28 "For in him we live, and move, and have our being..."*

*Col 3:3 "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."*

*Col 2:9 "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."*

So coming to the fullness that God intends necessitates being in Christ.

*Eph 1:10 "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:"*

This is God's desire: that "he might gather in one...even in him."

### **1 John 5:1-5**

***1 John 5:1 "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him."***

John establishes this truth, that one must believe that Jesus has come in the flesh.

Obviously, some didn't believe this, and we know that many did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah.

The Jewish thought was that the Messiah would come and deliver His people from Roman occupation and establish His kingdom on earth.

Jesus established the thought that He would spiritually deliver from sin and death and establish the kingdom in the heart.

Jesus was not interested in establishing a political kingdom but rather, a spiritual kingdom.

This belief that "*Jesus is the Christ*" is not merely in facts as presented in the Bible, but it is a trust in the person of Jesus Christ.

John makes it clear that the new birth, through which we receive life from God, comes through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

This first verse says literally, "Everyone believing 'Jesus is the Christ' is born of God."

This is not mental ascent but a cleaving to the person of Jesus Christ.

There can be no relationship with the Father except through Jesus.

*John 14:6 "...no man cometh unto the Father but by me".*

*Luke 4:17-22 "...he hath anointed..." "Anointed" is a form of the word: Christ.*

This is talking about His life, not just what He did (*Isa 61:1 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me..."*). That was His life!

It is not what we do, but who we are!

Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ, or Anointed One, is born of God.

This is not just an intellectual acknowledgement that He is the Christ. The Christian's life should declare that message.

(The Greek word translated "*believe*" means: to adhere to; cleave to; to trust; to have faith in; to rely on).

If one truly believes, then they will surrender their life to Christ. That one is born of God.

If you believe that Jesus is the Christ – that He is God's Son and your Savior-then you are a begotten child of God. Something is to take place within the one believing.

The Greek verb translated "*believeth*" means: to presently, continually believe. Believing is to be a continual thing, not just that we believed in the past.

***1 John 5:2-3 “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 3For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”***

Keeping His commandments testifies to the fact that a change has taken place within. Correct love toward God occurs as our hearts become like His, which makes it possible to love the children of God.

Loving God and keeping His commandments assures us that we will love God’s children.  
The love of God is seen when we keep on doing His commandments.

***1 John 5:4 “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.”***

Initially, we are born from above and receive life.  
But to move into fuller life, we must surrender to Him.

*John 10:10 “I am come that they may have life and that they might have it more abundantly”.*

The new birth is the way that God’s life is initially acquired, and it is also the way that abundant life becomes available.

Birth is being translated from one area of living into a completely different area of living. When we were born again, we were translated from one area of living to another. Now we have the opportunity to move from life to abundant life, which is another area of living.

*Deut 8:6 “Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him.”*

To acquire abundant life, it will be necessary to walk in the ways of the Lord for your life.  
Without His ways, little progress can be made.

*Deut 10:12 “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul”.*

This scripture adds the word “all”, which is possible, or the Lord would not have said it. The Lord desires that His people would walk in all His ways. If one does that, they will surely be in a place of abundant life.

*Deut 10:13 “To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?”*

Keeping His commandments and walking in His ways is for our good, even though it may not seem to be so.

Our spiritual good cannot be discerned by the ease or difficulty of our circumstances, but by the work the Lord does in us through them.

Through His ways He can work in us!

Gen Chapter 37

v13 Joseph is asked by his father to go check on his brothers, and Joseph says “*here am I*”. He is ready and willing to make sure his brothers are alright.

v15 He does not find them but persists in looking.

v17 He finally finds them.

v23-27 They treat him badly, even after the concern and love he had for them.

v31-33 The brothers lie and deceive their father (one sin is used to cover another).

v35-36 Jacob is grieved.

Gen 39:4-6 The blessing of the Lord was upon Joseph.

The Lord used Joseph's circumstances to teach him of God's ways, and to move Joseph into a spiritually abundant life.

*Ps 105:16-21* Who would have attributed that to the Lord? Joseph did (*Gen 45:4-5,8*)!

Somewhere along the way, God communicated to Joseph that He was the one behind what his brothers did.

*Josh 22:5* "But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the LORD charged you, to love the LORD your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."

It's not always easy to walk in all God's ways, but it is possible. First, we must depend upon the Lord to show us His ways, and we must have a soft heart and place our understanding aside. See *Hos 14:9; Isa 55:8-11*.

What are some of God's ways that were birthed in Joseph?

- When you are in God, you will, at times, be misunderstood. When Joseph told his brothers and father of his dreams, they rebuked him. Even though Joseph's dreams were from God, he was misunderstood. He had to learn to correctly receive being misunderstood, so that God could teach him His ways in this situation.

The way of the world is to get angry when misunderstood.

- Show love and compassion to those who mistreat you. Joseph was mistreated by his brothers, which could have led to bitterness and hatred. Joseph did not let those things settle in his heart, which is evidenced by him receiving his brothers when they came to Egypt many years later.

The way of the world would be to avenge yourself and get even, instead Joseph allowed the Lord to teach him.

*Rom 12:19* "...avenge not yourselves..."

- Love them that persecute you. Joseph's brothers persecuted him because of their hatred. Joseph himself did nothing to his brothers personally that they should treat him as they did, but in spite of their hatred, Joseph loved them.

The way of the world would be to hate. Joseph learned another way in this situation – the way of the Lord.

- Submit to those over you. It was critical for Joseph to learn submission. He submitted to Potiphar, the keeper of the prison, and those in authority, which laid the proper foundation in him to be in authority. He would never have become second to Pharaoh if he did not learn submission early in life.

The attitude of the world toward captors or those in authority is to rebel.

- Joseph was unjustly accused. After Joseph was in power he could have gotten even with Potiphar and his wife for accusing him of something he did not do. Or after the chief butler was restored to his place and forgot Joseph, he could have had him put back into prison (*Gen 40:23*). Rather, he learned from the Lord to forgive those who treated him wrongly.

The world says to justify yourself, tell everyone you were wronged, and get back at those who caused the problem.

- The world would reason: what good is trust in the Lord if it gets you into prison? But trust in the Lord took Joseph into a deeper place in God.  
*Prov 3:5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart."*
- Joseph waited for the Lord to justify him.  
When Joseph's brothers came to Egypt, Joseph could have gone to Jacob and exposed the lies and hatred of his brothers toward him. Instead, he waited for the Lord to do that.
- He refused to betray Potiphar by becoming involved with his wife. Even though it was probably difficult, Joseph remained faithful to the ways of the Lord.

The world would reason that no one would even know, so why not lay with her?

- Joseph suffered wrongfully when he did nothing to deserve it (*Gen 40:15*). This continues for quite some time before the Lord changed that.

God's ways are that which He teach us of His character through life's circumstances and our relationship with Him that enables us to follow His direction and will in our lives, which helps us to become Christ-like.

*Psalms 103:7*

***1 John 5:4a "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world..."***

*1 John 5:4 "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world..." – NAS*

Whatever is born of God, or whatever God births within you, overcomes the world. This process occurs as we walk in God's ways.

*1 John 3:8 "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil."*

The Son of God was manifested to destroy the works of the devil in our hearts. Whatever is destroyed is completely done away with and that area of our heart waits for the Holy Spirit to birth something of God.

*1 John 5:5 "...whatsoever is born..."*

The Greek verb translated "*is born*" is in the passive voice. This means that the subject (us) receive the action. The Holy Spirit is the one who does this work, not us.

"*Whatsoever is born*" is an action performed by God in the heart of a Christian. Whatever He births in your heart is His work.

The work or ways of God are abiding in the Christian presently, and that is why they overcome the world.

*1John 5:4b " ...and this is (the source or means) the victory that overcometh (or is overcoming) the world, even our faith."*

The faith in Jesus Christ, or the faith birthed in the Christian by walking in the ways of the Father, is overcoming the world. Walking with Jesus is the only way we can overcome.

Joseph did not have to work up faith; he had it within him.

**1 John 5:5** “*Who is he that overcometh* (is now overcoming) *the world, but he that believeth* (is presently believing) *that Jesus is the Son of God?*”

What do they now believe? They believe that surrender to God’s ways can produce character, and that He knows what is best.

God has a desire to work in the hearts of His children and, whenever He does a work, that work is birthed of God. The Lord changes an area in us that we could not, and a birth takes place.

The Lord takes us from one place of living to another.

Out from that comes the strength to conquer the world.

This “*whatsoever*” in v4 is related to character.

God initiates the work and sustains it so that there will not be a failure.

And this is the victory that is continually overcoming the world, our believing.

**1 John 5:18** “*We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.*”

### 1 John 5:6-9

**1 John 5:6** “*This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.*”

Some say that the water refers to the embryonic fluid; others say that it means Christ’s pure life.

Some believe it means Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan, and the blood refers to His death on Calvary.

Whatever one believes, His coming was by water and blood.

What is the most important is that “*He...came*” to us (1 John 5:6a).

In 1 John 1:6, it mentions fellowship with God. In order to have fellowship with God, He first had to come to us. Our coming to Him would not have been possible without His coming to us.

The baptism of Jesus signaled the beginning of His ministry, and the blood was shed at the end of His earthly ministry.

Christ’s life covered the whole spectrum of life (Heb 2:9,17-18; Heb 4:15; Heb 5:2).

Rev 1:8 “*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*”

The whole spectrum of life is seen in this verse – present, past, and future.

Jesus is the Alpha and Omega.

Among the Jewish rabbis, it was common to use the first and the last letters of the Hebrew alphabet to denote the whole of anything, from beginning to end.

He is the beginning and the end of all things; He was at the commencement and will be at the close.

Christ’s coming to us is not based upon us, but upon His character. The good shepherd seeks the lost sheep because that is His character.

1 John 1:7b “*...the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*”

In 1 John 1:7 we see the water (cleansing) and the blood.

The purpose for this is that we would walk in the light (v7) and fellowship with Him (v6).

**1 John 5:6b** “*The Spirit beareth witness*” to the water and the blood.

Or we could say that the Spirit testifies that the other two are true.

So you have a three-fold witness: the water, the blood, and the Holy Spirit.

*Eccl 4:12 "A threefold cord is not quickly broken."*

*Eccl 4:12 "A cord of three strands is not quickly broken." – New International Version*

If fellowship with one is good, fellowship with two is better.  
Cords of three strands can withstand a greater strain.

*Matt 18:20 "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."*

So the tie between Jesus and us is very strong because of the water, blood and Holy Spirit, or because of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, like the three-fold cord.

***1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."***

John was not making a doctrinal statement about the Trinity, although the Trinity can be seen here. He is talking about the witness of God.

Let us examine *1 John 5:7* as seen from the early manuscripts:

The text of this verse should read: "*because there are three that bear record.*" The remainder of the verse is not genuine. Not a single manuscript contains the Trinitarian addition before the fourteenth century, and the verse is never quoted in the controversies over the Trinity in the first 450 years of the church era.

If the disputed passage, therefore, be omitted as not genuine, the whole passage will read: "*For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one.*"

Some transcriber copied it into the body of the text, perhaps with a sincere belief that it was a genuine passage, omitted by accident, and then it became too important a passage in the argument for the Trinity ever to be displaced but by the most clear critical evidence. It was rendered into Greek and inserted in one Greek manuscript of the 16th century, while it was missing in all the earlier manuscripts.

The removal of this text does nothing to weaken the evidence for the doctrine of the Trinity, or to modify that doctrine. As it was never used to shape the early belief of the Christian world on the subject, so its rejection, and its removal from the New Testament, will do nothing to modify that doctrine. The doctrine was embraced, and held, and successfully defended without it, and it can and will be so still.

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Teaching about the addition of *1 John 5:7* is not intended to destroy one's faith in the Bible; rather, it is to show us that we do not need to add anything to the scriptures, for they can stand on their own, without any help from man.

We will look at the teaching of the Trinity apart from the 1 John text.

*Gen 1:26 "...us...our image"*

*John 1:3 "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."*  
This scripture is referring to Jesus.

*Gen 11:7 "...us..."*

*Isa 6:8 "who will go for us..."*

*Matt 3:16-17* The Father speaks, Holy Spirit descends and Jesus was baptized.  
All three persons of the Godhead are in harmony.

*Matt 28:19 "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

Matthew mentions each person of the Godhead.

*2 Cor 13:14 "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen."*

Paul's prayer includes the triune-God.

*Eph 4:4-6*

*"4 one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

*5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

*6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*

Once again, all three are mentioned, not just one.

- The Father is called God.

*1 Cor 8:6 "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."*

- Jesus is called God.

*1 Tim 1:16-17*

*"16 Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.*

*17 Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."*

Paul is not changing subjects in v17 but is still talking about Jesus Christ.

*Matt 4:7 "Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God"*

When Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, He tells the devil He was tempting God, referring to Himself.

- The Holy Spirit is referred to as God.

*Acts 5:3-4*

*"3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?*

*4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God."*

Verse 4 is not a change of subjects from the Holy Spirit to the Father, but it is referring to the Holy Spirit as God.

Next are some general scriptures that show or illustrate the Trinity:

*John 8:58 "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."*

He does not say, I was. "Am" is a present tense verb. This is the same phraseology that is seen in Exo 3:14.

*John 14:26 "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."*

*John 15:26 "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:"*

In John 14:26, Jesus says the Father will send the Holy Spirit, but in John 15:26, Jesus says that He would send the Holy Spirit. Which is right? Both are true in light of a triune God perfectly one in character and harmony.

Gen 20:13 "And it came to pass, when God caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said unto her, This is thy kindness which thou shalt shew unto me; at every place whither we shall come, say of me, He is my brother."

Gen 35:7 "And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother."

"God" in the Hebrew is the word 'Elohim.' This also is in the plural implying the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

John 1:1-2

"I In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us..."

The Word was God, and that Word (meaning Jesus) dwelt among us.

Isa 9:6 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

The "child" is referring to Jesus, who is called "the everlasting father".

Col 2:9 "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Christ had the fullness of the Godhead in bodily form. This cannot be understood by the mind, but can be believed by the heart.

1 John 5:8 "For there are three that bear record, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood; and these three agree in one."

These three are in agreement as to the testimony of sonship of Jesus Christ and that He is the Messiah.

1 John 5:10 "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself..."

The Holy Spirit bears witness that Jesus is the Son of God.

Example:

Mat 3:16 "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him"

The Holy Spirit witnessed to the baptism of Jesus.

Matt 27:50-54

50" Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."

The Holy Spirit witnessed to the death of Jesus even though the witness came forth from an unsuspecting Roman soldier."

The witness of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit agree together!

**1 John 5:9** “If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.”

We all are constantly acting on the idea that what others say is true, for example, our family, friends, neighbors, a book, or a coworker. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.

We are to receive the witness of God as being more believable than that of man.

*Matt 17:5* “While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”

There are different witnesses:

There is the external witness – nature, history, scrolls and the Bible.

Then, there is the internal witness – the Holy Spirit.

Here are some different definitions of the Trinity from several sources, all saying about the same thing:

- There are three separate and distinct persons in the Godhead, each distinct in office from the others, and yet so perfectly one in character and harmony that they make up one Godhead, not three Gods.
- The doctrine of the Trinity in the Godhead includes the three following particulars, viz. (a) There is only one God, one divine nature; (b) but in this divine nature there is the distinction of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as three (subjects or persons); and (c) these three have equally, and in common with one another, the nature and perfection of supreme divinity.
- The doctrine of the trinity means that within the being and activity of the one God there are three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The doctrine of the Trinity cannot be understood in our minds; it is a revealed truth.

## 2 John 9

**2 John 9** “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”

*2 John 9* “...in the doctrine of Christ...”

Doctrine has importance because what you believe determines your behavior, your decisions, your relationships, etc.

The early church held to many beliefs, for example:

(1) Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ (*Acts 3:18*); (2) God had raised Him from the dead (*Acts 1:22; 2:24,32*); (3) that salvation was by faith in His name (*Acts 2:38*), etc.

Is the “*doctrine of Christ*” the same as today’s church doctrine?

How much emphasis is to be placed on church doctrine?

Is our belief to be centered around church doctrine?

Jesus was constantly trying to persuade men to believe on Him, not a particular church doctrine.

*John 20:31* “But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

*1 John 3:23* “And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ”.

This was written to Christians and was not directed to the unsaved.

1 John 5:13 "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." In this scripture, the focus is not doctrine!

What did John mean by the "doctrine of Christ"? Was it a set of beliefs that is called doctrine today?

The word "doctrine" in 2 John 9 means: instruction<sup>1</sup>, that which is taught<sup>3</sup>.

Jesus taught and instructed His disciples, but what was the essence of what He taught? What was the core? What was His doctrine? What was His message?

In Deut 32, Moses declares his doctrine.

Deut 32:2-4

2 "Let my teaching (doctrine) drop as the rain, My speech distill as the dew, As the droplets on the fresh grass And as the showers on the herb.

3 For I proclaim the name of the LORD; Ascribe greatness to our God!

4 The Rock! His work is perfect, For all His ways are just; A God of faithfulness and without injustice, Righteous and upright is He." – New American Standard

Moses, who was given the law, does not say that his doctrine was some rule.

The doctrine Moses declared was not the Ten Commandments; rather, his doctrine centered upon God Himself. Moses does not say, 'I proclaim doctrine;'. His doctrine was "the name of the Lord".

John 7:16-17

"16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me."

What was the doctrine Jesus spoke of?

"17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

Doing the will of the Father will necessitate coming to Jesus and having some type of relationship with Him. Relationship with Jesus will constrain the Christian to do God's will, which should bring understanding of Christ's doctrine.

The focus was not the doctrine but knowing the Father.

John 16:28 "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."

Christ's doctrine was not a particular set of beliefs; but it was much higher. No doctrine can be compared to the image of Christ. Being conformed to "the image of His Son" (Rom 8:29) is much higher than any church doctrine can reach.

Many churches today focus more upon doctrine than on the character of Christ and His work in the Christian.

The teaching of Christ is to guide us to Him, and the instruction is to bring enlightenment in the knowledge of God.

Acts 2:42 "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship."

The Apostles' teaching centered on Christ and the development of His character in the Christian, which would direct their lives toward Christ in hope of a higher fulfillment.

Matt 7:28-29

The astonishment was because of the vast difference between the Scribes and Pharisees' doctrine and Jesus' doctrine. The one was religious doctrine taken in part from the Mosaic Law and in part from man's ideas. Jesus' doctrine was Spirit and Life and testified of another – the Father.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

*Mat 16:12 “Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”*

Why did Jesus tell His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees? Because the doctrine, or leaven, of the Pharisees and Sadducees did not have the Father as the source.

*Mark 4:2-3*

*2 “And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them in his doctrine,*

*3 Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow”*

As Jesus taught, that which was in His doctrine came out, which was the nature Father and His kingdom (v11).

*John 10:30 “I and my Father are one.”*

Jesus was not giving them information but direction.

*John 7:16 “Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.”*

That which Jesus taught had the Father as its source. That doctrine was not a list of beliefs; instead it was Spirit and Life, which cannot be grasped by those who are religious and carnally minded.

*John 7:17 “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”*

If the Father is the source, some understanding will come so that what is taught, and its direction, are discernable.

*1 John 9, John equates having God with having the “doctrine of Christ.”*

Modern church doctrine is not God because doctrine can be false, but God can never be false.

What is normally taught as doctrine – predestination, eternal security, baptism of Holy Spirit, etc. can be taught falsely or become false teachings. But the doctrine of Christ cannot be false in any way.

Church doctrine is not the same thing as the doctrine of Christ.

So, the doctrine of Christ must be in some way different than church doctrine.

*John 17:8 “For I have given unto them the words (doctrine) which thou gavest me; and they have received them and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.”*

These words were more than teaching about the Father. They were that which could bring man into knowing, not doctrine, but God.

Many churches seem to be more interested in being correct in their doctrine than in their relationship with Jesus. Doctrine may give us a standard to live by, but only His words can give us life and understanding.

Knowing God is much different than knowing doctrine!

Jesus received the words of the Father:

- Pertaining to His life and crucifixion.
- For a given present situation, e.g. the woman taken in adultery.
- For His disciples.
- For many who were afar off.

The teaching that came forth from the words of the Father did not center on the teaching itself or doctrine, but on the Godhead.

*John 10:27-28*

27 “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.”

Jesus did not say, ‘I give unto them church doctrine.’

*Mat 4:4* “But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”

Doctrine can be dead and dry, but that which proceeds from the mouth of God is fresh and living.

Man is to live by every word that is presently proceeding out of the mouth of God!

If you see that the doctrine of Christ is not a set of beliefs, then you can rest, not having any doctrine to defend. All you have is Him!

*John 17:8* “I came out from thee”.

So, the life of the Father was placed in word form and sent to Jesus. Jesus receives the life and projects it out from Him to His disciples and to those around.

Life was not meant to stop with an individual, but to be projected out from the one who receives it.

*1 John 1:1-5* (v5) “God is light”; not, ‘God is doctrine.’

We are not to project doctrine, but Him.

*John 10:30* “I and my Father are one.”

The essence of the doctrine of Christ was to express the Father.

*2 John 9b* “...hath not God...”

The reason that one does not have God is that they are not abiding in the teaching of Christ, or not abiding in Christ (*1 John 2:27*).

One meaning of the word “*transgresseth*” is: to move ahead; go forward; to go beyond established bounds.

Whoever moves ahead with their life and is not continuing in the doctrine of Christ does not have God.

*2 John 9* “...he hath both the Father and the Son”

This is the result of abiding.

*John 17:3*

Jesus prays for His disciples and us, (v20). He does not pray that we would know doctrine, but that we would know Him, true eternal life.

If doctrine is the focus of your life, you will not understand what the doctrine of Christ is, and you will reject everyone who does not line up with your doctrine.

Jesus must be your focus!

### 3 John 2

***3 John 2* “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”**

This word “*prosper*” is found in only two other scriptures in the New Testament (*Rom 1:10; 1 Cor 16:2*).

It means: to lead in a good way; to prosper one's journey; to make prosperous; to give success to; to be prospered. It would apply here to any plan or purpose<sup>3,5,9</sup>.

This scripture has been used to promote the financial prosperity doctrine. The prosperity doctrine can only survive in a prosperous nation, in prosperous times. There are many Christians in other countries that are poor, and are not financially prospering, nor could they under their current circumstances. If this teaching was true, then there would be no excuse for poor Christians in poor countries to remain poor. To accuse the poor of lack of faith is ignorance.

If one's thinking is earthly, they will relate prosperity to the physical realm.

*1 Cor 2:14 "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit".*

The spiritual man will see prosperity as spiritually flourishing, while the natural man will only relate to the natural.

There are more important ways to prosper than financially. Spiritual and emotional prosperity are beyond price.

- Just because John is praying that one may prosper does not mean one will not experience poverty.

National status alone can place a person in poverty by birth.

*2 Cor 8:1-5*

*"1 And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches.*

*2 Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.*

*3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own,*

*4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.*

*5 And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God's will." – New International Version*

Paul testified that God's grace was upon the Macedonian church in their extreme poverty. They were not doing anything wrong; rather, they were doing things correctly and became an example of how a church should give. Their giving was not out from their abundance but out from their lack.

- Even though John prayed for prosperity, one can still experience some natural circumstance that keeps them in poverty.  
For example, war and famine (Jacob and his family were touched by famine). The Israelites were born into slavery and poverty in Egypt.

*Acts 11:28-30*

*28" One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.) 29 The disciples, each according to his ability, decided to provide help for the brothers living in Judea. 30 This they did, sending their gift to the elders by Barnabas and Saul" – N IV*

Famine causes economic problems, which can result in poverty.

- Even if a Christian is prospering spiritually it does not mean that they will not experience lack.

*Rom 8:35 "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"*

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<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon

<sup>5</sup> Louw and Nida Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament

<sup>9</sup> Vine's Expository Dictionary

2Cor 4:7-12

Spiritual prosperity has nothing to do with circumstances (v11). The Christian is to prosper in every circumstance.

2 Cor 6:4-10

v10 "...poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet possessing everything..."

- We can be prospering spiritually and experience persecution or tribulation in the natural.  
2 Tim 3:12 "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

Matt 5:10 "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Tribulation can be experienced as a result of some outward circumstance, but it is always inward.

Acts 14:22 "Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."

John's desire is that Gaius would be as prosperous in other areas of his life as he was in his spiritual life.

Some Christians are not prospering spiritually like Gaius, yet they want prosperity in these other areas.

The Christian can miss the most important area of prosperity, which is spiritual, because that will produce something of eternal value.

Just because one is used in ministry, or in tremendous healing and mighty signs does not mean that that one is prospering spiritually.

The Greek word for "prosper" is a compound of two words.

One means: well or good. The other means: to progress by certain means or method or way<sup>1</sup>.

Another meaning for "prosper" is: a way, path or road.

What is the good way we are to progress in?

It is the development of the character of Christ in us, resulting in us being the expression of Christ.

By what means will this development take place with us?

The means by which we will spiritually prosper is through our cooperation with the Lord's ways.

**3 John 2 "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."**

In 3 John 2, the phrase "be in health" seems to be referring to physical health because of its use with the word "soul" (psuchee), referring to the spiritual and emotional side of the person.

But remember, having perfect health only benefits one for a short time. With many people, that is all they want.

The people Jesus healed physically are all dead now; unless that benefited them spiritually, it only served a temporary purpose, because nothing of eternal value was done.

For the Christian, physical health is not the only thing of importance. One must see beyond it and focus upon the spiritual life.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

*Our health is to be seen as an opportunity to prosper spiritually.*

The phrase “*be in health*” has different meanings:

- 1) To be sound, to be well<sup>1</sup>, to be in good health<sup>3</sup>.
- 2) To be uncorrupted by incorrect doctrine<sup>3</sup>.

The second definition is seen in what John deals with in these Epistles: false teaching, false brethren – those like Diotrephes who, by example, teach something else.

Remember, the prosperous journey is primarily speaking of our journey in this present life and how that relates to the spiritual life.

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<sup>1</sup> Strong's Greek/Hebrew definitions

<sup>3</sup> Thayer's Greek Lexicon