

# I JOHN

## CHAPTER ONE

1) We [apostles] **proclaim to you** [the truth about Jesus], **who existed from the beginning** [of time]. **We have heard [Him] and seen [Him] with our [own] eyes. We looked at Him, and [even] touched Him with our hands.** [See John 20:20]. [So, we proclaim that] **He is the word of life** [i.e., the life-giving Word]! 2) **Truly, this ALife® was made known to us and we have [actually] seen it [i.e., Him], and so we testify and proclaim to you [that He is] Athe Eternal Life,® who was with the Father and was made known to us [apostles].** 3) **We declare to you what we have seen and heard [concerning Christ], so that you also may share a relationship with us. And indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.** 4) **We are writing to you about these things, so that [together] our joy may be [completely] full.**

5) **And this is the message we heard from Him, and [now want to] announce to you: God is light** [i.e. righteousness] **and in His [very nature] there is no trace of darkness** [i.e., evil]. 6) **If we claim to share a relationship with God and yet live in darkness** [i.e., in a sinful way], **we are lying and are not living a truthful life.** 7) **But, if we live in the light** [of righteousness] **just like God** [constantly] **lives in the light** [of righteousness], **we can truly share a relationship with one another and [can know that] the blood of Jesus, God's Son, continues to cleanse [our spirits] from all of our sins.**

8) **If we claim to have no sinful practices** [in our lives], **we are self-deceived and are not being truthful about the matter.** 9) **[But] if we confess our sins [to God], He is faithful [to His promise] and righteous [in His judgment], and will forgive us of those sins and cleanse us from all of our wrongdoing.** 10) **If we claim that we have not committed sins, we are [in effect] calling God a liar** [i.e., because He says we have] **and His word** [i.e., the real truth about the matter] **is not in our hearts.**

## CHAPTER TWO

**1) My little children [i.e., dear ones], I am writing this to you so that you will not sin anymore. But if anyone does sin, we have Someone to go to the Father on our behalf; it is Jesus Christ, the [only] righteous One. 2) And He is the One who provides a Acovering over@ [or atonement] for our sins [See Heb. 2:17; Dan. 9:24; II Chron. 29:24], and not for ours [who are already Christians] only, but also for the sins of the people of the whole world.**

**3) And here is how we can be assured that we know Jesus [i.e., that we are saved]: [It is] by obeying what He commands us. 4) The person who says, AI have come to know Him,@ but does not obey what He commands, is lying [by such a profession], and the truth [about the matter] is not in his heart. 5) But the person who obeys what His teaching requires, truly in this person love for God has been made complete. This is [another way] to be sure that we are in [fellowship with] Him: 6) The person who claims he is continuing to live in [fellowship with] Jesus should also live the way He did.**

**7) My dearly loved ones, I am not writing to you about a new commandment, but about an old one. [It is the one] you had learned about from the beginning. [Note: This is the commandment to love one another (3:1; II John 5) which Jesus had taught his disciples during His earthly ministry. See Mark 12:31]. This old commandment is the word [of God] which you heard [previously]. 8) Yet, I am [also] writing to you about a new commandment [Note: This commandment was to love one another as Jesus loved them. See John 13:34]; its truth is [being demonstrated] by Christ [perfectly] and [also] by you people [in a lesser measure], because the darkness [of sin] is passing away, and the real light [of righteousness] is already shining [in people's lives]. 9) The person who claims to be living in [harmony with] the light [i.e., by obeying God's truth], and [yet] hates his brother is still [living] in the darkness [of sin]. 10) [However], the person who loves his brother continues to live in [harmony with] the light [of God's truth], and such a person is not the cause of others stumbling [over his example]. 11) But the person who hates his brother is in the darkness [of sin] and he lives in [harmony with] that darkness, and he does not know where he is heading, because the darkness [of sin] has blinded his eyes [to his spiritual condition].**

**12) I am writing to you, little children [i.e., dear ones], because you have been forgiven of your sins for [the sake of]**

**Christ's name. 13) I am writing to you fathers, because you have known Him** [i.e., Christ], [who has existed] **from the beginning** [See John 1:1]. **I am writing to you young men, because you have overcome the** [power of the] **evil one** [i.e., through faith they had gained victory over Satan, See 5:4]. **14) I have written to you little children** [i.e., dear ones], **because you have known the Father** [as your God]. **I have written to you fathers, because you have known Him** [i.e., Christ], [who has existed] **from the beginning.** [See verse 13]. **I have written to you young men, because you are** [spiritually] **strong and the word of God continues to live in your hearts, and you have overcome the** [power of the] **evil one** [See verse 13].

**15) You should not love the** [godless] **world, nor the things** [i.e., the materialistic values] **that are part of this** [present] **age. If any person loves the world, a** [genuine] **love for the Father is not in his heart. 16) For all that makes up the world, namely, the improper desires of the physical body, the improper desires for what is seen, and the** [boastful] **pride over life's possessions; these are not from the Father, but from the** [godless] **world. 17) And the world, with its** [physical and material] **desires, is passing away, but the person who does what God wants will continue to live forever.**

**18) Dear children, it is** [now] **the last hour** [i.e., the final period of God's dealing with people on earth], **and since you have heard that an antichrist** [i.e., a person who is against Christ] **is coming, even now** [you should be aware that] **many antichrists have** [already] **come. This is** [one way] **we know that this is the last hour. 19) These antichrists left our group** [i.e., withdrew their fellowship from us], **but they were not** [really a part] **of us, for if they had been, they would have continued** [to participate] **with us. But, by their leaving us, it proved that none of them were** [really] **a part of our group** [after all].

**20) But, you people have a** [special gift] **from the Holy One** [Note: The Greek word for [special gift] is [charisma] and probably refers to the Holy Spirit (See Acts 2:38); [Holy One] probably refers to Jesus, (See Acts 2:27; 3:14)], **and all of you know** [the truth]. **21) I did not write to you people because you are ignorant of the truth** [about these matters], **but because you do know it, and because nothing false belongs to the true teaching. 22) Who is the liar? It is the person who denies that Jesus** [truly] **is the Christ** [i.e., God's specially chosen One]. **This person is the antichrist** [See verse 18]; **he is the one who denies** [the truth about] **the Father and the Son. 23)**

**Every person who denies** [the truth about] **the Son** [See 4:2-3], **does not have the Father** [living in his heart]; **but, the person who confesses** [the truth about] **the Son has the Father** [living in his heart] also.

**24) You people should continue** [to practice] **what you heard from the beginning** [i.e., to love one another, See verses 7-11]. **If you do, then you also will continue in** [fellowship with] **the Son, and with the Father.** **25) And this is the promise which Christ** [or, AGod@] **has given to us:** [It is] **never ending life.** [Note: This passage may mean that God promised us Athe Eternal Life,@that is, Christ, See John 3:16].

**26) I have written these things to you people concerning those who are trying to lead you astray** [from the truth]. **27) And this is important to you: The A special gift,@ which you received from God** [See verse 20], **continues to live in your hearts,** [so that] **you do not need anyone to teach you** [anything different]. **But, since this same A special gift,@ teaches you concerning everything that is true, and** [what it teaches] **is not false, you should continue to live in** [fellowship with] **Christ.**

**28) And now, little children** [i.e., dear ones], **continue to live in** [fellowship with] **Christ, so that when He appears, we may have boldness and not have** [any reason] **to be ashamed in front of Him at His** [second] **coming.**

**29) If you know that Christ is** [truly] **righteous** [verse 1], **then you should also know that everyone who does what is right has been** [spiritually] **conceived** [and eventually born] **by God** [See 5:18].

### CHAPTER THREE

**1) Look at how much love the Father has shown to us** [Christians], **that we should be called His children! But, that is what we** [really] **are! The reason the people of the world do not know who we are is because they do not know who God** [really] **is.** **2) Dearly loved ones, we are God-s children now, but it has not yet been revealed** [to us] **what we will be** [in the future life, Luke 20:34-36]. **But, we do know this, however, that when Jesus is revealed** [i.e., at His second coming], **we will be like Him** [I Cor. 15:49], **for we will see what He really looks like!** **3) And every person who has set his hope on this** [i.e., of being like Jesus], **will live** [as] **purely** [as possible], **just as He** [i.e., Jesus Himself] **is pure.**

**4) Every person who practices a life of sin is also breaking [God's] law, for sin is law-breaking. 5) But, you [should] know that Christ appeared [on earth] to take away [our] sins, and that there is no sin in His life [See II Cor. 5:21]. 6) No person who lives in [fellowship with] Christ will continue living a sinful life; the one who keeps on sinning [however], has not seen Him or known Him [as his personal Savior].**

**7) Little children [i.e., dear ones], do not allow anyone to lead you astray [from the truth]; the person who continues to do what is right is [considered by God as] righteous, even as Christ is righteous. 8) [But] the person who continues to live a sinful life belongs to the devil, because the devil has continued to sin since the beginning [See Gen. 3]. For this is the reason that the Son of God came [into the world]; it was to destroy the works [i.e., the influence of] the devil [in people's lives]. 9) No one who has been [spiritually] conceived [and eventually born] by God continues to live a sinful life, because God's seed [i.e., His word, See Luke 8:11] continues to live in his heart, so he cannot [continue a life of] sin, because he has been conceived by God. 10) Here is how the children of God and the children of the devil can be recognized: All those who do not continue to do what is right do not belong to God. Also, the person who does not continue to love his brother [or sister does not belong to God].**

**11) [Now] this is the message that you people heard from the beginning [of Christ's ministry], that we should love one another [See Mark 12:31], 12) not [hate each other] the way Cain did, who belonged to the evil one [i.e., Satan], when he murdered his brother [Abel]. And why did he murder him? It was because his [own] actions were evil and his brother's were righteous [See Heb. 11:4].**

**13) So, do not be surprised, brothers, if the people of the world hate you. 14) [For] we [can] know that we have passed out of [the realm of spiritual] death and into [spiritual] life, because we [show] love for the brothers [and sisters]. The person who does not love [them] continues to be [spiritually] dead. 15) Every person who hates his brother is a murderer [in God's sight]; and you [surely] know that no murderer has [the hope of] never ending life remaining in his heart. 16) Here is how we can know what [God's] genuine love really is: It was [demonstrated by] Jesus laying down His life [on the cross] for us. And [because of that] we [too] should [be willing to] lay down our lives for [the sake of helping] our**

**brothers** [and sisters]. **17) Now whoever has** [a sufficient amount of] **life=s possessions and** [then] **observes one of his** [Christian] **brothers who does not have enough to get by on, but does not feel sorry for him** [i.e., enough to help him out], **surely a love for God does not continue to live in that person=s heart. 18) Little children** [i.e., dear ones], **we should not** [merely] **claim to love** [people], **or** [even just] **talk about it, but** [we should love] **by what we do** [for them] **in a genuine way. 19) And this is how we will know that we are following** [God=s] **truth, and will have assurance** [of it] **in our hearts and before God** [as well]. **20) But, if our hearts condemn us** [for not demonstrating God=s love for others], **surely God, who is greater than our hearts** [will also condemn us], **because He knows all things.**

**21) Loved ones, if our hearts do not condemn us** [i.e., because we are showing love by helping the needy], **we can have boldness before God** [in prayer for our own needs]; **22) and we can be assured of receiving from God whatever we ask Him for, because we are obeying His commands** [i.e., especially the one about loving others] **and are practicing what is pleasing to Him. 23) And this is His commandment: We should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ** [i.e., the person of Christ], **and love one another, just as He has commanded us to do. 24) And God lives in the heart of the person who** [continually] **obeys His commands, and he lives in** [fellowship with] **God. And here is** [another] **way we know that God lives in our hearts: It is by** [means of] **the Holy Spirit, whom God gave to us.** [See Rom. 8:9, 11; James 4:5; I Cor. 6:19].

## CHAPTER FOUR

**1) Loved ones, do not believe** [the message of] **every spirit** [i.e., every person claiming to be a teacher], **but test the spirits** [i.e., require proof that they and their message are genuine] **to see whether they represent God** [or not], **because many false prophets have begun circulating throughout the world. 2) Here is how to know** [who is speaking from] **the Holy Spirit of God: Every spirit** [i.e., person] **who proclaims that Jesus Christ has come** [to earth] **in a physical body is** [speaking] **from God.** [See I Cor. 12:3]. **3) But every spirit who does not proclaim** [this truth about] **Jesus is not** [speaking] **from God. And this** [person] **represents the spirit of the antichrist**

[See 2:18-22; II John 7], **whom you have heard would come. Well, now he is already here!**

**4) [But], you people are [followers] of God, little children [i.e., dear ones], and you have overcome them [i.e., these false teachers] because He who is in your lives [i.e., the Holy Spirit, See 3:24] is greater [i.e., more powerful] than he who is in [i.e., dominates] the world [i.e., Satan. See II Cor. 4:4]. 5) These [false teachers] are part of the world, so [naturally] they speak [a message endorsed] by the world and the world listens to them. 6) We [who preach the true Gospel] represent God; the person who knows God listens to our message; the one who does not belong to God does not listen to us. This is how we can know [the difference between those speaking by] the Holy Spirit of truth and [those speaking by] the spirit of [Satan's] error.**

**7) Loved ones, we should have love for one another, because love comes from [the very nature of] God, and every person who [continually] loves [others] has been [spiritually] conceived by God [See 2:29; 3:9], and knows [he is in fellowship with] God. 8) The person who does not love [others] does not know God [as Savior], for [the very nature of] God is love. 9) Here is the way God's love for us was demonstrated; He sent His one and only Son into the world so that we could have [spiritual] life through Him. 10) Here is [the essence of] love: [It is] not that we loved God [first], but that He loved us [See Rom. 5:6-8] and sent His Son to be a covering over [i.e., atonement, 2:2] for our sins. 11) Loved ones, if God loved us that much, we should also love one another. 12) No person has gazed upon God [at any time]; [but] if we love one another, God [continually] lives in our hearts, and His love is made complete within us.**

**13) This is [one way] to know we live in [fellowship with] God and that He lives in our hearts: [It is] because He has given us His Holy Spirit [to live within us, See 3:24]. 14) And we [apostles] have seen and are [reliable] witnesses that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world [See 1:2; 2:2]. 15) Whoever proclaims that Jesus is the Son of God, God [continually] lives in that person's heart, and he lives in [fellowship with] God [See 2:23]. 16) And we have known [with certainty] and have believed [with assurance] that God has truly loved us. God's [very nature] is love and the person who [continually] loves [Him and others] lives in [fellowship with] God [continually], and God [continually] lives in**

that person's heart. 17) Here is what a complete love will do for us: It will give us boldness in [facing] the judgment day, because the way Jesus acts [regarding love] is the way we should act [while] in this world. 18) There is no [reason for] fear if one [really] loves, but a complete love removes fear [from us] because fear produces punishment [i.e., mental anxiety], and the person who is [always] afraid does not have a complete love. 19) We love [God and others] because God has first loved us. 20) If a person says, *AI love God,* yet [in reality] hates his brother, he is a liar. For the person who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot [possibly] love God, whom he has never seen. 21) And this is the [greatest] commandment [See Matt. 2:37-38] we have received from Him: [It requires] that the person who [claims to] love God should also love his brother.

## CHAPTER FIVE

1) Every person who believes that Jesus is the Christ [i.e., God's specially chosen one] has been [spiritually] conceived [and eventually born] by God. And everyone who [continually] loves God, who did the conceiving, also [must continually] love the person whom God has [spiritually] conceived. 2) This is [one] way we know that we love God's [spiritually reborn] children: [It is] when we love God and obey what He commands us to do. 3) For this is [real evidence of] our love for God: [It is] obeying what He commands us to do. And obeying His commands does not cause us any grief [or, unpleasantness]. 4) For whoever [Note: The Greek says *whatever*] is [spiritually] conceived [and eventually born] by God will overcome [the evil influence of] the world. And this is [how] that victory can be gained over the world: [It is through] our faith [in God]. 5) And who is the person who can overcome [the evil influence of] the world? [It is] the one who [truly] believes that Jesus is the Son of God. 6) This Jesus is the one whose coming [to earth was introduced] by water [at His immersion. See Matt. 3:13] and [completed] by blood [at His crucifixion, John 19:17-37]. He did not come by the water only, but by the water and by the blood. And it is the Holy Spirit who gives testimony [at both of these events], because the Holy Spirit is [always] the truth. [See John 16:13]. 7) For there are three who give their testimony [about Jesus]: 8) The Holy Spirit [through His Word],

**and the water** [through His immersion] **and the blood** [through His crucifixion]; **and these three agree together** [in giving testimony about Him]. **9) If we** [are willing to] **accept the testimony of people about matters**, [surely we ought to accept that] **the testimony of God is more reliable; because the testimony of God is that He has presented** [confirming] **testimony concerning** [the identity and mission of] **His Son.** **10) The person who** [sincerely] **believes in God's Son has the evidence** [of it] **within his heart**, [confirming God's testimony]. **The person who does not believe God** [i.e., what He says about Jesus], **accuses Him of lying, because he has not accepted the** [irrefutable] **testimony of God concerning** [the identity and mission of] **His Son.** **11) And this is the testimony** [of God]: **He gave to us** [the hope of] **never ending life, and this life is** [available through fellowship] **in His Son.** **12) The person who has the Son** [in his heart] **possesses this Alife;**<sup>@</sup> **the one who does not have the Son of God does not possess this Alife.**<sup>@</sup>

**13) I have written these things to you people, who believe in the name** [i.e., in the person and work] **of the Son of God, so that you can have assurance that you have** [the hope of] **never ending life.** [See Titus 1:2; 3:7; Mark 10:30]. **14) And this is** [how we can express] **boldness in our relationship with God: Whatever we ask** [of God, in prayer], **so long as it is in harmony with His will for us,** [we know] **He hears our request.** **15) And if we can be sure that He hears our request for whatever we ask** [of Him], **we can** [also] **be certain that we** [will] **have whatever we have requested from Him.** **16) If anyone** [of you] **observes his brother** [or sister] **sinning** [in a way that would not lead] **to** [spiritual] **death, he should ask** [God, in prayer, to help that person], **and God will give him** [spiritual] **life,** [that is], **to such ones, provided their sin is not leading to** [spiritual] **death. There is such a sin that leads to** [spiritual] **death.** [See Heb. 6:4-6; I Tim. 5:6; Heb. 10:26-27; II Pet. 2:20-22]. **I am not suggesting that you should ask** [God, in prayer] **about such a situation.** **17) All wrongdoing is sinful, and** [yet] **there is a situation where** [a persons] **sin does not lead** [him] **to** [spiritual] **death.**

**18) We know that every person who has been** [spiritually] **conceived by God** [and eventually born] **does not continue in** [a life of] **sin, but God's only conceived One** [i.e., His Son] **keeps him** [from continuing to sin], **and the evil one** [i.e., Satan] **does not continue to touch him** [i.e., continue to control his life]. **19) We** [also] **know that we are** [children] **of God and that the people of the whole world lie**

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**under** [the control of] **the evil one** [i.e., Satan]. **20) And** [in addition], **we know that the Son of God has come** [in a physical body, See 4:2] **and has given us understanding, so that we can know the True One** [i.e., God], **and that we are in** [fellowship with] **the True One, even His Son Jesus Christ. This Son is the true God and eternal life.**

**21) Little children** [i.e., dear ones], **protect yourselves from** [worshiping] **idols.**