John's First Letter

1 That which was from the beginning, that
which we have heard, that which we have seen
with our eyes, that which we saw, and our hands
touched, concerning the Word of life 2 (and the life
was revealed, and we have seen, and testify, and
declare to you the life, the eternal life, which was
with the Father, and was revealed to us); 3 that
which we have seen and heard we declare to you,
that you also may have fellowship with us. Yes,
and our fellowship is with the Father and with his
Son, Jesus Christ.† 4 And we write these things to
you, that our joy may be fulfilled.

5 This is the message which we have heard from
him and announce to you, that God is light, and in
him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have
fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we
lie and don't tell the truth. 7 But if we walk in
the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship
with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his
Son, cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we
have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth
is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful
and righteous to forgive us the sins and to cleanse
us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we
haven't sinned, we make him a liar, and his word
is not in us.

† **1:3:** "Christ" means "Anointed One".

2

1 My little children, I write these things to you
so that you may not sin. If anyone sins, we have
a Counsellor† with the Father, Jesus Christ, the
righteous. 2 And he is the atoning sacrifice‡ for our
sins, and not for ours only, but also for the whole
world. 3 This is how we know that we know him:
if we keep his commandments. 4 One who says, "I
know him," and doesn't keep his commandments,
is a liar, and the truth isn't in him. 5 But God's love
has most certainly been perfected in whoever
keeps his word. This is how we know that we are
in him: 6 he who says he remains in him ought
himself also to walk just like he walked.

7 Brothers, I write no new commandment to
you, but an old commandment which you had
from the beginning. The old commandment is
the word which you heard from the beginning.
8 Again, I write a new commandment to you,
which is true in him and in you, because the
darkness is passing away and the true light al-
ready shines. 9 He who says he is in the light
and hates his brother is in the darkness even until
now. 10 He who loves his brother remains in the
light, and there is no occasion for stumbling in
him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in the
darkness, and walks in the darkness, and doesn't
know where he is going, because the darkness has
blinded his eyes.

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† **2:1:** Greek παρακλητον: Counsellor, Helper, Intercessor, Advocate, and Comforter. ‡ **2:2:** "atoning sacrifice" is from the Greek "ιλασμος", an appeasing, propitiating, or the means of appeasement or propitiation—the sacrifice that turns away God's wrath because of our sin.

12 I write to you, little children, because your
sins are forgiven you for his name's sake.
13 I write to you, fathers, because you know him
who is from the beginning.
I write to you, young men, because you have
overcome the evil one.
I write to you, little children, because you know
the Father.
14 I have written to you, fathers, because you
know him who is from the beginning.
I have written to you, young men, because you
are strong, and the word of God remains in you,
and you have overcome the evil one.
15 Don't love the world or the things that are in
the world. If anyone loves the world, the Father's
love isn't in him. 16 For all that is in the world—the
lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride
of life—isn't the Father's, but is the world's. 17 The
world is passing away with its lusts, but he who
does God's will remains forever.
18 Little children, these are the end times, and
as you heard that the Antichrist is coming, even
now many antichrists have arisen. By this we
know that it is the final hour. 19 They went out
from us, but they didn't belong to us; for if they
had belonged to us, they would have continued
with us. But they left, that they might be revealed
that none of them belong to us. 20 You have an
anointing from the Holy One, and you all have
knowledge.§ 21 I have not written to you because
you don't know the truth, but because you know it,
and because no lie is of the truth. 22 Who is the liar

§ **2:20:** Or, "know what is true", or, "know all things"

but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is
the Antichrist, he who denies the Father and the
Son. 23 Whoever denies the Son doesn't have the
Father. He who confesses the Son has the Father
also.†
24 Therefore, as for you, let that remain in you
which you heard from the beginning. If that
which you heard from the beginning remains in
you, you also will remain in the Son, and in the
Father. 25 This is the promise which he promised
us, the eternal life.
26 These things I have written to you concerning
those who would lead you astray. 27 As for you, the
anointing which you received from him remains
in you, and you don't need for anyone to teach
you. But as his anointing teaches you concerning
all things, and is true, and is no lie, and even as it
taught you, you will remain in him.
28 Now, little children, remain in him, that when
he appears, we may have boldness and not be
ashamed before him at his coming. 29 If you know
that he is righteous, you know that everyone who
practices righteousness has been born of him.

3

1 See how great a love the Father has given to us,
that we should be called children of God! For this
cause the world doesn't know us, because it didn't
know him. 2 Beloved, now we are children of God.
It is not yet revealed what we will be; but we know
that when he is revealed, we will be like him, for
we will see him just as he is. 3 Everyone who has

† **2:23:** MT omits: He who confesses the Son has the Father also.

this hope set on him purifies himself, even as he is
pure.

4 Everyone who sins also commits lawlessness.
Sin is lawlessness. 5 You know that he was re-
vealed to take away our sins, and no sin is in him.
6 Whoever remains in him doesn't sin. Whoever
sins hasn't seen him and doesn't know him.

7 Little children, let no one lead you astray. He
who does righteousness is righteous, even as he
is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the
devil has been sinning from the beginning. To
this end the Son of God was revealed: that he
might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever is
born of God doesn't commit sin, because his seed
remains in him, and he can't sin, because he is
born of God. 10 In this the children of God are
revealed, and the children of the devil. Whoever
doesn't do righteousness is not of God, neither is
he who doesn't love his brother. 11 For this is
the message which you heard from the beginning,
that we should love one another— 12 unlike Cain,
who was of the evil one and killed his brother.
Why did he kill him? Because his deeds were evil,
and his brother's righteous.

13 Don't be surprised, my brothers, if the world
hates you. 14 We know that we have passed out
of death into life, because we love the brothers.
He who doesn't love his brother remains in death.
15 Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and
you know that no murderer has eternal life re-
maining in him.

16 By this we know love, because he laid down
his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives
for the brothers. 17 But whoever has the world's

goods and sees his brother in need, then closes his
heart of compassion against him, how does God's
love remain in him?
18 My little children, let's not love in word only,
or with the tongue only, but in deed and truth.
19 And by this we know that we are of the truth
and persuade our hearts before him, 20 because
if our heart condemns us, God is greater than
our heart, and knows all things. 21 Beloved, if
our hearts don't condemn us, we have boldness
towards God; 22 so whatever we ask, we receive
from him, because we keep his commandments
and do the things that are pleasing in his sight.
23 This is his commandment, that we should be-
lieve in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love
one another, even as he commanded. 24 He who
keeps his commandments remains in him, and he
in him. By this we know that he remains in us, by
the Spirit which he gave us.

4

1 Beloved, don't believe every spirit, but test the
spirits, whether they are of God, because many
false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By
this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit who
confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is
of God, 3 and every spirit who doesn't confess that
Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God;
and this is the spirit of the Antichrist, of whom you
have heard that it comes. Now it is in the world
already. 4 You are of God, little children, and have
overcome them, because greater is he who is in
you than he who is in the world. 5 They are of the

world. Therefore they speak of the world, and the
world hears them. 6 We are of God. He who knows
God listens to us. He who is not of God doesn't
listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth, and
the spirit of error.

7 Beloved, let's love one another, for love is of
God; and everyone who loves has been born of
God and knows God. 8 He who doesn't love doesn't
know God, for God is love. 9 By this God's love was
revealed in us, that God has sent his only born†
Son into the world that we might live through him.
10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he
loved us, and sent his Son as the atoning sacrifice‡
for our sins. 11 Beloved, if God loved us in this way,
we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has
seen God at any time. If we love one another, God
remains in us, and his love has been perfected in
us.

13 By this we know that we remain in him and
he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.
14 We have seen and testify that the Father has sent
the Son as the Saviour of the world. 15 Whoever
confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God remains
in him, and he in God. 16 We know and have
believed the love which God has for us. God
is love, and he who remains in love remains in
God, and God remains in him. 17 In this, love has
been made perfect amongst us, that we may have
boldness in the day of judgement, because as he is,

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† **4:9:** The phrase "only born" is from the Greek word "μονογενη", which is sometimes translated "only begotten" or "one and only".

‡ **4:10:** "atoning sacrifice" is from the Greek "ιλασμος", an appeasing, propitiating, or the means of appeasement or propitiation—the sacrifice that turns away God's wrath because of our sin.

even so we are in this world. 18 There is no fear in
love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear
has punishment. He who fears is not made perfect
in love. 19 We love him,§ because he first loved us.
20 If a man says, "I love God," and hates his brother,
he is a liar; for he who doesn't love his brother
whom he has seen, how can he love God whom
he has not seen? 21 This commandment we have
from him, that he who loves God should also love
his brother.

5

1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has
been born of God. Whoever loves the Father also
loves the child who is born of him. 2 By this we
know that we love the children of God, when we
love God and keep his commandments. 3 For this
is loving God, that we keep his commandments.
His commandments are not grievous. 4 For what-
ever is born of God overcomes the world. This
is the victory that has overcome the world: your
faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but
he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus
Christ; not with the water only, but with the water
and the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because
the Spirit is the truth. 7 For there are three who
testify:† 8 the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and
the three agree as one. 9 If we receive the witness
of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is

§ **4:19:** NU omits "him". † **5:7:** Only a few recent manuscripts add "in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. And there are three that testify on earth:"

God's testimony which he has testified concerning
his Son. 10 He who believes in the Son of God
has the testimony in himself. He who doesn't
believe God has made him a liar, because he has
not believed in the testimony that God has given
concerning his Son. 11 The testimony is this: that
God gave to us eternal life, and this life is in his
Son. 12 He who has the Son has the life. He who
doesn't have God's Son doesn't have the life.

13 These things I have written to you who be-
lieve in the name of the Son of God, that you may
know that you have eternal life, and that you may
continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

14 This is the boldness which we have towards
him, that if we ask anything according to his will,
he listens to us. 15 And if we know that he listens
to us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the
petitions which we have asked of him.

16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not
leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give
him life for those who sin not leading to death.
There is sin leading to death. I don't say that
he should make a request concerning this. 17 All
unrighteousness is sin, and there is sin not leading
to death.

18 We know that whoever is born of God doesn't
sin, but he who was born of God keeps himself,
and the evil one doesn't touch him. 19 We know
that we are of God, and the whole world lies in the
power of the evil one. 20 We know that the Son of
God has come and has given us an understanding,
that we know him who is true; and we are in him
who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true
God and eternal life.

21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

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