

**Notes on the Greek New Testament**  
**Week 234 – 1 John 4:16b-5:21**

**Day 1166: 1 John 4:16b-21**

**Verse 16**

Ο θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν, καὶ ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἐν τῷ θεῷ μένει καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει.

μενω remain, stay, abide

Marshall writes, "Stott rightly notes that living in love is the proof or result of living in God: it is not by loving that we come into fellowship with God, but as a result of our fellowship with him we live in love."

And Dodd comments, "The expression 'to remain in love' is suggestive rather than exact. It is not clear whether the meaning is 'to continue to live as the objects of God's love,' or 'to continue to love God,' or 'to continue to love our brothers.' It is in fact impossible, according to the teaching of both this epistle and of the Fourth Gospel, to make a clear separation between these three modes or manifestations of love. The energy of love discharges itself along lines which form a triangle, whose points are God, self and neighbour: but the source of all love is God, of whom alone it can be said that He *is* love. Whether we love God or our neighbour, it is God's love that is at work in us – assuming, that is, that our love is authentic ἀγάπη which is exemplified in God's gift of His Son, and in Christ's sacrifice for us all."

**Verse 17**

ἐν τούτῳ τετελείωται ἡ ἀγάπη μεθ' ἡμῶν, ἵνα παρρησίαν ἔχωμεν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς κρίσεως, ὅτι καθὼς ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ.

Westcott argues that the 'in this' refers to what precedes. "The fellowship of man with God and of God with man carries with it the consummation of love. *In this* – in this double communion – *love hath been perfected* already on the divine side; and it is God's will that men should make its blessings their own."

τετελείωται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s  
τελεω complete, finish, fulfill

"The unique form of expression appears to have been chosen in place of the simple 'hath been perfected in us' in order to place the perfection clearly in the realised fellowship of God and man. Love is not simply perfected in man (ἐν ἡμῖν) by an act of divine power, but in fulfilling this issue God works with man (μεθ' ἡμῶν)." Westcott.

παρρησια, ας f boldness, assurance

"To abide in God is to share the character of Christ under the conditions of earth. The sense of spiritual harmony with Him which this abiding brings necessarily inspires boldness in the believer; and it is the purpose of God that it should do so." Westcott.

κρισις, εως f judgement

ἐκεῖνος, η, ο that (one), he, she, it

"The ground of confidence is present likeness to Christ." Westcott.

Marshall comments, "We probably have here another example of that portrayal of the 'eschatological reality' of the Christian life which we found particularly in 3:6, 9; John is stating the characteristic which ought to be found in every true Christian, namely that he is like Jesus, but this is not incompatible with his urging his readers to let the ideal become a reality. Were it not so, our grounds for confidence might seem very slender and fitful."

Smalley thinks that the Epistle may here reflect the teaching of the farewell discourse of the Gospel, particularly Jn 15:9-10 but also 14:10-11, 20; 17:21-23, 26. He concludes, "On such a theological basis John may be implying here that the relationship of believers to God in the world can and should reflect that of Jesus to God (as it was on earth, and as it still *is* in heaven: this includes the Son's own 'confidence' before God; cf. 2:1)."

**Verse 18**

φόβος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ, ἀλλ' ἡ τελεία ἀγάπη ἔξω βάλλει τὸν φόβον, ὅτι ὁ φόβος κόλασιν ἔχει, ὁ δὲ φοβούμενος οὐ τετελείωται ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ.

φοβος, ου m fear

Smalley comments, "The term φόβος ('fear') is used in the NT to denote reverence for God (Rom 3:18; 2 Cor 7:1; cf. Acts 9:31; 2 Cor 5:11; Eph 5:21); although some biblical texts imply that this 'reverence' may include an element of 'fear and trembling' (e.g. Ps 119:120; Phil 2:12). In the present context φόβος means servile, self-regarding fear (as in Rom 8:15; cf. John 19:38; 20:19). Such 'fear' has no part with love; so that the Christian who lives in God's love can anticipate the judgment day confidently, and not with terror. Human relationships provide a parallel. Two people who love each other are to that extent unafraid of each other; all the more, therefore, 'to live within the love of God is freedom from ultimate fear' (Dodd...). Sin leads to fear, but love to confidence."

τελειος, α, ον complete, perfect, mature

"The thought is of love which is complete in all its parts, which has reached its complete development (Hebr. 5:14)." Westcott.

ἔξω adv. out, outside, away

βαλλω throw, throw down

Real love "flings fear out of doors." Law.

κολασις, εως f punishment; κ. ἔχω  
have to do with punishment

Westcott thinks that the punishment spoken of is a suffering which stems from a sense of disharmony with God and that this suffering is a form of discipline, "a divine punishment which has a salutary office: Hebr. 12:11." Smalley argues that fear "anticipates and makes real the future pain it contemplates." I.e. it causes present pain but has also an eye to the future judgment (cf. v. 17).

φοβεομαι fear, be afraid (of)

τετελείωται see v.17

"This consummation of the believer is presented in two complementary forms. He is himself the sphere in which love finds its perfection; and love is the sphere in which he finds his perfection. Love is perfected in him (2:5): and he is perfected in love." Westcott.

### Verse 19

ἡμεῖς ἀγαπῶμεν, ὅτι αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς.

ἀγαπαω love, show love for

Both love for God and love of one another. The two are inseparable.

In place of the absolute ἀγαπῶμεν, which appears in A B Vg<sup>ww</sup> eth<sup>pp</sup>, et al., κVg<sup>cl</sup> syr<sup>p,hcl</sup> cop<sup>bo</sup> arm (eth<sup>ro</sup>), et al. read ἀγαπῶμεν τὸν θεόν, and K Ψ Augustine 1/4, et al. have ἀγαπῶμεν αὐτόν. As in 3:16; 4:10 and 17, however, these are certain to be later additions which attempt to give precision to John's thought. In so doing they run counter to the meaning of the passage, since this treats 'love' in its absolute sense.

πρῶτος, η, ον first

"Our love is the light kindled by the love of God." Westcott.

Marshall comments, "It is, therefore, good for us constantly to renew our knowledge of God's love as we read of it in the Bible, as we hear it proclaimed in the worship of the church, and as we consider the ways in which our whole life has been moulded by experiences of God's love and care for us."

### Verse 20

ἐάν τις εἴπῃ ὅτι ἄγαπῶ τὸν θεόν, καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῇ, ψεύστης ἐστίν· ὁ γὰρ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ὃν ἑώρακεν, τὸν θεὸν ὃν οὐχ ἑώρακεν οὐ δύναται ἀγαπᾶν.

τις, τὶ acc τινά, τὶ gen τινός dat τινί  
anyone, anything, a certain

μισεω hate, despise, be indifferent to  
ψευστης, ου m liar

Cf. 2:4. "The claim to the knowledge of God without obedience, and the claim to the love of God without action, involve not only the denial of what is known to be true (ψευδεσθαι), but falseness of character."

Westcott.

"The vital, practical test of our love for God is to be found in our love for others." Smalley. John is clearly writing against the false claims of the heretical members and ex-members of the fellowship.

ὄραω see

Smalley writes, "For οὐ δύναται ἀγαπᾶν ('he cannot love'), which is attested by  $\aleph$ B  $\Psi$ , et al., some witnesses (including A K L) read πῶς δύναται ἀγαπᾶν ('how can he love?'). The statement ('he cannot love') is solemn and impressive, and suits John's predilection for absolute phraseology (Westcott, 162; Brooke, 126). However, the question in the variant ('how can he love?') introduces a new thought to this v, in a typically Johannine manner ('for the person who does not love his brother no way of loving God remains'). So Brooke, 126–27. Thus the alternative text need not be dismissed as completely unlikely. (UBS GNT gives it a 'B' rating, indicating some degree of doubt.)"

### Verse 21

καὶ ταύτην τὴν ἐντολὴν ἔχομεν ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ, ἵνα ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν θεὸν ἀγαπᾷ καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ.

ἐντολὴ, ἡς f command, instruction

Cf. Jn 13:34. The two loves are inseparable.

## Day 1167: 1 John 5:1-5

### Verse 1

Πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ Χριστὸς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται, καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν γεννήσαντα ἀγαπᾷ [καὶ] τὸν γεγεννημένον ἐξ αὐτοῦ.

γεγέννηται Verb, perf pass indic, 3 s  
γενναω be father of, bear; pass be born

The perfect tense indicates the present state of the believer. Marshall comments, "Faith is thus a sign of the new birth, just as love (4:7) and doing what is right (2:29; 3:9f.) are also indications that a person has been born of God." And Smalley comments, "The regenerate Christian (past) must constantly live out (present) his faith in Jesus as Messiah, and also give his sustained allegiance to the love command."

γεννήσαντα Verb, aor act ptc, m acc s  
γενναω

καὶ is included by  $\aleph$ A K P Vg<sup>cl</sup> cop<sup>bo</sup>, et al., but omitted by B  $\Psi$  Vg<sup>ww</sup> cop<sup>sa</sup>, et al.. There is no certainty about the original reading from the MS evidence; but in this context the addition of an intensive enclitic ('also loves') is entirely appropriate.

γεγεννημένον Verb, perf pass ptc, m acc & n nom/acc s γενναω

Augustine thought that the reference here is to Christ, but this does not fit the context. It is possible that the meaning is that 'Anyone who loves *his own* parent should also love other children of his parents.'

### Verse 2

ἐν τούτῳ γινωσκομεν ὅτι ἀγαπῶμεν τὰ τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅταν τὸν θεὸν ἀγαπῶμεν καὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ ποιῶμεν.

Marshall argues that the train of thought in this verse demands that ἀγαπῶμεν here be understood as 'we ought to love.' Smalley disagrees – see below.

τέκνον, ου n child  
ὅταν when, whenever  
ἐντολὴ, ἡς f see 4:21

Love for one another is one of the central commands of God. "The one commandment of God (ἡ ἐντολὴ) is that we believe the Name of His Son and love one another." Westcott. Smalley cites Westcott and says, "We know that we love God's children when we love God.' John is then saying once more that love of others (including God's offspring) is grounded in the love of God (see 4:8, 16, 19...). The two loves are inseparable (4:12); we are to love others in God, and God in others. Moreover, when we love God truly we shall want to obey his orders, which are in any case summed up in the command to love other people (3:11; 4:7, 21). Thus we can recognize that we love God's children properly by loving God himself obediently."

Some MSS, including  $\aleph$  K L P TR, read τηρῶμεν in place of ποιῶμεν. This would seem to reflect an attempt to conform the text to the more normal phrase. The expression τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ ποιῶμεν occurs nowhere else in the NT.

Westcott suggests that the use of ποιεω suggests the active and positive 'energy of obedience'.

### Verse 3

αὕτη γὰρ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ τηρῶμεν· καὶ αἱ ἐντολαὶ αὐτοῦ βαρεῖαι οὐκ εἰσὶν,

τηρεω keep, observe

"A continuous and watchful endeavour to observe them." Westcott.

βαρὺς, εἰα, υ heavy, hard, difficult

Cf. Matt 11:30; 23:4. Smalley comments, "When John claims that God's commands are not 'burdensome' (βαρῆλαι), he means that they are not oppressive, so as to crush the freedom and spontaneity of love (he will show *why* they are not thus oppressive in v 4)."

#### Verse 4

ὅτι πᾶν τὸ γεγεννημένον ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ νικᾷ τὸν κόσμον· καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ νίκη ἣ νικήσασα τὸν κόσμον, ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν.

ὅτι "The fact that the divine commandments are not a burden is not established by a consideration of their character. In themselves they are difficult (Acts 14:22; John 16:33). To love the brethren is not a light thing. But with the commandment comes also the power of fulfilment. Natural taste, feeling, judgement may check spiritual sympathy; but every faculty and power which is quickened by God is essentially stronger than 'the world' and realises its victory at once." Westcott.

γεγεννημένον see v.2

νικᾷ Verb, pres act indic, 3 s νικῶ  
conquer, overcome

"A struggle which is present and continuous... Under the title 'the world' St John gathers up the sum of all the limited, transitory powers opposed to God which make obedience difficult." Westcott.

νικη, ης f victory

Occurs here only in the New Testament.

νικήσασα Verb, aor act ptc, f nom s νικῶ  
πίστις, εως f faith, trust, belief

Faith forms a vital link with Christ who has gained this victory. Marshall comments, "The fact that we hold the true faith from our hearts is the means whereby the power of the new world operates in us and enables us to overcome the world. It is striking that John says that we *have* overcome the world. Perhaps he is thinking of the completed victory of Jesus (Jn 16:33) which repeats itself in the life of the Christian."

#### Verse 5

τίς [δέ] ἐστὶν ὁ νικῶν τὸν κόσμον εἰ μὴ ὁ πιστεύων ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ;

To the words τίς ἐστὶν, read by A L Vg et al., some mss (including  $\aleph B K P \text{ syr}^{\text{hcl}}$ ) add δέ. Such a particle is likely to have been dropped from the text, rather than added to it; but equally the connection between v 5 and its predecessor is not so close that an enclitic becomes indispensable. The measure of doubt surrounding the origin of δέ is reflected in the UBS text, where it is enclosed in square brackets.

Verse 5 forms a bridge between vv 1-4 and the verses that follow.

Smalley comments, "The shift from confessing Jesus as 'Christ' (5:1), to accepting him as 'Son of God' in this verse, is paralleled at 2:22-23. It may be that for John both titles indicated the exalted status of Jesus, with little basic difference in meaning between them. As Son of God and Messiah, Jesus is intimately related to the Father (cf. John 13:3). However, the title 'Son of God' is perhaps especially appropriate in the present context because John is thinking of 'the power of God revealed in his Son, Jesus' (Marshall...). God's Son shares God's power, which is greater than that of the devil (cf. 4:4). Thus the believer can draw on the resources which are in God, through his Son, in order to 'conquer the world'; and in this way the temptation to adopt a worldly attitude, and to be allied with worldly desires (cf. 2:17), can be overcome. Right belief leads to right behaviour (cf. 5:1-4)."

#### Day 1168: 1 John 5:6-12

#### Verse 6

Οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἐλθὼν δι' ὕδατος καὶ αἵματος, Ἰησοῦς Χριστός· οὐκ ἐν τῷ ὕδατι μόνον ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ ὕδατι καὶ ἐν τῷ αἵματι· καὶ τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστιν τὸ μαρτυροῦν, ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστὶν ἡ ἀλήθεια.

ἐλθὼν Verb, aor act ptc, m nom s ἐρχομαι  
ὕδωρ, ὕδατος n water

Instead of καὶ αἵματος, which is read by B K L Ψ Vg syr<sup>p</sup>, et al., a number of mss (including 43 241 Ambrose) have καὶ πνεύματος. Other witnesses add καὶ πνεύματος to the text, either before the word αἵματος (e.g. P 81 88 arm [eth]) or after it (e.g. xA syr<sup>hcl</sup> cop<sup>sa,bo</sup>). Some authorities (including 39 61) fill out the addition by appending ἁγίον το πνεύματος. These additions were probably introduced by copyists who recalled John 3:5 where Jesus speaks of birth 'from water and the Spirit'.

Suggests Jesus' baptism and his death, though Westcott sees in this a reference also to the water and the blood which John records as issuing from Jesus' side on the cross (Jn 19:34). Blood symbolises his life given as a sacrifice for others. Water symbolises the spiritual life (Jn 3:5; 4:14; 7:38).

μονον adv only, alone

Marshall comments, "The reason why John emphasised these two events in the life of Jesus is seen in the second part of the verse where he stresses that Jesus did not come by water only but by water and blood. If we read, as it were, between the lines, it is not hard to guess that John's opponents accepted that Jesus Christ came by water but not by blood. We have already seen who these opponents were (see 2 Jn 7; 1 Jn 2:22 ...). They were people who held that the heavenly Christ descended upon Jesus at his baptism but withdrew from him before his death, so that it was only the earthly Jesus who died and not the heavenly Christ. Over against this heresy John emphasised that it was Jesus Christ – not simply a human Jesus – who experienced both baptism and crucifixion."

Smalley comments, "Historically Jesus 'came' into his power and authority by the 'water' of his baptism, at which point he was declared to be God's Son (Mark 1:11; John 1:34); and he 'came' into his power and authority in an even more ultimate sense by the 'blood' of his cross, a moment which the fourth evangelist describes as the 'glorification' of Christ (John 17:1). Cf. 4:2."

μαρτυρω bear witness, testify  
ἀληθεια, ας f truth, reality

Marshall comments, "Since he refers to the Spirit's activity in the present tense, the most obvious interpretation is that the Spirit presently testifies to us, in our inward hearts or through the preaching of the Word, that the baptism and death of Jesus point to his being the Christ and Son of God."

Smalley adds, "As in vv 7–9, the theology of v 6 is fully trinitarian. John speaks of Jesus, God's Son, who came (from God) by water and blood, and to whom the Spirit bears witness."

#### Verse 7

ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες,  
τρεις, τρια gen τριων dat τρισιν three

The present tense suggests a continuing witness.

#### Verse 8

τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν.

"The Spirit is the sign of the glory of the Risen Christ; John 7:39; 16:7; Acts 2:32f. Thus the Spirit, with the Water and the Blood, completes the witness to the Incarnation as a Fact no less than as an open source of blessing." Westcott.

εἰς, μια, ἓν gen ἑνος, μιας, ἑνος one

Marshall comments, "The implication of this last remark is that their witness stands or falls together; a person cannot claim that he is accepting the witness of the Spirit if he rejects the witness of the water and the blood to the character of Jesus."

Both Marshall and Smalley argue that 'water and blood' refer, as in v. 6, to Jesus' baptism and death – not, as some argue, to the sacraments. Smalley writes, "The basic subject in this part of 1 John is the need to keep faith in the revelation of God centered historically in Jesus (see the comment on v 6). The witness to this is provided above all by the Spirit who descended on Jesus at his baptism (John 1:32), and whom he gave to his disciples when, after his glorification on the cross (John 19:30; cf. 7:39), he empowered them for their mission (John 20:22 cf. 15:26–27). In each case the testimony of the Spirit himself is fundamental, and this is why he is called *first* as a witness here."

#### Verses 7-8 Textual Note

The short reading reproduced above is supported by the vast majority of mss., including the Byzantine. A longer reading is to be found in the Textus Receptus which appears to have been incorporated from the Latin versions, namely:

ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ, ὁ πατήρ, ὁ λόγος, καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα· καὶ οὗτοι οἱ τρεῖς ἐν εἰσι. καὶ τρεῖς εἰσιν οἱ μαρτυροῦντες ἐν τῇ γῆ, τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ τὸ ὕδωρ καὶ τὸ αἷμα, καὶ οἱ τρεῖς εἰς τὸ ἓν εἰσιν.

This longer reading is clearly an addition to the original text and may have arisen by a marginal scribal note having subsequently been incorporated into the text.

### Verse 9

εἰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν τῶν ἀνθρώπων λαμβάνομεν, ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ θεοῦ μείζων ἐστίν, ὅτι αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι μεμαρτύρηκεν περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ.

μαρτυρία, ας f testimony, witness

Even in the human arena the testimony of three witnesses should be accepted. Cf. John 5:36-37.

μειζων, ον greater

The perfect tense suggests a historical testimony – the testimony of God at Jesus' baptism and concerning his death.

### Verse 10

ὁ πιστεύων εἰς τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ἔχει τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ· ὁ μὴ πιστεύων τῷ θεῷ ψεύστην πεποίηκεν αὐτόν, ὅτι οὐ πεπίστευκεν εἰς τὴν μαρτυρίαν ἣν μεμαρτύρηκεν ὁ θεὸς περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ.

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/herself, itself

"That which for others is external is for the believer experimental. The witness of the Spirit and water and blood becomes an inner conviction of the life and cleansing and redemption." Westcott.

"To believe in the Son of God is to accept and keep God's testimony." Marshall. Smalley adds, "The inward witness of God's Spirit shows the Christian that he was right to believe in Jesus; and this 'internal testimony' (of the Spirit) balances and complements the external and historical witness of the 'water and blood,' the baptism and death of Jesus, which marked the limits of his earthly ministry (vv 6–8). Christian believing is subjective in character, but its origins are ultimately objective."

ψευστης, ου m liar

Cf. 1:10; 2:4, 22; 4:20

### Verse 11

καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ μαρτυρία, ὅτι ζωὴν αἰώνιον ἔδωκεν ἡμῖν ὁ θεός, καὶ αὕτη ἡ ζωὴ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ ἐστίν.

ζωη, ης f life

αἰωνιος, ον eternal, everlasting

ἔδωκεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s διδωμι

"The reference is to the historic facts by which this life was communicated to humanity." Westcott.

### Verse 12

ὁ ἔχων τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει τὴν ζωὴν· ὁ μὴ ἔχων τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν ζωὴν οὐκ ἔχει.

Cf. Jn. 3:16-18; 14:6. Smalley comments, "So absolutely is eternal life available to the believer in and through Jesus, the Christ and Son of God, as John has claimed in v 11, that to possess the Son is to have 'life' in its completeness. The reverse is equally true... As in vv 11 and 13 John's theology includes an exclusive note. It is *only* through Jesus Christ that God's life may be shared by believers... A practical call to decision is also implicit. Life-giving faith is possible, and therefore it should be exercised and maintained!"

## Day 1169: 1 John 5:13-17

### Verse 13

Ταῦτα ἔγραψα ὑμῖν ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅτι ζωὴν ἔχετε αἰώνιον, τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ.

Commences the epilogue. Cf. John 20:31.

γραφο write

Cf. 1:3,4.

After ὑμῖν, TR, following K L P et al. and most minuscules, reads τοῖς πιστεύουσιν εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ, ἵνα εἰδῆτε ὅτι ζωὴν ἔχετε αἰώνιον, καὶ ἵνα πιστεύητε εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ. It is possible that the longer reading (as in TR) was original, and that it was subsequently contracted in order to avoid the repetition of τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ... ἵνα πιστεύητε. But it is much more likely that the extended variant is secondary. It probably represents an attempt to straighten out the slightly awkward order of the clauses in this verse, together with a scribal assimilation to the statement in John 20:31.

εἰδῆτε Verb, perf/pres act subj, 2 pl οἶδα

Cf 2:29; 3:14. Eternal life may be possessed without having assurance of such possession.

ὄνομα, τος n name

Cf. 3:23. An afterthought, describing the character of those addressed.

John's primary purpose in writing was "not to persuade unbelievers of the truth of the Christian faith but rather to strengthen Christian believers who might be tempted to doubt the reality of their Christian experience and to give up their faith in Jesus." Marshall. The subject of the following verses is therefore confidence.

#### Verse 14

καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ παρρησία ἣν ἔχομεν πρὸς αὐτόν, ὅτι ἐάν τι αἰτωμεθα κατὰ τὸ θέλημα αὐτοῦ ἀκούει ἡμῶν.

"One important result of the believer's assurance of eternal life is that he can have confidence and boldness in relation to God. In particular this applies to the situation of making requests to God in prayer." Marshall.

παρρησια, ας f boldness, assurance

Cf. 2:28 and Heb 4:16.

αἰτεω ask, request

θελημα, ατος n will, wish, desire

Cf. 1 Pet 4:19; Gal 1:4; Eph 1:5,11 and Jn 15:7. Marshall comments, "It is as we freely yield ourselves to God that he is able to accomplish his will through us and our prayers. In a very real sense, therefore, the accomplishment of God's will in the world does depend on our prayers. Through prayer we make ourselves instruments of God's will, and at the same time, in a manner that lies beyond human comprehension, he is able to act powerfully to answer our prayers. When we learn to want what God wants, we have the joy of receiving his answers to our petitions."

#### Verse 15

καὶ ἐὰν οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἀκούει ἡμῶν ὁ ἐὰν αἰτωμεθα, οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἔχομεν τὰ αἰτήματα ἃ ἠτήκαμεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ.

αἴτημα, τος n request, demand

Cf. Phil 4:6; Lk 23:24.

ἠτήκαμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl αἰτεω

Cf. Mk 11:24.

#### Verse 16

Ἐάν τις ἴδῃ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτάνοντα ἁμαρτίαν μὴ πρὸς θάνατον, αἰτήσῃ, καὶ δώσει αὐτῷ ζωὴν, τοῖς ἁμαρτάνουσιν μὴ πρὸς θάνατον. ἔστιν ἁμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον· οὐ περὶ ἐκείνης λέγω ἵνα ἐρωτήσῃ.

"That boldness of access to God, which finds expression in prayer, finds its most characteristic expression in intercessory prayer." Westcott.

ἴδῃ Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ὄραω see

ἁμαρτανω sin, commit sin

ἁμαρτια, ας f sin

θανατος, ου m death

All sin causes separation from God and tends to death. The sin which is *unto death* may be the sin of utter rejection of Christ. John does not say that we may not pray for such a person, but such prayer is not dealt with here nor is it prayer to which this promise may be attached. So, for instance, Smalley, following Marshall, writes, "On the basis of the teaching in 1 John itself ... we may argue ... that 'sin leading to death' alludes to such wrongdoing as is incompatible with walking in the light and living as a child of God. Against such behaviour John has been warning his readers throughout this letter, by showing them the conditions for a truly Christian existence: renunciation of sin, obedience to the love command, rejection of worldliness, and maintenance of the faith. A deliberate refusal to fulfill those conditions leads to the very opposite of light and life; it must end in darkness and death. Those who choose such a path are committing an unpardonable sin (cf. Mark 3:28–29 = Matt 12:31–32 = Luke 12:10); and by their basic denial of Jesus, and their lack of love, they are risking God's denial of them (2:22–23; 3:10–15; cf. Mark 8:38 par.). Deliberate sin of this kind leads inevitably to apostasy, a removal from the Church which is evidence of the presence and spirit of antichrist (cf. 2:18–19; 4:2–5).

"Sin which does *not* lead to death, on the other hand, is still possible for believers. They may genuinely have faith in God through Christ, and seek to love their fellow men and women; but they may also find that on occasions the battle is too strong, and that they yield to temptation. Such error is not a deliberate turning away from God, but the kind of inadvertent wrongdoing to which John refers elsewhere in his letter, and for which God's grace has made provision (2:1–2; 4:10)."

ἐκεινος, η, ο demonstrative adj. that (one)

ἑρωτήση Verb, aor act subj, 3 s ἑρωτάω  
ask, request

**Verse 17**

πᾶσα ἀδικία ἁμαρτία ἐστίν, καὶ ἔστιν  
ἁμαρτία οὐ πρὸς θάνατον.

ἀδικια, ας f wrongdoing, evil, sin

Cf. 3:4.

**Day 1170: 1 John 5:18-21****Verse 18**

Οἶδαμεν ὅτι πᾶς ὁ γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ  
θεοῦ οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει, ἀλλ' ὁ γεννηθεὶς ἐκ  
τοῦ θεοῦ τηρεῖ αὐτόν, καὶ ὁ πονηρὸς οὐχ  
ἄπτεται αὐτοῦ.

Marshall comments, "He takes up his keyword from verse 13: 'I write these things to you ... so that you may know.' In a series of three affirmations he declares the content of this Christian knowledge which should characterise his readers. It may be significant that the Greek word which he uses expresses a state of knowledge rather than the action of coming to know something. John is declaring what he and his fellow Christians know for certain, and his readers ought to be able to include themselves in the number of those whose Christian faith is a matter of certainty and assurance."

γεγεννημένος see v.1

The perfect participle suggests the abiding results of regeneration.

"While St John states this without reserve he yet recognises 'the brother' – brother as son of the one Father – 'sinning a sin not unto death' (v.16). The paradox remains unsolved." Westcott.

Marshall, referring back to 3:6 and 9, comments, "We saw that it describes the eschatological reality which should characterise the life of the child of God. It is, therefore, all the more significant that John's affirmation follows directly upon his warning about the need to pray for brothers who fall into sin... His statement that the child of God does not sin is at once a promise and a demand."

τηρεῶ keep, observe, maintain

Here the reference must be to Christ, the one born of God who keeps the believer. Marshall comments, "He will face satanic attacks and temptations, but he is defended by One who is stronger than Satan." Cf. John 17:12; also vv 11,15; Rev 3:10. Note also 1 Peter 1:5; Jude 24. Smalley comments, "Sin is a present and serious reality for all believers; but through Christ it may be overcome."

Of the αὐτόν in τηρεῖ αὐτόν Smalley writes, "If ὁ γεννηθεὶς is taken as a reference to Jesus, the reading αὐτόν ('him'), supported by A\* B 330 614 it<sup>f</sup> Vg syr<sup>hcl</sup> cop<sup>bo</sup>, et al., is to be preferred. Copyists who understood ὁ γεννηθεὶς as referring to the Christian naturally adopted the reflexive ἑαυτόν ('himself'), as in ⲘA<sup>c</sup> K P Ψ 33 81 1739, et al. The MS testimony is weighty on both sides; but John's use elsewhere of ὁ γεγεννημένος (never ὁ γεννηθεὶς) for the believer (cf. 3:9; v 18a; see also John 3:6) probably means that, quite apart from other evidence, αὐτόν is likely to be original. Furthermore, the use of the reflexive ('himself') appears to demand some explanation of that from which the Christian 'keeps' himself (as in 2 Cor 11:9; James 1:27)."

πονηρὸς, α, ον evil, bad, wicked  
ἄπτω midd. take hold of

**Verse 19**

οἶδαμεν ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ ὁ  
κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται.

ὅλος, η, ον whole, all, complete, entire

Westcott compares the word order, ὅλος ὁ κόσμος in 2:2 and suggests that the meaning here is, "'the world, the organisation of society as alien from and opposed to God, is wholly, in all its parts and elements, placed in the domain of...'. The two thoughts of the world, and of the entirety of it, are given separately. The same form occurs Matt 16:26 and parallels." Westcott.

κεῖται lie, be laid; be exist

κεῖται suggests helpless passivity. Smalley comments, "Although the whole world lies at the moment in the power of the evil one, victory over the world and its evil is at hand (5:4–5), since Jesus is himself the offering for the sins of the whole world (2:2)."

**Verse 20**

οἴδαμεν δὲ ὅτι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἦκει, καὶ δέδωκεν ἡμῖν διάνοιαν ἵνα γινωσκωμεν τὸν ἀληθινόν· καὶ ἐσμὲν ἐν τῷ ἀληθινῷ, ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ. οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεὸς καὶ ζωὴ αἰώνιος.

How can a world lying under the power of the evil one be redeemed? John gives us the answer by reminding us that Jesus, God's Son, has come into the world.

ἦκω come, have come, be present

After τι ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἦκει several Latin authorities (including Vg<sup>ms</sup> Julianus of Toledo) add *et carnem induit nostri causa et passus est et resurrexit a mortuis; adsumpsit nos* ('[The Son of God has come] and was clothed with flesh for our sake, and suffered, and rose again from the dead; he adopted us...'). But this is clearly a doctrinal expansion; and it has no support from Greek witnesses.

δέδωκεν Verb, perf act indic, 3 s διδωμι  
διάνοια mind, thought, understanding  
ἀληθινός, η, ον real, genuine, true

After τὸν ἀληθινόν a number of later witnesses added θεόν.

Smalley comments, "To make his nongnostic position clear in the present context, moreover, the writer goes on to say that true believers are given insight "to know *him* who is the truth" (rather than simply "the truth"). The object of spiritual knowledge is personal, not abstract... The knowledge of God as the real God, to which the OT writers refer (e.g. 1 Sam 3:7; Jer 24:7; 31:34), is fully realized and revealed in Jesus Christ, to whom in the NT the adjective ἀληθινός is also attributed (John 15:1; Rev 3:7; cf. also 2:8b; John 1:9; 4:23; Rev 3:14)."

καὶ ἐσμὲν ἐν τῷ ἀληθινῷ, ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ cf. 5:11. Smalley comments, "We are in God and share fellowship with him inasmuch as, or because, we are in Christ... Jesus mediates both the knowledge of God and the possibility of intimate spiritual communion with him."

οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεὸς καὶ ζωὴ αἰώνιος "Here, as in the Gospel (Jn 1:1; 20:28; cf. 1:18 NIV mg.), John declares that Jesus is the true God." Marshall.

Smalley, however, writes, "The most natural way of construing οὗτος in v 20 ... is to take it as a reference to God: the God whom we recognize as genuine through the insight given us by his Son, and with whom we are in fellowship through Jesus Christ. 'This is the real God.' It is precisely through knowing him, as the Gospel (17:3) maintains, that eternal life itself becomes a reality."

**Verse 21**

Τεκνία, φυλάξατε ἑαυτὰ ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδωλῶν.

τεκνιον, ου n little child, child  
φυλάξατε Verb, aor act imperat, 2 pl  
φυλασσω keep, guard, defend

Cf. Jude 21

εἰδωλον, ου n idol

From false devotion – from anything which occupies the place due to God alone. "John urges his readers to have nothing to do with false ideas of God and the sins that go with them." Marshall. Smalley paraphrases it, "Avoid the sham, John warns, and keep to the genuine (of which I have spoken)!" Cf. Ezek 14:4 for a similar use of 'idols'.

Some texts (among them K L P 81 614) include the word ἀμῆν at the end of the verse. This was a common liturgical addition.