

# The First Epistle General of John

## Chapter 1

### *Testimony of Christ*

<sup>1</sup> That which was from the beginning,<sup>1</sup> which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes,<sup>2</sup> which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled,<sup>3</sup> of the Word<sup>4</sup> of life; <sup>2</sup> (For the life was manifested,<sup>5</sup> and we have seen *it*, and bear witness,<sup>6</sup> and shew unto you that eternal life,<sup>7</sup> which was with the Father,<sup>8</sup> and was manifested unto us;)<sup>9</sup> <sup>3</sup> That which we have seen and heard<sup>10</sup> declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us:<sup>11</sup> and truly our fellowship *is* with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.<sup>12</sup> <sup>4</sup> And these things write we unto you, that your<sup>13</sup> joy may be full.<sup>14</sup>

### *God is Light*

<sup>5</sup> This then is the message<sup>15</sup> which we have heard of him,<sup>16</sup> and declare unto you, that God is light,<sup>17</sup> and in him is no darkness at all. <sup>6</sup> If we say that we have fellowship

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Genesis 1:1 and see the notes to John 1:1-3. Vv. 1-4 constitute one long, awkward sentence in GR. The main verb is not presented until v. 3: "declare we unto you." The vv. will make more sense in ENG if one begins reading them with an understanding that they contain an account of the things that have been declared unto the reader by apostolic witness.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. John 15:27; 2 Peter 1:16. The apostles were to be witnesses of Christ. This is why, when Judas killed himself, the other apostles sought a replacement who had been with them from the beginning to be a witness of Christ (Acts 1:21-22).

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Luke 24:39-40; John 20:25-27; 3 Nephi 11:14-15; cf. D&C 6:37.

<sup>4</sup> See the note to John 1:1 on Jesus as the Logos or Word of God.

<sup>5</sup> ἐφανερώθη *ephanerōthē* made evident, visible.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. John 1:7-8, 15; 3:26; 5:36.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. John 17:3; 1 John 2:25; D&C 88:4; 132:24.

<sup>8</sup> See the note to John 1:1, which is the pattern for the introduction to this letter as well..

<sup>9</sup> Cf. John 1:14.

<sup>10</sup> See the note to 1:1.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Acts 2:42; 2 Corinthians 8:4; Galatians 2:9; 1 John 1:7; Helaman 6:3; D&C 83:2-3; 88:33.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:9; Philippians 3:10; 1 John 1:6.

<sup>13</sup> Textual evidence suggests that the original text read "our" in lieu of "your" here.

<sup>14</sup> The concept of fullness of joy is drawn from Psalm 16:11 (cited in Acts 2:28). Cf. John 15:11; 16:24; 1 Peter 1:8; 2 John 1:12; 1 Nephi 5:7; 2 Nephi 9:18; Alma 26:11, 16, 30; 27:17; 29:13-14; Helaman 5:44; 3 Nephi 17:20; 28:10; D&C 59:13; 101:36.

<sup>15</sup> ἀγγελία *angelia* message. This word is related to the word whence we derive *angel*, which is a messenger from God. The word is a shortened form of the word usually rendered as "gospel"; IE the good news of Jesus Christ.

with him,<sup>18</sup> and walk in darkness,<sup>19</sup> we lie, and do not the truth.<sup>20</sup> <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light,<sup>21</sup> as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another,<sup>22</sup> and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.<sup>23</sup> <sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,<sup>24</sup> and the truth is not in us.<sup>25</sup> <sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins,<sup>26</sup> he is faithful and just<sup>27</sup> to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.<sup>28</sup> <sup>10</sup> If we say that we have not sinned,<sup>29</sup> we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.<sup>30</sup>

## Chapter 2

### *Walking in the Light*

<sup>1</sup> My little children,<sup>31</sup> these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And<sup>32</sup> if any man<sup>33</sup> sin, we have an advocate<sup>34</sup> with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: <sup>2</sup> And he is

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<sup>16</sup> IE from him. The referent is probably Jesus Christ.

<sup>17</sup> The words *God* and *light* appear in poetic parallel in Job 3:4 and Acts 26:18. Cf. Isaiah 60:19; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Alma 19:6; D&C 50:24; 88:12-13; D&C 93:36. For Christ as the light, see John 8:12; Revelation 21:23 23 (cf. Revelation 22:5); Mosiah 16:9; Alma 19:6; 26:36; 28:14; 38:9; 3 Nephi 9:18; 11:11; 15:9; Ether 4:12; D&C 6:21; 10:70; 11:28; 12:9; 14:9; 34:2; 39:2; 45:7; 50:27; 88:13; 93:9.

<sup>18</sup> See the note to 1:3.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Psalm 82:5; Proverbs 2:13; Isaiah 59:9; John 8:12; 11:9-10; 12:35; 1 John 1:6; D&C 95:12.

<sup>20</sup> IE do not the deeds that truth demands. Cf. 1:8 and see 2:4.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Psalms 56:13; 89:15; Isaiah 2:5 (2 Nephi 12:5); John 8:12; 12:35; Ephesians 5:8; Revelation 21:23-24.

<sup>22</sup> See the note to 1:3.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Matthew 26:28; Alma 5:21, 27; Mormon 9:6; D&C 29:17; Moses 6:59. In the law of Moses, the blood of the sacrificial animal was used to make one ritually clean (Leviticus 14:14, 17, 25, 28; 16:19). Different Hebrew words are used in Leviticus 14:52, Numbers 35:33, and Ezekiel 43:20.

<sup>24</sup> See also 1:10 and cf. Romans 3:23; 5:12; D&C 82:2; 84:49, 53.

<sup>25</sup> See the note to 1:10 and cf. 1:6 and 2:4.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Matthew 3:6; Mark 1:5; James 5:16; Jacob 7:19; Mosiah 26:29, 35-36; 27:35; Alma 17:4; Helaman 5:17; 16:1, 5; 3 Nephi 1:25; Moroni 6:7; D&C 19:20; 42:88-89, 91-92; 58:43; 59:12; 61:2; 64:7, 12. In the law of Moses, confession of sins was an essential element in offering animal sacrifice and in praying for forgiveness (Leviticus 5:5; 16:21; 26:40; Numbers 5:7; Joshua 7:19; 2 Chronicles 30:22; Nehemiah 1:6; 9:2-3; Psalms 32:5; Proverbs 28:13; Daniel 9:20).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Revelation 3:14; 19:11; 21:5; 22:6; 2 Nephi 31:15.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Alma 7:14; D&C 76:41.

<sup>29</sup> See the note to 1:8.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. 1:8, where John writes “the truth is not in us.” Throughout his writings, John uses the terms “truth” and “word” as titles of Christ.

<sup>31</sup> Throughout this epistle, John follows Jesus’ example (John 13:33; 21:5) by referring to members of the Church as children (see 1 John 2:12-13, 18, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21),

the propitiation<sup>35</sup> for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for *the sins of* the whole world.<sup>36</sup> <sup>3</sup> And hereby we do know that we know him,<sup>37</sup> if we keep his commandments. <sup>4</sup> He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.<sup>38</sup> <sup>5</sup> But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected:<sup>39</sup> hereby know we that we are in him. <sup>6</sup> He that saith he abideth in him<sup>40</sup> ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.<sup>41</sup> <sup>7</sup> Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment<sup>42</sup> which ye had from the beginning.<sup>43</sup> The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. <sup>8</sup> 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.<sup>44</sup> <sup>9</sup> He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother,<sup>45</sup> is in darkness even until now. <sup>10</sup> He that loveth his brother abideth in the light,<sup>46</sup> and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. <sup>11</sup> But he that hateth his brother is in darkness,<sup>47</sup> and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

### *Wickedness and Righteousness*

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though he employs two different GR words. See also 2 John 1:1, 4, 13; 3 John 1:4 and cf. Galatians 4:19.

<sup>32</sup> OR but.

<sup>33</sup> OR anyone.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. D&C 29:5; 32:3; 45:3; 62:1; 110:4. The GR term παράκλητος *paraklētos* is rendered “Comforter” in John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7.

<sup>35</sup> ἱλασμός *hilasmos* atoning sacrifice (offered as expiation). Cf. Romans 3:25; 1 John 4:10.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. John 1:29; 1 Nephi 10:10; 11:33; 2 Nephi 31:4; Mosiah 26:23; Alma 5:48; 7:14; 30:26; 34:8, 12; 36:17; 39:15; 42:15; 3 Nephi 9:21; 11:11, 14; 28:9; Mormon 7:7; D&C 21:9; 35:2; 46:13; 53:2; 54:1; 76:41.

<sup>37</sup> The antecedent to the pronoun is probably God.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. 1:6, 8.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. John 14:15; 15:10; 1 John 5:2-3.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. John 15:4; D&C 35:18; 43:3; 50:24; 112:22; Moses 6:34.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. 2 Nephi 31:12, 17; 3 Nephi 18:24; 27:21; JST Matthew 26:25. *Walking* is a common metaphor in the scriptures for how one lives one's life; IE we ought to live as Jesus lived.

<sup>42</sup> From the verses that follow, it is clear that this is the “new commandment” given by Jesus at the last supper (John 13:34; 15:12). John repeats the commandment in 1 John 3:11, 23; 2 John 1:5; cf. 1 John 3:14, 18; 4:7, 11-12; 5:2.

<sup>43</sup> “Beginning” is a title of Jesus, who gave the commandment; see the note to John 1:1 and cf. 1 John 2:13-14, 24.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. John 1:5; 2 Corinthians 4:6. The terms “truth” and “light” are titles of Christ. See the note to John 1:4.

<sup>45</sup> Not in a literal sense, but a fellow believer, Christian.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Job 24:13; John 12:46.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. 2:9.

<sup>12</sup> I write unto you, little children,<sup>48</sup> because<sup>49</sup> your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. <sup>13</sup> I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning.<sup>50</sup> I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one.<sup>51</sup> I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.<sup>52</sup> <sup>14</sup> I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him *that is* from the beginning.<sup>53</sup> I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you,<sup>54</sup> and ye have overcome the wicked one.<sup>55</sup> <sup>15</sup> Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world.<sup>56</sup> If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.<sup>57</sup> <sup>16</sup> For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh,<sup>58</sup> and the lust of the eyes,<sup>59</sup> and the pride of life,<sup>60</sup> is not of the Father, but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world passeth away,<sup>61</sup> and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.<sup>62</sup>

### *Warning About Apostasy*

<sup>18</sup> Little children,<sup>63</sup> it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist<sup>64</sup> shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.<sup>65</sup> <sup>19</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> See the note to 2:1.

<sup>49</sup> It is unclear whether this clause is causal, as the KJV takes it, or is simply stating a fact, in which event in lieu of "because" render "that." The same ambiguity exists in the succeeding "because" clauses through v. 14.

<sup>50</sup> See the note to 2:7.

<sup>51</sup> IE Satan. Cf. Matthew 13:19, 38; 1 John 2:14; 3:12; 5:18; D&C 93:25, 39, 42, 49.

<sup>52</sup> John seems to be referring to three different generations of Christians here. The older generation (the fathers) had known Jesus ("him that is from the beginning"), while the youngest had known the Father, having recently come from the premortal world where they dwelt in his presence.

<sup>53</sup> See the notes to 1:7, 13.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. John 5:38.

<sup>55</sup> See the note to 2:13.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. John 15:19; 17:14-16; 18:36; Galatians 1:4; James 1:27; 1 John 5:4.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. D&C 95:12 and contrast John 8:42; 14:21, 23; Moroni 7:48.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Galatians 5:16.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. Proverbs 6:25; Matthew 5:28; Romans 1:27; 3 Nephi 12:28; D&C 42:23; 63:16.

<sup>60</sup> IE ostentation in the material goods by which daily life is sustained. The expression means to allude to the arrogance produced by material possessions.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Matthew 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33; 1 Corinthians 7:31; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 21:1; 1 Nephi 17:46; Alma 9:2-3; 3 Nephi 26:3; Ether 13:8-9; D&C 1:38; 29:23-24, 26; 43:32; 45:22; 56:11; Moses 1:35, 38; Joseph Smith Matthew 1:35; JST Matthew 5:20.

<sup>62</sup> Cf. 1 Samuel 1:22; Psalm 23:6; 37:28-29; 61:4, 7; John 8:35; 12:34; 1 Peter 1:23; Mosiah 2:41; Alma 28:12; D&C 76:62; 132:17; 133:35.

<sup>63</sup> See the note to 2:1.

<sup>64</sup> Here alluding to opponents, false teachers. Cf. 1 John 2:22; 4:3; 2 John 1:7; Alma 30:6, 12.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. 1 Peter 1:5 and Jude 1:18, which use different GR words for "time."

They went out from us,<sup>66</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup> But ye have an unction<sup>67</sup> from the Holy One, and ye know all things.<sup>68</sup> <sup>21</sup> 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.<sup>22</sup> Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?<sup>69</sup> He is antichrist,<sup>70</sup> that denieth the Father and the Son. 23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: [*but*] *he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.*<sup>71</sup>

### *Abide in Christ*

<sup>24</sup> Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning.<sup>72</sup> If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.<sup>25</sup> And this is the promise that he<sup>73</sup> hath promised us, *even* eternal life.<sup>74</sup> <sup>26</sup> These *things* have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you.<sup>27</sup> 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<sup>75</sup> in him.<sup>76</sup> <sup>28</sup> And now, little children,<sup>77</sup> abide in him; that, when he shall appear,<sup>78</sup> we may have confidence,<sup>79</sup> and not be

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<sup>66</sup> IE these false teachers originated in the Christian community itself.

<sup>67</sup> OR anointing.

<sup>68</sup> The term *unction* means anointed (with oil), an allusion to the gift of the Holy Ghost. See John A. Tvedtnes, "Olive Oil: Symbol of the Holy Ghost," in Stephen D. Ricks and John W. Welch (eds.), *The Allegory of the Olive Tree: The Olive, the Bible, and Jacob 5* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book & FARMS, 1994). For the Holy Ghost as a source of knowledge, see John 14:26; 1 John 2:27 and Cf. Jeremiah 31:34; John 6:44; 1 Thessalonians 4:9. There is a textual issue here, involving whether the word "all" is nominative masculine or neuter accusative; rather than "you know all things," the textual evidence suggests that the original reading was "you all know (it)."

<sup>69</sup> Cf. 2 Nephi 25:28-29; Jacob 7:9; Alma 30:39; 34:37; 3 Nephi 29:5; Mormon 9:3; Moroni 1:2-3; 7:17; 10:33.

<sup>70</sup> See the note to 2:18.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 8:19; 14:6-7; 16:3. The italicized words were unintentionally omitted in most texts of the Byzantine tradition by homoioteleuton; they were originally a part of the text and need not be italicized.

<sup>72</sup> I.e., from Christ, one of whose titles is "the beginning." See the note to 2:1.

<sup>73</sup> The referent could be either the Father or the Son here; a reference to Jesus seems the more likely.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. John 17:3; 1 John 1:2; D&C 88:4; 132:24.

<sup>75</sup> There is an ambiguity as to whether the form of this word in GR (μένετε *menete*) is an imperative (expressing a command) or an indicative (simply stating a fact).

<sup>76</sup> See the note to 2:20.

<sup>77</sup> See the note to 2:1.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. 3:2.

ashamed before him at his coming.<sup>80</sup> <sup>29</sup> If ye know that he is righteous, ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of<sup>81</sup> him.<sup>82</sup>

## Chapter 3

### *Sons of God*

<sup>1</sup> Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us,<sup>83</sup> that we should be called the sons<sup>84</sup> of God:<sup>85</sup> therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.<sup>86</sup> <sup>2</sup> 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,<sup>87</sup> we shall be like him;<sup>88</sup> for we shall see him as he is.<sup>89</sup> <sup>3</sup> And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth<sup>90</sup> himself, even as he<sup>91</sup> is pure.<sup>92</sup>

### *Sin and the Devil*

<sup>4</sup> Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.<sup>93</sup> <sup>5</sup> And ye know that he was manifested<sup>94</sup> to take away our sins;<sup>95</sup> and in him

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<sup>79</sup> The GR word rendered “confidence” here (παρρησία *parrēsia*), in 3:21 and 5:14 is the same as the one rendered “boldness” in 1 John 4:17, Ephesians 3:12, 1 Timothy 3:13, though the English translation of the Ephesians passage renders another word as “confidence.” See also Hebrews 4:16; 10:19, 35; 1 John 3:21; 4:17; 5:14; D&C 121:45.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Romans 1:16; 5:5; 9:33; 10:11; Philippians 1:20; 2 Timothy 1:8.

<sup>81</sup> OR begotten by. The verb *γεννιηται* *gennētai*, when used in the passive with a female agent, means to be born, but when used with a male agent, as here, it means to be begotten (IE sired, fathered).

<sup>82</sup> This is a common theme in John’s first epistle (1 John 3:9 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18). Cf. John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 8:47; 1 John 5:18; 1 Peter 1:23; Mosiah 5:2; Alma 19:33; and contrast John 5:42.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. John 16:27; 17:23, 27.

<sup>84</sup> OR children.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. John 1:12; D&C 76:24. At this point, the GR words *καὶ ἐσμέν* *kai esmen* “and we are” were either accidentally or intentionally omitted from the text. This parenthetical comment affirms that we are indeed the children of God.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. John 14:17; 17:25.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. 2:28.

<sup>88</sup> An allusion to deification or apotheosis; as his children, we have the capacity to become like God.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. John 16:16; Moroni 7:48; D&C 35:21; 38:8; 93:1; 130:1.

<sup>90</sup> An allusion to ritual purification.

<sup>91</sup> IE God.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Moroni 7:48; D&C 35:21.

<sup>93</sup> Cf. Romans 3:20; 4:15; 5:13, 20; 7:7-9; Alma 42:17, 20.

<sup>94</sup> OR revealed.

is no sin.<sup>96</sup> <sup>6</sup> Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.<sup>97</sup> <sup>7</sup> Little children,<sup>98</sup> let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he<sup>99</sup> is righteous. <sup>8</sup> He that committeth sin is of the devil;<sup>100</sup> for the devil sinneth from the beginning.<sup>101</sup> For this purpose the Son of God was manifested,<sup>102</sup> that he might destroy the works of the devil.<sup>103</sup>

### *Born of God*

<sup>9</sup> Whosoever is born of<sup>104</sup> God doth not commit sin; for his seed<sup>105</sup> remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of<sup>106</sup> God.<sup>107</sup> <sup>10</sup> In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil.<sup>108</sup> whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother. <sup>11</sup> For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning,<sup>109</sup> that we should love one another.<sup>110</sup> <sup>12</sup> Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one,<sup>111</sup> and slew his brother.<sup>112</sup> And wherefore<sup>113</sup> slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.<sup>114</sup> <sup>13</sup> Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.<sup>115</sup> <sup>14</sup> We know that we have passed<sup>116</sup> from death unto life,<sup>117</sup> because we love

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. John 1:29; Romans 11:27; 1 Nephi 10:10; 2 Nephi 31:4; Alma 5:48; 7:14; 24:10-12; 39:15.

<sup>96</sup> 1 Peter 1:19.

<sup>97</sup> See the note to John 1:18; cf. John 5:37; 7:28; 8:19, 54-55; 14:7; 16:3; 17:25 and contrast John 14:7.

<sup>98</sup> See the note to 2:1.

<sup>99</sup> IE Jesus Christ.

<sup>100</sup> Cf. John 8:38, 44; 1 John 3:10, 12.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Moses 4:1-4; Abraham 3:28.

<sup>102</sup> OR revealed.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. Hebrews 2:14.

<sup>104</sup> OR begotten by. The verb in the passive with a male agent refers to siring, fathering, not bearing (which would be the meaning with a female agent).

<sup>105</sup> σπέρμα *sperma* (male) seed.

<sup>106</sup> OR begotten by.

<sup>107</sup> See the note to 2:29.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. John 8:38, 44; 1 John 3:8, 12.

<sup>109</sup> I.e., from Christ, whom John calls the beginning (see the notes to John 1:1-2 and 1 John 1:1).

<sup>110</sup> This is the commandment recorded in John 13:34; 15:12, 17. John seems to have been very impressed by this teaching, for he repeated Jesus' commandment to love in his epistles (cf. 1 John 3:14, 18, 23; 4:7, 11-12; 5:2; 2 John 1:5).

<sup>111</sup> IE Satan. Cf. Matthew 13:19, 38; 1 John 2:13-14; 5:18; D&C 93:25, 39, 42, 49; Moses 5:18, 29-30; Ether 8:15.

<sup>112</sup> See the note to 3:8.

<sup>113</sup> OR why.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Matthew 23:35; Hebrews 11:4; D&C 84:16; Moses 5:26.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. John 7:7; 15:18-19; 17:14.

the brethren. He that loveth not *his* brother<sup>118</sup> abideth in death.<sup>15</sup> Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer:<sup>119</sup> and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.<sup>16</sup> Hereby perceive we the love *of God*, because he laid down his life for us:<sup>120</sup> and we ought to lay down *our* lives for the brethren.<sup>121 17</sup> But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels *of compassion*<sup>122</sup> from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?<sup>123 18</sup> My little children,<sup>124</sup> let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.<sup>125 19</sup> And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.<sup>20</sup> For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.<sup>126 21</sup> Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, *then* have we confidence toward God.<sup>127 22</sup> And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him,<sup>128</sup> because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.<sup>23</sup> And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ,<sup>129</sup> and love one another, as he gave us commandment.<sup>130 24</sup> 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.

## Chapter 4

### *Warning about False Prophets*

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<sup>116</sup> μεταβεβήκαμεν *metabebēkamen* having gone or passed from one place (or state) to another.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. John 5:24.

<sup>118</sup> The words "his brother" here do not appear to be original based on textual evidence.

<sup>119</sup> ἀνθρωποκτόνος *anthrōpoktonos* lit. a man killer. Matthew 5:21-22; 3 Nephi 12:21-22.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. John 10:15.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45; John 6:51; 10:11, 15; 15:13.

<sup>122</sup> The bowels or intestines were held in Bible times to be the seat of emotion (Isaiah 63:15; Jeremiah 31:20; Lamentations 1:20; 2:11; Philippians 1:8; 2:1; Colossians 3:12; Philemon 1:7; Mosiah 15:9; Alma 7:12; 26:37; 34:15; 3 Nephi 17:6-7; D&C 101:9; 121:3-4, 45; Moses 7:41).

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Mosiah 2:17.

<sup>124</sup> See the note to 3:7.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Romans 15:18.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. John 16:30; 2 Nephi 9:20; Alma 7:13; 40:5; Mormon 8:17; Moroni 7:22; D&C 127:2; Moses 1:6.

<sup>127</sup> For the word "confidence" here, see the note to 2:28.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. Matthew 21:22; John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24; 1 John 5:15; James 4:3; 1 Nephi 15:11; Enos 1:15; Mosiah 4:21; 3 Nephi 17:3; 18:20; 27:28-29; Mormon 9:21, 27; Moroni 7:26; 10:4; D&C 4:7; 6:5; 8:1; 11:5; 12:5; 14:5, 8; 18:18; 29:6; 42:61; 49:26; 50:29; 66:9; 75:27; 88:63-64; 103:31, 35; 124:95, 97; Moses 6:52.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Articles of Faith 1

<sup>130</sup> See the note to 3:11.



<sup>1</sup> Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.<sup>131</sup> because many false prophets<sup>132</sup> are gone out into the world. <sup>2</sup> Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.<sup>133</sup> <sup>3</sup> And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God:<sup>134</sup> and this is that *spirit* of antichrist,<sup>135</sup> whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. <sup>4</sup> Ye are of God, little children,<sup>136</sup> and have overcome them:<sup>137</sup> because greater is he that is in you,<sup>138</sup> than he that is in the world.<sup>139</sup> <sup>5</sup> They<sup>a</sup> are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.<sup>140</sup> <sup>6</sup> We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us.<sup>141</sup> Hereby know we the spirit of truth,<sup>142</sup> and the spirit of error.<sup>143</sup>

*Love is of God*

<sup>7</sup> Beloved, let us love one another:<sup>144</sup> for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God,<sup>145</sup> and knoweth God. <sup>8</sup> He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.<sup>146</sup> <sup>9</sup> In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent<sup>147</sup> his

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<sup>131</sup> Cf. D&C 50:31; 129.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. Jeremiah 14:14; Lamentations 2:14; Matthew 7:15; 24:11, 24; Mark 13:22; Luke 6:26; Acts 13:6; 2 Peter 2:1; Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10; 2 Nephi 25:18; Words Of mormon 1:16; Helaman 13:26; 3 Nephi 14:15; 4 Nephi 1:34; Joseph Smith Matthew 1:9, 22.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. 1 Corinthians 12:3.

<sup>134</sup> These comments seem to be directed toward the early Gnostics, who believed that the nature of matter was sinful and that Christ only appeared to have taken on flesh. Ironically, the heretical idea that God is immaterial later became the official doctrine of traditional Christianity.

<sup>135</sup> Cf. 1 John 2:18, 22; 2 John 1:7; Alma 30:6, 12.

<sup>136</sup> See the note to 2:1.

<sup>137</sup> I.e., the false spirits and false prophets. Cf. John 16:33; Revelation 12:11; D&C 50:41; 63:47; 64:2; 76:107.

<sup>138</sup> I.e., the Holy Ghost.

<sup>139</sup> I.e., the devil, whom Paul calls “the god of this world” (2 Corinthians 4:4).

<sup>140</sup> I.e., the false prophets.

<sup>141</sup> Cf. Daniel 12:10; John 8:47; 13:20.

<sup>142</sup> For the Spirit of truth, see John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6; Alma 30:46; D&C 6:15; 50:17, 19, 21; 93:9, 11, 23, 26; 107:71. For the pairing of spirit and truth (also in vs. 24), see also John 4:23-24; 1 Peter 1:22; Alma 34:38; 43:10; D&C 50:14; 84:45; 88:66; 91:4; 124:97.

<sup>143</sup> The term “spirit of error” is frequently found in early Jewish texts such as the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, portions of which were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.

<sup>144</sup> See the note to 3:11.

<sup>145</sup> See the note to 2:29.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. 4:16.

only begotten Son<sup>148</sup> into the world, that we might live through him.<sup>149 10</sup> Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son<sup>150</sup> to be the propitiation<sup>151</sup> for our sins,<sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.<sup>12</sup> No man hath seen God at any time.<sup>152</sup> If we love one another, God dwelleth in us,<sup>153</sup> and his love is perfected in us.<sup>13</sup> Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.<sup>154 14</sup> And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son<sup>155</sup> to be the Saviour of the world.<sup>156 15</sup> Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God,<sup>157</sup> God dwelleth in him, and he in God.<sup>16</sup> And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love;<sup>158</sup> and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.<sup>17</sup> Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.<sup>159</sup> because as he is, so are we in this world.<sup>18</sup> There is no fear in love;<sup>160</sup> but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.<sup>19</sup> We love him, because he first loved us.<sup>20</sup> 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?<sup>21</sup> And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.<sup>161</sup>

## Chapter 5

### *Faith is Victory over the World*

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<sup>147</sup> John frequently has Jesus noting that the Father had sent him (John 3:17, 34; 4:34; 5:23, 30, 36-38; 6:29, 38-40, 44, 57; 7:16, 18, 28-29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26-29, 42; 9:4; 10:36; 11:42; 12:44-45, 49; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:3, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21; JST John 1:16).

<sup>148</sup> For the title “only begotten,” see the note to John 1:14.

<sup>149</sup> John drew this verse from Jesus’ words to Nicodemus in John 3:16-17. See also John 6:57.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. John 3:16-17.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Romans 3:25; 1 John 2:2.

<sup>152</sup> Cf. John 1:18; 6:46. John’s purpose in saying this becomes clear in 4:20.

<sup>153</sup> Cf. John 14:23.

<sup>154</sup> It was in the context of the promise to send the Comforter that Christ said that he and the Father would make their abode with those who love him (John 14:23-26).

<sup>155</sup> See the note to 4:9.

<sup>156</sup> The title “Savior of the world” is also found in John 4:42; 1 Nephi 10:4; 13:40; D&C 1:20; 42:1; 43:34; 66:1.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Romans 10:9; Philippians 2:11; 1 John 4:15; 2 John 1:7.

<sup>158</sup> Cf. 4:8.

<sup>159</sup> For the word rendered “boldness” here, see the note to 2:28.

<sup>160</sup> Cf. 2 Timothy 1:7; Moroni 8:16.

<sup>161</sup> Jesus, evidently citing Rabbi Hillel, tied these two commandments together (Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 12:30-31).

<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>162</sup> <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God,<sup>163</sup> when we love God, and keep his commandments.<sup>164</sup> <sup>3</sup> For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments:<sup>165</sup> and his commandments are not grievous.<sup>166</sup> <sup>4</sup> For whatsoever is born of God<sup>167</sup> overcometh the world:<sup>168</sup> and this is the victory that overcometh the world, *even* our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?<sup>169</sup>

### *The Witness concerning the Son*

<sup>6</sup> This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood.<sup>170</sup> And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.<sup>171</sup> <sup>7</sup> For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. <sup>8</sup> And there are three that bear witness in earth,<sup>172</sup> the Spirit, and the water, and the blood:<sup>173</sup> and these three agree in one. <sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>174</sup> <sup>10</sup> He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. <sup>11</sup> And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and

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<sup>162</sup> See the note to 2:29.

<sup>163</sup> See the note to 3:11.

<sup>164</sup> John recorded this commandment in John 14:15, 21; 15:10. See also 2 John 1:6; 2:5; D&C 124:87.

<sup>165</sup> See the note to 5:2.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. Matthew 11:29-30.

<sup>167</sup> See the note to 5:1.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. John 15:19; 16:33; 17:14-16; 18:36; Galatians 1:4; James 1:27; 1 John 4:4; Revelation 12:11; D&C 50:41 and see D&C 63:47; 64:2; 76:107.

<sup>169</sup> Cf. Revelation 12:11.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. Moses 6:59.

<sup>171</sup> For the Spirit of truth, see the note to 4:6.

<sup>172</sup> The words "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." <sup>8</sup> And there are three that bear witness in earth" are a famous and spurious addition to the text, commonly referred to as the Johannine Comma. The words were added as a proof-text of the Trinity. They are absent from every GR mss. except four late ones, and these appear to contain the words in a retroversion from the LAT Vulgate. It is quoted by none of the GR Church Fathers, nor is it present in any of the ancient versions. This reading apparently arose as a marginal gloss. A marginal comment taking the spirit, water and blood as emblematic of the Trinity eventually was brought over time from the margin into the text itself.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. Moses 6:59.

<sup>174</sup> See John 5:34-37 and cf. Matthew 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:11; 9:7; Luke 3:22; 9:35; 2 Peter 1:16-18.

this life is in his Son.<sup>175</sup> <sup>12</sup> He that hath the Son hath life; *and* he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

### *The Knowledge of Eternal Life*

<sup>13</sup> 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,<sup>176</sup> and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.<sup>177</sup> <sup>14</sup> And this is the confidence that we have in him,<sup>178</sup> that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: <sup>15</sup> And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.<sup>179</sup>

<sup>16</sup> If any man see his brother sin a sin *which is* not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death.<sup>180</sup> There is a sin unto death.<sup>181</sup> I do not say that he shall pray for it. <sup>17</sup> All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death.

<sup>18</sup> We know that whosoever is born of God<sup>182</sup> sinneth not;<sup>183</sup> but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one<sup>184</sup> toucheth him not. <sup>19</sup> *And* we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness.<sup>185</sup> <sup>20</sup> And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true,<sup>186</sup> and we are in him that is true, *even* in his Son Jesus Christ.<sup>187</sup> This is the true God, and eternal life.<sup>188</sup> <sup>21</sup> Little children,<sup>189</sup> keep yourselves from idols. Amen.

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<sup>175</sup> Cf. John 3:15-17.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. John 3:15-16, 36; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 8:51; 11:25-26; 20:31; Helaman 14:8; 3 Nephi 15:9; D&C 45:5; 63:49.

<sup>177</sup> The latter part of this sentence may be a dittograph of the first part.

<sup>178</sup> For the word rendered "confidence" here, see the note to 2:28.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Matthew 21:22; John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24; 1 John 3:22; James 4:3; 1 Nephi 15:11; Enos 1:15; Mosiah 4:21; 3 Nephi 17:3; 18:20; 27:28-29; Mormon 9:21, 27; Moroni 7:26; 10:4; D&C 4:7; 6:5; 8:1; 11:5; 12:5; 14:5, 8; 18:18; 29:6; 42:61; 49:26; 50:29; 66:9; 75:27; 88:63-64; 103:31, 35; 124:95, 97; Moses 6:52.

<sup>180</sup> Cf. John 11:4.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. Genesis 9:6.

<sup>182</sup> See the note to 5:1.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. John 8:47; 1 John 3:9; Mosiah 5:2; Alma 19:33.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. Matthew 13:19, 38; 1 John 2:13-14; 3:12; D&C 93:25, 39, 42, 49.

<sup>185</sup> Cf. D&C 84:49, 53; 123:7.

<sup>186</sup> Cf. John 3:33; 7:18, 28; 8:26.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. Revelation 3:14; 19:11.

<sup>188</sup> Cf. John 17:3.

<sup>189</sup> See the note to 2:1.