

# I JOHN

PLAIN SENSE PARAPHRASE

APRIL 27, 2017

## **Koinonia with God!**

The One who existed from eternity past, . . . whom we have heard speak! and whom we have seen with our own eyes! whom we have closely observed! and touched with our own hands! . . . the life-giving Word! 2 . . . this one who is Life made himself known to us, and we are eye-witnesses of him!

And now we testify and proclaim to you this One who is Eternal Life, who came down from the Father in Heaven to make himself known to us. 3 This One whom we have actually seen and heard we proclaim to you, so that you may join us in koinonia [mutual, loving, intimate fellowship]. For we are delighting in koinonia with God the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ, 4 so, we are writing these things to you so that you, too, may fully share in this incredible joy.

## **Koinonia with God calls for Clean Living**

5 Here is what we heard Jesus say and now pass on to you: “God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all”.

6 Because of this, we are lying if we say we are saved and are having koinonia with God but then go on living like the unsaved - in spiritual darkness, or by keeping sins hidden

in our lives from ourselves or others; our life is not backing up what we say. 7 But if our lives are truly holy, as God is holy, then we truly do have koinonia with Christ and each other, and are truly cleansed from all sin by the blood of Jesus, his Son.

8 If we claim we never sin, or if we deny any sins that we have, we are only fooling ourselves and are not being truthful. 9 But if we confess our sins to God, to ourselves, and to one another [when we have trespassed against somebody else], he is always faithful - and just - to forgive us and to cleanse us - no matter what we may have done.

10 If we insist that we have never sinned, or if we deny the sin we are hiding, we are calling God a liar and showing that we do not believe what He says in his Word, the Bible.

## 1 JOHN 2

My dear children, I am telling you about koinonia with God so that you will be careful not to sin. But when we happen to sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father — Jesus Christ, the One who is truly righteous, 2 having appeased God with his sacrifice for our sins— and not just our sins but the sins of the whole world.

3 We can be sure we have a saving relationship with God when our lives are in alignment with what He says in his Word. 4 If someone claims, “I know God,” but his life isn’t

in alignment with God's Word, that person is a liar and is not truly saved. 5 But those who obey God's Word show that they truly love him, and are truly saved. 6 A real Christian will live a holy life as Christ did.

### **The Law of Love**

7 Dear friends, I have a command for you. It is not a new one, for it is the same old command you have had from the very beginning. You have heard the old command — “Love God and one another.” — ever since you were born. 8 But, now, the old command has a new twist, because, now, Jesus lives it in and through you — the darkness of living your own lives is gone, and His life is now shining through you.

9 If anyone claims, “I am a Christian,” but doesn't love other Christians, that person is still living in darkness. 10 Those who love their fellow-believers are living in the light and are no longer stumbling around in the dark. 11 But anyone who claims to be a Christian but doesn't love other Christians is still living and walking in darkness. Such a person is lost and is still groping around, because he is unsaved and cannot see the light.

### **True Believers**

12 This letter is for believers in all stages of spiritual maturity:

It is for new believers - who have only recently had their sins forgiven through faith in Jesus;

13 It is for mature believers, who have built a strong relationship with Christ over the years.

It is for growing believers whose lives show they are winning their battles against the world, the flesh and the devil.

14 So, I am writing to believers;

- to spiritual children who now recognize God as their Father.

- to you who are mature in the faith and have built a strong relationship with Christ over many years.

- and to you who, though young in the faith, have developed spiritual muscles, are in alignment with God, and are no longer serving the devil.

### **A Selfish World**

15 Don't get too attached to this world or the things it offers you, for the more you love this world, the less you love the Father. 16 For this world focuses only on pleasing ourselves - their bodies, their eyes, their pride. These objectives are not from the Father, but are from this world.

17 And this world is fading away, along with all its self-centered gratification. But anyone whose objective is to do what pleases God will live forever.

### **The Spirit of Antichrist**

18 Dear children, we are living in "the last days" - the end of the Age of Grace - the final days before the Rapture.

You have been taught that the Antichrist will be here

during the Seven-year Tribulation, and the growing number of 'antichrists' all around us show us that we are rapidly approaching that time.

19 Some of these 'antichrists' used to attend our house churches, but they were never truly saved, in the first place; they never really belonged with us; otherwise they would have stayed with us. When they left, it proved that they did not belong with us. 20 But you are not like them, for you are truly saved, the Spirit lives in you, and all of you know the truth about Christ.

21 So I am writing to you not because you need to be saved but because you are truly saved and need to know the difference between true believers and false professors. 22 So, who is a false professor? Anyone who denies that Jesus is the Messiah. By denying the deity of Jesus, one is rejecting both God the Father and God the Son. 23 Because anyone who rejects the Son rejects the Father, too. But anyone who accepts the Son accepts the Father also.

24 It is important that you remain faithful to what you have been taught from the beginning about these things. If you do, you will continue to have koinonia with the Son and with the Father, 25 and will, one day, acquire the eternal life God promised.

26 I am writing to warn you about those who are trying to deceive you. But they're no match for the Spirit of Christ who lives within you. You don't need any of their so-called teaching. The Holy Spirit within you confirms the truth on everything you need to know about yourself and Jesus — and you can trust the Spirit's teaching. So, if you adhere to what He has taught you, you will stay in koinonia with Christ.

28 And I *urge* you to stay in koinonia with Christ so that, when he returns for you in the Rapture, you will be full of confidence and not shrink back from him in shame.

29 We know that Christ is righteous, so we also know that all who are truly saved will live righteous lives.

1 JOHN 3

### **The Real Children of God**

How very much our Father loves us! for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the unsaved world doesn't recognize us because it never recognized God.

2 Dear friends, we truly are God's children, right now. We know we will undergo some changes, someday, though we don't know just what they will be like. But we do know that, after Christ comes for us in the Rapture, we will be spiritually mature, perfectly aligned with Jesus, because all of our misconceptions about Him will vanish. We shall see Jesus exactly as He is, and this will bring us into perfect

alignment with Him. 3 Anticipating this great day will keep us motivated to stay in alignment with God — like our “brother”, Jesus.

4 Whenever anyone sins, he is breaking God’s law, for all sin is contrary to the law of God. 5 You know that Jesus came to take away our sins, and there is no sin in him. 6 So, anyone who continues to abide in Jesus will not live a sinful life. Anyone who is living a sinful life does not understand what Jesus came to do, and is, simply, not a Christian.

7 Dear children, don’t let anyone deceive you about this: When a person lives a holy life, it shows that he is a Christian [a Christ-one], because Christ is holy. 8 But when a person lives a sinful life, it shows that he is unsaved and belongs to the devil, who has done nothing but sin from the beginning. But Jesus came to this earth to free us from satan and sin.

9 Those who have been born into God’s family do not live unholy lives, for two reasons:

1. God’s holy Son lives within them.
2. It is impossible for them to live like children of the devil, because they are children of God.

10 So now we can tell who are God’s children and who are children of the devil. Anyone who does not live in alignment with God — which includes being unloving to

other believers — isn't part of God's family, but is unsaved - a child of the devil.

## **Real Love**

11 You've heard it taught ever since you were saved, that we should love one another. 12 We must not be like Cain, a child of the devil, who murdered his brother. And why did he kill him? Cain had been following his own will, and his brother, Abel, had been following God's will. And Cain became murderously jealous of Abel when God showed approval of Abel's life, rather than Cain's. 13 So don't be surprised, dear brothers and sisters, when this rebellious world hates you for being a Christian and a follower of God.

14 If we love other Christians, it proves that we are saved and have passed from death to life. But a person who does not love believers is unsaved - spiritually dead. 15 Anyone who claims to be a Christian, but treats another brother or sister in Christ hatefully, is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers aren't saved - they don't have Christ's life in them.

16 Jesus showed us what real love is: he laid down his life for us! And, we ought to be willing to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.

17 If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person?

18 Dear children, let us not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. 19 Our loving actions will show that we are truly saved, and will give us confidence when we stand before God someday. 20 And we can be confident, even now, when our unloving actions sometimes make us feel guilty toward God, because we know that God’s promises are greater than our feelings, and he knows that we truly love him, even though we sometimes slip up.

21 Dear friends, living lives of love will keep us from feeling guilty, and will keep us confident in our relationship to God. 22 And our prayers will be effective, too, because we are in alignment with Him, and are doing our best to honor Him.

23 Right along with God’s command that we should believe in Jesus Christ as our Savior comes the command that we should love one another. 24 Anybody who is obeying these two commandments is truly saved, is remaining in fellowship [koinonia] with God, and God is remaining in fellowship [koinonia] with them. And another way we know we are saved is by the witness of the Holy Spirit who lives within us.

## 1 JOHN 4

### **False Prophets**

Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to be a religious leader. You need to compare whatever they say with the Scriptures to see if what they are saying comes from a false spirit or from God. For there are many false religious teachers in the world. 2 One way to know if they are speaking through the Spirit of God is this: If a person claiming to be a spiritual leader acknowledges that Jesus Christ was God in human form, that person has the Spirit of God. 3 But if someone claims to be a spiritual leader and denies the deity of Jesus, that person is not from God. Such a person has the spirit of the Antichrist, which you heard is coming into the world and indeed is already here.

4 But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world. 5 Those people belong to this world, so they speak from the world's viewpoint, and the world listens to them. 6 But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God, they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the Spirit of Truth or a deceiving spirit.

### **Loving One Another**

7 Dear friends, let us continue to love one another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and

knows God. 8 But anyone who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

9 God showed how much he loved us by sending his only begotten Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. 10 If you want an example of real love, don't look at how much we love God, but rather at how much God loved us! God loved us so much that He sent his Son to die on the cross as a sacrifice to take away our sins.

11 Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. 12 God is invisible, and nobody has ever seen him. But when we love each other, God lives in us, and people can see Him through the love they see in us. 13 God's love shining through us is evidence that we are saved.

14 To summarize, God sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God, are saved. 16 And, after they're saved, since God is love and God lives in them, the result is that they love others. 17 As our love continues to grow more mature, the result is that we will have nothing to fear on the day that we stand before God to give an account of our lives, but we will be able to face him with confidence because we've been allowing the Lord to love others through us, in this world.

18 Lives of love like these are free from fear about facing God, and the more we love God and others, the less we have to fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of God's punishment. Maturing in Christian love will eliminate this fear of God. 19 After all, it was God's love for us that caused us to love Him, in the first place. ["We learn to be loving because God first loved us." Dr. Cloud We only learn to love others from a place of security in their love. "Grace must come from the outside for us to be able to develop it on the inside." You can't give to others what you, yourself, don't have.]

20 So, if anyone among us claims to love God, but is unloving toward a fellow believer, that person is a liar; for the only way to show love for the invisible God is to show it to the people around us. 21 And, besides, God has commanded those who love Him to love their brothers and sisters — fellow believers.

## 1 JOHN 5

### Faith in the Son of God

Everyone who believes that Jesus is God in human form, who came to this earth to be our Savior, is saved - a child of God. And everyone who loves the Father loves his children, too. 2 We know we love God's children if we love God and obey his commandments. 3 The proof that we love God is that we do what He says, we seek to be in alignment with Him — and we know that everything He asks us to do is for our good.

4 Every real child of God lives a life of victory over the sins of this world, and this victory is achieved by keeping our faith firmly in God and in His Word. 5 So, who is it that wins this battle against the world? Only those who are truly saved — who believe that Jesus is who he claimed to be, the Son of God.

6 Jesus Christ was revealed as God's Son by his physical virgin birth and by his death on the cross—not just by his miraculous physical birth, but by both his birth and his death. And the Spirit, who is truth, confirms it with his testimony. 7 There are three that bear witness in Heaven, The Father, The Son, and The Holy Spirit. 8. And there are three witnesses on earth 8 the Spirit, Christ's birth, and Christ's death—and all three agree. 9 Since we believe human testimony in courts of law, surely we can believe God's testimony; and what I have just told you is God's testimony about his Son. 10 All who believe in Jesus as their Savior know in their hearts that this testimony is true. Those who don't believe this are calling God a liar because they don't believe what God has testified about his Son.

11 And this is the proven fact: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever believes in the Son, Jesus, and has the Son living within him, has life; whoever does not believe in Jesus, and does not have God's Son living within him, does not have life.

## Conclusion

13 I have written this letter to you Christians so that you may know who are truly saved and are children of God.

14 If we are truly saved and are God's children, we can be confident that our Father will hear any of our prayers that are according to his will. 15 And since we know our loving Father hears us when we ask Him for something, we can be confident that he will give us what we ask for.

16 If you see a fellow believer sinning in a way that does not result in death, you should pray, and God will restore that person's health. But there are sins that cause irreparable physical harm - and, sometimes, death, and there is no point in asking God to heal people who commit such sins. 17 Every sin hurts us, but not every sin leads to sickness and death.

18 Be assured that God's children do not live sinful lives; genuine Christians keep themselves in alignment with God, and do not let the devil get a hold on them. 19 There is an obvious difference between the children of God and the rest of the world that lives in wickedness.

20 We are absolutely sure that Jesus came to this earth to be our Savior, and that he has caused us to be saved and have a relationship with the true God. And now we live in koinonia with the true God because we live in koinonia

with his Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the only true God, and Jesus is eternal life.

21 Dear children, don't let anything come between you and your relationship with God.