

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1 That which was from the beginning,

John begins this epistle as he did the gospel that bears his name. He spoke of Jesus as the “**word**” **BEFORE** it became flesh. But this time instead of stating only the facts, he offers the proof that the Holy Spirit inspired him to reveal. The false gnostic gospels were destined to create many false impressions and possibly undermine the truth. These words were necessary to set apart those who, inspired by the Holy Spirit, inerrantly wrote the gospel as eyewitnesses who could truly relate the facts and not the fancies that had sprung up after.

Since the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are always designated with masculine pronouns throughout the Scriptures, A neuter pronoun is a very unusual way to refer to Jesus. More than that, a pronoun is never used before the noun it modifies. All pronouns must be identified by an antecedent, yet here there is none. Why would the Holy Spirit use a neuter relative pronoun “*ho*” with an imperfect indicative active to describe “*the word?*” These are questions those reading this letter would be asking themselves and we need to be aware of that.

*hos, he, ho... II. a relative pronoun who, which, what; 1. in the common construction, according to which the relative agrees as respects its gender with the noun or pronoun which is its antecedent, but as respects case is governed by its own verb, or by a substantive, or by a preposition: . . . a. refers to nouns of the masculine and the feminine gender, and to plurals, when that which is denoted by these nouns is regarded as a thing...* (Thayer’s Greek Lexicon, 454-456 3739)

Note that Thayer reminds us of something we learned when we studied grammar in school. “*A relative pronoun ... agrees as respects its gender with the noun or pronoun which is its antecedent.*” In this case though there is no antecedent! The book begins with the very first word being a relative pronoun which initially hangs on nothing. One has to read forward to find it. It is interesting that there are four neuter relative pronouns before we find the “antecedent” which in this case is at the very end of the first sentence. Most translations have the term “which” but the NAS gives a variant which is also in the definition of the term “what.”

**That which** was from the beginning, **which** we have heard, **which** we have seen with our eyes, **which** we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life-- (NKJ) 1Jn. 1:1

**What** was from the beginning, **what** we have heard, **what** we have seen with our eyes, **what** we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life – (NAS) 1Jn. 1:1

Since the noun these pronouns refer to is “*the Word of life,*” it is evident that John is speaking of Jesus before he became flesh. When he existed in the form of God and was God.

*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross Phil. 2:5-8*

Yet even existing in the form of God, the masculine is always used except here. Keep this in mind as the book proceeds

As noted in the introduction, one of the central points of the gnostic teaching centered on the man, Jesus. Those who brought their previous religious notions into the church could not accept that Jesus as the Christ was nailed to the cross. They either “*separated the spiritual being, Christ, from the man Jesus; they supposed that the Christ entered Jesus at the time of His baptism, and left Him at the moment of His crucifixion. Thus the Christ was neither born as a man nor suffered as a man,*” (ISBE) or by Docetism “*assuming that the human body of Our Lord was only a phantom body, and not real flesh and blood*” (ISBE).

“Many imagined that Jesus was a mere man, and maintained that the aeon Christ descended upon

the man Jesus at his baptism, and left him immediately before his crucifixion, so that Christ was not, in fact, subjected to pain and death; while others held that the body, with which Christ appeared to be invested, was not really human and passable, but unsubstantial or etherial, or, at least, immaterial: these last were called Docetae" ... They denied the whole humanity of Christ, regarding it only as a deceptive show, a mere vision." (McClintock & Strong Encyc.)

Before we proceed, we have to get the clear picture of "*the Word of life which was from the beginning*" as revealed in the gospel of John. This "*Word*" was in the beginning, with God, was God. All things were created by the Word and nothing that has been created was created without him.

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that hath been made. John 1:1-3*

In these first few passages John sets up a choice. If you believe the apostles you must give up all your previous religious convictions (*vain manner of life handed down from your fathers (1 Pet 1:18)*) and rely solely upon the teaching of the inspired apostles and prophets. Their teaching is consistent with each other and with the prophets. John, Paul, the writer of Hebrews, Matthew and the NT prophets (Mark, Luke, James and Jude) along with the prophecies of the Old Testament all unite to say the same thing.

Both before and while he was in the flesh, the Christ was God. He was "*existing in the form of God,*" and "*counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself.*" This child would be called "*Mighty God*" for when "*the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,*" they "*shall call his name Immanuel*" "*which is, being interpreted, God with us.*" While here, Jesus knew "*he had come from God and was going to God*" and had "*the glory which I had with thee before the world was.*"

*who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking on the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; Phil. 2:6-7*

*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isa. 9:6*

*Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Isa. 7:14*

*So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 23 Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, And they shall call his name Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us. Immanuel; which is, being interpreted, God with us. Mt. 1:22-23.*

*Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, Jn. 13:3*

*And now, Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Jn. 17:5*

The Holy Spirit chose the creation of the material creation to reveal exactly how great the Word was before He became flesh. John revealed that "*the word was with God and was God*" "*he was in the beginning with God*" and "*all things were made through him and without him not anything made has been made.*" This deals with another error or gnosticism. Matter is not evil and there were no aeons between God and the evil material creation!

There is no way to misunderstand the teaching of the gospel on Jesus Christ. Before he became flesh he was the Word and as the Word he created all things. Not one thing that has been created was made without him. The writer of Hebrews takes this even further, making it even harder to misunderstand. It was through "*his son*" that God "*made the worlds,*" and it was "*to the Son he says*" "*you Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens*

are the work of Your hands.”

*God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when he had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, Heb. 1:1-3*

*But to the Son he says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your Kingdom. 9 You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness more than your companions.” And: “you, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. 11 They will perish, but you remain; and they will all grow old like a garment; 12 Like a cloak you will fold them up, and they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will not fail.” Heb. 1:10-12*

Paul tells us that Jesus is “the image of the invisible God,” “by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth,” and “all things were created through him and for him.” It is difficult for us to grasp the fulness of the power and nature of the word.

*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. 16 For by him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through him and for him. 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things consist. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things he may have the preeminence. Col. 1:15-18*

One thing however was also made clear. From the moment of conception, Jesus was man and God, as man and God he was born, as man and God he lived his life on earth, as man and God he was raised from the dead, and as man and God he rules on the throne of his father David.

*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14*

*“Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 “he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that his soul was not left in Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 “This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses. 33 “Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God,” Acts 2:30-33*

*For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, 1 Tim. 2:5-6*

*Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God 2 which He promised before through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, 4 and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Rom. 1:1-4*

*For both he who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, 12 saying: I will declare Your name to My brethren; in the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You. Heb. 2:11-12*

## **1 That which was from the beginning,**

Now that we have seen the fulness of what the Word of Life actually is, we want to return again to the idea of the neuter relative pronoun ( *ὃ* ). Since “a relative pronoun ... agrees as respects its gender with the noun or pronoun” and we are speaking Jesus both before, during and after his incarnation, why not the masculine? There are a few interesting observations by others who have commented on this verse. The Pulpit commentary offers the following:

The neuter ( *ὃ* ) expresses a collective and comprehensive whole (John 4:22; 6:37; 17:2; Acts 17:23, etc.); the attributes of the (*logos*) rather than the (*logos*) himself are indicated. Or, as Jelf expresses it, “the neuter gender denotes immaterial personality, the masculine or feminine material personality.” (Pulpit Commentary).

Two of the verses cited above help us see how the neuter is used in other Scriptures written by John. The first speaks of the Father, the second of mankind. This helps us realize that this has nothing to do with some special way to understand deity since it is also used of mankind as well. When speaking to the Samaritan woman about the differences in how the Jews worshiped the Father and how the Samaritans worshiped him, Jesus used the same relative pronoun as John does here. In the second verse, Jesus used both the masculine and the neuter pronouns in the same discussion to describe the same people.

*Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. 22 Ye worship **that which** ye know not: we worship **that which** we know; for salvation is from the Jews. Jn. 4:21-22*

*But I said unto you, that ye have seen me, and yet believe not. 37 All **that which** the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and **him** that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. 38 For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the will of him that sent me, that of all **that which** he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should **raise it** up at the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that **every one** that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have eternal life; and I will **raise him** up at the last day. John 6:36-40*

This clearly proves that a neuter pronoun can be used to describe something in a different way than a masculine pronoun would. When one uses the masculine pronoun, it is the person himself under consideration. But when a neuter is used, the one speaking intends us to understand something more than just the person. Jesus told the Samaritan woman that all that was involved in worship to the Father and made it true worship came only from the knowledge Jews had. He was not simply speaking of the Father as a person, but of all that is involved in his revelation regarding how to worship him as the Father.

Jesus revealed to Israel in 6:37 that an entire group of people had been chosen by the Father based on His own criteria. That group and all that was involved in their selection would be drawn to and come to Jesus. Then, on an individual basis Jesus spoke of “*him*” who would in no wise be cast out. Later in 6:39-40 he did the same thing. Of all “*that which*” God had so given him he would lose nothing. Once again, he sums them up as a class and as a whole and that entire class and who would be raised up in the last day. But then moving to each individual who would do this, he says every single one who sees and hears will have eternal life and he will raise “*him*.” individually on the last day. I think the Pulpit commentary is right when it states that this is exactly what John is doing here. “The neuter ( *ὃ* ) expresses a collective and comprehensive whole, the attributes of the (*logos*) rather than the (*logos*) himself.”

### **that which we have heard,**

While those with “knowledge” were making statements and writing gospels contradicting those of the apostles, John wanted it clearly understood that what we (the apostles & prophets) had revealed to us was made up of informed and verified statements based on their own personal experiences. Remember what Luke said to assure us of this? First he reminded us that the others were eyewitnesses, while he “*accurately traced the course of all things from the first.*” As the epistle unfolds he will make clear that the statements of the others who were not there and had not traced things our accurately were patently false and thus lies.

*Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, 2 even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, 3 it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus; 4 that thou mightest know the certainty concerning the things wherein thou was instructed. Luke 1:1-4*

The entirety of what they had heard is the basis of the information and truth they are revealing. With “*that which*” he revealed the comprehensive whole of what they had heard from Jesus, from the material creation, from his miracles, from the Father, from the Holy Spirit and from the OT Prophets.

He began with all that they had heard. In the gospel of John he spoke of some of these things

and other apostles and prophets also supplement it. Peter spoke of what he saw and heard on the Mount of transfiguration (John was there too Mt. 17:1-5), and what the OT prophets had said that made it even more sure.

*For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 2 Pet.1:16-19*

Throughout his own gospel John spoke of many things he and the other apostles had heard. They had heard it from the testimony of John the Baptist and the Father, from Jesus own words while he was here, and from the Holy Spirit after Jesus left.

*John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'" . . . 32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. 33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' 34 "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God." John 1:15 32-34*

*And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." . . . 41 And many more believed because of His own word. 42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world." John 4:39; 41-42*

*"But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. 27 "And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning. John 15:26-27*

*"Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it and will glorify it again." 29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to Him." 30 Jesus answered and said, "This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake. John 12:28-30*

The aggregate of what they had heard all led to the same conclusion. With the perfect tense, John informs us that the effects of all that he had heard then were still with him and led to on conviction.

### **that which we have seen with our eyes, that which we beheld,**

There are two basic differences between "seen" and "beheld". The first are the vocabulary words and the second are the tenses. The vocabulary words are clearly a progression. In the first, John describes all the individual things they had seen with their eyes. These were not things they had dreamed about or beheld in a vision. They were things they had seen in this world with their own eyes.

*"horao... to see, i.e. 1. to see with the eyes... 2. to see with the mind, to perceive, know... to look at or upon, observe, give attention to... 3. to see i.e. to become acquainted with by experience, to experience... 4. to see to, look to; i.e. a. l. q. to take heed, beware, ... b. to care for, pay heed to... see thou to it, that will be thy concern..." (Thayer, p. 451-453; 3708).*

The second vocabulary word from which we get the word "theater" describes things that are summed up into one grand vista that can be pondered and considered in one sitting.

*theomai . . .to behold, look upon, view attentively, contemplate, . . . to view, take a view of. . . to learn by looking: . . . to perceive (Thayer 2300)*

The tenses themselves seem to verify the vocabulary. The term "seen" is in the perfect tense which describes the individual actions as they occurred at the time and then the affects those

actions continued to have right up to the present moment. The second is the aorist tense which sums up all past actions into one and simply affirm that they happened. The gospel of John has many examples of the former. He lists many of the individual things they saw and the affects it had upon them. This is what they saw with their own eyes:

*Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." 49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." John 1:48-50*

*This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him. John 2:11*

*Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. John 2:23*

*Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 "Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." John 6:67-69*

*Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. 15 "And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him." Jn. 11:14-15*

*Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. 39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." 40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. 42 "And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." 45 Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. Jn. 11:38-45*

*Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." 3 Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. 4 So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. 5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. John 20:1-8*

There were also the effect that what Jesus did had on both friend and foe that the apostles also witnessed with their eyes. (Jn. 10:37-38; 5:31-34; 36-38 8:17-18; 10:25; 8:29-32; 10:41-42; 12:10-11;)

**that which we beheld,**

The cumulative affects of all that they "beheld" is summed up by John in his final observations.

*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; 31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name. John 20:30-31*

*And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen. John 21:25*

**and our hands handled,**

We only have a few written examples of their doing this:

*Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." 37 But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. 38 And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? 39 "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." 40 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. 41 But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" 42 So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. 43 And He took it and ate in their presence. Lk. 24:36-43*

*Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." 28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jn. 20:27-28*

But it is obvious that in the course of three years they had many opportunities to touch him. Perhaps at the foot washing (Jn 13) or when Peter was sinking in the sea (Mt 14:28-32), but John speaks with certainty of the number of times they had touched him and knew he had come in the flesh.

### **concerning the Word of life**

The term "*concerning*" comes from the Greek term *peri* from which we get the word perimeter or periscope which describes the circumference in which something occurs. A periscope describes what can be seen within a circle while a perimeter describes boundary that defines the area inside of a circle. In this case all that they had heard, seen, beheld and touched were within the circle that contained the "Word of life."

*"peri... prep., joined in the N. T. with the gen. and the acc. ... and indicating that the person or thing relative to which an act or state is predicated is as it were encompassed by this act or state; Lat. circum, circa; around, about... I. with the GENITIVE it denotes that around which an act or state revolves; about, concerning, as touching, etc... a. about concerning... after verbs of speaking, teaching, writing, etc. ...after verbs of hearing knowing, ascertaining,... after verbs of thinking, deciding, supposing, doubting, etc. ... b. as respects [A. V. often (as) touching]... with regard to, in reference to..." (Thayer, p. 502; 4012)*

We spoke earlier of the reasons why the Holy Spirit might have used the neuter "*that which*" to describe the fulness of the Word of life. We concluded that it was to sum up everything about the Word of life that had been revealed to them, beginning with His work at the creation, His work in His incarnation, and His work in the church and nations (*King of kings and Lord of lords*) today.

But there is one more consideration that now needs to be examined. Why does God call Jesus the "*Word*?" In the Greek language there were three terms for "*word*" each with a specific idea. The term *logos* describes "*those things which are put together in thought, ... gathered together in the mind,...*" and "*expressed in words*" For the Greek speaking person this word is not used to describe simple letters or the sounds they make. It is used to describe the "*conception or idea*" that is behind them.

*"logos... prop. a collecting, collection, (See lego),- and that, as well of those things which are put together in thought, as of those which having been thought i.e. gathered together in the mind, are expressed in words. Accordingly, a twofold use of the term is to be distinguished: one which relates to speaking, and one which relates to thinking. ... I as respects SPEECH: 1. a word, yet not in the grammatical sense (i.q. vocabulum, the mere name of an object), but language, vox, i.e. a word which, uttered by the living voice, embodies a conception or idea; (hence, it differs from hrema and hepos ... 2. what some one has said a saying... b. of the sayings of God; a. l. q. decree, mandate, order... 3. discourse... a. the act of speaking, speech... 4. in an objective sense, what is communicated by instruction, doctrine... specifically, the doctrine concerning the attainment through Christ of salvation in the kingdom of God... 5. anything reported in speech; a narration, narrative... of a written narrative, a continuous account of things done..." (Thayer, p. 380-382; 3056)*

Though the definition and use are easy to understand, why and how it is used to describe the one who was with God, was God, and created all things is not so easy to understand. Jesus was called the Word in the beginning with God and the Word who became flesh, dwelt among us and revealed His glory.

We must therefore use these two events to fully comprehend this term as it is used in the Scriptures. First, in the creation, we were told that the Word created everything that has been made. If we go back to the first chapter of Genesis we will gain some insight into this.

Remember that the Holy Spirit revealed to Moses that in the creation it was what God said and the ideas behind his word that preceded each act of creation.

*6 Then **God said**, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters." 7 Thus God made the firmament, ... and **it was so**.*

*9 Then **God said**, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear;" and **it was so**.*

*12 Then **God said**, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and **it was so**.*

*14 Then **God said**, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; ..." and **it was so**.*

*20 Then **God said**, "Let the waters abound with an abundance of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the face of the firmament of the heavens." 21 **So God created** great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind*

*24 Then **God said**, "Let the earth bring forth the living creature according to its kind: cattle and creeping thing and beast of the earth, each according to its kind"; and **it was so**.*

*26 Then **God said**, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 **So God created man** in His own image; in the image of God **He created him**; male and female **He created them**. 28 Then God saw everything that **He had made**, and indeed it was very good.*

Thus God said... is used in Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26. When we can now add that in that creation Jesus was the Word, who later became flesh. We now know that in the creation:

*All things were made through him and without him nothing was made that was made. Jn. 1:3 through whom also He made the worlds; Heb. 1:1-3*

*"You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Your hands. Heb. 1:10-12*

*by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. Col. 1:15-18*

So in between each "God said" and "it was so," was the Word that God made it through. Hence the Father spoke and Jesus became not only the embodiment of the ideas expressed, but also perfectly brought them into being so that what God thought, what God said and what man sees are exactly the same. Jesus as the Word in creation was the "word which, uttered by the living voice, embodies a conception or idea" (see Thayer above).

This is also exactly what occurred when the Word became flesh. Every idea, concept and thought that God had about man, about redemption and salvation came with the Word. Jesus took those ideas, concepts and thoughts, lived them and then left a perfect blueprint of exactly what God had in mind. Everything Jesus did is our example (1Pet. 2:21) and everything Jesus did is a perfect revelation of the Father. Jesus is the word who perfectly embodied God's thoughts in the creation and brought them into being exactly as God wanted. He was also the word who perfectly embodied all that God wanted revealed and done on earth to bring about



salvation for man.

*Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us." 9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" 10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. 11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. John 14:8-11*

*I and My Father are one." John 10:30*

*Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. John 4:34-35*

*because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me. John 5:30*

*For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. John 6:38*

All that the apostles heard, saw, beheld and touched revealed that Jesus was the perfect representation of all the ideas, plans, and concepts of the Father both prior to, during and after the incarnation.

This also explains why Jesus was the Word of life. All life was created by Him in the beginning. Man brought death and after the incarnation Jesus again brought life.

## **2 (and the life was manifested,**

With the term "manifested" John revealed how they were able to get this information. All they heard, saw, beheld and touched was made possible only because the life was manifested. It was only after the Word became flesh that these things were manifested, made visible, and something we could now know.

*"phaneroo,... to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown, to manifest, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way... to make known by teaching... b. with an acc of the person, to expose to view, make manifest, show one ... Pass. to become known, to be plainly recognized, thoroughly understood..." (Thayer, p. 648; 5319)*

This is exactly how John began his gospel. It was not great thinking, human ingenuity or some breakthrough on the part of these men that created the gospel. It was not idle speculation or cunningly devised fables. It was God revealing to man the true origin of life. Only when the word became flesh, Jesus discussed the nature and essence of life, and the Holy Spirit taught us all things could anyone fully understand. Both John and Paul reveal things that man could not know. Information and facts that change everything.

*In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:4; 14*

*For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. Col. 1:16-17*

When the Word became flesh, many things that were not known and could not be known were revealed for us to understand. It is the Word that became flesh who created all life. All the life revealed in Genesis one existing in the material world (vegetation; life in the water, air, and land; insect life; and lastly the life in man) and all the life man can look forward to in eternity. It was the Word who created Adam and Eve and placed an eternal soul within. Death is not attributed to God. Any reasoning that seeks for the source of evil and death in God is false to the core. Man brought death and evil into the world. One of the greatest things manifested when the word became flesh is that man and man alone is responsible for our present circumstances. But with his resurrection, even the power of death was destroyed. Yet no one knew this before the Word became flesh. It was Jesus who brought life and immortality to life.

*Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God, 9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, 10 but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, 11 to which I was appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12 For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. 2 Tim. 1:8-18*

### **and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare unto you**

We must not miss the profound nature of what John says here. The *Gnostics* had gained all their insight and information from the philosophers and idolaters. They truly were brilliant men who grappled with the most difficult questions of life and had come up with some logical and sensible answers. But this was the one great difference. While man could only look at what is and seek to explain it, the apostles and prophets without any great thought had been chosen by God to hear the truth.

*how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: Eph. 3:3-5*

It was God and the Word who manifested these things. The only role of the apostles was to make it known and bear witness to its truth. They did not imagine or think up what they were revealing. They saw it! Read again Peter's words that fill out and explain exactly what John does here.

*For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 17 For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 18 And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. 2 Pet. 1:16-18*

They neither followed nor devised fables. They were eyewitnesses and were simply bearing witness to what they saw. If what they say is true, then all competing philosophies are fables. This is exactly what Paul himself revealed.

*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 2 Tim. 4:3-4*

Only the apostles saw, bore witness of what they saw and declared it to us. This is the same term as *saw* (*horaō*) in verse one and will be used again in verse three. They want it clearly established that they were capable and qualified to bear witness.

*"martureo... to be a witness, to bear witness, testify, i.e. to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something, or that (so in the N. T.) he knows it because taught by direct revelation or inspiration... a. in general; absol. to give (not to keep back testimony... i.q. to prove or confirm by testimony... to bear witness (of) anything... b. emphatically; to utter honorable testimony, give a good report... pass. ... to be borne (good) witness to, to be well reported of, to have (good) testimony borne to one, accredited, attested, of good report, approved..." (Thayer, p 390-391; 3140)*

This was the most powerful and important role of the apostles as well as that of Paul.

*"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." Acts 1:8*

*"Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. 15 'For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. Acts 22:14-15*

This is all they were doing. They were not coming up with these things or devising them. They were simply announcing the life that had been revealed to them and they had seen and heard.

*“apaggelo... to bring tidings (from a person or thing), bring word, report... to carry tidings to a place... 2. to proclaim (apo), because what one announces he openly lays as it were, off from himself,...) to make known openly, declare... by teaching and commanding...” (Thayer, p. 53; 518)*

### **the eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us);**

This is the third time John has used the term *life* in this section:

*concerning the **Word of life** — 2 **the life** was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you **that eternal life** which was with the Father and was manifested to us —*

It is evident that all three of these terms refer to Jesus. Does this description of life as being eternal, form an explanation of the other two references to life or is he now refining the two broad terms above with one specific aspect of it? It is difficult to say for certain, but since the Word is the author of all life, is also eternal and brings eternal life to us, I believe the latter is the truth. John now refines life to one specific point. This time he speaks of Jesus in His essential nature. He is eternal.

*“aionios... 1. without beginning or end, that which always has been and always will be... 2. without beginning... 3. without end, never to cease, everlasting...” (Thayer, p. 20; 166)*

Several Scriptures outline and explain this.

*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Heb. 13:8*

*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11 saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” ... Rev. 1:10-11*

*And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. 18 “I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. 19 “Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. Rev. 1:17-19*

*“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. 13 “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” Rev. 22:12-13*

The word was not only in the beginning with God, but far more. Like the Father he has no beginning and no end. He has always been and always will be. This is what God manifested, made known and revealed when the Word became flesh. All the apostles saw it and were testifying. It is this Word of life and eternal life that brought both to man:

*In Him was life, and the **life** was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. John 1:4-5*

*that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal **life**. 16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting **life** John 3:15-16*

*He who believes in the Son has everlasting **life**; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see **life**, but the wrath of God abides on him.” John 3:36*

*For as the Father has **life** in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have **life** in Himself, 27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. John 5:26-28*

*You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal **life**; and these are they which testify of Me. 40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have **life**. John 5:39-40*

*For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives **life** to the world.” John 6:33*

*Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal **life**. 69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” John 6:67-69*

Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of **life**." John 8:12

And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal **life**, and this **life** is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has **life**; he who does not have the Son of God does not have **life**. 13 These things I have written to you who believe 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. 1 John 5:11-13

### **3 that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also,**

Repetition in the Scriptures is one of the clearest indications that the Holy Spirit wanted this clearly understood and emphasized as important. He then summarized the main point from the first two verses. The apostles and prophets heard and saw what they were proclaiming and declaring. It is therefore of the highest importance that we hear and act on what they are declaring.

*For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will? Heb. 2:2-4*

### **that ye also may have fellowship with us:**

There are two key words in this phrase. The first is "*a final conjunction denoting purpose.*"

*"hina... II a final conjunction (for from local direction, indicated by the adverb, the transition was easy to mental direction or intention)denoting purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that;... it is used 1. prop of the purpose or end;..."* (Thayer, p. 302-304; 2443)

Hence the purpose and end of all that John has said up to this point regarding seeing, hearing, beholding touching, witnessing and declaring has been to bring the readers into fellowship with us (apostles and prophets). "Fellowship" is used four times in this chapter. It means "*association, community, communion, joint participation, and intimacy.*"

*"koinonia... fellowship, association, community, communion, joint participation, contact, in the N.T. as in class. Grk. 1. the share which one has in anything, participation, ... 2. contact, fellowship, intimacy..."* (Thayer, p 352; 2842),

There are two primary uses for fellowship. The first centers on relationships. A family has fellowship, association and communion because they share the same home, blood, memories and emotions (*intimacy*). The second use centers on work and activities. When people work together to accomplish a goal, they are in fellowship with each other (*joint participation, participation*). All of this illustrating that are many things in this life much easier to do if there are two or more people to do it.

*Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. 10 For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. 11 Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone? 12 Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken. Eccl. 4:9-12*

It appears to me that both of these are in play here. When we believe and act on the testimony of the apostles and prophets, we join them in a family relationship and we work together in communion with one another. We can only have such fellowship when we fully trust what they have revealed.

### **yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ:**

The sublime nature of this fellowship with the apostles and prophets is stated in this verse. When we listen to what they say and obey it, not only does this put us into fellowship with those who were preaching (which by the way is what all teachers and those who follow their teaching possess), but in this one case alone, it also brings one into fellowship with God the Father and

with His Son Jesus Christ.

We see the nature of this fellowship in it's different aspects in parables, figures and spiritual realities set forth in the Scriptures:

### **1. The church as God's temple.**

The apostles and prophets are a part of the foundation with Jesus as the chief cornerstone and all of us built upon that foundation making up a holy temple for a habitation of God (Eph. 2:19-22). Paul (as an inspired apostle) is a wise master builder going from city to city laying the foundation of Jesus in each city. Each person is built on the foundation and we also enter into this work building on to the foundation (1Cor. 3:10-13). Finally in 1 Pet he skips over the role of the apostles and prophets and goes directly to the word they have left. When we obey that word we become a living stone in the temple joining with other Christians to make up the a Holy Temple and a priesthood offering up sacrifices to God.

*So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit. Eph. 2:19-22*

*According to the grace of God which was given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder I laid a foundation; and another buildeth thereon. But let each man take heed how he buildeth thereon. 11 For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 But if any man buildeth on the foundation gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay, stubble; 13 each man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it is revealed in fire; and the fire itself shall prove each man's work of what sort it is. 1 Cor. 3:10-13*

*unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, 5 ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1Pet. 2 4-5*

### **2. The church as a body**

Our fellowship to Jesus is seen in that he is the head and we are the body. In the Corinthian letter they completely misunderstood the spiritual gifts they were given by the apostles to further that fellowship. After listing all the gifts, he then spoke of the body and all the parts. In concluding this section, he revealed again that this body begins with the apostles and prophets (1 Cor. 12:27-31). He also describes how each of us entered into this fellowship in 1 Cor. 12:12 (baptized into the one body). Each of us does those things that we can do with the gifts and abilities we have to build up the body. This is also the them of Rom. 12:1-8. Each of us gives ourselves as a living sacrifice. Then we assess our gifts and use them.

### **3. The Vine and the Branches**

God has made Jesus the vine and his servants the branches. He is the vinedresser pruning and caring for the branches. In this case we are all in fellowship when we bear the fruit of more servants for the Lord and spiritual growth in our hearts (Jn. 15:1-8).

### **4. The Family of God**

This relationship places all of us first in fellowship with Jesus who made it all possible and then in fellowship with God as our Father and Jesus as our brother (Heb. 2:9-18). He became a man (a little lower than the angels) to taste death for every man. God wanted to bring many sons to glory so he made the author of our salvation perfect (complete) through suffering. He who sanctifies (Jesus) and those who are sanctified (his brethren) are one (fellowship). Therefore Jesus is not ashamed to call us his brethren. Since the children are flesh and blood (us) he too partook of the same (Jesus) and delivered us from the fear of death. In all things he was made like his brethren to become a merciful and gracious high priest.

This relationship is further explained in Gal. 4:4-7

## 5. The Shepherd and sheep

Jesus is the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. He knows his own and his own know him. All of the sheep will be brought together into one fold with one shepherd over them. (Jn 10:14-18), Jesus is now the great shepherd over the sheep (Heb. 13:20-21) and the chief shepherd with the elders and the shepherds protecting each flock (1Pet. 5:1-4).

## 6. I am not of the world and you are not of the world.

*I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them from the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil (one). 16 They are not of the world even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth: thy word is truth. 18 As thou didst send me into the world, even so sent I them into the world. John 17:14-18*

*If ye were of the world, the world would love its own: but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. John 15:19*

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For they that say such things make it manifest that they are seeking after a country of their own. 15 And if indeed they had been mindful of that (country) from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.*

*16 But now they desire a better (country), that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. Heb. 11:13-16*

*Beloved, I beseech you as sojourners and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lust, which war against the soul; 12 having your behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that, wherein they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. 1 Pet. 2:11-12*

Here in John he simply pointed out the foundation that fellowship with God and with Jesus can only be gained by fellowship with the apostles and prophets. John will say this more strongly as the epistle unfolds.

*They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. 6 We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. 1 Jn. 4:5-6*

One cannot have fellowship with God without being in full fellowship with the apostles and prophets. The reason for this is important to understand. Since the age of the Patriarchs, God has never been in fellowship with his people directly. During the Jewish age, all fellowship with God was based on the Law of Moses. During the Christian age, all fellowship is based on the Law of Christ. The Jews were in fellowship with Moses. This was the affirmation of the Jewish leaders even in the time of Christ. They still recognized they were disciples of and thus in fellowship with Moses who was in fellowship with God.

*Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. 29 "We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from." John 9:28-29*

This was true because Moses was the only one God chose to direct and guide the Jews until the Messiah. In the same way Jesus chose the apostles and prophets and gave them as gifts to the church to perfect the saints.

*Therefore the wisdom of God also said, 'I will send them **prophets and apostles**, and some of them they will kill and persecute,' 50 "that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation, Lev. 11:49-50*

*Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on **the foundation of the apostles and***

**prophets**, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, Eph. 2:19-20

how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been **revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets**; Eph. 3:3-5

And He Himself gave **some to be apostles, some prophets**, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, Eph. 4:11-12

Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of **the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior**, 2Pet. 3:1-2

This is the point John is making so clearly. Without fellowship with those chosen to reveal the will of God and Christ to man, we can have no fellowship with God or Jesus Christ. They wrote the word of God and only by full submission to the things they wrote can we be in fellowship with God and His Son Jesus Christ.

#### **4 and these things we write, that our joy may be made full.**

The different translations reveal the textual issue in this verse. While the KJV and NKJ have “*your joy*” The ASV, NASB and ESV have “*our joy*.” The reasons for this are set forth in a textual commentary:

Although the reading *humin* (*your*) is widely supported (Ac C K L almost all minuscules vg syrp, h, pal copsa, bo arm eth), a majority of the Committee preferred *hemeis*(*our*) because of the quality of its support (it is read by the Alexandrian text and one Old Latin manuscript: A\* B P ψ 33 it65 copsa ms) and because copyists were more likely to alter *graphomen hemeis* to the expected *graphomen humin* ... than vice versa. (Textual Commentary on the Greek NT)

The difference is only on the recipient of the joy. John is writing this letter to protect and guide God’s people. If they listen carefully and follow what John reveals then his joy will be made full because he will have averted a terrible calamity of many lost souls. Paul said something similar to the Philippians

*Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Phil. 2:1-3*

On the other hand those receiving the letter will also have their joy made full because they will know the truth and be made free. Both are true, both are scriptural, so it is not really necessary to know for certain which it is since both the writer and the readers in fellowship will have their joy made full. This was a theme that Jesus dealt with several times in his last night with the apostles. In most of them both his joy and their joy are described.

*These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and (that) your joy may be made full. John 15:11*

*“Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. . . 22 “Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. John 16:20, 22*

*But now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy made full in themselves. John 17:13*

But whether it is the joy of John as the writer or the joy of the readers, John again used *hina* to make it clear they understood this is the true purpose of the letter.

*“hina... denoting purpose and end: to the intent that; to the end that, in order that;...” (Thayer, p. 302-304; 2443)*

If these written words are accepted and bring into fellowship then the joy will be “*made full*.” This is a very comprehensive word that is used many many times in the NT. It means to “*fill up to the*

top (or brim), to make complete in every particular, and render perfect.”

“pleroo, ...1. to make full, to fill, to fill up... to fill to the full... to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally...2. to render full, i. e. to complete; a. prop. to fill up to the top...so that nothing shall be wanting to full measure, fill to the brim,... b. to perfect, consummate... bb. to make complete in every particular; to render perfect... c. to carry into effect, bring to realization, realize; a. of matters of duty, to perform, execute ... bb of sayings, promises, prophecies, to bring to pass, ratify, accomplish; ... hh universally and absolutely, to fulfill, i.e. to cause God’s will (as made known in the law)to be obeyed as it should be, and God’s promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfillment ...” (Thayer, p. 517-518; 4137).

When John placed this in the perfect tense it means that this joy once made full will remain so from then on.

## 5 And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you,

Pres. I A

Per. Ind. Act

Present I A

5 This is the message which we having heard from Him and are declaring to you,

The term “message” can also be translated announcement. So an announcement was heard from him. The pronoun “him” goes back to the nearest antecedent, but in this case there are two. This could refer to God or to Jesus.

We can only assess the context to make the decision. This one is very straightforward. We know that the term “that which” was from the beginning in verse 1 refers to Jesus. John stated there that they had heard, seen, beheld and touched him. Then in verse three he says that “that which” they saw and heard they declared to them. Since the verbs and their tenses are identical, he is clearly speaking of Jesus. What they heard in verse one was from Jesus, what they heard in verse 3 was from Jesus so why change to the Father now? While here, even Jesus stated that what we know about the Father, we only learn from the son.

*No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared (him). Jn. 1:18*

*God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, 2 hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in (his) Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, through whom also he made the worlds; Heb. 1:1-2*

*If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things? 13 And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, (even) the Son of man, who is in heaven. Jn. 3:12-13*

So just as all that they had heard, seen, beheld, and touched could be summed up by the terms “word” and “life,” so also all that Jesus had declared to them about the Father and they were now announcing to us is summed up in the word “light.”

### that God is light,

This is the summation of the entire message.

“we” (apostles and prophets) announce to “you” (Christians).

The things “we” declare bring “you” (hearers) into fellowship with “us.” (3)

Since “we” are in fellowship with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ,

when “you” accept the message “we” declare “you” enter into fellowship with the Father and Son. The summation of the message from “us” which “we” heard from him (Jesus Christ) and “we” now declare to you is that “God is light.”

The complexity of light makes this a very big concept to grasp. God created light on the very first day of the creation (1:14-19) and on the fourth day He then created all the lights in the heavens to contain and reveal this light (1:14-19). Even in the material creation, light is easy to see and it is not difficult to explain what it does, but it is still difficult to explain it. How much more when we come to a verse that takes a difficult concept in the material realm and then applies it to the



spiritual realm? If we look at the revelation that God is light, we see clearly that this is obviously not of this creation.

*which in its own times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; 16 who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom (be) honor and power eternal. Amen. 1 Tim. 6:15-16  
Bless Jehovah, O my soul. O Jehovah my God, thou art very great; Thou art clothed with honor and majesty: 2 Who covers thyself with light as with a garment; who stretches out the heavens like a curtain; Ps. 104:1-2*

We can't approach it, no one has seen it or can see it. So this is not the real point of this revelation because this light is something we can see and must walk in. But since this is a "light" and "darkness" we can walk in, it is doubtful that all John intended for us to understand is the revelation of God's appearance. God created all light in this world and is light in the spiritual realm. This is the foundation, God is the source of all forms of light. When Jesus entered this world, the light, John here spoke of, entered into the world. Although these passages speak of Jesus, they are instructive for us on what John meant when he revealed that God too is light.

*In him was life; and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light shines in the darkness; and the darkness apprehended it not. 6 There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. 7 The same came for witness, that he might bear witness of the light, that all might believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but (came) that he might bear witness of the light. 9 There was the true light, (even the light) which lights every man, coming into the world. 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world knew him not. John 1:4-17*

Looking carefully at this verse we can deduce some important conclusions. First this was a light that could be seen, a light within every man, yet it was also a light that could be ignored or not understood. The sad reality is that light brings truth and clarity to every unknown thing. When we hear or smell something while in the darkness we have no idea what it is, but when we turn on the light we recognize it immediately. Before commenting further look at the next passage in John that refers again to light

*And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their works were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hates the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reprov'd. 21 But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God. Jn. 3:19-21  
Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Isa. 5:20  
The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. Isa. 9:2*

When the light entered the world, the world was in darkness. But when the light gave them the opportunity to see clearly, men chose to remain in the darkness. They did not want to come to the light because their works were evil. Those who do evil and enjoy doing evil do not want to come to the light where their works are clearly exposed as evil. Only those who want to do the truth so that he can see clearly which works are righteous and wrought in God and which works are evil wrought from Satan.

Now there was a new threat. False gospels that allowed people to remain in the darkness but think they were in the light. They have all the pleasures of living in the darkness and all the joy and comfort of being servants of God. Yet there was a problem, it wasn't true!

Adam and Eve walked in light until the serpent (Satan) came and sought to lead them into darkness. Before the serpent came, Eve saw clearly that to eat of the tree brought death, but after the serpent's lie, she could no longer see for she had entered into darkness. Jesus dealt with this very issue. After rebuking those who refused to repent because they could not see the need he reminded them that when Jonah came to Nineveh they saw the light and repented of what was coming. They could clearly see that Jonah was telling them the truth and they need to change. Then Jesus revealed that each man, if his eye is single regarding his relationship with God, will be full of light. But if his eye is darkened with sin, the light that is in him is truly only darkness.

*The men of Nineveh shall stand up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, a greater than Jonah is here. 33 No man,*

*when he hath lighted a lamp, putteth it in a cellar, neither under the bushel, but on the stand, that they which enter in may see the light. 34 The lamp of thy body is thine eye: when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when it is evil, thy body also is full of darkness. 35 Look therefore whether the light that is in thee be not darkness. 36 If therefore thy whole body be full of light, having no part dark, it shall be wholly full of light, as when the lamp with its bright shining doth give thee light. Luke 11:32-39*

This was not new. Jesus was only speaking of things they could and should have known from their own law. First, the light and truth are placed side by side and synonyms. They (light and truth) will lead and they (light and truth) will bring to thy holy hill (Ps. 43:3). Then in Ps. 119:104-106 it is God's precepts that give understanding, his word that is a lamp to his feet and a light to his path. In Pr. 6:23 it is the command that is the lamp and the law that is light. Finally the path of the righteous who are listening to God and allowing him to direct his steps is as the dawning light growing brighter and brighter. While the way of the wicked is darkness.

*Oh send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me: let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Ps. 43:3*

*Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. 105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and light unto my path. 106 I have sworn, and have confirmed it, that I will observe thy righteous ordinances. Ps. 119:104-106*

*For the commandment is a lamp; And the law is light; And reproofs of instruction are the way of life: Pr. 6:23*

*But the path of the righteous is as the dawning light, That shineth more and more unto the perfect day. 19 The way of the wicked is as darkness: They know not at what they stumble. Pr. 4:18-19*

Jesus final words to the world emphasized all of this. He warned those in that day that the light is only among them for a little while longer. While they have that light they need to take advantage of it. If they don't, the darkness will overtake them. For if they go back to waking in the darkness of their own ideas and opinions, they will not know where they are going. But if they will believe on the light (him) they can become sons of light.

*Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a little while is the light among you. Walk while ye have the light, that darkness overtake you not: and he that walk in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36 While ye have the light, believe on the light, that ye may become sons of light. These things spake Jesus, and he departed and hid himself from them. John 12:35-37*

This leads a logical conclusion. John is not speaking about the spiritual light that surrounds God. He is speaking of the truth that God has revealed to the world. There is no darkness in God for God cannot lie. Darkness comes from ignorance and sin. It comes from the devil and those who are influenced by him. The world is in the darkness. So when we walk as the world walks we are walking in darkness. This is exactly what Paul told the Ephesians. All of us were once darkness. But now that we have obeyed the gospel we are light and must walk as children of light. We do this by "proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord" and we do it by having no fellowship (same root word as here) with the unfruitful works of darkness. Those who walk in the darkness do so because they are not following God's word. We know better and so we must take that word and put all to the test and only do those things God reveals for us to do. In order to have fellowship with the deeds of darkness we must reenter the realm of darkness. Instead of fellowship with them, they must be reprov'd, brought out into the light and seen for what they really are.

*Be not ye therefore partakers with them; 8 For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord; 11 and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them; 12 for the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of. 13 But all things when they are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light. 14 Wherefore (he) saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee. 15 Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise; 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Eph. 5:7-16*

Since the context here clearly defines light and darkness in relationship to sin and a lack of love for a brother, the light refers to truth, purity, holiness and a knowledge of God's word. While darkness is the exact opposite.

**and in him is no darkness at all.**

There is no darkness in God. This is a double negative. The first is simply a “no” to deny that the subject (God) has anything to do with the darkness. Then the second “negation” is in no wise, not at all, nothing whatever.

*ou*,... 1. absol. and accented, *ou, nay, no*,...2. It is joined to other words, - to a finite verb, simply to deny that what is declared in the verb applies to the subject of the sentence...” (Thayer, p. 460-461; 3756)

“*oudeis*... and not one, no one, none, no; it differs from *meideis* as *ou* does from *me*... 1. with nouns... 2. absolutely, ... *nothing whatever, not at all, in no wise*...” (Thayer, p. 462; 3762)

Since this phrase is the exact opposite of the previous one, we can now test our conclusions by looking at the verse dealing with darkness. If we are correct that light refers to truth, righteousness, obeying and following God’s word so we can see things clearly and exactly as they are, then the darkness will lead to exactly the opposite. When one forsakes the path of uprightness he will walk in the ways of darkness which will lead to being wayward in their paths. Such people call good evil and evil good, first because they simply do not have any method to tell the difference. Good feels bad to them and bad feels good. The same is true for light and darkness. They can’t tell the difference because they have left the path of light and no longer even understand the difference.

*To deliver thee from the way of evil, From the men that speak perverse things; 13 Who forsake the paths of uprightness, To walk in the ways of darkness; 14 Who rejoice to do evil, And delight in the perverseness of evil; 15 Who are crooked in their ways, And wayward in their paths: Pr. 2:12-15  
Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Isa. 5:20*

This also fits perfectly with what John says in the next chapter.

*He that saith he is in the light and hateth his brother, is in the darkness even until now. 10 He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is no occasion of stumbling in him. 11 But he that hateth his brother is in the darkness, and walketh in the darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes. 1 Jn. 2:9-11*

If we think we are in the light but we are doing something exactly the opposite of what has been commanded to us then we are in the darkness. Such a man walks in the darkness because the darkness has blinded his eyes and he cannot see the truth God has revealed through Jesus Christ.



### The tenses used in 1John 1:5-10

This is the message which we have **heard** ( -... ) **(PFIA)** from Him and **declare**(—) **(PIA)** to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we **say** ( -... ) **(PFIA)** that we **have** (—) **(PIA)** fellowship with Him, and **walk** (~~~) **(PSA)** in darkness, we **lie** (—) (PIM) and do not **practice** (—) **(PIA)** the truth. 7 But if we **walk** (~~~) **(PSA)** in the light as He is in the light, we **have** (—) **(PIA)** fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son **cleanses** (—) **(PIA)** us from all sin. 8 If we **say** ( ° ) **(AOSA)** that we **have** (—) **(PIA)** no sin, we **deceive** (—) **(PIA)** ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we **confess** (~~~) **(PSA)** our sins, He is faithful and just to **forgive** ( ° ) **(AOSA)** us our sins and to **cleanse** ( ° ) **(AOSA)** us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we **say** ( -... ) **(PFIA)** that we have not **sinned** ( -... ) **(PFIA)**, we **make** (—) **(PIA)** Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1 John 1:5-10

### A brief explanation and use of the various tenses.

**PFIA (Perfect Indicative Active)** — ( -... ) an action that occurred in the past, ceased, but the effects of that action are continuing right up to the present moment.

Hard to express in English. .... After we complete an exhausting workout, I have become tired... I was tired after the workout and the affects of that workout continue up to the present moment, I was tired and I am still tired...

**PIA (Present Indicative Active)** — (—) Continuous action in the present moment (...ing)

I    am    Walking

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**PSA (Present Subjunctive Active)** — (~~~) Continuous action in a mode of contingency. No time since it is in the subjunctive. (If...) (... may)

I may be walking                  If I am walking

**AOSA (Aorist Subjunctive Active)** — ( ° ) Aorist looks at action as a point (punctiliar). Simple expressing an action. Since it is in the subjective it is a contingency having no time.

Not .... I was walking - I walked (undefined action; it occurred, but the rest doesn't matter



## How the Greek speaking people would be reading John's words:

Pres. I A

Per. Ind. Act

Present I A

5 This is the message which we having heard from Him and are declaring to you,

PIA

PIA

that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.

Aor. Subj. A.

PIA

6 If we might said that we are having fellowship with Him,

Pres Subj A

Pres I Middle

and if walking in darkness, then we are lying in reference to ourselves and

PIA

are not practicing the truth.

Pr Subj A

Pres I A

7 But if we are walking in the light as He is in the light,

Pres IA

then we are fellowshiping with one another,

Pres IA

and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son is cleansing us from all sin.

Pres Subj A.

Pres I A

Pres I A

8 If we are saying that we are having no sin, we are deceiving ourselves,

Pres I A

and then the truth is not in us.

Pres. Sub. A

9 If we are confessing our sins,

Pres. IA

Pres. Subj. Act.

Aorist Subj Active

He is faithful and just then to be forgiving us our sins then cleansed us from all unrighteousness.

Aorist Subj Act

Perf Ind Act.

10 If we said that we have not sinned, (Never in the past and no affects up to the present)

Pres I A

Pres I A

we are making Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

6 If we say that 6 If we might said (Aor. Subj. A.) that

There is a definite change in the pronoun "we." This "we" is no longer the apostles and prophets, as it has been since the first verse. Now it everyone who is walking (including the apostles, prophets, and all Christians), some in darkness and some in light. The "we" who walk in darkness are in verse 6 and the "we" who are walking in the light are found in verse 7. Each of these begins with a second class conditional sentence. In this case by using the subjunctive and the particle "ean," John makes it clear that this is not something that is fixed or certain. Only if we say the first thing and then do the second thing will the conclusion of this passage come to

pass. That is the meaning of the subjunctive with this particle if:

*ean... I. a conditional particle (derived from ei an), which makes reference to time and to experience, introducing something future, but not determining, before the event, whether it is certainly to take place; if, in case ..."* (Thayer, p. 162-163; 1437)

Since this is in the aorist tense, it is summing up all that is the past. If we have ever said at anytime in the past ...

**we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness,**

**we are having fellowship (PIA) with Him, and if walking (Pres Subj A) in darkness, then**

The remainder of the statement is simply a restatement of the previous verses.

*that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us: yea, and our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ: 1 Jn. 1:3*

John stated that we (the apostles and prophets) are declaring a message to you that we (apostles and prophets) both saw and heard. Jesus made this clear distinction in His final prayer. First He spoke of those He had chosen out of the world (his apostles and subsequent prophets).

*I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. 18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth. Jn. 17:14-19*

If we (all future Christians) listen to what they are saying we will have fellowship with them and since their fellowship is with the Father and his Son, we too will have fellowship with both the apostles and prophets and the Father and Son. This is exactly how Jesus continued His prayer.

*"I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; 21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. John 17:20-22*

But we must be careful. Just as it is possible to be on the broad path that leads to destruction, it is also possible to say one thing, but by the way we walk in our lives be doing the exact opposite of our words. For whether we are a true Christian who have served God for many years or we are someone who has never had any relationship with God the same terrible outcome can occur.

The key to understanding all this is found in the terms **walk** and **darkness**. Greek speaking people used the term "walk" the way we use the term "live." When we go places, do things, and enjoy life, we are living. When they did the same things, they were walking.

*"peripateo... to walk a. prop. to make one's way, make progress, in fig. disc. equiv. to to make a due use of opportunities... to frequent, stay in, a place... b. Hebraistically, to live... a. to regulate one's life, to conduct one's self..."* (Thayer, p. 504; 4043)

So those who say they are in fellowship but by the way their live their lives and conduct themselves in their daily activities make it evident that they are actually in the darkness then the second part of the condition will come to pass. From the above we saw clearly that walking in the darkness applies to those who do not know or do God's word. They are ignorant of what God wants them to do (or they do not want to know). Those in the darkness refuse to come to the light. They do not want their evil works to be manifest. When God's word rebukes something that someone is walking in they must repent and leave it, or walk from the light into the darkness. This is true of doctrine, every day life, morality, worship, and everything else God's word reveals to us that we ought to do. When we don't want to know or remain wilfully ignorant, we are walking in the darkness. So walking in darkness can apply both to those who have never obeyed the gospel (the hard soil) and those who obey it but don't live it fully (rocky or thorny soil).

**we lie, and do not the truth:**

**then we are lying in reference to ourselves or lying to ourselves (Pres I Middle) and are not practicing (PIA) the truth.**

This term is a strong word for someone who cheats and deceives. If we say one thing and do another, then we "*show ourselves to be deceitful.*" Yet in this case we are only deceiving



ourselves.

*“pseudomai... ‘to deceive,’ ‘cheat’; hence prop. to show one’s self deceitful, to play false)... to deceive one by a lie, to lie to...” (Thayer, p. 675-676; 5574)*

The second thing that occurs when we say this one thing, but do the opposite is that we are not **doing** the truth.

*“poieo... I. to make ... 1. ... a. with the names of the things made, to produce, construct, form, fashion, etc. ... to create produce: of God, as the author of all things... absol. of men, to labor, to do work... to be operative, exercise activity ... b. joined to nouns denoting a state or condition, it signifies to be the author or, to cause ... with nouns describing a plan or course of action, to perform, accomplish...” (Thayer, p. 524-527; 4160)*

This is the other (false) side of walking in the darkness just as it is the true side for walking in the light. When we walk in the darkness we are not “doing,” “producing, forming, laboring, working” the truth. Walking in the darkness is always walking away from the truth. Walking outside of what the Scriptures reveal is not doing the truth, because only when we abide in his word can we know the truth.

*Jesus therefore said to those Jews that had believed him, If ye abide in my word, (then) are ye truly my disciples; 32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. John 8:31-32*

So walking in truth and walking in light are the same and walking in darkness and not walking in truth are the same.

**7 but if we walk in the light, as He is in the light,**

**7 But if we are walking (Pr Subj A) in the light as He is (Pres I A) in the light,**

This is the continuation of thought and the other side of the conditional sentence. If we walk in darkness then we do not have fellowship with God who is light, but if we walk in the light as He is in the light then we have a very different outcome. Not only is God light, but He is in the light, and if we are to receive the benefits of this statement we must walk in the light in “*exactly the same manner*” He does.

*“hos... adverbial form of the relative pronoun hos, he, ho, which is used in comparison, as, like as, even as, according as, in the same manner as, etc. ... When thus used hos refers a. to the manner (‘form’) of the action expressed by the finite verb, and is equiv. to in the same manner as, after the fashion of; ...c. Hos makes reference to a similarity or equality... d. hos so makes reference to the quality of a person, thing, or action, as to be equiv. to such as, exactly like, as it were” (Thayer, p. 680-682; 5613)*

Thus John makes God the standard. It is not something we can devise or even modify. God is light and we must walk in the light exactly as He is in the light. Since all the Scriptures are united to reveal that the light God dwells in is truth, purity, righteousness, holiness and a knowledge of God’s word, then walking in the light as He is in the light would be all of that. While here, Jesus was that light.

*Again therefore Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life. John 8:12*

*When I am in the world, I am the light of the world. John 9:5*

*I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me may not abide in the darkness. Jn 12:46*

After He left, all that He had revealed as the light of the world has been recorded for us by those inspired to reveal it.

*And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: 20 teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Mt. 28:18-20*

*how shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation? which having at the first been spoken through the Lord, was confirmed unto us by them that heard; 4 God also bearing witness with them, both by signs and wonders, and by manifold powers, and by gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to his own will. Heb. 2:3-4*

Hence walking in the light is equivalent to walking in the light of God’s word. When we walk by faith and not by sight, we walk in the light. When we walk as he walked, we are walking in the light. When we are truly a disciple following our Lord, we are walking in the light.

Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a little while is the light among you. Walk while ye have the light, that darkness overtake you not: and he that walk in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. 36 While ye have the light, believe on the light, that ye may become sons of light. These things spake Jesus, and he departed and hid himself from them. John 12:35-37

John clearly revealed the real difference between walking in the light and walking in the darkness:

*For every one that doeth evil hates the light, and cometh not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, that they have been wrought in God. Jn. 3:19-21*

If we are doing evil, hate the light, and refuse to come to the light lest our works should be reproved, then we are walking in the darkness and we are thus lying and doing not the truth if we say we have fellowship with God. But if we do the truth and love the truth, we willingly come to the light so all our deeds can be made manifest for what they are. We then rejoice over and continue to do those things that have been wrought in God. But when we come to the light and find that we have done a work of darkness and are now reproved, we repent and confess. This is the true essence of walking in the light. Truth and sincerity, a good conscience and a pure heart are the most important signs that we are walking in the light as he is in the light.

**we have fellowship one with another,**

**then we are fellowshipping (Pres IA) with one another,**

Every person, no matter where or when they lived is in fellowship with every other person who walks in the light. We are all working together toward the common goal of salvation. We are still in fellowship with those who left long ago because they are our great cloud of witnesses cheering us on, and we know that they endured the same sufferings we are now enduring.

*Therefore let us also, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Heb. 12:1*

*Be sober, be watchful: your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour, 9 whom withstand steadfast in your faith, knowing that the same sufferings are accomplished in your brethren who are in the world. 1 Pet. 5:8-9*

We are all are stones in the temple, branches in the vine, sheep under the shepherd and not of the world as he was not of the world. When we walk in the light as he is in the light we are in fellowship with him and thus in fellowship with one another.

*"allelon... one another; reciprocally, mutually..." (Thayer, p. 28; 240)*

**and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.**

**and then the blood of Jesus Christ His Son is cleansing (Pres IA) us from all sin.**

This second point is not only the truth, but also forms the bridge to the next point in his lesson. All who walk in the light "say they have sin," (1:8) "confess those sins," (1:9) and "say that they have sinned." (1:10). Only these new false teachers following human philosophy would deny any of these things. This was the very purpose for Jesus coming.

*But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . 10 Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see (his) seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. 11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, (and) shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. 12 Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Isa. 53:5-6; 10-12*

Anyone who does not recognize that the most important part of our coming to the light and walking in the light is to cleanse us from the sins we commit has no part or fellowship with those who walk in the light. The entire purpose of the crucifixion and the entire purpose of the gospel is forgiveness, reconciliation, and purification. Only the blood of Jesus can "cleanse" us of sin.

*"katharizo... to make clean, to cleanse... ; a. from physical stains and dirt... to remove by cleansing... b. in a moral sense; aa. to free from the defilement of sin and from faults; to purify from*

wickedness... bb. to free from the guilt of sin, to purify... cc. to consecrate by cleansing or purifying... to consecrate, dedicate... 2. to pronounce clean in a levitical sense..." (Thayer, p. 312; 2511)

Much effort has been expended on this verse. The verb "cleans" is present indicative active. This means that this is a continuous action. The Greek speaking person reading this verse would read the tenses like this:

but if we may be walking in the light, as he is in the light, we are fellowshiping one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son is cleansing us from all sin.

Each of these verbs is a present tense which always means continuous action, so his mind would also add:

but if we may be walking (continuously) in the light, as He is (continuously) in the light, we are in fellowship (continuous) with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son is (continuously) cleansing us from all sin.

There is no question that this is true, but it has led to an interesting question concerning interpretation of the passage. If the blood of Jesus is "*continuously cleansing us from all sin.*" Does this mean we are cleansed as we are committing a sin? If a Christian is continuously cleansed from his sin, but a Christian does sin, then does the continuous cleansing continue when we are actually in that sin? Though at first glance logic might demand that we so interpret the passage, it impossible to interpret in this way. The verse says that only when we are continuously walking in the light as He is in the light does the blood of His Son continuously cleanse us of all sin. Therefore the better and more scriptural question is: Can we continuously be walking in the light if we are sinning? Can we be partaking in the works of darkness and still be walking in the light?

*Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10 finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14 Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." Eph. 5:5-16*

Paul's answer is no! When we sin, we enter into the fellowship of darkness. God's wrath is coming upon those who do such things and we cannot partake (have fellowship) in them. Those who do are in darkness. Since we were once darkness ourselves and we are now light, we must walk as children of light. To know certainly that this is true, we must be producing the the fruit of light which goodness, righteousness, and truth.

So the real question posed would be this. Can we be walking in the light (goodness, righteousness, and truth), and at the same time be walking in the darkness (evil, unrighteousness and error)? There is no fellowship between light and darkness. If we are in the light we are not in the darkness and if we are in the darkness we are not walking in the light. Hence from the moment we leave the path of light and enter the darkness we are not walking in the light and the blood of his son is not cleansing us. The moment we repent and confess we return to the light and the blood of his son cleanses us. If we die during the moments, hours or days when we are remaining in sin (before we repent), there is nothing in the Scriptures to give us any comfort that we can be forgiven at that moment.

*"Therefore you, O son of man, say to the children of your people: 'The righteousness of the righteous man shall not deliver him in the day of his transgression; as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall because of it in the day that he turns from his wickedness; nor shall the righteous be able to live because of his righteousness in the day that he sins.' 13 When I say to the righteous that he shall surely live, but he trusts in his own righteousness and commits iniquity, none of his righteous works shall be remembered; but because of the iniquity that he has committed, he shall die. 14 Again, when I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, 15 if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. 16 None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered against him; he has done what is lawful and right; he shall surely live. 17 "Yet the children of your people say, 'The way*

of the Lord is not fair.' But it is their way which is not fair! 18 **When the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, he shall die because of it.** 19 **But when the wicked turns from his wickedness and does what is lawful and right, he shall live because of it.** 20 Yet you say, 'The way of the Lord is not fair.' O house of Israel, I will judge every one of you according to his own ways." *Ezek. 33:12-20*

**8 If we say that we have no sin,**

8 If we **are saying** (Pres Subj A.) **that we are having** (Pres I A) no sin,

The last three verses are all set up exactly the same way grammatically as the previous two. They all begin with "if" and follow with a verb in the subjunctive mood which tells the reader it is not a fixed event. Whether we are in the "we" here depends on our own choices and decisions. The key is in the first part of the condition. If we do or say the thing in the first part of the verse, then the second part of the verse is fixed and that consequence will always follow. This is true of each of the verses in the last portion of the first chapter.

<u>Condition</u>	<u>Consequence</u>
6 If we say we have fellowship but walk in darkness.....	We lie and do not the truth.
7 If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, .....	fellowship and cleansing;
8 If we say that we have no sin, .....	we deceive ourselves, and truth is not in us.
9 If we confess our sins .....	He is faithful and righteous to forgive & cleanse;
10 If we say that we have not sinned.....	we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Anyone reading the letter who either believe or say they have no sin will be absolutely placed in the categories above. If we never say or think any of these things, then we are safe. When these words were penned, John was speaking to the Epicureans who believed the material body was sinful and therefore we could not be guilty and the Gnostics who had other reasons for saying the same things. There are many today who are saying the same things and therefore they too will be under the same condemnation. Those who believe in once saved always saved and who think they are no longer having sin unto death would also be deceiving themselves. No matter what the doctrine behind it, Anyone, Christian, idolater, unbeliever or intellectual who believes for whatever reason that we have no sin is under this indictment.

**we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.**

**Pres I A**

**Pres I A**

***then*** we are **deceiving** ourselves, ***and then*** the truth **is** not in us.

Regardless of the teaching we are hearing and how it is influencing us, if we have accepted and believe that we have no sin is the truth then we are only "deceiving" ourselves. The Scriptures are clear. The moment we sin we are a sinner and have sin. Until we repent of that sin and confess it to God we continue to possess it. Only when God sends it away and blots it out is it removed. Anything other than this is only "deception."

*"planao... to cause to stray, to lead astray, lead aside from the right way; a. prop. to go astray, wander, roam about... b. metaph. to lead away from the truth, to lead into error, to deceive... pass. to be led into error, [ R. V. be led astray]... esp through ignorance to be led aside from the path of virtue, to astray, sin... to wander or fall away from the true faith, of heretic... to be led away into error and sin..."* (Thayer, p. 514; 4105)

Sin is a serious problem for the human race and try as hard as we can we will never remove ourselves from it in this life. As we grow to conquer one set of sins a new group we were previously unaware of comes into view. When we conquer those, we find another and another and another. This is part of our upward call and never in this life will we reach a time where we can say we have no sin. All religions that minimize human sin are also false. The truth clearly revealed in the Scriptures is that we are sinners. Even Paul after many years as a Christian speaks of buffeting his body and bringing it into bondage. So if we say we have no sin the truth is not in us. It is only lies and self-deception.

**9 If we confess our sins,**

**Pres. Sub. A**

9 If we **are confessing** our sins,

God clearly revealed sin to man. Lusts of the flesh and mind (Rom. 1:18-32; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:17-5:17; Col. 3:5-11;) the pride of life, knowing to do good and not doing it (Jas. 4:17). If we do

any of these things then we have to “confess” them. The term confess simply means to say the same thing as God does about sin.

*“homologeō... 1. prop. to say the same thing as another, i. e. to agree with, assent, both absol. and with a dat. of the pers. 2. univ. to concede i.e. a. not to refuse, i. e. to promise... b. not to deny, i. e. to confess; declare... 3. to profess... i. e. to declare openly, speak out freely, [A. V. generally confess;...] ...”* (Thayer, p. 446; 3670)

What God has said about sin is what we confess when we have done it. God revealed that lying is a sin worthy of death. When we come to ourselves after the lust has dissolved, we plainly see that our disagreement with God under the influence of lust was wrong and should not have been done. Now that we believe God again, we not only feel remorse and sorrow for what we have done (repentance), but then we must take it the next step and speak the same thing as God did. We called God a liar as Satan did in the Garden when we did it and now we are in sin, worthy of death, defiled, and unclean. After we admit all this, we have fulfilled the condition of the passage. Sin is a great failure and something never to be minimized.

*“hamartia... a failing to hit the mark... a bad action, evil deed ... In the N. T. always in an ethical sense, and 1. equiv. to ... a sinning, whether it occurs by omission or commission, in thought and feeling or in speech and action... 2. that which is done wrong committed or resultant sin, an offence, a violation of the divine law in thought or in act... 3. collectively, the complex or aggregate of sins committed either by a single person or by many...”* (Thayer, p. 31; 266)

*“harmartano... to miss the mark, ... with gen. of the thing missed ... then to err, be mistaken; lastly to miss or wander from the path of uprightness and honor, to do or go wrong... to miss one’s aim in the literal sense. ...In the N.T. to wander from the law of God, violate God’s law, sin ... b. ... to commit (lit. sin) a sin ...”* (Thayer, p. 30; 264)

God has clearly revealed that sin is a missing of the mark of perfection and obligation. It is a violation of divine law in thought or act. We must fully agree with God and openly declare it to Him.

**He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins,  
Pres. IA Pres. Subj. Act.**

*He is faithful and just then to be forgiving us our sins*

This is a very intriguing and fascinating passage of Scripture. Where would have expected John to say God is merciful and compassionate to forgive us, he says faithful and just. We know God forgives us because He is kind gentle, patient and loving. But for him to say He is faithful and righteous (just) forces us to dig a little deeper. How can God be “faithful” when He forgives me?

*“pistos... trusty, faithful; of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties... worthy of trust, that can be relied on... of things, that can be relied on...”* (Thayer, p. 514; 4103)

Faithful implies a promise or commitment, that once made must be fulfilled. We can rely on God to do it because He promised He would. From the moment after the first sin, God had promised to deal with it. He promised Eve He would send someone to bruise the head of the serpent. He promised Abraham and later David He would send someone to bless all nations of the earth. God promised in Isaiah 53 that He would bring forgiveness. So when God forgives and cleanses, He is being “faithful” to His promises.

*For when God made promise to Abraham, since he could swear by none greater, he swore by himself, 14 saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And thus, having patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men swear by the greater: and in every dispute of theirs the oath is final for confirmation. 17 Wherein God, being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath; 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us: 19 which we have as an anchor of the soul, (a hope) both sure and steadfast and entering into that which is within the veil; Heb. 6:13-19*

The purpose of this statement here, like the one in Hebrews is so we can have a strong encouragement and an anchor of the soul. He forgives because he is compassionate, merciful and kind, but he also forgives because he promised and swore that he would do so. Added to this is that God is “just” when He forgives us. Just and righteous are synonyms. They

are the basis of all that is fair, just, right and honorable. They are illustrated by the balance and measuring tape. Everything is equitable and honest.

**tsedeq-** justice, rightness, righteousness a) what is right or just or normal, rightness, justness (of weights and measures) b) righteousness ...5) used of God's attribute c) righteousness, justice (in case or cause) d) rightness (in speech) e) righteousness (as ethically right)

How is God just when I repent and confess and He forgives me? Doesn't his justice demand that we be punished. How can God be just and righteous when he forgives? When we entered a covenant with him at baptism, he made these promises. Once God makes a covenant when he does what he says, he is being righteous. When we fulfill our side, He we always be faithful and just to fulfill his.

*for all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; 24 being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 whom God set forth (to be) a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; 26 for the showing, (I say), of his righteousness at this present season: that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus. Rom. 3:23-26*

This becomes clearer when we see sin as a debt (Mt. 6:12-15). Before Jesus death on the cross, God did not have anything to "pay" for sin. It was only a forbearance and truce that God could give. But after Jesus death on the cross, God now had the power of propitiation. He could cover the debt created by sin and remove that debt by paying it himself through the blood of Jesus. With this power, he can now be just and also be a justifier of those who have faith in Jesus.

We can safely rely on our God to forgive us of all sin when we confess it because He has promised to do so since the beginning, and through the death of his son and the advent of the new covenant, He is now just and righteous when He does "forgive" us.

*"aphiemi... to send from (apo) one's self; 1. to send away; a. bid go away or depart... b. to send forth, yield up, emit... c. to let go, let alone, let be; AA to disregard:... BB to leave, not to discuss now, a topic, used of teachers, writers, speakers, etc.: Heb 6:1... D to let go, give up, a debt, by not demanding it... i.e. to remit, forgive..." (Thayer, p. 88-89; 863).*

There are many figures of how God forgives. He blots them out, sends them away, forgets them and cleanses them away. This is the figure for sending them away for remitting or paying them for us.

**and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

**Aorist Subj Active**

**and then cleansed us from all unrighteousness.**

Not only is He faithful and just to forgive, but also He "cleansed" us.

*"katharizo... to make clean, to cleanse... ; a. from physical stains and dirt... to remove by cleansing... b. in a moral sense; aa. to free from the defilement of sin and from faults; to purify from wickedness... bb. to free from the guilt of sin, to purify... cc. to consecrate by cleansing or purifying... to consecrate, dedicate... 2. to pronounce clean in a Levitical sense..." (Thayer, p. 312; 2511)*

We were washed, we are freed and purified, consecrated and cleansed.

*Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10 nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. 1Cor. 6:9-11*

Though we were "unrighteous," God removed it and made us clean again.

*"adikia,...1. injustice, of a judge... 2. unrighteousness of heart and life... 3. a deed violating law and justice, act of unrighteousness..." (Thayer, Joseph Henry; op. cit., p. 12; 93)*

This is one of the most serious aspects of sin. Sin is always an injustice to another. It is the opposite of doing what is right and honorable to others. Every sin has a terrible price for it has hurt God or another human being this is the debt that must be paid. Not only does God forgive us for the violation, but he also cleanses us of the guilt, consequences and harm the sin has done.

**10 If we say that we have not sinned,**

**Aorist Subj Act**

**Perf Ind Act.**

10 If we **said** that we have not **sinned**, (Never in the past and no affects up to the present) There are two basic differences between this passage and 1:8. The first is the tenses of the verbs. In 1:8 it is a present indicative active and here it is perfect indicative active. In 1:8 sin is a noun joined to “have” and here sin is the verb.

The tenses are best rendered in 1:8 “we are not sinning (present active) we are not continuously sinning. Here in verse 10, “we have not sinned in the past and there are no affects of that sin up to the present moment.” The difference in meaning is in the action. In the first, it is continuous action in the present moment. Nothing is said about the past. There may or may not have been sin, but there is none in the present. Here, even in the past there is no sin, nor are there affects of sin in this present moment. We have not and never have sinned.

“echo... . Transitively. 1. to have l. q. to hold; ... 2. to have . q. to own, possess; a. external things such as pertain to property, riches, furniture, utensils, goods, food, etc. ...” (Thayer, p. 265-268; 2192).

We do not possess, own or hold sin. Never had and never will. There is no consequence and no need for intervention. We have never had it. There is a vast difference in the consequences of the two passages. In 1:8 we only deceive ourselves, but here we make God a liar.

**we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.**

**Pres I A**

**Pres I A**

we **are making** Him a liar, and His word **is** not in us.

If we have ever said this at any time, we are continually “making” Him a liar.

“poieo... l. to make ... 1. ... a. with the names of the things made, to produce, construct, form, fashion, etc. ... to create produce: of God, as the author of all things... absol . of men, to labor, to do work... to be operative, exercise activity ... b. joined to nouns denoting a state or condition, it signifies to be the author or, to cause ... 2. With additions to the accusative which define or limit the idea of making...” (Thayer, p. 524-527; 4160)

God has clearly stated that all have sinned and fallen short of his glory (Rom 3:23), from the garden of Eden up to the present moment God’s testimony has been clear. Listen to Paul in Romans

*What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we before laid to the charge both of Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin; 10 as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; 11 There is none that understands, There is none that seeketh after God; 12 They have all turned aside, they are together become unprofitable; There is none that doeth good, no, not, so much as one: 13 Their throat is an open sepulcher; With their tongues they have used deceit: The poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood; 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways; 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes. 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it speaks to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be brought under the judgment of God: Rom. 3:9-20*

God testifies that no one that has ever lived has avoided committing sin. So if any one of us says that we have not sinned we are calling God a liar. If we do this, His word is not in us.

We have no faith or belief in God’s word. It has not become a part of us. We are not being led or directed by it and it holds no power in our lives.