

# 1 JOHN

## INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF 1 JOHN

The author of this epistle was John, the son of Zebedee, the disciple whom Jesus loved: he was the youngest of the apostles, and survived them all. He does not indeed put his name to this epistle, as the Apostles Paul, Peter, James, and Jude do to theirs; and it is easy to observe, that when this disciple, in his writings, had any occasion to speak of himself, it was usually by such a circumlocution, as the disciple whom Jesus loved, or the other disciple, studiously concealing his name: so that his not putting his name to this epistle need not create any scruple about his being the author of it, which everywhere breathes the temper and spirit of this great apostle; and whoever compares this epistle, and the Gospel written by him, together, will easily conclude it to be his, both from the style and subject matter of it: besides, as Eusebius asserts <sup>f1</sup>, this epistle was generally received without scruple, both by ancient and modern writers. It is called “general”, because it was not written and sent to any particular church, or person, and not because it was for the general use of the churches, for so are all the particular epistles but because it was written to the Christians in general, or to the believing Jews in general wherever they were; for that it was written to the Jews seems evident from (~~600B~~1 John 2:2). It was called, by some of the ancients, the epistle of John to the Parthians <sup>f2</sup>; by whom must be meant not the natives of Parthia but the Jews professing to believe in Christ, who dwelt in that empire. We read of Parthian Jews at the feast of Pentecost, (~~400B~~Acts 2:9), who at that time might be converted, and, upon their return to their own country, lay the foundation of a Gospel church state there Dr. Lightfoot <sup>f3</sup> conjectures from a passage in (~~600B~~3 John 1:9) that this epistle was written to the Corinthians; but there does not seem to be any sufficient reason for it. As for the time when, and place where, this epistle was written, it is not easy to say: some think it was written at Patmos, whither the apostle was banished in the reign of Domitian, and where he wrote the book of the Revelations; (see ~~600B~~Revelation 1:9); and here some say he wrote his Gospel, and this epistle, and that a little before

the destruction of Jerusalem, and which he calls the last time or hour; and that his design in writing it was to exhort the believing Jews, either in Parthia, or scattered about in other countries, to brotherly love, and to warn them against false Christs and false prophets, which were now gone forth into the world to deceive men; (see [6128](#)-1 John 2:18 4:1). Others think that it was written by him, when a very old man, after his return from his exile to Ephesus, where he resided during his life, and where he died, and was buried. It is called his “first” epistle general, not that it is the first general epistle, for the other two are written to particular persons, but is the first he wrote, and which is general: the occasion, and manifest design of it, is to promote brotherly love, which he enforces upon the best principles, and with the strongest arguments, taken from the love of God and Christ, from the commandment of Christ, and its being an evidence of regeneration, and the truth and glory of a profession of religion: and also to oppose and stop the growth of licentious principles, and practices, and heretical doctrines. The licentious principles and practices he condemns are these, that believers had no sin in them, or need not be concerned about it, nor about their outward conversation, so be they had but knowledge; and these men boasted of their communion with God, notwithstanding their impieties; and which were the sentiments and practices of the Nicolaitans, Gnostics, and Carpocratians. The heresies he sets himself against, and refutes, are such as regard the doctrine of the Trinity, and the person and office of Christ. There were some who denied a distinction, of persons in the Trinity, and asserted there was but one person; that the Father was not distinct from the Son, nor the Son from the Father; and, by confounding both, tacitly denied there was either, as Simon Magus, and his followers; regard is had to these in ([6122](#)-1 John 2:22 5:7) and others, as the unbelieving Jews, denied that Jesus was the Messiah, or that Christ was come in the flesh; these are taken notice of in ([6122](#)-1 John 2:22 4:2,3 5:1). Others, that professed to believe in Jesus Christ, denied his proper deity, and asserted he was a mere man, and did not exist before he took flesh, of the virgin, as Ebion and Cerinthus; these are opposed in ([6100](#)-1 John 1:1,2 3:16 5:20). And others denied his real humanity, and affirmed that he was a mere phantom; that he only had the appearance of a man, and assumed human nature, and suffered, and died, and rose again in show only, and not in reality; of which sort were the followers of Saturninus and Basilides, and which are confuted in ([6100](#)-1 John 1:1-3). This epistle is, by Clemens Alexandrinus <sup>f4</sup>, called his “greater” or “larger epistle”, it being so in comparison of the other two that follow.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO 1 JOHN 1

In this chapter the apostle gives a summary of the Gospel, and the evidence of it, and from thence presses to a holy life and conversation, The sum of the Gospel is Jesus Christ, who is described both as God and man; his deity is expressed by being that which was from the beginning, the Word of life, life, and eternal life; his humanity by being the life manifested in the flesh, of which the apostles had full evidence by the several senses of seeing, hearing, and handling, and so were capable of bearing witness to the truth thereof, (~~GEN~~ 1 John 1:1,2). And the ends had in view in giving this summary, evidence, and testimony, were, that the saints wrote unto might have fellowship with the apostles, whose fellowship was with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ, and that their joy on hearing these things might be full, (~~GEN~~ 1 John 1:3,4). And the amount of the message declared by them was, that God is light, or a pure and holy Being, and that there is no darkness of sin, or unholiness in him; wherefore all such that pretend to communion with him, and live a sinful course of life, are liars; only such have fellowship with him, and with his Son, whose blood cleanses them from all sin, who live holy lives and conversations, (~~GEN~~ 1 John 1:5-7), not, that it is to be expected that men should be clear of the being of sin in this life, only that they should, as often as they sin, be humbled for it, and confess it before God, who will forgive them, and cleanse them from all unrighteousness; but as for those who affirm they have no sin in them, or any done by them, they are self-deceivers, the truth of grace is not in them, nor the word of God, and they make him a liar, (~~GEN~~ 1 John 1:8-10).

**Ver. 1.** *That which was from the beginning*, &c.] By which is meant not the Gospel, as if the apostle's design was to assert the antiquity of that, and clear it from the charge of novelty; for though that is called the word, and the word of life, and is the Spirit which gives life, and is the means of quickening dead sinners, and brings the report of eternal life and salvation by Christ, yet the seeing of it with bodily eyes, and handling it with corporeal hands, do not agree with that; but Jesus Christ is here intended, who in his divine nature was, really existed as a divine person, as the

everlasting Jehovah, the eternal I AM, which is, and was, and is to come, and existed “from the beginning”; not from the beginning of the preaching of the Gospel by John only, for he was before the Gospel was preached, being the first preacher of it himself, and before John was; yea, before the prophets, before Abraham, and before Adam, and before all creatures, from the beginning of time, and of the creation of the world, being the Maker of all things, even from everlasting; for otherwise he could not have been set up in an office capacity so early, or God's elect be chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and they have grace and blessings given them in him before the world began, or an everlasting covenant be made with him; (see ~~<BOOK>~~ John 1:1);

*which we have heard*; this, with what follows, proves him to be truly and really man; for when the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among men, the apostles heard, and saw, and handled him; they not only heard a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God, but they often heard him speak himself, both in private conversation with them, and in his public ministry; they heard his many excellent discourses on the mount, and elsewhere, and those that were particularly delivered to them a little before his death; and blessed were they on this account, (~~<BOOK>~~ Matthew 13:16,17);

*which we have seen with our eyes*: with the eyes of the body, with their own, and not another's; and they saw him in human nature, and the common actions of life he did, as eating, drinking, walking, &c. and his many miracles; they saw him raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, restore sight to the blind, cause the lame to walk, the dumb to speak, and the deaf to hear; and they saw him transfigured on the mount. John was one that was present at that time, and saw his glory, as he also was when he hung upon the cross, and saw him bleeding, gasping, and dying there; they saw him after his resurrection from the dead, he showed himself to them alive, and was seen of them forty days; they saw him go up to heaven, and a cloud receiving him out of their sight:

*which we have looked upon*; wistly and intently, once and again, and a thousand times, and with the utmost pleasure and delight; and knew him perfectly well, and were able to describe exactly his person, stature, features, and the lineaments of his body:

*and our hands have handled of the Word of life*; as Peter did when Jesus caught him by the hand on the water, when he was just ready to sink; and as this apostle did, when he leaned on his bosom; and as Thomas did, even

after his resurrection, when he thrust his hand into his side; and as all the apostles were called upon to see and handle him, that it was he himself, and not a spirit, which has not flesh and bones as he had. Now as this is said of Christ, the Word of life, who is so called, because he has life in himself, as God, as the Mediator, and as man, and is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, it must be understood as he, the Word, is made manifest in the flesh; for he, as the Word, or as a divine person, or as considered in his divine nature, is not to be seen nor handled: this therefore is spoken of the Word, or of the person of Christ, God-man, with respect to his human nature, as united to the Logos, or Word of God; and so is a proof of the truth and reality of his human nature, by several of the senses.

**Ver. 2.** *For the life was manifested*, &c.] That is, the Word of life, who is life itself, the fountain of life, having it as God, in and of himself, without derivation from, and independent of another, originally and eternally, and who is the cause, author, and giver of life in every sense to others; this living God, who from all eternity was invisible, was in the fulness of time manifested in human nature; (see <sup><B114></sup>John 1:14 <sup><S16></sup>1 Timothy 3:16 <sup><B115></sup>John 3:8).

*And we have seen [it]*; as before with the eyes of their bodies:

*and bear witness*; for they were both eye and ear witnesses of the Word, and of the truth of his incarnation, and bore a faithful record to his proper deity, and real humanity:

*and show unto you that eternal life*; Jesus Christ, the true God, and eternal life, as in (<sup><B116></sup>1 John 1:5:20); so called, because he has everlasting life in himself; as he is the living God, and because he has eternal life for all his people; not only the purpose and promise of it are in him, but the thing itself; and it is in his power and gift to bestow it on all the Father hath given to him, and to them he does give it. The beginning of it lies in the knowledge of him, and the consummation of it will be in the lasting vision and enjoyment of him:

*which was with the Father*; that is, which life, eternal life, and Word of life, was from the beginning, or from all eternity with God the Father; which phrase is expressive of the eternal existence of Christ, as the Word and Son of God, with his Father, his relation to him, his oneness in nature, and equality with him, and his personal distinction from him; (see <sup><B117></sup>John 1:1);

*and was manifested unto us*; in human nature, as before observed, and that to the apostles, as he was not to the patriarchs and prophets; for though they saw him in promise, in prophecy, in type, and figure, and he sometimes appeared in an human form for a short time to them, yet they did not see him incarnate, in actual union with human nature; nor had they him dwelling among them, and conversing with them, as the apostles had; this was an happiness peculiar to them.

**Ver. 3.** *That which we have seen and heard*, &c.] This is repeated, both to confirm and illustrate what had been before said, and to carry on the discourse to what follows:

*declare we unto you*; in the ministry of the word; the person and offices of Christ being the sum and substance of the Gospel ministrations, that declares him to be the true God and eternal life, God over all, blessed for ever; and truly man, made of a woman, and made under the law; and to be the only Mediator between God and man, to be prophet, priest; and King, and to be the alone Saviour and Redeemer: this declares the greatness and excellency of his salvation, what an able, proper, and suitable Saviour he is; and what precious promises and spiritual blessings are in him, even all grace and eternal glory. And this declaration of him is made in the Gospel, for the following ends and purposes,

*that ye also may have fellowship with us*; in hearing, seeing, and handling of Christ in a spiritual sense; and by enjoying the same privileges in God's house and family, the same ordinances and spiritual provisions; joining and partaking with them in all the immunities and advantages of a Gospel church state here; and by being with them to all eternity hereafter.

*And truly our fellowship [is] with the Father*; the Father of Christ, the covenant God and Father of his people; and which they have with him, when under the influence and witnessings of the spirit of adoption, and can in the strength of faith call him their Father, draw nigh to him through Christ as such, and are indulged with his presence, and the discoveries of his love:

*and with his Son Jesus Christ*; being in union to him, they become partakers of him, and of his blessings; they receive out of his fulness, and grace for grace; they are admitted to an intimacy and familiarity with him; they are had into his chambers of secret retirement; they are brought into his banqueting house, where his banner over them is love, and where he

supps with them, and they with him; and into this fellowship are they called by the grace of God, through the Gospel; as also they have fellowship with the blessed Spirit, though not here mentioned; (see ~~47134~~ 2 Corinthians 13:14).

**Ver. 4.** *And these things write we unto you, &c.*] Concerning the deity and eternity of Christ, the Word and concerning the truth of his humanity, and the manifestation of him in the flesh; and concerning that eternal life and salvation which is declared in the Gospel to be in him; and concerning the saints' fellowship one with another, and with God the Father, and with Jesus Christ:

*that your joy may be full*; meaning either their spiritual joy in this life, which has Christ for its object, and is increased by the consideration of his proper deity, his incarnation and mediation by a view of free justification by his righteousness, and atonement by his blood; by a sight of his glorious person by faith, and by intimate communion with him, and a discovery of his love, which passeth knowledge: and which joy, when it is large, and very great, may, in a comparative sense, be said to be full, though not absolutely so, and being as much as can well be enjoyed in this state; and nothing can more contribute to it than a declaration of the above things in the Gospel, and an experimental acquaintance with them, and enjoyment of them: or else it may intend the joy of the saints in the world to come, in the presence of Christ, where are fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore; and so may express the ultimate glory and happiness of God's people, which is the chief end, as of his purposes, promises, and covenant, so of the Gospel, and the declaration of it. The Syriac version renders it, "that our joy, which is in you, may be full"; it is the joy of the ministers of the word, when the saints are established in the faith of Christ's person and offices, and have communion with him, with which view they declare him, and bear record of him. Some copies read, our joy.

**Ver. 5.** *This then is the message, &c.*] Of God by his Son the Word, or from Christ by his apostles. The Syriac version renders it, "this is the Gospel"; which is good news from a far country, a message sent from the King of kings to sinful men: or this is the annunciation, or declaration; that is, the thing declared, or showed. Some render it, "this is the promise", that whereas God is light, such who walk in the light shall have communion with him, and others shall not:

*which we have heard of him*; of Christ, who has declared him, that he is light without any mixture of darkness; that is a pure Spirit, and must be worshipped in a spiritual way; and that only spiritual worshippers are such as he seeks, and admits to communion with him. Moreover, they might hear and learn this of Christ, by his telling them that he himself was light, who is the image of the invisible God, insomuch, that he that has seen the Son, has seen the Father also. Wherefore, if the one is light, the other must be likewise; nor is there any coming to the Father, and enjoying communion with him, but through Christ; all which our Lord told his disciples. The Ethiopic version reads, “which ye have heard”, very wrongly; for the words regard the apostles, who made a faithful declaration of the message they heard, and had from Christ, which is as follows:

*and declare unto you that God is light*; that is, God the Father, as distinguished from “him”, Christ, of whom they had heard this message, and from Jesus Christ his Son, (~~GENE~~ 1 John 1:7), what is declared of him, agreeably to the report of Christ, is, that he is “light”; that is, as light is opposed to the darkness of sin; he is pure and holy in his nature and works, and of such pure eyes as not to behold iniquity; and so perfectly holy, that angels cover their faces before him, when they speak of his holiness: and as light is opposed to the darkness of ignorance, he is wise and knowing; he knows himself, his own nature, being, and perfections, his Son and Spirit, and their distinct modes of subsisting; he sees clearly all things in himself, all things he could do, or has determined shall be done; he has perfect knowledge of all creatures and things, and the darkness and the light are alike unto him, nor can the former hide from him: he is knowable, and to be discerned; he is clothed with light, and dwells in it; he may be known by the works of creation and providence; even the invisible things of him, his eternal power and Godhead, may be clearly seen and understood by them, and especially in his word, and most clearly in his Son; it is owing to the darkness of men, and not to any in and about God, who is light, that he is so little known as he is: and, like the light, he illuminates others; he is the Father of lights, the author and giver of all light; of the light of reason to men in general; and of grace here, and glory hereafter, to his own people, which are both signified by light; in whose light they see light; and he refreshes and delights their souls with the light of his countenance now, and with his glorious presence in the other world:

*and in him is no darkness at all*; no darkness of sin; nothing is more contrary to him, or more distant from him: nor any darkness of error and



ignorance; what is unknown to men, as the times and seasons; what angels were ignorant of, and even Christ, as man, as the day and hour of Jerusalem's destruction, were known to the Father; in him is no ignorance of anything whatever; nor is there any variableness or shadow of turning in him, as there is in the luminous body of the sun; but God is always the same pure and holy, wise and knowing Being. It is usual with the Cabalistic Jews<sup>f5</sup>, to call the supreme Being *rwa*, light the most simple light, hidden light, and infinite light, with respect to his nature, glory, and majesty, and with regard also to his grace and mercy, justice and judgment; though, as R. Sangart says<sup>f6</sup>, this is to be understood of him figuratively.

**Ver. 6.** *If we say that we have fellowship with him, &c.*] The Alexandrian copy reads, “for if we say”: that is, if any profess to be partakers of the divine nature, to be like unto God, and to have communion with him, to have the light of his countenance, and the discoveries of his love:

*and walk in darkness*; in the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief, or are in a state of unregeneracy and blindness; whose understandings are darkened, and they know not God in Christ, nor have any true sight and sense of themselves, their sin and danger; and are ignorant of Christ and his righteousness, and the way of salvation by him; and are strangers to the Spirit of God, and the work of his grace; and are unacquainted with the truths of the Gospel; and not only so, but go on in darkness more and more; prefer it to the light, love it, and the works of it; have fellowship with them, and choose them; take pleasure in the ways of sin and wickedness, and continue, and walk on in them; if such persons pretend to fellowship with God, they are liars:

*we lie*; it cannot be, it is a contradiction, the thing is impossible and impracticable; what communion hath light with darkness? or what fellowship can the throne of iniquity, or those in whom sin reigns, have with God? for God is light, and were they partakers of him, or like unto him, or had communion with him, they would consequently be in the light, and not in darkness, and much less walk in it; wherefore they are liars,

*and do not the truth*: they do not say the truth, nor act according to it; they do not act uprightly or sincerely, but are hypocrites, and pretend to that which they have not; and if they did the truth, they would come to the light, and not walk in darkness; (see ~~REB~~ John 3:21).

**Ver. 7.** , &c.] Are persons enlightened by the Spirit of God, so as to have a true sight and sense of sin, to know Christ,

on and increasing in spiritual light and knowledge; walk on in Christ, the light, by faith, and in the light and truth of the Gospel, and as becomes it,

marvellous light:

*as he is in the light*

itself, is in it, and dwells in it. This “as” denotes not equality, but likeness: when this is the case, then it is a clear point, that

; not with the saints, with the apostles, and other Christians, but with God: “we have mutual communion”, as the

read, “with him”, as in ~~(ROM)~~

requires; and agreeably to this the Ethiopic version renders it, “and we are

appear to be like him, and partake of his nature, and have communion with him; and not only so, but with his Son Jesus Christ, as appears from our

*and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin:* there is a

internal, and is such that nothing can remove but the blood of Christ; not ceremonial ablutions and sacrifices, nor moral duties, nor evangelical

baptism, which is not the putting away the flesh of the flesh; nor even the graces of the Spirit, no, not faith, no otherwise than as it has to do with

that more properly belongs to the Spirit of God, and besides, does not cleanse from all sin; for notwithstanding this, sin is in the saints: but either

justification from it by his blood, which is put for both his active and passive obedience, the one being finished in the other; or rather of the

blood to the conscience, which purges it from dead works, and which has a continued virtue in it for that purpose. Christ's blood, being applied by the

and was of this use, even before it was actually shed, to the Old Testament

saints; whence Christ is said to be the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and it has the same efficacy now as when first shed, and will have to the end of the world; and being sprinkled upon the conscience, by the Spirit of God, it takes away the sins of believers, and cleanses from them, as fast as the corruption of nature rises, or sins appear; and removes them out of their sight, and speaks peace to their souls; and which is owing, as to the dignity of Christ's person and the value of his sacrifice, so to his continual intercession, advocacy, and mediation; and which reaches to all sin, original and actual, secret and open sins; sins of heart, thought, lip, and life; sins of omission and commission, greater or lesser sins, committed against light and knowledge, grace and mercy, law and Gospel, all but the sin against the Holy Ghost; and in this Christ was the antitype of the scape goat, of which the Jews say<sup>f7</sup>, that

“it atoned for all the transgressions of the law, whether small or great, sins of presumption, or of ignorance, known, or not known, which were against an affirmative or negative command, which deserved cutting off (by the hand of God), or death by the sanhedrim.”

The Arabic and Ethiopic versions render it, “from all our sins”; and this must be ascribed to the greatness of his person, as the Son of God; wherefore the emphasis lies on these words, “his Son”: the Son of God, who is equal with God, and is truly and properly God: as it must be the blood of man that must, according to the law, be shed, to atone for and expiate sin, and cleanse from it, and that of an innocent man, who is holy, harmless, and without sin; so it must not be the blood of a mere man, though ever so holy, but the blood of one that is God as well as man; (see ~~Acts~~ Acts 20:28). The divine nature of the Son of God, being in union with the human nature, put virtue into his blood to produce such an effect, which still continues, and will, as long as there is any occlusion for it.

**Ver. 8.** *If we say that we have no sin, &c.]* Notwithstanding believers are cleansed from their sins by the blood of Christ, yet they are not without sin; no man is without sin: this is not only true of all men, as they come into the world, being conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity, and of all that are in a state of unregeneracy, and of God's elect, while in such a state, but even of all regenerated and sanctified persons in this life; as appears by the ingenuous confessions of sin made by the saints in all ages; by their complaints concerning it, and groans under it; by the continual war in them

pardoning grace, and for the fresh application of Christ's blood for cleansing; by their frequent slips and falls, and often backslidings: and though their sins are all pardoned, and they are justified from all things by the righteousness of

sin, and are under no obligation to punishment on account of it, yet not from the being of it; their sins were indeed transferred from them to Christ,

redeemed from them, and are acquitted, discharged, and pardoned, so that sin is not imputed to them, and God sees no iniquity in them in the article

the guilt of them, and are taken out of their sight, and they have no more conscience of them, having their hearts sprinkled and purged by the blood

of God, or the second death, by reason of them; yet pardon of sin, and justification from it, though they take away the guilt of sin, and free from

cause it to cease to act, or do not make sins cease to be sins, or change the nature of actions, of sinful ones, to make them harmless, innocent, or

the same kind and nature, and equally transgressions of the law, and many of them are attended with more aggravating circumstances, and are taken

people in love: now though a believer may say that he has not this or that particular sin, or is not guilty of this or that sin, for he has the seeds of all

shall have no sin, for in the other state the being and principle of sin will be removed, and the saints will be perfectly holy in themselves, yet he cannot,

cleansed from sin by the blood of Christ should affirm this,

*we deceive ourselves*

put a cheat upon themselves, thinking themselves to be something when they are nothing; flattering themselves what pure and holy creatures they

deceptions, sad delusions, and gross impositions upon themselves:

*and the truth is not in us*

persons, for if there was a real work of God upon their souls, they would

know and discern the plague of their own hearts, the impurity of their nature, and the imperfection of their obedience; nor is the word of truth in them, for if that had an entrance into them, and worked effectually in them, they would in the light of it discover much sin and iniquity in them; and indeed there is no principle of truth, no veracity in them; there is no sincerity nor ingenuity in them; they do not speak honestly and uprightly, but contrary to the dictates of their own conscience.

**Ver. 9.** *If we confess our sins*, &c.] Not to one other; for though it is our duty to confess our faults to our fellow creatures and fellow Christians which are committed against them, yet are under no obligation to confess such as are more immediately against God, and which lie between him and ourselves; or at least it is sufficient to confess and acknowledge in general what sinful creatures we are, without entering into particulars; for confession of sin is to be made to God, against whom it is committed, and who only can pardon: and a man that truly confesses his sin is one that the Spirit of God has convinced of it, and has shown him its exceeding sinfulness, and filled him with a godly sorrow for it, and given him repentance unto salvation, that needeth not to be repented of; and who, under such a sight and sense of sin, and concern for it, comes and acknowledges it before the Lord, humbly imploring, for Christ's sake, his pardoning grace and mercy; and such obtain it:

*he is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins*: forgiveness of sin here intends not the act of forgiveness, as in God, proceeding upon the bloodshed and sacrifice of Christ, which is done at once, and includes all sin, past, present, and to come; but an application of pardoning grace to a poor sensible sinner, humbled under a sense of sin, and confessing it before the Lord; and confession of sin is not the cause or condition of pardon, nor of the manifestation of it, but is descriptive of the person, and points him out, to whom God will and does make known his forgiving love; for to whomsoever he grants repentance, he gives the remission of sin; in doing of which he is faithful to his word of promise; such as in (<sup>אֱמֵן</sup>Proverbs 28:13 <sup>אֱמֵן</sup>Isaiah 55:7); “and just”; in being “true”, as the Arabic version adds, to his word; and showing a proper regard to the blood and sacrifice of his Son; for his blood being shed, and hereby satisfaction made to the law and justice of God, it is a righteous thing in him to justify from sin, and forgive the sinner for whom Christ has shed his blood, and not impute it to him, or punish him for it; though the word here used may answer to the Hebrew word **qydx**, which sometimes carries in it the notion and idea of

mercy and beneficence; hence mercy to the poor is sometimes expressed by righteousness; and the righteous acts of God intend his mercies and forgiveness of sin springs from the tender mercies of our God, and is both

Christ, and of pure grace and mercy to the pardoned sinner: the following clause,

*unrighteousness*, is but the same thing  
unrighteousness is sin, and to cleanse from sin is to remove the guilt of it, by an application of the blood of Christ who is light, and with whom the saints have fellowship; or his Son Jesus Christ, who is the nearest antecedent, and who, being truly God, has a

**Ver. 10.** , &c.] Have never sinned, in time past as well as now; deny original sin, and that men are born in sin, but

concupiscence is not sin; and so not regarding internal lusts and desires as sinful, only what is external, fancy they have so lived as to have been

*we make him a liar*: that is, God, who in his word declares that the wicked speaking lies; that his own people are transgressors from the womb; that all have sinned and come short of his glory; and that there is none that does and become filthy by it, and so obnoxious to the wrath of God:

*and his word is not in us*  
word of God which declares these things; no regard is had unto it; it “is not with us”, as the Ethiopic versions render it; it is not used and attended to as the rule and standard of truth, but is east away and despised;

for, was this the case, they would have other notions of themselves than that of sinless creatures. The apostle has regard either to the Gnostics, a set even in the midst of all their impurities, and notwithstanding their vicious lives; or to entertained such sort of notions as these of being perfect and without sin <sup>f8</sup>