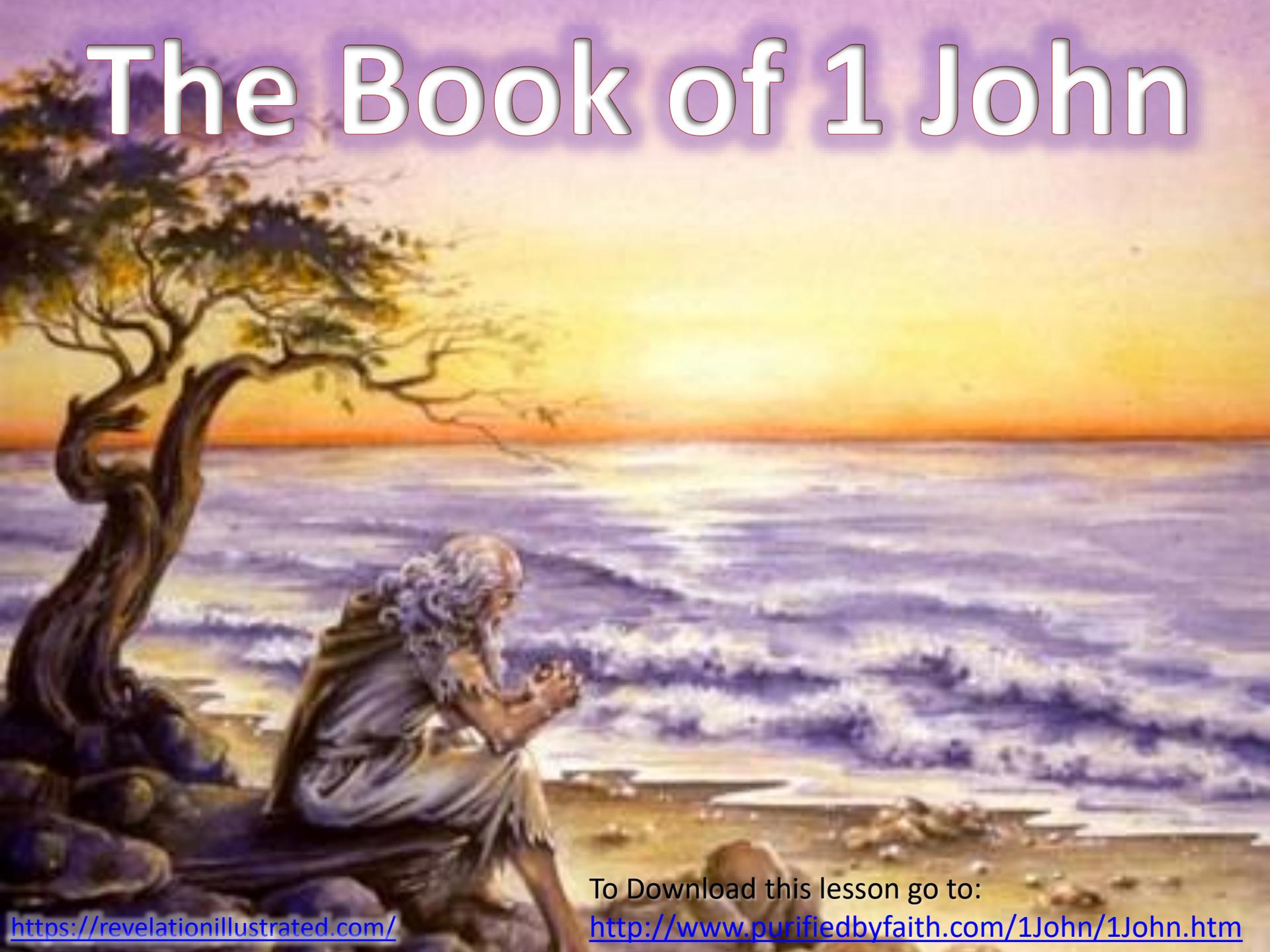


# The Book of 1 John



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# Outline of 1 John

- 1:1-4 - *Prologue: John Introduces the Major Theme of the Letter - FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD*
- 1:5-2:28 - *The First Presentation of the Three Tests of FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE and BELIEF in Jesus*
- 2:29-4:6 - *The Second Presentation of the Three Tests of FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE and BELIEF in Jesus*
- 4:7-5:21 - *The Third Presentation of the Three Tests of FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD: RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE and BELIEF in Jesus*

4:7-5:21

*The **Third** Presentation of the Three Tests of  
FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD:*

**RIGHTEOUSNESS, LOVE and BELIEF** in Jesus

- 4:7-5:3a – **Christian LOVE**
  - 4:7-12 – The Source of **LOVE**
  - 4:13-16 – The **Synthesis** of **LOVE** and **BELIEF** – true belief is the vital ground of Christian love
  - 4:17-5:1 – The Effect and Motives of **LOVE**
  - 5:2-3a – The **Synthesis** of **LOVE** and **RIGHTEOUSNESS** – we love God by keeping His commandments
- 5:3b-21 – **Christian BELIEF**
  - 5:3b-4 – The **Synthesis** of **BELIEF** and **RIGHTEOUSNESS** – in belief lies the power of obedience
  - 5:5-12 – The Contents, Basis, and Issue of Christian **BELIEF**
  - 5:13-21 – The Certainties of Christian **BELIEF**

# 1 John 4:13-16

The Synthesis of LOVE and BELIEF—  
True belief is the vital ground of Christian love

*<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

# 1 John 4:13-16

## The Synthesis of LOVE and BELIEF

### High Level Overview

# The Synthesis of Belief and Love

- The previous two sections have been ***exhortations***:
  - A warning not to ***believe*** every spirit (4:1-6)
  - An appeal to ***love*** one another (4:7-12).
- These two tests of ***belief*** and ***love*** are now applied more personally, no longer in ***exhortation*** but in ***affirmation***.
- The belief and love, which John has been ***urging*** upon his readers, are now ***assumed***, and deductions are drawn from them. Furthermore, the relationship of ***belief*** and ***love*** to each other is pointed out for the first time.
- This passage “*is the high-watermark of the thought of the epistle*” (C.H. Dodd). That “***the Father has sent his Son***” is not only the ***chief test*** of doctrinal orthodoxy but also the ***supreme evidence*** of God's love for us and ***inspiration*** of our love for our fellow believer.

God's indwelling is mentioned *three* times in this paragraph, and what in 4:12 was *single* ("God abides in us") is now each time *reciprocal*:

- 4:13 - *we abide in him and he in us*
- 4:15 - *God abides in him, and he in God*
- 4:16 - *[he] abides in God, and God abides in him*

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

To say that someone “*abides in God*” and that “*God abides in them*” is another way of saying that they are saved. The present tense verbs (which imply continuing action) in combination with the meaning of the Greek word translated “*abides*” (“to remain, to stay”) emphasize:

- The believer’s continuing perseverance
- God’s abiding faithfulness to the believer

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

Throughout this letter, the role of the **Spirit** (as described by John) is to **testify** to the **truth** about **Jesus** as proclaimed by the apostles:

- 5:6 – *And the Spirit is the one who **testifies**, because the Spirit is the **truth**.*
- 2:27a – *But the anointing [= the **Spirit**] that you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you. But as His anointing **teaches** you about everything, and is **true**...*
- 4:2 – *By this you know the **Spirit** of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God...*

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his **Spirit**.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.*

<sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

Here in 4:13-14, John tells us that ***because*** we have been given the ***Spirit***, we believe the apostolic testimony concerning the love of God that was powerfully expressed in the sending of His Son to be the Savior of the world, and because we have ***believed*** that teaching, we can be ***assured*** that we abide in God and God in us.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

Further on in our text, we see ***two other*** examples of the Spirit's work which give us ***assurance*** that we remain in God and He remains in us.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

It is by the *Spirit* that we:

- 4:15 – Come to *confess* that Jesus is the Son of God (and thus equal to the Father – cf. John 5:18)
- 4:16 – Are enabled to *love*.

The natural man (who does *not* have the Spirit) can neither *believe* nor *love*. In his fallen and unredeemed state he is both *blind* and *selfish*.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

And yet, John seems to be indicating that (in our present state) there is a sense in which the Spirit is given in *limited measure*. He has given us *of* His Spirit.

*13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

Compare this with John 3:34, which indicates that the Spirit was given ***without limit*** to Jesus. By implication, therefore, the Spirit is given to human beings in limited measure because of their finite nature.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

John's reference to those who "*have seen and testify*" is similar to 1:1-2 where the reference is to the **apostolic witnesses**:

- 1 John 1:1-2 - *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have **seen** with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life... we have **seen** it, and **testify** to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us--*

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.*  
<sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

Therefore “*we*” in 4:14 is *probably* a reference to John and his fellow apostles.

A few verses later, however, John uses “*we*” in a *broader* sense to include *all* believers.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

# Jesus is “*Savior of the world*”

*13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the *Savior of the world*. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

## “Savior”- σωτήρ (soter)

- The noun “*savior*” appears only **two times** in John’s writings: here (4:14) and in the Gospel of John 4:42:
  - *They [the Samaritans] said to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the world.”*
- In extra biblical Greek the term was used of pagan gods, of men such as physicians, and of kings or emperors.

# “Savior”- σωτήρ (soter)

- In Scripture, the term “*savior*” is used of:
  - **Judges** who delivered the Israelites from their enemies:
    - **Judges 3:9** - *But when the people of Israel cried out to the LORD, the LORD raised up a **deliverer** for the people of Israel, who saved them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.*
  - God:
    - **Isaiah 45:15** - *Truly, you are a God who hides himself, O God of Israel, the **Savior**.*
  - Christ (16 times in the New Testament)
- Here in 4:14 the term is **parallel** with two earlier statements describing what God has done in sending His Son:
  - 4:9b – *...God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him.*
  - 4:10b – *...[God] loved us and sent his Son to be the **propitiation** for our sins.*
- In other words, Christ, as our Savior, **delivers** sinners from the wrath of God.

# “world” κόσμος (kosmos)

## New Testament Usage

The word “*world*” has a fairly wide range of meanings in the New Testament:

- It can refer to the **earth** (as a planet or a place where men live) and/or **all that is in it**:
  - **Acts 17:24** - *The God who made the **world** and everything in it...*
  - **John 1:9** - *The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the **world**.*
  - **Matthew 16:26a** - *For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole **world** and forfeits his soul?*
- The **evil world system** that Satan has set in opposition to God and/or the unbelieving world of **unregenerate humanity**:
  - **2 Corinthians 4:4** - *...the god of this **world** has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
  - **John 15:19** - *If you were of the **world**, the **world** would love you as its own; but because you are not of the **world**, but I chose you out of the **world**, therefore the **world** hates you.* (Joh 15:19 ESV).

# “world” κόσμος (kosmos)

## New Testament Usage (continued)

- Gentiles as distinguished from Jews:
  - Romans 11:12 - *Now if [Israel's] trespass means riches for the world, and if their failure means riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their full inclusion mean!*
- The *human race, people in general*, or people *without distinction*:
  - John 8:12 - *Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world..."*
  - John 18:20 - *Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret."*
  - Acts 17:6 - *"These men [Paul and Silas] who have turned the world upside down have come here also..."*

# “world” κόσμος (kosmos)

## New Testament Usage (continued)

- Because of their **theological presuppositions**, Arminians often assume that the word “*world*” – **especially** as it relates to Christ’s atonement for sinners – means “every man woman and child who ever lived without exception.”
- The word “*world*” **can** have that meaning in scripture, though it is a **very rare**. One example of where it has this meaning is in **Romans 3:19**:
  - *Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.*
- In **most** places in scripture, taking the word *world* to mean “every man woman and child without exception” would lead to an **absurd** understanding of the passage, such as in **John 12:18-19**:
  - *The reason why the crowd went to meet [Jesus] was that they heard he had done this sign [raising Lazarus from the dead]. So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the **world** has gone after him.”*
  - Clearly the meaning here is “people in general”, or “people without distinction”.

# “world” κόσμος (kosmos)

## Usage in 1 John (so far)

Within the book of 1 John, we have already seen many of these varied meanings for the word “world”:

- People in general or perhaps all people without distinction
  - **1 John 2:2** - *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*
- The evil world system that Satan has set in opposition to God:
  - **1 John 2:16** - *For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions--is not from the Father but is from the world.*
- The unbelieving world (unregenerate humanity)
  - **1 John 3:13** - *Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.*
- The earth as a place where people live
  - **1 John 4:3** - *This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.*

# In what way is Jesus *“the Savior of the world”?*

- In summary, we have seen:
  - Jesus is the **Savior**, in that he *delivers* sinners from the wrath of God.
  - As Savior of the **world**, Jesus saves **people** – but **which people?**
    - Gentiles as distinguished from Jews?
    - All people past, present, and future without exception?
    - The evil world system (of sinners who oppose God)?
    - People from every nation, all men without distinction?

# In what way is Jesus “*the Savior of the world*”?

- **Gentiles as distinguished from Jews?**
  - There hardly seems to be any justification for this meaning in the this context.
- **All people past, present, and future without exception?**
  - The problem is, if John were saying that Jesus saves ***all men without exception*** he would be **contradicting** what many other Scriptures clearly teach: that there are **many men** who are **not saved** from the wrath of God.
    - **Matthew 7:13** - *Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many.*
    - Obviously John is not saying that Jesus saves everyone without exception.

# In what way is Jesus “*the Savior of the world*”?

- The evil world system (of sinners who oppose God)?
  - This meaning of the word “world” is **applicable** to this passage.
  - After all, Jesus is said to **save** men from their **sins**.
  - Before Jesus saved us we **all** were **opposed** to God:
    - **Romans 5:10** - *For if while we were **enemies** we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son...*
  - But at the same time, we must recognize that **many** who are a part of the evil world system that opposes God **will not be saved** (see previous section).

# In what way is Jesus “*the Savior of the world*”?

- **People from every nation, all men without distinction?**
  - This theme is found throughout John’s writing:
    - **John 4:42** - *They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the **Savior of the world**."* **Note:** this is probably a reference to the fact that Jesus would save **Samaritans** as well as **Jews**.
    - **John 12:32** - *And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw **all** people to myself.* **Note:** this is stated in a context where some **Greeks** had come and asked to see Jesus, prompting Jesus to speak of a time when he would be “glorified” and draw **all** [kinds of] men to Himself (i.e., **Greeks as well as Jews**)
    - **Revelation 5:9** - *And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are you to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation.*
  - This meaning of the word “**world**” seems most applicable in this context.

Christ is the Savior of “*the world*”, in that He saves men from every nation, “all kinds of men, without distinction”.

*13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the *Savior of the world*.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

It is clear that the ***confession*** here is not merely a statement of theological fact; it is a confession of ***personal trust***. It is in the aorist tense in the Greek, which indicates that John was thinking, not of a continuous confession, but of a single initial confession that introduces a believer into a life of faith in the incarnate Son of God.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

*So we have come to **know** and to **believe** the love that God has for us...*

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to **know** and to **believe** the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

# “know” - γινώσκω (*ginosko*)

This verb characteristically speaks of the acquisition of knowledge which is why the ESV translates it as “**come to know**”.

# “*believe*” - πιστεύω (*pisteuo*)

A perfect tense verb (in the Greek), which means that one has believed (in the past) and is now confident (in the present).

The *order* in which the two verbs (“*know*” and “*believe*”) appear is *significant*. A *knowledge* of basic facts must *precede belief*, for it is necessary to *know* what is to be *believed*. Faith must be intelligent or it is sheer gullibility.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

That being said, it's interesting that the two verbs appear in **reverse** order in John 6:68-69:

- *Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have **believed**, and have **come to know**, that you are the Holy One of God.”*

For it is **also** true that **faith precedes knowledge**.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to **know** and to **believe the love** that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

In spiritual matters, basic facts that are perceived must be received by faith in order for one to go further in knowledge. Advance in knowledge may be blocked by unbelief. So the growth of knowledge and the growth of faith act and react on each other.

*<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

F.F. Bruce points out that the Greek phrase (*en hēmin*) translated “**for us**” in the ESV, may more naturally be translated “**in us**” or “**among us**”.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has **for us**. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

*In speaking of “the love that God has **in us**” [translated “**for us**” in the ESV] John may mean more than His love for us; that is included, indeed, but the love which God has for His children is poured into their hearts by His Spirit and flows out to others. (Bruce, p.112).*

*<sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

In other words, John is expressing **confidence** that God's love is at work in Christians as they love one another. They have come to know and are now confident that God who is love is dwelling in and loving others **through** them.

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

Pulling all these ideas together, Burdick paraphrases 4:16 as follows: *And as for us believers, we have come by experience to know, and we now have confidence in, the love which God has shed abroad in our hearts.*

<sup>13</sup> *By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.* <sup>14</sup> *And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.* <sup>15</sup> *Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.* <sup>16</sup> *So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

Since God in His essence is “*love*”, and since He is the source of “*love*”, it follows logically that to dwell in love is to dwell in God.

*13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. 16 So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.*

1 John 4:13-16

# Paraphrastic Commentary

## on 1 John 4:7-12

### by Donald W. Burdick

- ▶ (7) Dear friends, we believers are habitually manifesting love to everyone in our fellowship because God enables us to love with spontaneous, self-giving love. Anyone who practices such love is a regenerate child of God and knows God by personal experience. (8) The one whose life is not marked by love has never come to know God. This is true because God in his essence is love. (9) We saw God's love in action among men when God sent His unique Son into this world on the mission of securing eternal life for us. (10) Love consists, not in the fact that we on our part have taken the initiative in loving God. Instead, it is that God was the one who manifested His selfless love toward us by commissioning His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins, to satisfy God's just demands so that His wrath might be averted. (11) Dear friends, since God at Calvary manifested such love toward us, we are under a continuing obligation to show the same kind of selfless love to everyone in our fellowship. (12) God in his essence has never been observed by anyone. If we are manifesting love to the other members of our fellowship, it is God living within us and His selfless love which has come to fruitful maturity.

# Paraphrastic Commentary

## on 1 John 4:13-16

### by Donald W. Burdick

- ▶ (13) This is how we come to know that we are in close relationship with God and that He is dwelling within us: in limited measure, He has imparted His Holy Spirit to us.
- ▶ (14) In addition, we of the apostolic circle have observed-the memory is still very real-and are continuing to bear eyewitness testimony that God the Father commissioned God the Son to make salvation available for the whole world. (15) If anyone publicly and solemnly confesses his faith in the man Jesus as the incarnate Son of God, God is dwelling within him and he is experiencing a close personal relationship with God. (16) And as for us believers, we have come by experience to know, and we now have confidence in, the love which God has shed abroad in our hearts. God in His essence is selfless love, and the person who dwells in the sphere of love actually dwells in God and God dwells within Him.

# Class Discussion Time



## \*Class Discussion Time

- As you have read about the crucial importance of genuine believers loving other believers and reflected on the presence of that otherwise unnatural disposition within your own otherwise sinful heart, do you find comfort and assurance that God really **has** done a work in you and that you really **are** in Him and He in you?
- In light of the fact that your conformity to the high standard of love set for us 1 John (of God sending his unique Son and Christ dying on our behalf in order to save us) falls **far short** of what it ought to be, is it a relief to be reminded that, though God has given us **of** His Spirit, while we live on this earth, we do not (yet) have it in the fullest measure?
- Does this make you long for heaven where we will be in the very presence of God and no longer be burdened with a sinful nature in a fallen world?