

1 John 2:7-11 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[1 John 2:1](#)
[1 John 2:2](#)
[1 John 2:3](#)
[1 John 2:4](#)
[1 John 2:5](#)
[1 John 2:6](#)
[1 John 2:7](#)
[1 John 2:8](#)
[1 John 2:9](#)
[1 John 2:10](#)
[1 John 2:11](#)
[1 John 2:12](#)
[1 John 2:13](#)
[1 John 2:14](#)
[1 John 2:15](#)
[1 John 2:16](#)
[1 John 2:17](#)
[1 John 2:18](#)
[1 John 2:19](#)
[1 John 2:20](#)
[1 John 2:21](#)
[1 John 2:22](#)
[1 John 2:23](#)
[1 John 2:24](#)
[1 John 2:25](#)
[1 John 2:26](#)
[1 John 2:27](#)
[1 John 2:28](#)
[1 John 2:29](#)

FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD AND HIS CHILDREN

Click chart to enlarge

Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission
Another Overview Chart - [1 John](#) - Charles Swindoll

BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP		BEHAVIOR OF FELLOWSHIP	
Conditions of Fellowship	Cautions of Fellowship	Fellowship Characteristics	Fellowship Consequences
Meaning of Fellowship 1 Jn 1:1-2:27		Manifestations of Fellowship 1 Jn 2:28-5:21	
Abiding in God's Light		Abiding in God's Love	
Written in Ephesus			
circa 90 AD			

From Talk Thru the Bible

1 John 2:7 Beloved, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the

Greek: αγαπητοι ουκ εντολην καινην γραφω υμιν αλλ εντολην παλαιαν ην ειχετε απ αρχης η εντολη η παλαια εστιν ο λογος ον ηκουσατε

Amplified: Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the message which you have heard [the doctrine of salvation through Christ]. ([Lockman](#))

Berkley (Modern Language): Dear friends, I am writing you no new command, but only the old command which you have had from the beginning. The old command is the message you have heard.

ESV: Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard.

KJV: Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning.

HCSB: Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old command that you have had from the beginning. The old command is the message you have heard.

NET: Dear friends, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have already heard.

NIV: Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard.

NLT: Dear friends, I am not writing a new commandment for you; rather it is an old one you have had from the very beginning. This old commandment—to love one another—is the same message you heard before.

Phillips: I am not really writing to tell you of any new command, brothers of mine. It is the old, original command which you had at the beginning; it is the old message which you have heard before.

TLB: Dear brothers, I am not writing out a new rule for you to obey, for it is an old one you have always had, right from the start. You have heard it all before.

Weymouth: My dearly-loved friends, it is no new command that I am now giving you, but an old command which you have had from the very beginning. By the old command I mean the teaching which you have already received.

Wuest: Divinely loved ones, no commandment new in quality am I writing to you, but a commandment, an old one, which you have had constantly from the beginning. The commandment, the old one, is the Word which you heard.

Young's Literal: Brethren, a new command I write not to you, but an old command, that ye had from the beginning--the old command is the word that ye heard from the beginning;

Note: Pops are from the Amplified Version which is relatively literal and can often function as a "mini-commentary" on a passage. Hint: Click the Scripture link (e.g., Hebrews 11:4) and hold your pointer just to the right of the Scripture (the one beneath the designation "The Amplified Bible") and select "Study Tools" for multiple commentaries, dictionary articles, etc, related to that Scripture.

- **I write** 1John 3:11; Acts 17:19; 2John 1:5
- **but** Leviticus 19:18,34; Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 5:43; 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-34; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:13,14; James 2:8-12
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE OLD, NEW COMMANDMENT

Recall that in 1Jn 2:6, John had just said his readers are to walk as Jesus walked. In this section he amplifies this thought by explaining what this conduct looks like in the life of one who follows Jesus. Be aware also that in this section where John introduces love of the brethren, he is building toward a command of what not to love in 1Jn 2:15-17.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones - "These five verses (1John 2:7–11) must obviously be taken as a whole because they contain one particular,

great message. So before we consider them in detail, let us observe first of all the connection between them and what has gone before. John has just said that the final proof any man can have of the fact that he is a Christian is that he keeps, and delights in keeping, and goes on keeping, the commandments of the Lord. There, he says, is something which is really safe as a test, much safer than any experience that one may have had, certainly much safer than any feelings or sensations that one may be conscious of within. Here is an objective test, and yet, obviously, a proof of life itself. Then, having laid that down, John, as we have been considering, very naturally and almost inevitably brings it down to the realm of the particular. And so he now brings us to this vital and all-important New Testament doctrine of the love of the brethren... John is concerned about our fellowship with God, so he has been telling us there are certain things that hinder it, and here is another and one of the most important of them. To fail to love the brethren will interrupt our fellowship with the Father and therefore will rob us of many of the blessings of the Christian life. But we can also put it in a different way, and this is true of every one of these items that John singles out. It also provides us with a very wonderful test of our whole position. You see, we can go on looking at this epistle constantly in a two-fold manner. We can look at the various things that John enumerates as **the things that hinder the fellowship**, and we can also see them all as **tests of our Christian position**, and so you will find that when people have studied this epistle, they have generally looked at it from one of those two standpoints. But **both are true, and it would be well for us always to bear the two in mind!** (Lloyd-Jones, D. M. Walking with God)

John MacArthur - Because love is the saint's highest moral duty toward others, it is not only the ultimate mark of genuine salvation, but also provides the supreme assurance of that reality. In this passage John reiterates the theme of light versus darkness that he had introduced earlier (cf. 1:5-7). Light represents the kingdom of Christ and eternal life (Luke 2:32; John 1:4, 9; 8:12; 12:46; 2 Cor. 4:4b; 1 Peter 2:9; cf. Ps. 36:9; Prov. 4:18; John 3:20-21; Eph. 5:13), and darkness represents the kingdom of Satan and eternal death (Prov. 2:13; Matt. 8:12; 22:13; Acts 26:18; Eph. 5:11; 6:12; Col. 1:13; 1 Thess. 5:5; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6; cf. Isa. 59:9-10). Though a form of the word love appears only once in this section, love is clearly John's theme as he emphasizes its primacy as a moral test to verify salvation (cf. 3:10-11, 16-18, 23; 4:7-12, 16-21; 5:1-3; 2 John 5-6). The passage describes love as an old commandment, a new commandment, and a way of life. ([1-3 John- MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#)) ([See also MacArthur's sermons on 1John](#))

Beloved (Gal 5:22) means beloved, dear, very much loved. **Agapetos** describes the love of another, this love being called out of the "giver's" heart by preciousness of the recipient of the love (the "beloved"). **Agapetos** is used only of Christians as united with God or with each other in love. **Agapetos** is used only of Christians as united (by covenant, the New Covenant) with God and/or with each other in love.

So by using **agapetos** it seems clear that John is addressing believers (or those he considers to be believers) as those who were **beloved** by God (1Th 1:4) and by him. **Agapetos** is apropos as because John begins to speak about love for one another and his addressing them as beloved models that love he will now discuss.

Agapetos - 10x in 1John and 3John (Not used in John's Gospel or The Revelation)

1 John 2:7 **Beloved**, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard.

1 John 3:2 **Beloved**, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is.

1 John 3:21 **Beloved**, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;

1 John 4:1 **Beloved**, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1 John 4:7 **Beloved**, let us love one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

1 John 4:11 **Beloved**, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

3 John 1:1 The elder to the **beloved** Gaius, whom I love in truth.

3 John 1:2 **Beloved**, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

3 John 1:5 **Beloved**, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers;

3 John 1:11 **Beloved**, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.

William Barclay - Beloved is John's favorite address to his people (compare 1 John 3:2; 1 John 3:21; 1 John 4:1; 1 John 4:7; 3 John 1:1-2; 3 John 1:5; 3 John 1:11). The whole accent of his writing is love. As Westcott puts it: "St. John, while enforcing the commandment of love, gives expression to it." There is something very lovely here. So much of this letter is a warning; and parts of it are rebuke. When we are warning people or rebuking them, it is so easy to become coldly critical; it is so easy to scold; it is even possible to take a cruel pleasure in seeing people wince under our verbal lash. But, even when he has to say hard things, the accent of John's voice is love. He had learned the lesson which every parent, every preacher, every teacher, every leader must learn; he had learned to speak the truth in love. ([1 John - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

I am not writing (grapho) a new commandment (entole) to you - The Greek more literally reads "No new commandment am I writing to you," which places emphasis on the words "no new commandment" (they are first in the Greek sentence). John wants them to know at the outset that the commandment he was writing about was "not novel or new in kind." (A T Robertson).

A new (kainos) commandment - New in quality. As discussed in more detail below, this commandment was not a new commandment they had never heard before. In the previous section John had referred to **commandments** in the plural but now speaks of **commandment** in the singular, indicating that a specific command is in view. This begs the question -- to which commandment is John referring? The **context** gives the answer, because 1Jn 2:9-11 shows that **commandment** refers to love for the brethren.

New (2537)(kainos) is an adjective which refers to that which is new kind (unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of). **Vine** observes that "**kainos**, 'new,' signifies what is fresh, in contrast to that which is familiar and well-known. Another word, **neos**, 'new,' differs from **kainos**, in that it marks a contrast to what is old, hence it is often rendered 'young.' John uses it once only in his writings, in John 21:18, whereas he uses **kainos** fourteen times." See comments on 1Jn 2:8 as to why this old commandment is also a **new commandment**.

Commandment (1785)(entole from **en** = in, upon + **téllo** = accomplish, charge, command) - **Entole** refers to some type of demand or requirement. A general injunction, charge, precept of moral and religious nature. Of the 67 uses, all but three (Lk 15:29; Col 4:10; Titus 1:14) refer specifically to divine commandments.

Wiersbe - John has been talking about "the commandments" in general, but now he narrows his focus down to one single commandment. In the OT, the command that God's people love one another was only one of many, but now this old commandment is lifted out and given a place of preeminence. How is it possible for one commandment to stand head and shoulders above all the others? This is explained by the fact that love is the fulfillment of God's Law (Ro 13:8-10)... This is why John says that "Love one another" is a new commandment—it is new in emphasis. It is not simply one of many commandments. No, it stands at the top of the list!

Old (3820)(palaios from **pálai** = in the past, long ago) antique, not recent, not new. The idea behind **palaio**s is that the **commandment** had been in existence for a long time.

But an old commandment which you have had from the beginning - It is an **old commandment** in terms of its duration. In other words it is **old** because it is something they had previously heard.

What did John mean by "**from the beginning**?" It does not refer to the beginning of creation or even the giving of the Law of Moses to Israel. The phrase which you have had identifies it as something that occurred during their life. So most likely the beginning refers to that time in the past when John's readers first heard the Gospel and were born again ("in the beginning"). In a sense then it was **old news** they had heard when they first heard and received the **good news**.

This conclusion is substantiated by John's repeated use of the phrase **from the beginning**. For example John writes...

As for you, let that abide in you which you heard **from the beginning**. If what you heard **from the beginning** abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father. (1 Jn 2:24).

In 1Jn 3:11 we see a similar statement "For this is the message which you have heard **from the beginning**, that we should love one another."

In 2Jn 1:5-6 we John writes "Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were writing to you **anew commandment**, but the one which we have had **from the beginning**, that we **love one another**. And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard **from the beginning**, that you should walk in it."

Wiersbe - This phrase "**from the beginning**" is used in two different ways in John's letter, and it is important that you distinguish them. In 1 John 1:1, describing the eternity of Christ, we read that He existed "from the beginning." In John 1:1—a parallel verse—we read, "In the beginning was the Word."

From the outset of their Christian life, John's readers had been taught the importance of love for one another. It was not something they had never heard before. John was not telling them some new truth or something he had "invented." As **John Calvin** said "John reminds us that he was teaching nothing but what had been heard by the faithful concerning love from the beginning and had become old through long usage."

When one is born again as the readers of this letter were, at **the beginning**, "the love of God" is "poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who (is) given to us." (Ro 5:5) and we are enabled to bear "the fruit of the Spirit" which "is love." (Gal 5:22). Ray Stedman rightly reminds us "That (**Ed**: Continually energized by the Holy Spirit and bearing His fruit) is the only way anyone loves another the way God loves. Only God can love that way." **Wiersbe** adds "God does not have to give a new believer a long lecture about love! "For ye yourselves are taught of God [i.e., by the Holy Spirit within you] to love one another" (1Th. 4:9). A new believer discovers that he now hates what he used to love, and that he loves what he used to hate!"

As **Steven Cole** reminds us "the entire Bible may be summed up by the two great commandments, to love God and to love one another. So learning how to establish and maintain loving relationships is not "graduate level" Christianity. It is basic, beginning Christianity." (See Cole's practical application of this truth in his [sermon](#))

The old commandment is the word - As explained, one aspect of this being an **old commandment** was the fact that love was commanded in the Old Covenant

You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the sons of your people, but **you shall love your neighbor as yourself**; I am the LORD. (Lev. 19:18, cp loving one another 1Sa 20:17, 41-42).

Another aspect of the commandment being **old** is that **Jesus** had repeatedly quoted from the Old Testament in regarding the importance of the need to love one another...

One of the scribes came and heard them arguing, and recognizing that He had answered them well, asked Him, "What commandment is the foremost of all?" Jesus answered, "The foremost is, 'HEAR, O ISRAEL! THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD; AND YOU SHALL **LOVE** THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH.' "The second is this, 'YOU SHALL **LOVE** YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' There is no other commandment greater than these." The scribe said to Him, "Right, Teacher; You have truly stated that HE IS ONE, AND THERE IS NO ONE ELSE BESIDES HIM; AND TO **LOVE** HIM WITH ALL THE HEART AND WITH ALL THE UNDERSTANDING AND WITH ALL THE STRENGTH, AND TO **LOVE** ONE'S NEIGHBOR AS HIMSELF, is much more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices." When Jesus saw that he had answered intelligently, He said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that, no one would venture to ask Him any more questions. (Mark 12:28-34, cp Mt. 22:34-40; Mt. 5:43-48; Lk 6:27-36).

A T Robertson adds that "The Mosaic law taught love for one's neighbours and Christ taught love even of enemies."

"You have heard that it was said, '**YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR** and hate your enemy.' "But I say to you, **love your enemies** and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. "For if you **love** those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect. (Matt 5:43-48)

Which you have heard - This commandment reaches back to the beginning of their Christian lives. They had heard it from whomever spoke the Gospel to them. So from the beginning of their Christian lives, they knew that to **love one another** was a vital aspect of their walking like Jesus walked. The truth that we are to love one another is so important that it is repeated 12 times in the NT and 5 times in First John!...

John 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you **love one another**, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

John 15:12 "This is My commandment, that you **love one another**, just as I have loved you.

17 "This I command you, that you love one another.

Romans 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to **love one another**; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

1 Thessalonians 4:9 Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to **love one another**;

1 Peter 1:22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently **love one another** from the heart,

1 John 3:11 For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should **love one another**;

1 John 3:23 This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and **love one another**, just as He commanded us.

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us **love one another**, for love is from God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

1 John 4:11 Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to **love one another**.

1 John 4:12 No one has seen God at any time; if we **love one another**, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us.

2 John 1:5 Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we **love one another**.

1 John 2:8 On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining. (NASB: Lockman)

Greek: παλιν εντολην καινην γραφω υμιν ο εστιν αληθες εν αυτω και εν υμιν οτι η σκοτια παραγεται και το φως το αληθινον ηδη φαινει

Amplified: Yet I am writing you a new commandment, which is true (is realized) in Him and in you, because the darkness (moral blindness) is clearing away and the true Light (the revelation of God in Christ) is already shining.

([Lockman](#))

Berkley (Modern Language): On the other hand I am writing you a new command, realized in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

ESV: At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

KJV: Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true light now shineth.

HCSB: Yet I am writing you a new command, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

NET: On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you which is true in him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true light is already shining.

NIV: Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining.

NLT: Yet it is also new. Jesus lived the truth of this commandment, and you also are living it. For the darkness is disappearing, and the true light is already shining.

Phillips: And yet as I give it to you again I know that it is true - in your life as it was in his. For the darkness is beginning to lift and the true light is now shining in the world.

TLB: Yet it is always new, and works for you just as it did for Christ; and as we obey this commandment, to love one another, the darkness in our lives disappears and the new light of life in Christ shines in.

Weymouth: And yet I am giving you a new command, for such it really is, so far as both He and you are concerned: because the darkness is now passing away and the light, the true light, is already beginning to shine.

Wuest: Again, a commandment, one new in quality, I am writing to you, which fact is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is being caused to pass away, and the light, the genuine light, already is shining.

Young's Literal: again, a new command I write to you, which thing is true in him and in you, because the

darkness doth pass away, and the true light doth now shine;

- a new 1John 4:21; John 13:34; 15:12
- which 1John 3:14-16; 4:11; John 15:12-15; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Ephesians 5:1,2; 1 Peter 1:21; 4:1-3
- the darkness Song of Solomon 2:11,12; Isaiah 9:2; 60:1-3; Matthew 4:16; Luke 1:79; John 12:46; Acts 17:30; Acts 26:18; Romans 13:12; 2 Corinthians 4:4-6; Ephesians 5:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8
- and the Psalm 27:1; 36:9; 84:11; Malachi 4:2; John 1:4,5,9; 8:12; 12:35; 2 Timothy 1:10
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A new commandment - Why "**new**" if it is really an "**old**" one as John had just stated in 1Jn 2:8? We get a clue if one compares this to Jesus' teaching to the disciples...

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even **as I have loved you**, that you also love one another." (John 13:34)

"This is My commandment, that you love one another, just **as I have loved you**." (John 15:12)

What is the "qualifier" that Jesus adds to the command in Lev 19:18? "**As I have loved you**." To love like the Master is to love sacrificially, selflessly, even unto death (at least of self, if not even physical death). In Eph 5:25 Paul commanded husbands to "**love**" (present imperative = habitually, as one's lifestyle!) your wives, **just as Christ also loved** the church and gave Himself up for her." The question arises as to how **CAN** fallen men love like Jesus, the God-Man? First, we must be born again and then we must follow His example (1Jn 2:6). What was Jesus' example? He emptied Himself of His divine prerogatives and yielded His will to the will of God, trusting in the Holy Spirit to enable Him (cp Mt 4:1, Lk 4:1, 14, cp Acts 10:38). We must "**walk in the same manner as He walked**" (1Jn 2:6), in continual confidence (faith) and dependence (submission) on the Spirit to fill us and control us (Eph 5:18) and thereby empower us to manifest supernaturally what is impossible naturally.

Guzik - The cross points in four directions to show that the love of Jesus is:

Wide enough to include every human being.

Long enough to last through all eternity.

Deep enough to reach the most guilty sinner.

High enough to take us to heaven.

This is a new love, a love the world had never really seen before the work of Jesus on the cross. ([1 John - David Guzik Commentary](#))

MacArthur adds that "The commandment of love was **new** because Jesus personified love in a fresh, new way and it was shed abroad in believers' hearts (Ro 5:5) and energized by the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22; 1Th 4:9). He raised love to a higher standard for the church and commanded His disciples to imitate His love ("**as I have loved you**"; cf. 1Jn 3:16; Jn 13:34). The command was also "**old**" because the OT commanded love (Lev 19:18; Dt 6:5, Mt 19:19b, Mk 12:31) and the readers of John's epistle had heard about Jesus' command to love when they first heard the Gospel. (The MacArthur Study Bible)

King James Version Study Bible has an excellent explanation of why the commandment is both **old** (1Jn 2:7) and **new** (1Jn 2:8) - "John's **commandment** is both **old** and **new**. This **commandment**, as is clear below, is to love one another. Jesus called it "**new**" in John 13:34, though it appears in similar form in Leviticus 19:18. By late in John's life it is no longer so new; yet in the sense that it continually transforms and renews the lives of Christians, it is and ever shall be new indeed."

Later John writes "We know that we have passed out of death (spiritually speaking) into life, because **we love the brethren**. He who does not love abides in death." (1John 3:14) In other words, the fact that we can and do now **love** supernaturally is clear evidence that we have a supernatural Source (the indwelling Spirit) to do so. If we fail to manifest such supernatural love, John says it is because we are still spiritually dead in our trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1). And so many commentators see 1Jn 3:14 as another test for knowing whether we are truly saved and have "passed from death unto life" (Jn 5:24; 1John 2:3,5; 3:24; 5:2,13). As an aside, John gives three traits of this **supernatural love for our brethren** - (1) doing righteousness (1John 3:10); (2) willingness to die for them (1Jn 3:16); (3) willingness to share our possessions with them" (1Jn 3:17).

Robert S. Candlish on **new commandment** - That is the "**new commandment**;" a commandment always new; conveying in its bosom an ever-fresh experience, pregnant with ever-fresh experimental discoveries of Him Who is light, and Who dwells in light. Only act up to this commandment; be ever acting up to it more and more. Enter into the spirit of it, and follow it out to its fair and full issues. The newness of it, its constant novelty, will be more and more apparent, or at least more and more felt and relished.

Steven Cole explains it this way - In 1 John 2:3-6, the apostle gives a test by which you can know that you truly know Jesus Christ, namely, if you walk in obedience to His word. In 1Jn 2:6, he states, **"The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked."** Then, in 1Jn 2:7-11, John goes on to **apply this test of obedience** more specifically to the area of love. If Jesus' life and especially His death epitomized love, then those who claim to follow Him are obligated to live in love. In the Upper Room, on the night He was betrayed, Jesus demonstrated His great love for the disciples by taking a towel and a basin of water and washing the disciples' feet. After that unforgettable object lesson, He drove the point home (John 13:14-15), **"If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you."** He was not instituting a ceremonial foot-washing service, where everyone comes with clean feet to be washed! He was saying something much more difficult to practice, that we who follow Jesus must set aside our rights and serve one another out of love. In that same chapter (John 13:34-35), Jesus said, **"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."** Obviously, those words of Jesus were behind John's words about **the old, new commandment**. It may be that the heretics against whom John was writing claimed to have some "new" truths. Using an obvious play on words, John counters them by saying that we don't need new truth, but rather the old truth that his readers learned early in their Christian experience. On the other hand, if you want "new" truth, John says that the old commandment is the new commandment, which Jesus gave to us. In short, Loving one another is an essential mark of a true Christian. ([The Old New Commandment 1 John 2:7-11](#))

John Stott discusses four ways in which the commandment to love was new - The idea of love in general was not new, but Jesus Christ invested it in several ways with a richer and deeper meaning. First, it was new in the emphasis he gave it, bringing the love commands of Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 together and declaring that the whole teaching of the Law and the Prophets hung upon them. Secondly, it was new in the quality he gave it. A disciple was to love others not just as he loved himself but in the same measure as Christ had loved him, with selfless self-sacrifice even unto death. Thirdly, it was new in the extent he gave it, showing in the parable of the Good Samaritan that the 'neighbour' we must love is anyone who needs our compassion and help, irrespective of race and rank, and includes our 'enemy' (cf. Mt. 5:44). It was also, fourthly, to continue new by our fresh apprehension of it, 'for though doctrinal Christianity is always old, experimental Christianity is always new' (Candlish - see full quote below). In these ways it was 'a new command', and will always remain new. ([The Letters of John -Tyndale New Testament Commentaries John Stott](#))

Robert S. Candlish - And now, connecting the two verses (1Jn 2:7-8) which we have been considering separately, we may see how John, being a "scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven," is "like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old." (Mt 13:52) He probably had in his view a class of men, not uncommon in his day, who thirsted for novelties, if not in the doctrines of the Gospel themselves, at least in the way of setting them forth; upon whom the primitive simplicity that is in Christ was beginning to pall (lose effectiveness, lose attraction); by whom the commonplace preaching of the Cross was felt almost to have become effete (barren, not capable of reproduction), and to have lost its stimulating power. John will not pander (act as an agent of the lusts of others, be a go-between) to such a taste. He has been discoursing about high matters; but he is careful to assure his readers that they are not the sort of novelties for which some have a craving. There is nothing really **new** in his teaching. It is the **old** word which has been heard **from the beginning**; the same word that "Paul and Apollos and Cephas" proclaimed (1Cor 3:22); the same word that John has been always reiterating. But if any will have novelty, here is a safe receipt (recipe) for it. Let them make the old word new in their own experience by the ever-fresh practical application of it, in the ever-fresh practical apprehension of the "thing which is true in Christ and in them, that the darkness is passing, and the true light now shineth." For though doctrinal Christianity is always **old**, experimental Christianity is always **new**. The Gospel preached to us is **old**; but the Gospel realised in us is always **new**. Christ set forth before our eyes is always **old**; but "Christ in us the hope of glory," (Col 1:27)—"Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith," (Eph 3:17)—Christ becoming more and more, through the Spirit's teaching, part and parcel of our whole inner man—**This Christ is always new.** ([1 John 2:7,8 The Commandment at Once Old and New to One Walking with Guileless Spirit in the Light](#))

[New Commandment - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#)

Which is true in Him and in you - What is that **which is true**? The fact that the commandment is a **new commandment** to love (one another). It is **true** of Jesus and true of us because we are in Him and He is in us and His empowering Spirit is in us to enable us to fulfill the command to let our light shine before men in such a way that they might see our good works (in this case brotherly love) and glorify our Father Who is in heaven. (Mt 5:16).

In the **context** of John's letter the **"light"** we are to let shine is **love of the brethren** which **Ray Stedman** reminds us "comes out of a shared life. It is the fact that you and He (Christ) share together the same life that makes it possible for you to love (a "one another") who may be difficult, disagreeable, or hard to live with. It is because the love of God is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit Who is given unto you (Ro 5:5). That is the only way it can be done. This, therefore, is the **new** thing. The **old**

commandment was there **from the beginning**. We are our brother's keeper. No man is an island. We have a responsibility to love each other. **But we have never found the way until we find it in the sharing of the life of Jesus, the fellowship with the Son of God** (Ed: Moment by moment yielding to the control of the Holy Spirit). In the light of that new power it is now possible to perform the old commandment. Therefore, John says, "the darkness is passing away." Do you find that true in your life? Now comes the question, "How do you measure your progress in this?" How do you know how far along you have come, or whether you have even begun? John answers that in 1Jn 2:9-10. You can test yourself by asking, "What is my attitude toward my fellow Christian, my brother in Christ, the man who, like me, professes faith in Jesus Christ?" ([1 John 2 - Ray C. Stedman's Expository Studies of the Bible](#))

Bengel - In Christ all things are always true, and were so from the beginning; but in Christ and in us conjointly the commandment [the love of brethren] is then true when we acknowledge the truth which is in Him, and have the same flourishing in us. ([1 John 2 - Bengel's Gnomon of the New Testament](#))

As **Steven Cole** says the "old, new commandment **“is true in Him and in you”** (1Jn 2:8). It is true in Him because the Lord Jesus is the greatest example of love in the history of the world. He left the splendor and perfect holiness of heaven, where He enjoyed unbroken fellowship with the Father. He came to this cruddy, sin-stained world, not as the conquering King, but as a lowly servant. He was obedient to death on the cross at the hands of sinful men that He could have obliterated, if He had given the command. He did it all to save sinners who deserved His wrath. This new commandment is supremely true in Him. But John also says that it is true in you. If you ask, "How so?" the answer is, "Because you are now in Him." It is true in Him fundamentally and true in you derivatively because of your new relationship with Him. Paul often describes our new relationship as being "in Christ." John uses the term, "abiding" in Him. The glorious truth of the New Testament is that we are joint-heirs with Christ of all His riches (Ro 8:17; Eph 1:19-20; 2:6)! So if you are lacking in love for a difficult person, pray, "Lord, You know that I am empty and unable to love this person. But, I am in You and You do not lack love, even for the unlovely. Please love this person through me!" Understanding your new relationship with Jesus Christ is central to practicing biblical love." ([Ibid](#))

Candlish adds - A loving Father's eye ever fixed upon you, and a filial eye in you ever fixed upon Him;—that, I repeat, is the **true light now shining** in you as in Christ. It is not outward revelation only; it is inward illumination as well. It is the Spirit that dwelt in Christ dwelling also in you; shedding abroad in your hearts the love of God (Ro 5:5), and calling forth the simple response of obedient love in return. Let no child of God say that this **shining of the true light** must be reserved for the future. The true light shines in him as in Christ now. The **new commandment** concerning it is in force now. It is a great fact, a thing which is true in Christ,—not in Christ considered as glorified, but in Christ humbling himself, in Christ walking, in Christ crucified,—that not only is the darkness passing, but the true light is now shining. It is, it should be, it must be, it shall be, a great fact, a thing that is true, in you also. Is it not so? Why should it not be so? Is not that great, open eye of your Father in heaven continually beholding you? Yes! Even when in a little wrath He hides His face from you, even when He smites you with the rod, are you not under that benignant eye? And on your part, through grace, may not this voice be ever going upwards to the throne of grace? "Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us" (Ps 123:2). ([Ibid](#))

True ([227](#)) (**alethes** from **a** = negates + **letho** [from *lanthano*] = to escape notice, be hid) is an adjective which literally describes that which will not escape notice. **Alethes** describes that which conforms to reality, that which is unconcealed, that which is manifest, that which is in accordance with facts, that which is characterized by reality (and thus is genuine), that which is real (authentic, not imaginary).

Alethes is used to describe **Jesus** several times in the Gospels (Mt 22:16; Mk 12:14; Jn 7:18.. Jesus' testimony is **true** (Jn 8:14) and that of His disciples should also be **true**. It will be if we abide in Him Who is Truth (Jn 14:6) and rely on His Spirit to live and speak truth (cp Jn 10:41), for His Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (Jn 14:17, 15:26, 16:13).

John used **alethes** to describe his testimony (his light [so to speak] on THE Light, Christ Jesus)...

John 19:35 And he (John the Apostle) who has seen has testified, and his testimony is **true**; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you also may believe.

John 21:24 This is the disciple (John speaking of himself) who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is **true**.

Because - John is explaining something. What is it? He is explaining how this new commandment is effecting a spiritual transformation, in effect bringing about a new age, the Gospel age through Jesus and now through His disciples who are to be His ambassadors of love throughout the world.

The darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining - **Darkness** is not physical but spiritual darkness. When Christ "invaded" earth as the God-Man, His light began to expose and expunge spiritual darkness. Thus Luke announces His

darkness dispelling arrival...

To give to His people the knowledge of salvation in the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise (Jesus, the "Dayspring" [as in the KJV] Dawned, marking a new day for mankind) from on high will visit us, **TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH**, To guide our feet into the way of peace." (Lk 1:77-79, cp Isaiah 9:2)

Comment: Everywhere Jesus went He shone forth as the true Light, spreading the light of true life and true love. As Wiersbe says "The darkness is passing away little by little, and the True Light is shining brighter and brighter in our hearts."

Matthew wrote...

THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A **GREAT LIGHT** (Jesus), AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A **LIGHT** (Jesus) DAWNED. (Mt 4:16)

John adds that...

The **Light** (Jesus) **shines in the darkness**, and the darkness did not comprehend it... There was the true **Light** which, coming into the world, enlightens every man. (John 1:5,9)

Paul wrote...

For God, who said, "**Light shall shine out of darkness**," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2Cor 4:6-note)

Steven Cole - So becoming a Christian is a radical change from darkness to light, where God opens your blind eyes to see something of the glory of Jesus Christ.

Peter wrote...

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God's OWN POSSESSION, **so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**; (1Pet 2:9-note)

In short, Jesus was the True Light Who came to bring spiritual light into the spiritual darkness of this world, and He continues to shine this life changing light through the hearts of those who have become a new creation **in Christ**. Isaiah's prophecy while in **context** referring to Israel in the future Millennium, is surely applicable to all believers in this present age...

Arise, shine (both are commands, not suggestions!); (Why?) for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. (Isa 60:1)

Henry Morris - Although the commandment to love one another is not new (1John 2:7), in so far as knowledge and awareness are concerned, it becomes **new** when made a part of life when the old spiritual darkness is banished by the true light shining in one's soul (compare 2Cor 4:6-note).

MacDonald - Thus **the darkness is passing away** whenever men receive the light of the gospel. The darkness has not all vanished because many have not come to Christ, but Christ, **the true light, is already shining**, and whenever sinners turn to Him they are saved, and henceforth love their fellow believers. (Believer's Bible Commentary)

J Vernon McGee - As you look around you today, you will see that the darkness has not passed yet. Ignorance of the Word of God is still much in evidence. The "true light," who is the Lord Jesus Christ, is breaking upon this world. He still is the most controversial person who has ever lived on the earth. (Thru the Bible commentary)

H A Ironside - We can see as we look on the world around us and in us that the **darkness** is not past. Even though the gospel of the grace of God has been preached for almost two thousand years, the **darkness** is not gone. There are still millions in darkness and in the shadow of death. And no matter how well I know my Lord and His Word, I cannot say that the **darkness** is past even in me. But the **darkness is passing, and the true light is shining**. Every day I am getting to know my Lord better, and every day I understand His will more perfectly. But until the time comes when I leave this body and see my blessed Savior face to face, there will still be a measure of darkness in me, even though all is light in Him. Schiller, the German poet, said as he was dying, "I see everything clearer and clearer." It won't be long until all the darkness will be gone, and we will see everything in all its clearness in His own blessed presence.

Darkness ([4653](#))(**skotia** from **skotos** = darkness) means literal darkness in some NT uses (Jn 6:17, 20:1), but more often (14/16x)

as here in 1John 2:8, **skotia** is used figuratively to refer to spiritual darkness. In every figurative use, **darkness** is contrasted with **light** in all but one passage (1Jn 2:11). In the spiritual sense darkness describes both the state and works of a person. It symbolizes evil and sin, everything that life should not be and everything that a person should not do!

In the opening of this epistle, John declared...

This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that **God is Light**, and in Him there is **no darkness** (skotia) at all. (1John 1:5-note)

Marvin Vincent comments - God is light; and whatever is not in fellowship with God is therefore darkness. In all cases where the word is not used of physical darkness, it means moral insensibility to the divine light; moral blindness or obtuseness. Compare Jn 8:12; Jn 12:35, John 12:46; 1Jn 2:9, 1Jn 2:11. ([1 John 2 - Vincent's Word Studies](#))

The Dictionary of Biblical Imagery has a helpful summary of darkness in Scripture "Darkness has no existence by itself, being definable simply as an absence of light. It is a physical and spiritual reality as well as an apt symbol for some of the profoundest human experiences. With approximately two hundred references, **darkness** is a major actor in the biblical drama... **Darkness** stands out from virtually all other literary images, which are finally ambivalent (having both good and bad manifestations), because it is uniformly negative in its import... Throughout the Bible, **darkness** is an implied contrast to **light**, regardless of whether the darkness is physical or symbolic. In fact, sixty verses present light and darkness as a contrasting pair, and being brought out of darkness into light is a major biblical image of redemption... If light symbolizes understanding, darkness represents ignorance (Ps 82:5), folly (Eccl 2:13-14), a silencing of prophetic revelation (Mic 3:6), the state of the human mind unilluminated by God's revelation (2Pet 1:19), falsehood (1 Jn 1:6) and the loss of walking in God's truth "because the darkness has brought on blindness" (1 Jn 2:11NRSV). If light symbolizes good, darkness is the corresponding image for evil people "who forsake the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness" (Pr 2:13NRSV; cf. Pr 4:19). (Ryken, Leland; et al, Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, InterVarsity Press)

- Trench's Synonyms - [Darkness](#)
- Nave Topical Bible [Darkness](#)
- Torrey Topical Textbook [Darkness](#)
- American Tract Society [Darkness](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Darkness](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Darkness](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Darkness](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Darkness](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Darkness](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Darkness](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Light and Darkness](#) [Darkness \(2\)](#) [Darkness](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Darkness](#)
- Wilson's Bible Types [Dark \(darkness\)](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Darkness](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Dark: Darkness](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Darkness](#)
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia [Darkness](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Darkness](#)

Passing away ([3855](#))(**parago** from **para** = from beside, by the side of, by, beside + **ago** = lead) means literally to pass alongside or to pass by. In the present **context parago** means essentially to go out of existence or cease to exist (and is used in the same sense in 1Jn 2:17).

John "expounds" later in this same chapter on the **darkness passing away** writing that "The world is **passing away** (parago), and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever." (1Jn 2:17) Since the whole world lie in the power of the evil one (1Jn 5:19) and he is the prince of darkness (Col 1:12-13, Acts 26:18, Eph 2:2, Mt 4:8-9, 2Cor 4:4).

A T Robertson - Night does pass by even if slowly. See this verb in 1John 2:17 of the world **passing by** like a procession (**Ed**: a parade of the spiritually dead, the "walking dead").

Vincent - The passing is not represented as accomplished (KJV incorrectly renders it "is past"), but as in *progress*... The **true light** is the revelation of God in Christ.

Jamieson - It shall not be wholly "past" until "**the Sun of righteousness**" shall arise visibly. (Mal 4:2-note). Amen! [Maranatha](#), Lord

Jesus!

True Light (Literally = the light, the true) - In John 1:9 = "true light" where true is *alethinos*. Vincent comments on John 1:9 that the idea is "very light (compare the Nicene creed, "very God of very God"). This epithet (true Light) is applied to light only here and 1 John 2:8, and is almost confined to the writings of John."

Robertson on **true light** = "Genuine, reliable, no false flicker... Dawn is here. Is John thinking of the second coming of Christ or of the victory of truth over error, of light over darkness (cf. John 1:5-9), the slow but sure victory of Christ over Satan as shown in the Revelation (Rev 12:7-10-[note](#), cp Jn 12:31, 14:30, 16:11)?"

Spurgeon - Love is the true test of light, that light which leads us to love God, to love Christ, to love the truth, to love God's people, ay, and to love the whole world of men for their good, this is the love that attests the light we have to be the very light of God.

Robert Candlish - "**The darkness is passing.**" Is it so with me, to me, in me? Then all that pertains to the darkness, all that is allied to it, is passing too. It is all like a term in course of being worked out in an algebraic question; a vanishing quantity; a fading colour. Is it thus that I practically regard the whole kingdom of darkness, and all the works of darkness, and all the terrors of darkness; the power of darkness; the darkness of this world and the rulers of it?

Plainly there is here a thoroughly practical test. What is the darkness to me as regards my relation to it and my esteem of it? Or the things of darkness—what are they? I know well enough what the darkness, in this use of the word, means; what it is. It means, it is, the shutting out of God. For darkness is the absence of light. But God is light. This darkness therefore is the absence of God, the shutting out of God. In whatever place or scene or company God is shut out there is darkness. Whatever work or way God is shut out from, that is a work or way of darkness. Whoever shuts out God from his thoughts is a child of darkness. Now I come into contact with this darkness on every hand, at every point. Places, scenes, companies, from which God is shut out; works and ways from which God is shut out; people from whose minds and hearts God is shut out;—I am in the midst of them all; they press upon me; I cannot get rid of them. Tempting, flattering, cajoling; or trying, threatening, persecuting; they are on me like the Philistines on Samson. Worse than that, they are in me, as having only too good auxiliaries in my own sinful bosom. How do I regard them? Do I cleave to them, to any of them? Would I have them to abide, at least a little longer? Would it pain me to part with them and let them pass? Or is it this very feature about them all that they are passing,—that the darkness which owns them all is passing,—that I fasten upon for relief and comfort? Is it that which alone reconciles me to my being still obliged for a season to tolerate and have dealings with the darkness?

For dealings with this darkness I cannot but have. I have to go down into its depths to rescue, if it may be, its victims. And I have to resist its solicitations when its ministers come to me disguised as angels of light. My soul, like the righteous soul of Lot, must be vexed with the evil conversation and ungodly deeds that the darkness covers in Sodom. I have to stand its assaults; and when reviled, revile not again. So this darkness, this shutting out of God, with its manifold influences and agencies, besets me. How do I feel towards it? Have I still some sympathy with it in some of its less offensive aspects? Am I still inclined to make terms with it, so as to disarm its hostility, and even taste, in some safe manner and degree, its friendship? Would its instant and thorough disappearance from before me,—would my instant and thorough removal from beside it,—be altogether welcome? Would I have it stay with me or pass from me? Is the darkness of this world, with its pursuits and pleasures and amusements, its seductions, its associations, its customs and fellowships,—in which God is not, and therefore light is not,—is it a lingering friend to me, or a departing stranger, a retreating foe?

"The darkness is passing." Is that true in me, as in Christ with reference not merely to the darkness of this world that has such a bold on me, but also and chiefly to the darkness of my own shutting out of God; the darkness of my shutting out of God from my own conscious guilt and cherished sin? That is darkness indeed. Is it passing? Am I glad of its passing? Or am I somehow, and in some measure, loving it still?—so loving it that I would not have it altogether or all at once pass? Say that my sin is finding me out;—the sin, generally, of my state and character before God, or some particular sin. Say that I am falling away from my first love, or coming again under the dominion of some form of evil;—that, in some particular matter, my heart is not right with God. So far as that matter is concerned, I would shut out God. I would put in something between him and me; some excuse; some palliating circumstance; some countervailing aspect of goodness; some plea of self-justification of some sort. That is the darkness which, in such a case, I naturally love. And I feel myself drawn to love it, even in spite of my experience of the more excellent way of guilelessness on my part towards God, and grace on God's part towards me. But is it passing—this darkness? Is it passing with my own consent? Do I make it free and right welcome to pass? Or do I cleave to it as if I would still have a little of it to abide with me? Ah! this darkness, this shutting out of God! How apt am I, if not to ask it, at least to suffer it, to return and remain. "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

"The darkness is passing." Is this my stay, my hope, my joy in the hour of its fiercest power? When it gathers thickest and falls heaviest, hiding God's face from me; when all about me and in me is so dark that I cannot see my signs; when a sense of guilt

sinks me as in a dark pit, and “the sorrows of death compass me, and the pains of hell get hold upon me, and I find trouble and sorrow;”—let me fasten on this “thing which is true in Christ and in me, that the darkness is passing.” I am suffering with Christ, undergoing a kind of crucifixion with him. To me, as to him,—to me conscious of sin, my own and not another’s,—the cup of wrath is presented. On me, as on him, the awful blackness of that day of doom settles down. To me, as to him, sin is indeed exceeding sinful; and the death, which is its wages, terrible. Sold under sin, I am consciously, with a keen and nervous sensitiveness of conscience, dying that death. My faith is failing. Unbelief all but has the mastery. But a new commandment is given me, and a new power, at the critical moment, to realise it as a thing true in Christ, and therefore true in me, that this darkness is passing. In him it is true only through his draining the cup of wrath, dying the accursed death for me. O my soul, bless thou the Lord, that it is already and most graciously true in thee, because so terribly true in him, that, without cost to thee, though with infinite cost to him, this great darkness passes away for ever! ([Ibid](#))

The true Light is already shining is applied by **Robert Candlish** - “This **which is true in Him and in you**, in you as in Christ; in you because you are **in Christ** (in union by the New Covenant). And it is to be apprehended and felt as true now. **The true light is already shining**. It is not said that this true light is to shine hereafter. This is not represented as a benefit to be got, or as a reward to be reached, after the darkness shall have passed. It is a present privilege or possession,—a thing which is true in Christ and in you,—that all the time the darkness is passing the true light is shining. “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee.” (Isaiah 60:1) That is the Gospel call to the Church and to every member of it. It is true, as a great fact, in you as in Christ, that the true light now shineth. Its present shining is in you, as truly as in him, a blessed reality. For this **true light is already shining**, which is a true thing in you as in Christ, is simply what Christ found it to be; God’s loving eye upon you, and your single eye towards God. That is the true light now shining. And the fact of its now shining while the darkness is passing, is the thing which is to be recognized as true, in you as in Christ. ([Ibid](#))

Light ([5457](#))(**phos** from **pháo** = to shine) is defined by many lexicons as that which contrasts with darkness. **Light** is the medium of illumination that makes sight possible or makes things visible. In Scripture **phos** can refer to literal, physical light (Ge 1:3), but often is used metaphorically, the greatest metaphorical use being used to symbolize Jesus as the Light, a truth repeatedly stressed by the apostle John...

Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the **Light** of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the **darkness**, but will have the **Light of life**.” (Jn 8:12)

“While I am in the world, I am the **Light** of the world.” (John 9:5)

Jesus said “This is the judgment, that the **Light** has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the **Light**, for their deeds were evil. For everyone who does evil hates the **Light**, and does not come to the **Light** for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But he who practices the truth comes to the **Light**, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.” (Jn 3:19-21)

“I have come as **Light** into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in **darkness**. (John 12:46)

- Light in [Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)
- Light in [The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Light](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Light, Light of the World](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Light](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Light Light and Darkness](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Light](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Light](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Light](#)
- The Jewish Encyclopedia [Light](#)

Shining ([5316](#)) (**phaino** - see more detail below) in the **present tense** indicates that this is an ongoing, continuing effect of the true light, the light of Christ in the Gospel and in His saints. Christ was still shining. The Sun of Righteousness (Mal 4:2) still blazes brightly in the sky of human history and He will shine gloriously and victoriously when He appears at His **Second Coming** at the terminus of human history in this present age (Mt 24:27, 30, Isa 60:2 where Lxx = phaino)! **Are you letting Him shine today in and through your life?**

NET Notes: Because the author sees the victory of light over darkness as something already begun, he is writing Jesus’ commandment to love one another to the readers as a reminder to (1) hold fast to what they have already heard (see 1 John 2:7) and (2) not be influenced by the teaching of the opponents.

Robert S. Candlish has a wonderful application of this text to our lives: Thus it is “**which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.**” And it is ever a new oracle of divine grace. It will always be so to the pilgrim on his way through the dark wilderness to divinely lit (Heavenly Home). It will always be so, at every step, to you who, abiding in God, walk even as Christ also walked (1Jn 2:6). When faint and weary because of the way, tempted almost to give up, and to give in, as if your striving against sin were all in vain (Heb 12:3-4), and your endurance of the contradiction of sinners against yourself more than flesh and blood can stand, call to mind this word—“**which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.**” It is a new word to you then, a new assurance, a new appeal. It dissipates the gloom that is enshrouding all things to your view. “Lo! they are all new in the true light that is shining. Whenever the old shadows are flinging themselves again across your path, the old misgivings and questionings, the old doubts and fears, the old partial dealings with God’s promises in the word of his gospel, the old hesitations about the freeness of his grace, and the sufficiency of his great salvation, and your title to believe in the forgiveness of your sins; call to mind this word: “**which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.**” It rings as a new Jubilee trumpet. It breathes new life into you. For “on that day, “I will give thanks to Thee, O LORD; For although Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, And Thou dost comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For the LORD GOD is my strength and song, And He has become my salvation.” (Isa 12:1-2) Are old frames coming back upon me: old ways of thinking and feeling about the service of God, and the troubles of life, and the terrors of death; the old ideas as to God being an hard master, and His commandments being grievous; the old spirit of bondage, the old servile grudging, the old rebelliousness, that makes duty irksome, and self-denial hard, and labour thankless, and the whole doing of God’s will a dull routine or dreary task? Let me call to mind this word: “**which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.**” Is it not a new and spirit-stirring summons to me? Is it not a new Gospel to me? Is it not a new quickening, a new awakening? Is it not a new prayer that it prompts?—“Create in me a clean heart, O Lord; and renew a right spirit within me.” (Ps 51:10) ([Ibid](#))

BELIEVERS AS LIGHTS

Spurgeon: I would not give much for your religion unless it can be seen. Lamps do not talk, but they do shine.

Alistair Begg: If you can't shine, at least twinkle!

NLT Study Bible: The light of the Good News expels darkness. Darkness cannot overcome it, especially where believers are living out the love that is in Christ.

Oswald J. Smith: The light that shines the farthest will shine the brightest at home.

D. L. Moody: A Christian is the world's Bible — and some of them need revising. It is a great deal better to live a holy life than to talk about it. We are told to let our light shine, and if it does we won't need to tell anybody it does. The light will be its own witness. Lighthouses don't ring bells and fire cannons to call attention to their shining--they just shine. (**Ed:** A great word picture for Lighthouses do keep vessels from crashing into the rocks and being completely destroyed!)

Spurgeon: The sermons most needed today are sermons in shoes.

G. Campbell Morgan said that the church did the most for the world when the church was the least like the world. Today, many churches have the idea they must imitate the world in order to reach the world. Beloved, our great nation ("One Nation Under God") will not decay and collapse because of the evil peddlers of pornography or life destroying drugs, but because of Christians who are no longer as salt (Mt 5:13) and light. Sinners will always act like sinners because that is all they can do! But when saints begin acting like sinners, their compromise hurts not only themselves and their families and churches, and ultimately contributes to the decay of the entire nation. Are you as convicted as I am?

LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE OUT

Fanny Crosby

O let your light, tho' little, shine out,
Our Lord's command fulfilling,
To live for Him wherever we go,
And seek His will to do.

Refrain

Shine on, little light, shine on,
Shine on so bright and clear;

Shine on, little light, and bring
A smile for ev'ry tear.

Shine (appear) (5316) (phaino) means to bring to light, to cause to appear. To shed light upon (Rev 8:12). To seem to be (Lk 24:11). Figuratively of sin being shown to be sin (Ro 7:13). "The sinfulness of sin is revealed in its violations of God's law." (ATR). Figuratively of the Word of God as that which shines in a dark place (2Pe 1:19). Describes the glorified Jesus' face (Rev 1:16). **Appear** ("are seen") in Php 2:15 could be translated "**shine**." In Mt 24:30 **phaino** refers to the Second Coming of Christ (cp Mt 24:27).

Phaino in the active voice means "to shine" = literal: of the sun (Rev 8:12); of the moon (Rev 21:23); of a candle or lamp (Rev 18:23). Other times figurative: of the incarnation of the Word of God (Jn 1:5); of the witness of John the Baptist (Jn 5:35); of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and its effect in the world (1Jn 2:8). Occasionally a passive can mean "to shine" as used literally of the sun (Rev 8:12); of lightning (Mt 24:27); of a candle or lamp (Rev 18:23); or figuratively of the testimony of believers who appear (shine) as lights (Php 2:15).

Phaino refers to "something which is visible, something which appears." Most other New Testament uses revolve around this idea of appearing. In some uses the verb means "to seem or to appear externally" as in Jesus' description of hypocrites (Mt 23:27,28). **Phaino** can refer to the opinion or judgment of men, what they think about a situation (Mk 14:64 = "how does it **seem** to you [what is your decision]?", Lk 24:11 = "words appeared [seemed]").

Phaino refers literally to the appearance of people or things: an angel (Mt 1:20); a star (Mt 2:7); a dream or someone or something in a dream (Mt 2:13,19). It is also used of Elijah (Luke 9:8); of sin (Ro 7:13); of vapor (James 4:14); of tares (Mt 13:26); of a sign (Mt 24:30); of a miracle (Mt 9:23); and of the resurrected Jesus (Mk 16:9).

Our English word **Phenomenon** (general sense = an appearance; any thing visible; whatever is presented to the eye by observation or experiment, or whatever is discovered to exist; as the phenomena of the natural world; the phenomena of heavenly bodies, or of terrestrial substances; the phenomena of heat or of color. It sometimes denotes a remarkable or unusual appearance) is a transliteration of the middle voice of **phaino**. **Phaino** is also the source of our English word **epiphany** which describes an appearance or manifestation especially of a divine being or a usually sudden manifestation or perception of the essential nature or meaning of something. Interesting! **Lord give us an "epiphany" today of Your greatness and goodness in Jesus. Amen**

In Classical Greek **phaino** appears from Homer (Eighth Century B.C.) on in the active voice meaning "to bring to light" or "to cause to appear." When used in the passive voice it means "to come to light" or "to appear." Thus **phaino** can mean "reflect" or "reveal." Other figurative meanings are "set forth, expound, denounce, ordain," and "proclaim" (Liddell-Scott).

Appear (Webster's definition) - to be or come in sight, to be in view, to be visible, to show up, to have an outward aspect (to seem - e.g., appears happy enough), to become evident or manifest; to come into public view or present oneself publicly or formally; to come into existence. To become visible to the eye, as a spirit, or to the apprehension of the mind; a sense frequent in scripture. To seem or look: the evidence appears to support you. To be plain or clear, as after further evidence, etc.: it appears you were correct after all .

Seem (Webster's definition) - to give the impression of being; to appear; to make or have a show or semblance. To have the appearance of truth or fact; to be understood as true.

Shine (Webster's definition) - To emit rays of light; to give light; to beam with steady radiance; to exhibit brightness or splendor; as, the sun shines by day; the moon shines by night. Shining differs from sparkling, glistening, glittering, as it usually implies a steady radiation or emission of light, whereas the latter words usually imply irregular or interrupted radiation. This distinction is not always observed, and we may say, the fixed stars shine, as well as that they sparkle. But we never say, the sun or the moon sparkles. To emit rays of light; to be bright by reflection of light; to be eminent, conspicuous, or distinguished (shines in math); to have a bright glowing appearance (his face shone). Beloved ambassador of the Most High God, do not these definitions of "shine" speak to our hearts, constraining us to let His glorious light shine into the spiritual darkness of this world? **O God, our Great Father, by Thy Great Spirit, enable us, empower us, humble us (if need be), to be Thy "great lights" (great in Thy Son, not in our self!) in the midst of a crooked and perverse and dead generation (Php 2:15, cp Mt 5:16), all for the great glory of Thy Great Name, through Christ Jesus our Great High Priest. Amen**

Friberg - (1) active intransitively in the NT; (a) literally shine, give light (2Pe 1:19); (b) metaphorically, of a person who makes it possible to know something or someone (Jn 5:35); of a source of spiritual truth and knowledge (Jn 1:5; 1Jn 2:8); (2) passive; (a) literally, of light and its sources shine, flash (Mt 24:27); (b) of someone or something one becomes aware of = appear, become visible, be revealed (Mt 1:20; 2:7); (c) of what becomes known, either in its true character (Ro 7:13) or only in its superficial character (Mt 23:28) = appear, seem to be, look as though; (d) idiomatically = literally where will it appear? i.e. what will happen to?

what will become of? (1Pe 4.18)([Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament- Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Mille Timothy Friberg](#))

Phaino - 31x in 31v - **NAS Usage:** appear(5), appeared(7), appears(1), became evident(1), become(1), flashes(1), noticed(2), seem(1), seen(2), shine(3), shines(1), shining(4), shown(1), visible(1).

Matthew 1:20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord **appeared** to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 2:7 Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star **appeared**.

13 Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord **appeared** to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him."

19 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord **appeared** in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said,

Matthew 6:5 "When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners so that they may **be seen** by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

16 "Whenever you fast, do not put on a gloomy face as the hypocrites do, for they neglect their appearance so that they **will be noticed** by men when they are fasting. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.

18 so that your fasting **will not be noticed** by men, but by your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.

Matthew 9:33 After the demon was cast out, the mute man spoke; and the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "Nothing like this has ever **been seen** in Israel."

Matthew 13:26 "But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares **became evident** also.

Matthew 23:27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside **appear** beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. **28** "So you, too, outwardly **appear** righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

Comment: Pharisees were compared in appearance with whitewashed tombs because their appearances and actuality do not agree.

Matthew 24:27 "For just as the lightning comes from the east and **flashes** even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Matthew 24:30 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will **appear** in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

Mark 14:64 "You have heard the blasphemy; how does it **seem** to you?" And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.

Mark 16:9 Now after He had risen early on the first day of the week, He first **appeared** to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had cast out seven demons.

Luke 9:8 and by some that Elijah had **appeared**, and by others that one of the prophets of old had risen again.

Luke 24:11 But these words **appeared** to them as nonsense, and they would not believe them.

John 1:5 The Light **shines** in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Robertson - "The light keeps on giving light. he Logos, the only real moral light, keeps on shining both in the Pre-incarnate state and after the Incarnation. John is fond of skotia (skotos) for moral darkness from sin and phōs [phōtizō, phainō] for the light that is in Christ alone. In 1John 2:8 he proclaims that "the darkness is passing by and the true light is already shining." The Gnostics often employed these words and John takes them and puts them in the proper place.

John 5:35 "He (John the Baptist) was the lamp that was burning and was **shining** and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.

Romans 7:13 Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it

was sin, in order that it **might be shown** to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.

2 Corinthians 13:7 Now we pray to God that you do no wrong; not that we ourselves **may appear** approved, but that you may do what is right, even though we may appear unapproved.

Philippians 2:15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you **appear** as lights in the world,

Hebrews 11:3 By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is **seen** was not made out of things which are visible.

James 4:14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that **appears** for a little while and then vanishes away.

Detzler - Life itself is defined in terms of an appearance. Shakespeare caused Macbeth to say: Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player, That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, And then is heard no more; it is a tale Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, Signifying nothing. (Macbeth, v, iii, 16) Though Shakespeare did not intend it, he echoed a biblical idea. Human life is like a puff of smoke that appears and then drifts away (James 4:14).

1 Peter 4:18 AND IF IT IS WITH DIFFICULTY THAT THE RIGHTEOUS IS SAVED, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE GODLESS MAN AND THE SINNER?

2 Peter 1:19 So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp **shining** in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.

1 John 2:8 On the other hand, I am writing a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already **shining**.

Revelation 1:16 In His right hand He held seven stars, and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun **shining** in its strength.

Revelation 8:12 The fourth angel sounded, and a third of the sun and a third of the moon and a third of the stars were struck, so that a third of them would be darkened and the day would not **shine** for a third of it, and the night in the same way.

Revelation 18:23 and the light of a lamp will not **shine** in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery.

Revelation 21:23 And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to **shine** on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.

Phaino - 66v in the non-apocryphal Septuagint - Ge 1:15, 17; 21:11; 30:37; 35:22; Ge 38:10; 42:15; 45:5; Ex 25:37; Nu 23:3-4; 1Sa 18:8; 20:26; 2Sa 11:27; 1Kgs 22:32; 1Chr 21:7; Ezra 7:20; Neh 4:7; 13:8; Ps 77:18; 97:4; Pr 11:31; 21:2; 23:5; 24:25; 26:5, 16; 27:7; Isa 32:2; 47:3; 60:2; Ezek 32:7-8; Da 1:13, 15; 12:3 -

Septuagint: אור 'ôr (213), Be light, be bright; hiphil: give light, light up (Ge 1:15, Ps 97:4). בָּחַן bāchan (1010), Test; niphal: be tested (Gen 42:15). גָּלָה gālâh (1580), Give away, uncover; niphal: reveal oneself (Gen 35:7—Sixtine Edition only). הָיָה hāyâh (2030), Be (Prov 26:5). זָהַר zāhar (2178), Hiphil: shine (Dan 12:3). זָרַח zārach (2311), Rise (Isa 60:2). מָאֹר mā'ôr (4115), Shining lights (Ezek 32:8). נָפַל nēphal (A5490), Fall; provide (Ezra 7:20—Aramaic). קָרָה qārâh (7424), Happen, come; niphal: come to meet (Nm 23:3f.). רָאָה rā'âh (7495), See; niphal: be seen, be observed (Isa 47:3, Dan 1:13).

Phaino can mean “to shine,” as when God gave the sun “to shine” on the earth (Genesis 1:15). Proverbs 21:2 notes that every man appears righteous to himself. In Genesis 35:7 it means “reveal”: “God revealed himself.”

Daniel 12:3 “Those who have insight **will shine** (Heb = zahar = to be light or shining; Lxx = phaino) brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

Greek: ο λεγων εν τω φωτι ειναι και τον αδελφον αυτου μισων εν τη σκοτια εστιν εως αρτι

Amplified: Whoever says he is in the Light and [yet] hates his brother [Christian, born-again child of God his Father] is in darkness even until now. ([Lockman](#))

Berkley (Modern Language): He who claims to be in the light and hates his brother is in darkness to this very hour.

ESV: Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.

KJV: He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now.

HCSB: The one who says he is in the light but hates his brother is in the darkness until now.

NET: The one who says he is in the light but still hates his fellow Christian is still in the darkness.

NIV: Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness.

NLT: If anyone claims, "I am living in the light," but hates a Christian brother or sister, that person is still living in darkness.

Phillips: Anyone who claims to be "in the light" and hates his brother is, in fact, still in complete darkness.

TLB: Anyone who says he is walking in the light of Christ but dislikes his fellow man is still in darkness.

Weymouth: Any one who professes to be in the light and yet hates his brother man is still in darkness.

Wuest: He who is saying that in the light he is, and is habitually hating his brother is in the darkness up to this moment.

Young's Literal: he who is saying, in the light he is, and his brother is hating, in the darkness he is till now;

- that saith 1John 2:4
- he is 1John 1:6; John 9:41; Romans 2:18-21
- and hateth 1John 3:13-17
- is in 1John 2:11; Ps 82:5; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3; 2 Peter 1:9
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

"OUT OF SYNC"

PROFESSION AND POSSESSION: THE FUTILITY OF MERE CONFESSION

B F Westcott introduces this section reminding us that "The link of transition lies in the last words of 1Jn 2:8. The thought of **the light already shining** naturally suggests the question, **Who then is in the light?** John's account of the obligations and issues of love explains this and is an answer to the false claims of knowledge **separated from** the action which embodies it. **It is always easy to mistake an intellectual knowledge for a spiritual knowledge of the Truth. Real knowledge involves, at least potentially, corresponding action.** ([The Epistles of St. John: The Greek text with notes and essays](#))

The one who says he is in the Light - One who says (whoever says, if anyone says) occurs four times - 1Jn 2:4, 6, 9, 1Jn 4:20. This is his **profession**. The question is **"Do my attitudes and actions (behavior) authenticate the truth of my profession?** A minority (from my review of numerous commentaries) of writers feel that John is speaking here of a believer who is simply out of fellowship with the Lord. The majority of conservative commentators (and sermons) however favor the interpretation that John is describing the behavior of one who professes to be a believer and yet who continually conducts themselves as an unbeliever (continually hating their brother).

Compare - (1John 4:20) **If someone says**, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

ILLUSTRATION OF A DEADLY DELUSION - It is said that D. L. Moody was once accosted on a Chicago street by a drunk who exclaimed, "Aren't you Mr. Moody? Why, I'm one of your converts." Said Moody in reply, "That must be true, for you surely aren't one of the Lord's." The gospel promises not only forgiveness of sins but also new life. When a person receives this new life, his or her life should begin to show some changes.

David Smith - He says and perhaps thinks he is **in the light**, but he has never seen the light; it has never shone on him. **(Ed:** Beloved, this is an excellent description of **DECEPTION**-when you are deceived, you don't even know that you are deceived!

Remember Heb 3:13!) ([1 John 2 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

Paul Apple - The claim to be "in the light" is a simple claim to be a Christian. We shouldn't be gullible and assume that all professors of faith are genuine partakers of Christ. ([Outline Commentary](#))

Robert Yarbrough - Being **in the light** means being in fellowship with both God and other believers as the result of the cleansing effected by Christ's death (1Jn 1:7). It is a condition made possible by the nature of God, who is light (like Christ himself; John 12:46), as the gospel message goes forth and is received (1John 1:5). It is fitting and natural that believers should openly claim their allegiance to the light that is God and Christ; 1 John is itself an extended example of such testimony. **But the claim can be bogus... The claim is one thing; the reality is something else...** Such a person's spiritual and practical condition is out of conformity with salvation-historical possibility... and indeed divine expectation. In 1Jn 2:11 John elaborates on this sorry state. ([Yarbrough, Robert W: 1,2,3 John Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament](#))

H A Ironside - In 1John 2:9-10 the apostle speaks very seriously and very solemnly concerning something that may well convict some of us. "He that says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness even until now" (1John 2:9). **If you hate your brother, no matter what you profess, you are still in darkness. Notice he did not say you may be a real Christian who has fallen into darkness;** but he said, if you hate your brother you are "in darkness even until now." **You have never been anywhere else. You have never been in the light at all. You cannot have divine light or the Holy Spirit or the love of God dwelling in you, and still hate your brother.** And yet we often see people professing the name of Christ while showing hatred toward others. ([John 2 - Ironside's Notes](#))

In the Light - It is interesting that the 1995 revision of the NAS capitalizes "**Light**" (not so in the 1977 version), presumably equating the Light with Christ (Jn 8:12, Jn 9:5), which again shows the bias of even the more literal translations. (Although I do agree with their thought, especially in light of [pun intended!] 1Jn 1:5). Likewise **John Wesley** interprets **light** as Christ writing that it conveys the picture of covenant union (See **The Oneness of Covenant**), commenting that it means "In Christ, united to Him."

Notice that John uses **light (phos)** 6x in 5v - 1Jn 1:5, 7, 1Jn 2:8-10.

Westcott comments "is **in the light**, surrounded, as it were, by an atmosphere of divine glory. Comp. 1Jn 1:7." ([Ibid](#))

The structure of this verse is very similar to John's earlier statement that **"The one who says, "I have come to know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."** (1John 2:4)

Calvin said that "Fictitious sanctity dazzles the eyes of almost all men, while love is neglected, or at least driven into the farthest corner."

Expositor's Greek - He (**the one**) says and perhaps thinks he is in the light, but he has never seen the light; it has never shone on him... There is no contradiction between this passage and Luke 14:26. The best commentary on the latter is John 12:25. ([Reference](#))

Cambridge Greek - The convert from heathendom who professes Christianity and hates his brother, says S. Augustine, is in darkness even until now. "There is no need to expound; but to rejoice, if it be not so, to bewail, if it be." ([1 John 2 - Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary](#))

Steven Cole - The phrase, "**The one who says,**" tips us off that John again has the heretics in mind. They claimed to be enlightened, and yet, apparently, they were arrogant and self-centered. They did not love others in a sacrificial way. They were using people to build a following for themselves, rather than building people to follow Christ. So John gets out his black and white paint again, and without mixing them into shades of gray, he shows that these false teachers were not true believers. They do not love; they hate. They are not in the light; they are in the darkness until now (1Jn 2:9). But we should not only use John's words to identify false teachers. We should also apply them honestly to our own lives. Sadly, there are many that profess to know Christ, but in their marriages and towards their children they do not practice biblical love. Many evangelical churches are torn apart by conflict because certain powerful members did not get their own way. Rather than acting in love, they viciously attack those who don't agree with them. So John shows that love is inseparable from the light, just as hatred invariably is bound up with darkness. He does not allow for any middle ground, where you can be sort of loving, but sort of cantankerous, too! He makes three points: Your profession of being in the light is exposed as false if you **hate** your brother (1Jn 2:9). You may be thinking, "**Hate** is a pretty strong word! While I may not love that difficult person, I wouldn't say that I **hate** him." But John doesn't let us go there! You either love the other person, which requires sacrificing yourself for that person's highest good, as Jesus did for us on the cross (John 13:34)—or, you hate him. Writing to a Gentile church situation, Paul contrasts the new way in Christ with the old life before he met Christ (Titus 3:1-3): "Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, **hateful, hating one another.**" He goes on to talk of

how God's kindness and love transformed us through salvation. **The point is, no matter how pagan or unloving your background, if you continue in a lifestyle of hate rather than a lifestyle of love, your profession of faith is suspect.** ([The Old New Commandment 1 John 2:7-11](#))

AND YET: A CRITICAL CONTRAST!

And yet - More literally this is simply "and" (because the Greek is "kai" not "alla" or "de" which are the usual adversatives). However the **context** makes it clear that John is making a strong contrast between love and hate.

Cambridge Greek - For the fifth time the Apostle indicates a possible inconsistency of a very gross kind between profession and conduct (1 John 1:6; 1 John 1:8; 1 John 1:10; 1 John 2:4). We shall have a sixth in 1 John 4:20. In most of these passages he is aiming at some of the Gnostic teaching already prevalent. And this introduces a fresh pair of contrasts. We have had light and darkness, truth and falsehood; we now have love and hate. ([1 John 2 - Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary](#))

Hates his brother - **Hate** is in the **present tense** which describes one's continual attitude of hatred.

A T Robertson - The only way to walk in the light (1 John 1:7) is to have fellowship with God who is light (1 John 1:3, 1 John 1:5). So the claim to be in the light is nullified by hating a brother.

B F Westcott - Indifference is impossible. Comp. Luke 11:23 ("He who is not with Me is against Me"). **There is no twilight in this spiritual world.** 'The **brother**' stands in a relation towards us which makes some feeling on our part inevitable. In such a case there is a simple choice between '**for**' and '**against**,' that is essentially between 'love' and 'hatred.' '**Hatred**' is the expression of a want of sympathy. Where sympathy exists hatred is impossible (John 7:7); where sympathy does not exist hatred is inevitable (John 15:18-25, 17:14, 3:20). ([Ibid](#))

John Phillips - Love and hate. Light and darkness. As far as John is concerned, these things cannot coexist in the same heart. The aged apostle had come a long way since the day he had wanted to call down fire on Samaria because he felt the Samaritans had insulted the Lord (Luke 9:51-56). Since then he had been to Samaria and, along with Peter, had been instrumental in imparting the Holy Spirit to newly converted Samaritan believers, thereby welcoming old enemies into the Jewish church as first-class members of the mystical body of Christ (Acts 8:14-17). ([Exploring the Epistles of John](#))

Robert Yarbrough comments on what John means by **hates** - Is it like Hitler hated the Jews, like Ahab hated Micaiah (2Chr 18:7), like Haman hated Mordecai and the Jews (Esther 3:5-6)? Yarbrough doesn't think so, writing "It is likely that John is thinking of "**hate**" in this softer yet insidious sense in 1 John. The light of God in Christ transforms those who embrace it, and the seal of this is heartfelt response to the old-yet-new command (1Jn 2:7-8). Failure to love as Christ **commands and enables** (Ed: **Don't miss Yarbrough's use of the verb "enables"! This is a clear allusion to the Spirit of Christ in believers, the One Who Alone can empower such supernatural agape!**) is tantamount, in the kingdom economy as John presents it, to hating. "Love for God requires concrete expression in love of the sisters and brothers" (Strecker 1996: 52). "For either love, to the exclusion of the selfish element, is the animating principle; or self is made the centre of all, and selfishness governs" (Neander 1852: 80). ([Ibid](#))

Pulpit Commentary - His supposing that hatred is compatible with light proves the darkness in which he is. Nay, more, it shows that, in spite of his having nominally entered the company of the children of light, he has really never left the darkness. "If ye loved only your brethren, ye would not yet be perfect; but if ye hate your brethren, what are ye? where are ye?". Great professions involve great obligations. ([1 John 2 - The Pulpit Commentaries](#))

Ray Stedman - What does he mean here by hate? -- "He who hates his brother." The dictionary tells us that hate is "a feeling of extreme hostility or extreme dislike of another." That suffices as far as the definition is concerned. We know well the feeling, this dislike, this aversion to someone, a sense of extreme hostility toward another. Ah, yes, but it can be expressed in two different ways. It can be active, in that we indulge in malicious talk or injurious actions toward another. We can strike them, or beat them, or throw our garbage over their fence, or mistreat them in some way. We can attack them, we can slander them behind their back. All these are active expressions of hate, and perhaps most of us think of hate only in this sense. But hate can also be expressed passively and still be hate. It can be expressed by indifference, by coldness, by isolation, by exclusion, unconcern for another. Someone has well said that indifference is the cruelest form of hate. You only need to read the Gospel records to see how true that is. What hurt our Lord most was not the active enmity of those who were trying to accomplish his death, but the coldness and indifference of those who once followed him yet turned aside from him and idly stood by as he was put to death. ([1 John 2 - Ray C. Stedman's Expository Studies](#))

John MacArthur - Those who profess to be Christians, yet are characterized by hate, **demonstrate by such action that they have never been born again.** The false teachers made claims to enlightenment, transcendent knowledge of God, and salvation, but their actions, especially the lack of love, proved all such claims false (see also 1Jn 2:11)... It is a meaningless boast for someone to say

he is in the Light (cf. Matt. 7:21-23-**note**; James 1:22-**note**; James 2:14-26-**note**; 1John 1:6-**note**); if he (or she) hates his brother—meaning that he does not love saints selflessly as God does—he is not in the divine kingdom of light but remains in the darkness until now ([1-3 John- MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#)) ([See also MacArthur's sermons on 1John](#))

KJV Study Bible - Doctrinal truth about spiritual matters means nothing without compassion for others.

Yarbrough - The troubling fact, true in John's day as well as ours, is that religion (too often) fosters and sanctions the kind of darkness that John rejects here. In 1994 perhaps a million people were massacred in Rwanda; by one reckoning, more than 70 percent of the Hutus and Tutsis who slaughtered each other were Christian (Roman Catholic 58 percent, Protestant 15.2 percent, Adventist 6.3 percent). ([Ibid](#))

William MacDonald - If one professes to be a Christian and yet **hates** those who are truly Christians, it is a sure sign that such a one is in darkness until now. This latter expression shows that it is not a case of backsliding that is in view (**Ed: See discussion of Backsliding and Quotes on Backsliding**). The man continues to be what he always was, namely, unsaved. ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

Fleming - If hate determines their behavior, they live in darkness. They are spiritually blind and therefore they do wrong. If people claim to be Christians but hate others, they only deceive themselves (1Jn 2:9-11). ([AMG Concise Bible Commentary](#))

Jamieson - There is no mean between light and darkness, love and hatred, life and death, God and the world: **wherever spiritual life is, however weak, there darkness and death no longer reign, and love supplants hatred**; and Luke 9:50 holds good: wherever life is not, there death, darkness, the flesh, the world, and hatred, however glossed over and hidden from man's observation, prevail; and Luke 11:23 holds good. "Where love is not, there hatred is; for the heart cannot remain a void" [Bengel].

Candlish - "HE that saith he is in the light" is one who professes to obey the "new commandment;" to realise in himself, personally, the new position or state of things implied in its being "true in Christ and in him,"—in him as in Christ,—"that the darkness is passing and the true light is now shining." He says he is in the light which is now shining and chasing the darkness away. But he hates his brother; one who says the same thing; one in whom, as in Christ and in him, the same thing is true. He refuses to recognize him as a brother, or to regard him with brotherly love. **And that is enough to prove that he cannot really be himself one of those in whom, as in Christ, "this thing is true, that the darkness is passing and the true light is now shining."** (Excellent resource = [1 John 2:9-11 Brotherly Love a Test and Means of Being and Abiding](#))

Marvin Vincent - The sharp issue is maintained here as in Christ's words, "He that is not with me is against me" (Luke 11:23). Men fall into two classes, those who are in fellowship with God, and therefore walk in light and love, and those who are not in fellowship with God, and therefore walk in darkness and hatred. "A direct opposition," says Bengel; where love is not, there is hatred. "The heart is not empty." See Jn 3:20; 7:7; Jn 15:18; Jn 17:14. The word **hate** is opposed both to the love of natural affection (phileo), and to the more discriminating sentiment — love founded on a just estimate (agapen). For the former see John 12:25; 15:18, 19; compare Luke 14:26. For the latter, 1John 3:14, 15; 4:20; Matt. 5:43; 6:24; Eph. 5:28, 29. "In the former case, hatred, which may become a moral duty, involves the subjection of an instinct. In the latter case it expresses a general determination of character" (Westcott).

Matthew Henry - It is proper for sincere Christians to acknowledge what God has done for their souls; but in the visible church there are often those who assume to themselves more than is true. There are those who say they are **in the light**, the divine revelation has made its impression upon their minds and spirits, **and yet** they walk in hatred and enmity towards their Christian brethren; these cannot be swayed by the sense of the love of Christ to their brethren, and **therefore remain in their dark state, notwithstanding their pretended conversion to the Christian religion.** (**Ed:** In short, Henry seems to be saying these professors are not possessors of the Spirit of Christ for they are not yet born from above.)

Pulpit Commentary - This is an unvarying law, all profession to the contrary notwithstanding (John 3:9). Let a man talk as largely and as loudly as he may, if he loves not, he is in the dark. **No love, no light.** He will not see the light God has shed on the destiny of the race. He will be in miserable darkness as regards his own. ([1 John 2 - The Pulpit Commentaries](#))

Hiebert comments on "The one hating" (1John 2:9). **The individual pictured in this verse displays a conflict between his claim and his conduct.** Two present tense participles under the government of one article portray two distinct characteristics. **The one who says he is in the light** declares that the light is the sphere of his life and being; he claims to have fellowship with God Who is Light (1Jn 1:5). **"And"** (kai) introduces a further feature: "and hates his brother", literally, "and the brother of him hating". The word order stresses the flagrant contradiction between his claim and his conduct. "His brother," placed next to his claim to be in the light, denotes a fellow Christian with whom he should have a close relationship. In keeping with John's characteristic usage (1Jn 3:14-15; 5:1), the term **"brother"** denotes not merely a fellow human being but a Christian brother. This does not mean he is at liberty to hate a non-Christian; the brother-relationship is the key to the test being applied. If he fails to show love within the family circle, he cannot be expected to show love in broader relationships. The present participle "hating" denotes his characteristic attitude, not merely a

flash of anger or ill will. As the opposite of Christian love, such hatred cannot be viewed merely as a matter of indifference or deliberate disregard of the brother in his need. A feeling of ill-will or active malice toward the object of hatred is involved. For John there was no neutral ground between love and hate (cf. 1Jn 3:14-15). The test reveals that this individual "is in the darkness until now." **His conduct nullifies his claim, and he is still in the realm of "the darkness" (cf. 1Jn 1:5-6); he has never left it "until now." Though "the true light is already shining" (1Jn 2:8), he has never had the transforming experience of passing from the darkness into the light.** Kistemaker suggests that John's "until now" "tactfully leaves the door open so that they may repent and come to the light." ([Hiebert- 1John 2:7-17](#))

Zane Hodges is among those writers who feel John is speaking of **fellowship only** (Thomas Constable is also in this group) and that this passage has nothing to do with the authenticity of salvation. **Hodges** for example comments that "If the Bible taught that feelings of hatred were a sure sign of an unsaved condition, then virtually no one in the whole church would be saved! But the Bible does not teach this." While I agree with Hodges' statement, that is NOT what John says -- he is not referring to occasional (maybe even extended times) in which one might be angry with another person, but to an unchanged and "unwilling to change" attitude of hatred. Beware of writers like Hodges who are loathe to link fruit with faith, the fruit being a result (evidence) of and **not** the means (faith alone) of salvation. Such teaching leaves the door wide open for a man to say he "believes" in **Jesus** (perhaps he expressed this as a child, etc) and yet live like the **devil** all his life. How can such a person who continually manifests **unholy** behavior be confident that he will forever be in the present of the **Holy** God?!

Brother (adelphos) - There are 15 uses of **adelphos** in First John, but the meaning of each use must be determined from the **context**. For example, clearly use of **brother** in 1Jn 3:12 speaks of familial relationship and does indicate that Cain was not a believer because John clearly identifies him with the evil one (the devil, cp Jn 8:44). In contrast, Abel is clearly stated to be righteous in Heb 11:4 and was without question an OT saint or believer. As you read the descriptions of associated with brother (brethren) examine the **context** to determine whether John is describing the behavior of a true believer or the conduct of one who professes to believe in Christ.

1John 2:9 The one who says he is in the light and [yet] hates his **brother** is in the darkness until now.

1John 2:10 The one who loves his **brother** abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

1John 2:11 But the one who hates his **brother** is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

1John 3:10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his **brother**.

1John 3:12 not as Cain, [who] was of the evil one, and slew his **brother**. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were evil, and his **brother's** were righteous.

1John 3:13 Do not marvel, **brethren**, if the world hates you.

1John 3:14 We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the **brethren**. He who does not love abides in death.

1John 3:15 Everyone who hates his **brother** is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

1John 3:16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the **brethren**.

1John 3:17 But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his **brother** in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him?

1John 4:20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his **brother**, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his **brother** whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

1John 4:21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his **brother** also.

1John 5:16 If anyone sees his **brother** committing a sin not [leading] to death, he shall ask and [God] will for him give life to those who commit sin not [leading] to death. There is a sin [leading] to death; I do not say that he should make request for this.

NET Note on adelphos as used in this epistle - In the repeated uses of this form of address throughout the letter, it is important to remember that sometimes it refers (1) to genuine Christians (those who have remained faithful to the apostolic eyewitness testimony about who Jesus is, as outlined in the Prologue to the letter, 1Jn 1:1-4; an example of this usage is 1Jn 2:10; 3:14, 16), but often it

refers (2) to the secessionist opponents whose views the author rejects (examples are found here at 1Jn 2:9, as well as 1Jn 2:11; 3:10; 3:15; 3:17; 4:20). Of course, to be technically accurate, in the latter case the reference is really to a "fellow member of the community"; the use of the term "fellow Christian" in the translation no more implies that such an individual is genuinely saved than the literal term "brother" which the author uses for such people. But a translation like "fellow member of the community" or "fellow member of the congregation" is extremely awkward and simply cannot be employed consistently throughout.

Vincent on **adelphos** - His fellow-Christian. The singular, brother, is characteristic of this Epistle. See 1Jn 2:10, 11; 3:10, 15, 17; 4:20, 21; 5:16. Christians are called in the New Testament, **Christians** (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16), mainly by those outside of the Christian circle. **Disciples**, **applied to all followers of Christ** (John 2:11; 6:61 - **Ed Note:** Vincent's statement is diametrically opposite that of many modern evangelicals have been taught - they have been taught that believers are not necessarily disciples, but that all disciples are believers) and strictly to the twelve (John 13:5 sqq.). In Acts 19:1, to those who had received only John's baptism. Not found in John's Epistles nor in the Apocalypse. **Brethren**. The first title given to the body of believers after the Ascension (Acts 1:15, where the true reading is adelphon - brethren, for matheton = disciples). See Acts 9:30; 10:23; 11:29; 1Th 4:10; 5:26; 1 John 3:14; 3John 1:5, 10; John 21:23. Peter has e adelphotes the brotherhood (1Pe 2:17; 5:9). The believers. Under three forms: **The believers** (hoi pistoi = Acts 10:45; 1Ti 4:12); they that believe (hoi pisteuontes = 1Pe 2:7; 1Th 1:7; Eph 1:19); they that believed (hoi pisteusantes = Acts 2:44; 4:32; Heb. 4:3). **The saints** (hoi hagioi); characteristic of Paul and the Revelation. Four times in the Acts 9:13, 32, 41; 26:1), and once in Jude 1:3. Also Heb. 6:10; 13:24. In Paul, 1Cor. 6:1; 14:33; Eph. 1:1, 15, etc. In Rev 5:8; 8:3, 4; 11:18, etc.

Is - The verb **einai** means to be or to exist and is in the **present tense** which signifies this **"one"** is continually **in the darkness**. **Darkness** is his habitat so to speak. In short, his words (says he is in the Light) do not match his walk (hates his brother). **Westcott** adds that "The assertion is not simply characterized as false (1Jn 1:6 we lie) or as revealing a false nature (1Jn 2:4 he is a liar): **it involves the existence of a moral state the exact opposite of that which is claimed.**" ([Ibid](#)) How much clearer could John state the case of such a "habitual hater's" lost condition!

When we were born again by the Spirit of God (Jn 3:3-6), God "the Father, Who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in **light**. (not darkness)," "delivered us from the **domain** (the power, the right and the might) **of darkness**, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in Whom (in Christ, our Redeemer) we have redemption (we have been bought with a price and are no longer our own possession, but are now and forever the possession of Christ! - 1Cor 6:19-20, Titus 2:13-14, 1Pe 2:9-10), the forgiveness (we have been released from the penalty and power of sin in this life and from the presence and pleasure in the life to come!) of sins (missing of the mark which is God's will)." (Col 1:12-14) What would you conclude from this passage in Colossians. Where is the "habitat" of a believer now -- in Light or in darkness? What simple conclusion might one draw from John's statement about the one who is continually "in the darkness?" I strongly suggest you let the plain sense of John's inspired text speak for itself before you go to the "erudite" commentaries by the Greek scholars. John's words "amplified" by Paul's words seem to point to an inescapable conclusion.

In the darkness - **John Wesley** like most conservative commentators interprets **in darkness until now** as "Void of Christ, and of all true light."

Smalley - This clause indicates the outcome of claiming to live in the light while hating other people. Not only is the assertion untrue; the moral character and condition of the claimants is also shown to be the complete reverse of that which is believed. Those who hate the brotherhood are not living in the light of God, as they think, but in the darkness of evil. (For the contrasting motif of "light and darkness," with its background, see 1Jn 2:8; cf. also 1Jn 1:5.) And this is the case immediately (hence the emphatically placed "still"). Even now, while the light shines, they are in darkness (cf. Brooke, 39). ([1, 2, 3 John Word Biblical Commentary](#))

Ray Stedman - To be **"in the darkness"** is to be unregenerated, as you see also from 1Jn 3:14.

Jesus was very clear regarding the contrast between **light** and **dark** when He said "And this is the judgment, that the **light** is come into the world (Jn 8:12), and men loved the **darkness** rather than the **light**; for (explains the darkness = their conduct demonstrates the spiritual darkness that is in their unregenerate heart) their deeds were evil. For (further explains the manner of those who hate God and why they hate His exposing light) everyone who does evil **hates the light**, and does not come to the **light**, lest his deeds should be exposed. But (striking contrast similar to that here in First John) he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." (John 3:19-21)

Matthew Poole - is still in darkness = under the power of the unregenerate principle of impure and malignant darkness: the Gospel has done him no good and is to him but an impotent and ineffectual light, in the midst whereof, by stiff winking, and an obstinate resistance which excludes that pure and holy light, he creates for himself a dark and a hellish night. (**Woe!**)

James Montgomery Boice - The Gnostic claimed to be the enlightened one. But he is actually in darkness, says John, if he fails to love his brother. (The Epistles of John : An expositional commentary: Baker Books)

Until now - Wuest = "Up to this moment." He is still dwelling in the domain of darkness, not in the kingdom of light. How much clearer could John state his case? How could this possibly describe the habitual practice and position of a believer?

Vincent on until now - Though the light has been increasing, and though he may claim that he has been in the light from the first (**Ed**: In actuality he has remained in the darkness and is still in the darkness now). The phrase occurs in Jn 2:10; 5:17; 16:24; and is used by Paul, 1Cor. 4:13; 8:7; 15:6.

Ray Stedman - Now John says that he who hates his brother is **not a Christian**. He is "**in the darkness until now**," i.e., he has never come out of it. He is in the state of darkness in which the whole race is plunged and into which we were all born. He has never been removed from that. To say you are in the light and yet hate your brother is a basic denial of faith. We have seen this all along. ([1 John 2 - Ray C. Stedman's Expository Studies](#))

John Stott - John now shows that Jesus Christ, the true light, is the light of love, and that therefore to be, or to live, or to walk in the light (1Jn 2:9, 10; cf. 1Jn 1:6) is to walk in love. Light and love, darkness and hatred belong together. In 1Jn 2:3-6 the general principle preceded the specific example. Here the example comes first. The Gnostic claim was as much to have been 'enlightened' as to possess the 'knowledge' of God. The falsity of their claim to be in the light was betrayed not now by disobedience, but by hatred. The true Christian, who knows God and walks in the light, both obeys God and loves his brother. The genuineness of his faith is seen in his right relation to both God and his fellow human beings. (The Letters of John: An Introduction and Commentary. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries).

The Light Of The World - By Vernon C. Grounds - One dark and ominous night during World War II, a US aircraft carrier was plowing through heavy seas in the South Pacific. All lights were out because of enemy submarines. One plane was missing. Somewhere in that pitch-black sky it was circling in a seemingly futile search for the carrier—its only landing place, its only hope of not being swallowed up by the giant ocean. The ship's captain, knowing the terrible risk involved, gave the order, "Light up the ship." Soon the plane zoomed onto the deck like a homing pigeon.

At Bethlehem, knowing the risk, God gave the command, "Light up the world." Then Jesus was born. A new and radiant light began to shine, pushing back the darkness of the world, of spiritual ignorance, and of sin and despair. Like a ship lit up in an otherwise darkened sea of sinful humanity, Christ came as "the light of the world" (John 8:12). John wrote, "The darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining" (1 John 2:8). When Jesus the Savior entered this world, it was like the sunrise breaking radiantly over the horizon of human history (Luke 1:78-79).

In fathomless grace, God allowed His Son to die on the cross to save us from eternal darkness. What a blessed message for Christmas—and every day of the year!

Long ago in Bethlehem
One cold and starry night,
Jesus came from heaven above
To bring us love and light. —Fitzhugh

Without the light of Jesus, we would be in the dark about God.

1John 2:10 The one who loves his brother abides in the Light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. [NASB: Lockman](#)

Greek: ο αγαπων τον αδελφον αυτου εν τω φωτι μενει και σκανδαλον ουκ εστιν εν αυτω

Amplified: Whoever loves his brother [believer] abides (lives) in the Light, and in It or in him there is no occasion for stumbling or cause for error or sin. ([Lockman](#))

Berkley (Modern Language): He who loves his brother remains in the light and there is nothing within him to occasion stumbling.

ESV: Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.

KJV: He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him.

HCSB: The one who loves his brother remains in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

NET: The one who loves his fellow Christian resides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him.

NIV: Whoever loves his brother lives in the light, and there is nothing in him to make him stumble.

NLT: Anyone who loves another brother or sister is living in the light and does not cause others to stumble.

Phillips: The man who loves his brother lives and moves in the light, and has no reason to stumble.

TLB: But whoever loves his fellow man is "walking in the light" and can see his way without stumbling around in darkness and sin.

Weymouth: He who loves his brother man continues in the light, and his life puts no stumbling-block in the way of others.

Wuest: He who is habitually loving his brother in the light is abiding, and a stumbling block in him there is not.

Young's Literal: he who is loving his brother, in the light he doth remain, and a stumbling-block in him there is not;

- **that loveth** 1John 3:14; Hosea 6:3; John 8:31; Romans 14:13; 2Peter 1:10
- **occasion of stumbling** Matthew 13:21; 18:7; Luke 17:1,2; Romans 9:32,33; Philippians 1:10
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

LOVING ONE ANOTHER

New Living Translation: Anyone who loves another brother or sister is living in the light and does not cause others to stumble

Comment: The New Living Translation shows the bias which is inherent to all translations! Most commentators favor (from the **context**) that this individual who habitually loves his brother does not himself stumble! Keep the fact in mind that EVERY translation from the original language, no matter how excellent, has an unavoidable bias, some translations (especially the paraphrases) showing greater bias than others.

The one who loves his brother - Notice that the previous passage (1Jn 2:9) begins with what the one **says**, but here John begins with what one **does**. Actions speak louder than words and Paul clearly delineates the actions of agape love in 1Cor 13:4-8 (see commentary)! In fact regarding this love, 1Cor 13:4-8 **defines** it, Jn 3:16 **illustrates** it, and Gal 5:22-note, Ro 5:5-note describe how it is **produced**. Indeed, love is not a warm fuzzy "I love you," but is an "action" verb that says "I am here for you. Whatever you need, let me know. I don't expect you to recompense me."

Cambridge Greek Testament - Nothing is said about what he professes; it is what he does that is of consequence. Menei (meno = to abide) means not only has entered into the light, but has it for his abode: see 1John 2:24. ([1 John 2 - Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary](#))

John Phillips - Not that all our brothers in Christ are lovable! We all know some who have crossed us or criticized us, and some even who have done us harm. Others, by nature, we tend to dislike for no apparent reason at all. As the old rhyme puts it, "I do not like thee, Dr. Fell, The reason why, I cannot tell; But this I know, and know full well, I do not like thee, Dr. Fell." In his book A Tuft of Comet's Hair, F. W. Boreham includes a fine essay on Dr. Fell. He points out that when it comes to disliking people, there are two categories: disliking people for a reason, and disliking people for no particular reason. We dislike some people, for instance, because they are know-it-alls. No matter how fine a sermon you preach, they find something to criticize. No matter how many people applaud your latest book, they pick it to pieces with smug complacency and personal bias. We dislike "noisy people," who sweep over an assembled company with a tidal wave of animal spirits. And we dislike those who are quite the opposite, who seem to have no personalities at all. They bore us with a complete "organ recital" when we ask them how they are. We dislike those who want us to know how well connected they are, who drop names, and are related to famous people. They had lunch the other day with a cabinet minister or the mayor. We dislike those who gush. Even an accidental meeting becomes a state occasion. Second, and even more troubling, is our dislike of those whom we dislike without reason. People like Dr. Fell. John has no patience with any of this. He knew Jesus too well to entertain personal dislikes, no matter whether they were rooted in something he could put a finger on or rooted in something vague, a clash of personalities, perhaps, or an unattractive appearance. John remembered how completely human Jesus was. He had His preferences, finding a kindred spirit, for instance, in the rich young ruler. The moment Jesus met him His heart went out to him (Mark 10:21). So, too, with Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (John 11:5). John, himself, had occupied a special place in Jesus' heart, frequently describing himself simply as "the disciple whom Jesus loved" (John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7, 20). Nonetheless, the Lord did not allow preference or prejudice to make a difference in His heart, never allowing human feelings to motivate Him to the extent that He attracted this one and repelled that one. There were no Dr. Fells in Jesus' life. He loved Pilate as much as He loved Peter and would have saved Caiaphas as gladly as He saved Nicodemus. That is what John remembered, and that was the standard by which he sought to lead his own life. And that is the standard he lays down for all who say they love the Lord. For, after all, how are unbelievers to know what the Lord is really like unless we ourselves exhibit a true

image of Him to one another. We are reminded of the little girl who became increasingly annoyed at the cartoons and caricatures of her famous father, which appeared in the newspapers. One day she took a photograph of her father from the wall and sallied forth to show the newspaper editor and the cartoonist what her father was really like. John expects us to do the same, to show people what Jesus is really like. ([Exploring the Epistles of John](#))

Loves (25)(**agapao**) means to love unconditionally and sacrificially as God Himself loves sinful men (John 3:16), the way He loves the Son (John 3:35, 15:9, 17:23, 24). **Agapao** is in the **present tense** which identifies this love as one's lifestyle! Note that **agapao** is not an emotion but is an action initiated by a volitional choice. **Vine** adds this "Love can be known only from the actions it prompts."

John Trapp - As Paul pressed faith, and Peter hope, so John love, those three cardinal virtues, 1 Cor. 13:13.

Note that John's stress on love of brothers by no means excludes love of all men. Jesus addressed this prevalent thought in the Sermon on the Mount when He said "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt 5:43-48)

Yarbrough adds that "By stressing reciprocal love among Christians in 1 John, he is not repudiating love for humanity at large. He is rather underscoring the necessity of Christ's followers first practicing among themselves what they preach that God offers to the world through the Gospel."

Hiebert - The one loving (1Jn 2:10). The individual now portrayed, "the one who loves his brother", is the opposite of the one in 1Jn 2:9. There is no neutral ground between the two. No reference is made to his claim to love (He makes no profession as those in 1Jn 2:9). It is assumed he gives testimony to his faith as appropriate, but his **practice** speaks for itself without any loud **profession**. The **present tense** participle denotes that his love is no occasional, sporadic matter, but a continual, habitual practice. This term for "love" denotes "not so much a manifestation of the emotions as it is a manifestation of the will." It is an intelligent and purposeful love that seeks to promote the highest good for the one loved, even at the expense of self. Such a love is only the result of the love of God having been poured out within believers' hearts through the indwelling Holy Spirit (Ro 5:5, cp Gal 5:22). ([Hiebert- 1 John 2-7-17](#))

Wuest adds that "The essence of the word is that of a self-sacrificial love that gives of itself for the happiness and well-being of the fellow-Christian. The fact that this Christian is habitually loving his brother-Christian with the above kind of love, is indicative of his close fellowship with and dependence upon the Lord Jesus, for this supernaturally-produced love in His heart is present in an overflowing quantity only in the life of a believer who habitually is abiding in his Lord (**Ed**: I would add such a one is continually filled with, controlled by and energized by the indwelling Spirit of Christ - Ro 8:9, 1Pe 1:11, Eph 5:22, Eph 3:16, Gal 5:16). The light here is, of course, the Lord Jesus Himself and all that is written in the Word about Him."

Zeisler - At the end of John's life a man named Jerome, one of the second generation of Christian leaders after the apostles died, wrote about John, whom he had known. He said that John at the end of his life couldn't walk anymore or even sit upright. He would be brought into Christian assemblies on a stretcher by his friends. He would prop himself up on one elbow and whisper to the assembly, "Little children, love one another," and lie back down. The next time they met, he would do exactly the same thing. Finally someone objected and said, "We've heard that. It's too simple. What further teaching can you give us, what other emphasis can you bring?" John's answer to those who objected was this: "I say, 'Love one another' because it is the Lord's command, and if this is all you do, it is enough." ([BECOMING JESUS PEOPLE](#))

LOVING IS LIVING IN THE LIGHT

Abides in the Light - Notice that the verb "**is**" in 1Jn 2:9 is replaced by **abides** in this passage (See Westcott's comment below). **Abides** is **present tense** which pictures this as his habitual practice or lifestyle. Obviously it does not depict perfection, but does depict the "direction" of one's life (i.e., toward loving the brother).

Guy King - Just as he who dwells in sunny climes, or even spends a summer fortnight by the shining sea, bears the imprint of his dwelling upon his very countenance, so he who abides in Eternal Light cannot but wear the impress upon his whole behaviour and demeanor. Do you know Psalm 34:5, "They looked unto Him, and were lightened"? That's it: the radiance of love.

Hiebert - A believer's practice of such love reveals that he "abides in the light", that he lives in or is at home in the sphere of "the light," the sphere associated with the presence and power of God. The word order underlines the sphere of his abode. His practice

of love reveals that he has joined the brotherhood of "the light." ([Hiebert- 1 John 2-7-17](#))

Pulpit Commentary - Whereas he who loves his brother has not only entered the region or' light, but has made it his home: he abideth in the light. ([1 John 2 - The Pulpit Commentaries](#))

Westcott comments on **abides** (in place of "is" in 1Jn 2:9) - The idea of stability is added to that of simple 'being' (comp. 1Jn 2:5, 6). The position of the false brother and of the true brother is referred to the initial point of faith. Love testifies to the continuance of a divine fellowship on man's part but does not create it: **the absence of love shows that the fellowship has never been realized** (Motivated by Spirit energized) love the disciple 'follows' his Master and has 'the light of life' (John 8:12). ([Ibid](#))

David Smith - He does not merely catch glimpses of the light but "abideth in it," being of one mind with God, the common Father, who "is light" (1John 1:5). ([1 John 2 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

A T Robertson - Present active indicative, continues in the light and so does not interrupt the light by hating his brother.

Vincent on **abides** - To abide in God is a more common expression with John than to be in God, and marks an advance in thought. The phrase is a favorite one with John. See John 15:4 sq.; Jn 6:56; 1John 2:24, 27, 28; 3:6, 24; 4:12 sq.; 15 sq. Bengel notes the gradation in the three phrases "to know Him, to be in Him, to abide in Him; knowledge, fellowship, constancy."

Candlish - On the other hand, "he that loves his brother,"—he that loves as his brother one in whom, as in Christ and in himself, "this thing is true, that the darkness is passing and the true light is now shining,"—not only shows thereby that he speaks truth when he says he is **in the light**, but takes, moreover, the most effectual means for securing his continuing in the light; so abiding in the light that there shall be in him nothing to occasion **stumbling**. (Excellent resource = [1 John 2:9-11 Brotherly Love a Test and Means of Being and Abiding](#))

A "SCANDAL PROOF" WALK

And (kai) introduces a further fact concerning him: "and there is no cause for stumbling in him."

There is no cause for stumbling in him - Walking in love is the "safest" way to walk spiritually. The word for "no" in Greek (ouk) conveys the strongest negation - the idea is "**absolutely no** cause for stumbling." Indeed, this man can sing out and live out the great words of Newton's hymn...

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found,
Was blind but now I see.

John's words echo the Gospel record of Jesus' words - Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, **he does not stumble**, because he sees the light of this world. But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." (John 11:9-10)

John Stott - The light shines on our path, so that we can see clearly and so walk properly. If we love people, we see how to avoid sinning against them. ([Ibid](#))

William MacDonald - This may mean that the man himself is not in danger of stumbling, or that he will not cause others to stumble. Either interpretation is true. If the Christian is really living in touch with the Lord, the light illuminates his own pathway, and no one else is offended because of any discrepancy between his profession and his practice. (Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson)

James Montgomery Boice - The idea of stumbling may be applied in either of two ways. First, it may be applied to others in the sense that the one loving his brother not only walks in the light himself but also is free of having caused others to offend. This is the general meaning of the word in the rest of the New Testament. On the other hand, it can also apply to the individual himself in the sense that, if he loves, he walks in the light and therefore does not himself stumble. **The context almost demands this second explanation**, for the point of the verses is not what happens to others but rather the effect of love and hate on the individual himself. (The Epistles of John : An expositional commentary: Baker Books)

Wuest - An interpretation less agreeable to the **context**, but more consonant with the common use of skandalon (cp Mt. 13:41; 18:7; Ro 14:13) is, "Because he is winsome and gracious, there is in him no stumbling-block to others, nothing to deter them from accepting the Gospel. The love of the primitive Christians impressed the heathen." ([Ref](#)) (**Editorial comment** - So while this latter interpretation is less consistent with the **context**, it nevertheless gives us an excellent, challenging, personal application! Remember

you may be the only "Bible" many people will ever "read!" We must not just speak the Gospel, but live out the Gospel before the highly skeptical lost world! Indeed, as **Westcott** says "The triumph of love is that it creates no prejudice against the Truth. Want of love is the most prolific source of offences.")

Guy King - This man, unlike his unfortunate counterpart, is able to see the pitfalls in his path, and may thus, if he so wills, avoid them. Moreover, he is in a position to refrain from leaving stumbling-blocks for others. I remember the late beloved Bishop Taylor Smith telling us of an occasion when he was walking up and down a railway station platform, waiting for a train. Thinking of some matter, he carelessly trod on a piece of orange peel, and almost fell: not looking, not, as it were, walking in the light, he met with an occasion of stumbling. Walking on, the Bishop had a sudden, happy inspiration: he went back, and kicked the peel off on to the track, thus ensuring that he should not leave behind him a stumbling-block for others!"

Stumbling ([4625](#))(**skandalon** from root meaning jump up, snap shut) is a noun which originally referred to the piece of wood that kept open a trap for animals. Thus **skandalon** was literally that movable part of a trap on which the bait was laid, and when touched caused the trap to close on its prey. **Skandalon** thus came to mean any entanglement of the foot. Figuratively, as used most often in Scripture, **skandalon** refers to any person or thing by which one is drawn into error or sin. **Skandalon** can describe that which causes someone to sin or that which produces certain behavior which can lead to ruin. **Skandalon** thus denotes an enticement to conduct which could ruin the person in question. Skandalon can refer to a hindrance which stresses that which cause harmful or annoying delay or interference with progress as in (Ro 16:17).

Barclay adds that "**Skandalon** has two meanings. (a) It originally meant the bait-stick in a trap. (b) It then came to mean any stumbling-block placed in a man's way to trip him up. Jesus said that it was impossible to construct a world with no temptations; but woe to that man who taught another to sin or who took away another's innocence. Every one must be given his first invitation to sin, his first push along the wrong way. Kennedy Williamson tells of an old man who was dying. Something was obviously worrying him. He told them at last what it was. "When I was a lad," he said, "I often played on a wide common. Near its centre two roads met and crossed, and, standing at the cross-roads, was an old rickety sign-post. I remember one day twisting it round in its socket, thus altering the arms and making them point in the wrong direction; and I've been wondering ever since how many travelers I sent on the wrong road!"

Vincent on **stumbling (offend)** - See on offend, Mt 5:29 (The word **offend** carries to the English reader the sense of giving offence, provoking) For the image in John, see Jn 6:61; 11:9; 16:1; Rev 2:14. The meaning is not that he gives no occasion of stumbling to others, but that there is none in his own way (**Ed**: Others feel that both are possible, although they too favor Vincent's interpretation). See John 11:9, 10.

A T Robertson - a stumbling block or trap either in the way of others (its usual sense), as in Mt. 18:7, or in one's own way, as is true of proskoptō in John 11:9 and here in 1Jn 2:11

Paul Apple - He has nothing in him that is likely to ensnare him or to cause him to stumble. When we are walking around our house when it is well lit, we are able to see and avoid any obstructions which might otherwise trip us up. So if we live in love we won't fall over obstacles like pride, envy, jealousy, revenge. It is when self-seeking governs men that life becomes so entangled. ([Bible Outline](#))

Guy King - This man, unlike his unfortunate counterpart, is able to see the pitfalls in his path, and may thus, if he so wills, avoid them. Moreover, he is in a position to refrain from leaving stumbling-blocks for others. I remember the late beloved Bishop Taylor Smith telling us of an occasion when he was walking up and down a railway station platform, waiting for a train. Thinking of some matter, he carelessly trod on a piece of orange peel, and almost fell: not looking, not, as it were, walking in the light, he met with an occasion of stumbling. Walking on, the Bishop had a sudden, happy inspiration: he went back, and kicked the peel off on to the track, thus ensuring that he should not leave behind him a stumbling-block for others!"

1John 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: ο δε μισων τον αδελφον αυτου εν τη σκοτια εστιν και εν τη σκοτια περιπατει και ουκ οιδεν που υπαγει
οτι η σκοτια ετυφλωσεν τους οφθαλμους αυτου

Amplified: But he who hates (detests, despises) his brother [in Christ] is in darkness and walking (living) in the dark; he is straying and does not perceive or know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes. ([Lockman](#))

Berkley (Modern Language): But he who hates his brother is in the dark and walks in the dark; he does not

even know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

ESV: But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

KJV: But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

HCSB: But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he's going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

NET: But the one who hates his fellow Christian is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

NIV: But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.

NLT: But anyone who hates another brother or sister is still living and walking in darkness. Such a person does not know the way to go, having been blinded by the darkness.

Phillips: But the man who hates his brother is shut off from the light and gropes his way in the dark without seeing where he is going. To move in the dark is to move blindfold.

TLB: For he who dislikes his brother is wandering in spiritual darkness and doesn't know where he is going, for the darkness has made him blind so that he cannot see the way.

Weymouth: But he who hates his brother man is in darkness and is walking in darkness; and he does not know where he is going—because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Wuest: But he who as a habit of life hates his brother is in the darkness, and in the sphere of the darkness is habitually ordering his behavior, and he does not know where he is going, because the darkness blinded his eyes.

Young's Literal: and he who is hating his brother, in the darkness he is, and in the darkness he doth walk, and he hath not known whither he doth go, because the darkness did blind his eyes.

- **he that** 1John 2:9; John 12:35; Titus 3:3
- **and walks** Proverbs 4:19; John 12:35
- **because** John 12:40; 2Corinthians 3:14; 4:4; Revelation 3:17
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE DARKNESS OF LOVELESSNESS

Note that the first part of this verse repeats 1Jn 2:9. **Hiebert** adds "but now reference to his spiritual pretensions is dropped and the results of hatred in his life are stressed." Yarbrough adds that here "John expands on the dilemma posed and faced by the confessing believer who does not love others."

But - Always use this **term of contrast** as an opportunity to **pause and ponder** the **text and context**. For example, asking questions like what is being contrasted? What's the significance of this contrast or change of direction?, etc. Here the **but** (de) is added to set the following in clear contrast with 1Jn 2:10!

Westcott - Of the fruits of love it is sufficient to say that 'he that loveth abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. (1Jn 2:10) The issues of hatred are traced in different directions. They are regarded both in respect of present being (**is in**) and action (**walketh in**) and in respect of the final goal (**knoweth not whither**) to which life is directed. He who hates has lost the faculty of seeing, which requires light and love, 'so that his whole life is a continual error' (Howe). ([Ibid](#))

But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness (literally "he who is hating his brother, in the darkness he is") - Note the three clear contrasts in this passage and the preceding passage (1Jn 2:10) = "The one who **loves** (vs **hates**) his brother **abides** (vs **is**) **in the Light** (vs **in the darkness**)."

Compare John's related warning in 1John 4:20 = "If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen."

Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary - The darkness is his home and the sphere of his activity. The contrast between the

godly and the wicked is similarly indicated in Proverbs 4:18-19. ([1 John 2 - Cambridge Greek Testament Commentary](#))

Hates (detests, despises)([3404](#))(**miseo** from **misos** = hatred) means to dislike strongly or to have a strong aversion to someone, which is an expression of deep hostility of one person toward another (Mt 5:43-note, Lk 6:27, et al). The **present tense** depicts this not as **passing** dislike (which if we are honest with ourselves, we all experience from time to time), but as a **continual** state of this person's heart which is unflinchingly fixed on hating his brother.

Miseo is used 40x in the NT and 5x in John's first epistle (see below), as well as 12x in his Gospel - Jn 3:20; 7:7 (twice), Jn 12:25; Jn 15:18 (twice), Jn 15:19, Jn 15:23 (twice), Jn 15:24-25; 17:14 and 4x in the Revelation - Rev 2:6 (twice); Rev 17:16; 18:2. All of John's uses below are in the **present tense** and the **active voice**, this voice indicating that the hatred involves their volition = they are making a choice of their will to hate!

(1John 2:9) The one who says he is in the Light and yet **hates** his brother is in the darkness until now.

(1John 2:11) But the one who **hates** his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

(1John 3:13) Do not be surprised, brethren, if the world **hates** you.

(1John 3:15) Everyone who **hates** his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

(1John 4:20) If someone says, "I love God," and **hates** his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.

The highly respected expositor **Ray Stedman** interprets "Such an attitude of hostility... toward another (as) **a mark of an unregenerate life**." Stedman adds "But notice that the apostle is careful to make a distinction between **walking** in the darkness, and **being** in the darkness. To **be "in the darkness"** is to be **unregenerated**, as you see also from 1Jn 3:14."

John Stott - The person with hatred in his heart, however, because he is in the darkness, also walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him (1Jn 2:11; cf. Pr 4:19). Hatred distorts our perspective. We do not first misjudge people and then hate them as a result; our view of them is already jaundiced by our hatred. It is love which sees straight, thinks clearly and makes us balanced in our outlook, judgments and conduct. Cf. John 8:12; 11:9-10; 12:35. (Ibid)

Guzik - The point is plain. If we lose love then we lose everything. There is nothing left. You can do all the right things, believe all the right truths, but if you do not love other Christians then all is lost. The three tests - moral, doctrinal, and love - all stand together, like the legs on a three-legged stool. It is all too easy for people to place "ministry" or "being right" above love in the body of Christ. We must do ministry, and we must be right, but we must do it all in love - if not in perfect actions, then following with proper repentance.

([1 John 2 - David Guzik Commentary on the Bible](#))

Is in the darkness and walks in the darkness - John identifies this individual's sphere of existence and his mode of existence. "It is his sphere, and he both receives and diffuses it." (Philipp Schaff) This was every person's state in Adam for as Paul says "we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another." (Titus 3:3-note)

Smalley adds that "In other words, unethical behavior not only contradicts the claim to be a Christian; it actually contributes to a spiritual downfall "Hatred perverts a man's whole action, and prevents conscious progress toward any satisfactory goal" (Brooke, 40). Moreover, to "lose the way" spiritually and then determinedly to ignore all signposts pointing in the right direction ("whoever hates"), is to drift further and further away from the true light." ([1, 2, 3 John Word Biblical Commentary](#))

Hiebert - "The first two statements, **is in the darkness and walks in the darkness**, with their **present tenses** declare that **the darkness** remains his sphere of existence and daily round of activities. His character and conduct are characterized by **darkness**."

In the darkness conveys the picture of **darkness** as the "atmosphere" which he breathes and in which he lives and has his being, even as the atmosphere of a fish is in the water. As the fish lives in water, so too this person lives in the darkness! **Vaughan** adds that "**darkness** is the moral and spiritual atmosphere of his life." And how dark is this darkness! Woe!

MacArthur adds that " They are like those who are completely blind and grope around to determine where they are (cf. Ge 19:11; Acts 13:11-12). Such loveless people are clearly outside the kingdom of Light (cf. Matt. 5:21-22; 1John 3:15) and void of spiritual life. John described such claimants earlier as liars - "This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. (1Jn 1:5-6) ([1-3 John- MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#)) ([See also MacArthur's sermons on 1John](#))

Darkness ([4653](#))(*skotia* from *skotos* = darkness) means literal darkness in some NT uses (Jn 6:17, 20:1), but more often (14/16x) as here in 1John 2:8, *skotia* is used figuratively to refer to spiritual darkness. In every figurative use, **darkness** is contrasted with **light** in all but one passage (1Jn 2:11). In the spiritual sense darkness describes both the state and works of a person. It symbolizes evil and sin, everything that life should not be and everything that a person should not do!

Walks (Behaves, Conducts) ([4043](#))(*peripateo* from *peri* = about, around + *pateo* = walk, tread) means literally to walk around, to go here and there in walking, to tread all around. In this **context** *peripateo* is used metaphorically to describe one's day to day conduct or behavior (how they live). The **present tense** in this passage signifies that this individual is continually walking (living) in the sphere ("atmosphere") of spiritual darkness. The verb "**is**" (*estin* - *eimi*) is also in the **present tense**, so the picture John paints is one who is **continually in spiritual darkness** (this is his "sphere of existence" so to speak!)

Yarbrough comments that "such a person "lives his whole life (*peripateo*) in darkness." The LXX uses *peripateo* (to walk) as a **metaphor** for the tone and direction of the whole of life... In John's Gospel and Revelation, metaphorical *peripateo* is limited to Jn 8:12; Jn 12:35 (2x); Rev 21:24. But John's Epistles employ the metaphorical sense exclusively: 1Jn 1:6-7; 1Jn 2:6 (2x), 1Jn 2:11; 2John 1:4, 6 (2x); 3John 1:3, 4. By saying that someone walks in darkness, John means that his or her ethical and spiritual life is benighted. This person is not walking with God and may not admit or even recognize it, as John will make clear later in 1Jn 2:11. This is hardly a surprise, since in John's Gospel, Jesus teaches that people, far from abhorring darkness, typically have a strong preference for it (John 3:19 **Ed: And their deeds being evil is proof of their preference, even as hatred of brethren is proof of one's preference in 1Jn 2:9,11**). The alternative of having light shed on their evil deeds is unthinkable. It is easier to justify darkness and call it light, a tactic not foreign to OT annals: "Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness" (Isa. 5:20 NIV-note). In the early church, darkness connoted the realm of Satan, in which all who do not know Christ languish and from which the message of the cross delivers (Acts 26:18; Eph 5:8-note; Col 1:13-note; 1Pe 2:9-note). It is sobering to contemplate John's allegation that in the congregations he addressed could be ostensible believers who actually were strangers to saving grace. But the absence of communal love mentioned in 1John 2:9 and now 1Jn 2:11 was **prima facie** evidence of this very thing. Out of compassion, if nothing else, a pastoral leader like John would be bound to say something." ([Yarbrough, Robert W: 1,2,3 John Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament](#))

A E Brooke - "The man's mental, moral and spiritual state must affect his conduct. He **walks** in that in which he **is**."

John Phillips - Darkness does that. The classical biblical example is King Saul, who was jealous of David. The dark chapters of Saul's life began when David won the applause of the nation for going into the valley of death to destroy Goliath, the Philistine giant from Gath. For a while Saul seems to have struggled with his malice and ill will. But it grew until it dominated his whole life, until he forgot everything else, even allowing the administration of the kingdom to fall into ruins. He hated those who loved and supported David, even his own son Jonathan, whom he tried to kill in a fit of rage. He brooded on his dislike, ignoring the growing Philistine threat to his kingdom, his life degenerating into a mad crusade to hunt David down. He made at least two dozen separate attempts on David's life and massacred an entire colony of priests out of suspicion that they had sided with David and helped him to escape. On two occasions when David had Saul in his power and let him go, Saul owned his wrongdoing but was soon back at his old tricks again, planning crusades and campaigns to corner, capture, and kill David. Saul hated the man who was really his best friend, in the truest sense of the word. He went from one dark episode to another, blind to everything else until, at last, jealousy, fear, rage, and malice took over his entire existence. He ended up in total darkness, consulting a witch and dying as a suicide on his own sword. "He that hateth his brother walketh in darkness," says John. He was right. ([Exploring the Epistles of John](#))

Candlish - But let him be warned. If he is destitute of this brotherly love, he cannot be in the light, the true light which is now shining. He is in darkness; the darkness which, in all that are Christ's, as in Christ himself, is passing. And according to the darkness in which he is, must his walk be. It cannot be the walk of one in whom there is no occasion of stumbling. It must be the walk of one who is darkly groping his way, not knowing whither he is going. Nor is this his misfortune; it is his fault. There is light enough, but he refuses to see it; he allows the darkness to blind his eyes. (**Excellent resource = [1 John 2:9-11 Brotherly Love a Test and Means of Being and Abiding](#)**)

David Smith on in the darkness and walks in the darkness - John recognizes no neutral attitude between 'love' and 'hatred.' Love is active benevolence, and less than this is hatred, just as indifference to the gospel-call amounts to rejection of it (compare Mt 22:5-7). Observe the climax: 'in the darkness is, and in the darkness walks, and knows not where he is going.' The penalty of living in the darkness is not merely that one does not see, but that one goes blind. The neglected faculty is atrophied. Compare the mole, the crustacea in the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky. ([1 John 2 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

Pulpit Commentary - What an awful agnosticism! Can anything be more terrible than for a human soul to be compelled to plunge forward wildly, blindly, without a ray of light in any direction, simply because he would not follow the light God sent him, and tampered with his own power of seeing? ([1 John 2 - The Pulpit Commentaries](#))

Hamilton Smith comments on **in darkness** - This is not simply one who is in a state of darkness, as might be the case with a true

Christian who, having fallen under a cloud, entertains bitter thoughts against his brother. It supposes one who is in **"the darkness"**, that is, in a system in which there is no revelation of God. **"The darkness"** is the absence of the revelation of God, and is an expression used in contrast with "the true light", which is the revelation of God. Here, then, we have the great characteristics of eternal life — obedience and love. Moreover, the passage clearly shows that if we possess the life, and live the life, it will lead us:

- Firstly, into the knowledge of God the Father — we shall know Him (1Jn 2:3, 4).
- Secondly, knowing the Father, we shall walk in obedience to His will (1Jn 2:3, 4).
- Thirdly, keeping His commandments, we shall be confirmed in His love (1Jn 2:5).
- Fourthly, thus walking in obedience and love, we shall walk even as Christ walked (1Jn 2:6).
- Fifthly, walking as Christ walked, we shall love one another (1Jn 2:10). ([The Epistles of John.](#))

Does not know where he is going - This ignorance IS NOT bliss!

Jesus gave a similar warning to His largely unbelieving audience "For a little while longer the light is among you. **Walk** while you have the light, (**Why?**) that darkness may not overtake (seize) you; **he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes** (This last phrase is virtually identical to 1Jn 2:11 - it is almost as if John is quoting the words of Jesus)." (Jn 12:35)

The verb for **know** is **oida (eido)**, which speaks not of knowledge learned by experience, but of knowledge given by the Spirit, which explains why these individuals do **not know where they are going!** Believer's **know** "intuitively" that they are aliens and strangers in this present world and are headed for their real, eternal home in the presence of the glory of God. Not so with those who are unregenerate and live their lives continually in spiritual darkness. Indeed, spiritual darkness is what they have chosen to "sow" and spiritual darkness is what they "reap" throughout eternity. (cp Mt 8:12, 22:13, 25:30).

In contrast to those who don't know their destiny, believers (followers or disciples of Jesus) **know** the way they are going, and in fact are even called **"The Way"** (their destination is assured. See Acts 9:2, Acts 19:9, 23, Acts 22:4, 24:22).

Jesus told His disciples "And you know (**oida**) **the way** where I am going." Thomas *said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know **oida**) **the way**?" Jesus *said to him, "I am **the way**, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." (Jn 14:4-6) As **Yarbrough** says "John (1Jn 2:11) voices no such assurance regarding those who do not love fellow believers. In their aversion to love, they are charting a course toward the abyss!" Solomon adds that **"The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know over what they stumble."** (Pr 4:19)

Westcott points out "On the other hand that which was true of Christ (Jn 8:12, 13:3) is true also of the believer (cp. Jn 14:4-6). **He knows what is the end of life.**" (In regard to **"where he is going"** Westcott says) "The idea is not that of proceeding to a definite point ([that would be the verb] poreuesthai), but of leaving the present scene." ([Ibid](#))

Going (5055) ([hupago - see below](#))

Hiebert - such a life means that he **"does not know where he is going"**, has no true perception concerning the **direction** and **destiny** of his life. The verb **"is going"** ("to go or lead under") implies that he is unaware of what he is moving toward and will be controlled by. **"Because the darkness has blinded his eyes"** simply records the blinding impact of hatred in the human heart. "So hate destroys any windows for light from God." **Those who employ the tactics of hatred inevitably end up under the domination of darkness.** John's statement is metaphorical, but it is based on observed physical realities. Fish in Echo River in Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, living in perpetual darkness, have eye sockets but their eyes are undeveloped. The darkness has effectively blinded them. The verb rendered "has blinded" is an effective aorist; it simply records the result without calling attention to the time duration involved. **Persistence in hatred and sin inevitably leads to moral and spiritual blindness.** ([Hiebert- 1 John 2-7-17](#))

Because - Always be alert to this **term of explanation** and ask at least "What is the author explaining?"

The darkness has blinded his eyes - To spiritual truth, the things of God. Paul uses the same verb to describe unbelievers writing "in whose case the god of this world (Satan) has **blinded** the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (2Cor 4:4-note)

Jesus described the Pharisees as those who were spiritually blind and did not even know it - "Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but since you say, 'We see,' your sin remains." (John 9:41) They claimed to possess the truth about God (like the one in 1Jn 2:9 "who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother [and] is in the darkness until now.") and yet had walked in the darkness for so long, that the darkness seemed like light to them! (cp the question of the Pharisees in Jn 9:40 = clearly they were unaware of their own spiritual blindness!) The paradox is that the Light of Jesus works two effects - it gives spiritual sight to the spiritually blind [who acknowledge their desperate need for healing/salvation], but causes spiritual blindness to all who make a self-proclamation of possessing the light, much like Isaiah had prophesied would come to pass (Isa 6:10, quoted by John in Jn 12:40)!

Westcott agrees commenting that "The image comes from Isa 6:10 (John 12:40), which is the fundamental description of God's mode of dealing with the self-willed. Comp. Ro 11:10-**note** (Ps. 69:24)... The original tense (**blinded** in aorist tense) (cp. 2Cor. 4:4-**note** and contrast John 12:40) marks the decisive action of the darkness at the fatal moment when it once for all 'overtook' the man (John 12:35). This darkness not only hindered the use of vision but (as darkness does physically) destroyed the spiritual organ." ([Ibid](#))

Adam Clarke - He is still in his heathen or unconverted state; and walketh in darkness, his conduct being a proof of that state; and knoweth not whither he goeth - having no proper knowledge of God or eternal things; and cannot tell whether he is going to heaven or hell, because that darkness has blinded his eyes - darkened his whole soul, mind, and heart.

Smalley - Pursuing and extending the motif of "light and darkness" which he is using here, the author suggests that a perpetual existence in darkness rather than light causes spiritual blindness, and consequently makes it increasingly difficult to find the way back to God... Habitual hatred inevitably produces further hatred; so that the possibility of loving becomes more and more remote. ([1, 2, 3 John Word Biblical Commentary](#))

Blinded ([5186](#))(**tuphloo/typhloo** from **tuphlos** = blind from a root tuph/typh- = to burn, smoke, cp tuphos = smoke) to envelop with smoke and in the active sense means to make blind, to rob of sight. The figurative sense means to be unable to "see" (understand, comprehend) some truth, especially spiritual truth. The only other uses in NT are Jn 12:40 (of God blinding eyes) and 2Cor 4:4-**note** (of Satan blinding eyes).

Ralph Enlow writes that "Scripture often employs the imagery of **blindness** to describe the spiritual condition of persons who are either unable or unwilling to perceive divine revelation. The things of God are perceived not by observation and inquiry, but by revelation and illumination (Mt 11:25, 26, 27; 1Co 1:21; 2Pe 1:19, 20, 21-note). It is the Lord who "gives sight to the blind" (Ps 146:8; Is 42:16)... Spiritual blindness, then, refers in some instances to the inability of unbelievers to comprehend spiritual truth, specifically failure to recognize the true identity of the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ (Jn 1:1, 14). ([Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#))

Vincent on **has blinded** - The aorist tense (aorist, active, indicative), blinded, indicates a past, definite, decisive act. When the darkness overtook, it blinded. The blindness is no new state into which he has come. For the image (**blinded**) see Isa 6:10-**note**. See on **closed**, Mt 13:15 (Vincent's Note on Mt 13:15 = The Hebrew, in Isa. 6:10, is besmear. This insensibility is described as a punishment. Compare Isa. 29:10; 44:18; in both of which the closing of the eyes is described as a judgment of God. Sealing up the eyes was an oriental punishment. Cheyne ("Isaiah") cites the case of a son of the Great Mogul, who had his eyes sealed up three years by his father as a punishment. Dante pictures the envious, on the second cornice of Purgatory, with their eyes sewed up: "For all their lids an iron wire transpierces, And sews them up, as to a sparrowhawk wild, Is done, because it will not quiet stay." Purg., xiii., 70-72.) Compare Jn 1:5, and see **katalambano**, overtook; John 12:35, 40.

Pulpit Commentary - The brother-hater has darkness as his habitual condition and as the atmosphere in which he lives and works; and long ago (aorist) the continual darkness deprived him of the very power of sight, so that he is in ignorance as to the course he is taking. Cf. "They know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness" (Ps 82:5); "The wise man's eyes are in his head, but the fool walks in darkness. And yet I know that one fate befalls them both." (Eccl 2:14) ([1 John 2 - The Pulpit Commentaries](#))

Wuest spares no words in concluding that "This person (the one in whom darkness has blinded his eyes) is, of course, an unsaved person professing Christianity. Habitually conducting one's self in the sphere of darkness is indicative of an unsaved state."

Boice - The first consequence is in the nature of an observation: the one who hates his brother is in darkness. This is the simplest expression of the test in its negative form. The second consequence is that he walks in darkness. This adds the idea of continuing action or a continuing sphere of activity. It is not just that the man who fails to love his brother is without knowledge of God; it is also that everything he does is in darkness and is characterized by darkness. He continues in it. Finally, John adds that although he continues in his darkened walk, he does so without any clear knowledge of a goal. He walks on, for the way of the ungodly is one of restless activity. But he "does not know where he is going" (cf. John 12:35). (*Ibid*)

A T Robertson - (blinded here is) the very verb and form used in 2Cor 4:4-**note** of the god of this age to keep men from beholding the illumination of the Gospel of the glory of Christ who is the image of God. The first part of the verse repeats 1Jn 2:9, but adds this vivid touch of the blinding power of darkness. In the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky the fish in Echo River have eye-sockets, but no eyes. (1Jn 2:11).

Vaughan: "Like the mole, like the ponies used in coal mines, like the fish of Mammoth Cave, dwellers in darkness eventually lose the ability to appreciate light."

Kistemaker: "Darkness has a blinding effect on the eyes. When eyes are kept idle for sustained periods of time, blindness inevitably

results. When a person is in spiritual darkness, life becomes meaningless and goals are without purpose. The tragedy is that walking in darkness need not take place, for God's true light is available to everyone (John 1:9)."

Pulpit Commentary - Mark the characteristics of this life from which brotherly love is absent, as they are here sketched.

1. Darkness of moral condition. He "is in the darkness"—in it as the element of his moral life.
2. Darkness of moral action He "walketh in the darkness." His course of life and conduct is in keeping with the gloom of error and sin.
3. Darkness as to destination. He "knoweth not whither he goeth." He knows neither the way he is walking in nor the end to which it leads.
4. Darkness of the spiritual being. "The darkness hath blinded his eyes." Persons who have long been imprisoned in darkness have frequently lost their physical vision. So here it is said that the moral darkness in which the sinner dwells has destroyed his spiritual vision; and he walks on in moral night, imagining that he is walking in the light of day (cf. John 9:41) - W.J. ([1 John 2 - The Pulpit Commentary](#))

H A Ironside - This is the natural darkness in which all men are born. "Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart" (Ephesians 4:18-**note**). That is the condition of man by nature. But remember, we are not condemned because of what we are by nature. "This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (John 3:19). You are not responsible because you are a sinner by nature, but you are responsible if you reject the Savior. You are not responsible because you were born in darkness and your understanding is darkened, but you are responsible if you reject the light that comes to you through the Word of God. This light will chase away all the darkness if you walk in it. Don't turn from its searching rays. But if men persist in rejecting the light, there may come a day when God will withdraw that light. In Jeremiah 13:16 we read, "Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains, and, while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death, and make it gross darkness." This is the "strong delusion" we read about in 2Thessalonians 2:11. Then there is only one more step-eternal darkness—"Wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 1:13-**note**). "He that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes" (1John 2:11). But Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). Have you honestly trusted Him? Is He your light? Is He your life today? ([1 John 2 - Ironside's Notes](#))

[I Heard The Voice of Jesus say](#)
[\(Play this great hymn\)](#)

I heard the voice of Jesus say,
"I am this dark world's Light;
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise,
And all thy days be bright."

I looked to Jesus, and I found
In Him my Star, my Sun,
And in that light of life, I'll walk
Till trav'ling days are done.
--Horatius Bonar

Steven Cole sums up 1Jn 2:11 - The plain meaning of 1Jn 2:11 is that if you live for yourself with no regard for others, no self-sacrifice or willingness to be inconvenienced to meet others' needs, then you are not saved. John is not talking about occasional lapses into selfishness. We all fail in that at times. Rather, he's talking about a lifestyle ("walks"). The person who lives for himself and is indifferent towards others (which is what hatred means) "does not know where he is going because the darkness has blinded his eyes" (1Jn 2:11). He is spiritually blind, groping through life without the light of God's Word to guide him in God's ways. I have often counseled with people who profess to know Christ, but their relationships are marked by anger, abusive speech, bitterness, and self-centeredness. Invariably, they don't have a clue as to why they keep experiencing broken relationships. While I do not know their hearts (only God does), their lives do not give evidence that they have experienced the love of God in Jesus Christ. Rather, they seem to be in spiritual darkness, blindly colliding from one broken relationship to the next. They do not practice biblical love, which is an essential mark of every true Christian. Conclusion -Again, none of us loves perfectly. When we fail, we need to repent and ask forgiveness of the one we wronged. It is a lifelong process of being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. But those who have met Him at the cross will be growing in love for others. Also, note that love for others is a commandment, not a warm, gushy feeling. That should give you hope, because God's commandments are not burdensome (1John 5:3) and God's Spirit gives us the

grace and power to obey His commands, which are for our good. Biblical love is a self-sacrificing, caring commitment that shows itself in seeking the highest good of the one loved. You can obey the commandment to love others! So if you're thinking, "But I don't love my mate any more," or, "I just don't like that difficult person," the Bible is clear: Get to work obeying God's commandment to love him or her. It's not optional for the follower of Christ. It's essential! ([The Old New Commandment 1 John 2:7-11](#))

Candlish - The case put must be viewed as that of one who is so far in earnest as to be really aiming heavenward (**The one who says he is in the Light** - 1Jn 2:9). He may be even a most painstaking seeker of the heavenward way, and a plodding walker in whatever way he takes to be it. Such was many a Pharisee, like Paul in his days of elaborate self-righteousness. Such was many a Gnostic, or knowing one, among those whom John, I doubt not, had in his view when he was writing this verse. Take a devotee of that sort, engrossed in some self-purifying and self-perfecting spiritual discipline. "He hateth his brother." That means, in John's phraseology, he is destitute of brotherly love. He has no warm brotherly sympathy with other believers. He may have no positive ill-will to any man; on the contrary, in a sort of vague and general way he may think he wishes all men well. But he has no special affection for godly men as such, for children of the light. He is taken up with the care of his own soul, and his preparation for serving and enjoying God now and afterwards. I purposely state the case in its most favourable aspect. Now how does such a man really walk? One might suppose that, having nothing to do but to mind his own steps, he must walk very wisely and surely. But alas! the dreary, dismal records of ascetic and monastic piety prove that its walk is a terrible groping in the dark. Was ever the path of any of these recluses, even the holiest, "like the shining light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day?" Is it not rather a desperate plunging and floundering through mire and filth, amid stones and pitfalls, in the face of grisly phantoms of sin and hell? The man is bent on righting himself; ridding himself of lust; leaving behind him the world, the devil, and the flesh; working himself up into a state of serene and passionless equanimity, like that transcendental quiescence and repose in which he supposes God to dwell. It is a high though a visionary aim. For the attainment of it what efforts will he not put forth! what sacrifices will he not make! to what self-flagellation, self-laceration, bodily and spiritual, will he not submit! And yet what is it all but wandering as in a starless night? Incessant failure; disappointment after disappointment; new expedients resorted to in vain; now, for a moment, a supernatural trance, an ecstatic rapture, to be followed instantly by a fierce gust of unhallowed passion, or some horrid St. Anthony's temptation! Truly the man knoweth not whither he goeth. His eyes become so blinded that the very light is to him as darkness. The light of the glorious gospel itself fails to illuminate and enlarge his soul. The absence of sympathy; brotherly sympathy; first with the elder brother, and then with the little ones in him, explains it all. (**Excellent resource = 1 John 2:9-11 Brotherly Love a Test and Means of Being and Abiding**)

Going (get, go their way, go away, goes, went) ([5217](#))(**hupago** from **hupo** = under or denoting secrecy + **ago** = to go) means literally to lead under or to bring under and is used in this sense only once in the only use in the Septuagint/Lxx in Ex 14:21 (to translate "swept... back" - caused to recede). Most commonly **hupago** means to go, to go away, to withdraw one's self (e.g., of Jesus' departure from the world (Jn 8:14, etc). **Hupago** has the notion of withdrawing.

The idea of **hupago** is not so much of preceding to a definite point, but of leaving the present scene. In other words, it often means 'to go', with the implication of going in a certain direction, as to the house of Jairus (Lk 8:42).

Most of the uses of **hupago** are used without a direct object. In other words,; the "where" of the going is not specifically stated and is usually understood from the context.

Hupago is used most often in the Gospels (70x) and is frequently (36x) used as a command (**present imperative**) calling for one to continually go (go away, depart), most of these commands being issued by Jesus. These uses by our Lord testify to His authority of Christ = over physical illness (Mt 8:13); directing His followers on mission (Lk 10:3); directing the disciples with details for His triumphal entry (Mark 11:2); Satan (or demons) to go (be gone, go away). (Mt 4:10, 8:32, 16:23, Lk 11:8). It is notable that Jesus does not need to engage in a "power struggle" over the demonic forces, usually commanding them to with this one verb hupago! Go!

Mounce - **hupago** means "to go" in the sense of departing (Mt 4:10, "Away from me, Satan!") or accompanying (Mt 5:41, "Go with him two miles"). It is used figuratively to refer to dying (Mt 26:24, "The Son of Man will go just as it is written") or to an outward sign of conversion (Jn 12:11, "Many of the Jews were going over to Jesus") The phrase, "Get behind me" (Mk 8:33) may reflect the Hebrew idea of both contempt and rejection. Going and bearing fruit are also a part of what it means to be chosen by God (Jn 15:16, "I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit."). Jesus uses the verb often in the gospel of John to refer to "where he is going," namely, to his Father in heaven (Jn 8:14; 13:3; 14:4-5, 28). (Mounce's complete expository dictionary of Old & New Testament words)

Louw-Nida - **Hupago** means to lead (oneself) under, i.e. withdraw or retire (as if sinking out of sight), lit. or fig.:— depart, get hence, go (a-) way.

Wuest - **Hupago** is used of the final departure of one who ceases to be another's companion or attendant.

Zodhiates - In the NT and later (**hupago**) was used intrans. or with **heautón** (reflexive pronoun - of himself, herself or itself) meaning

to go away, particularly under cover, out of sight, with stealth.

John used **hupago** especially to describe Jesus going - eg, presumably to the Cross in Mt 26:24 and returning to His Father in heaven, an important theme in John's Gospel. Jesus teaches that His time with the Jews is brief, and that He will go back to where He came from, to His Father. (Jn 13:3, 33, 36 Jn 14:4, 5,28, Jn 16:5, 10, 17) In John 6:67 **hupago** conveys the idea of leaving Jesus, going away from Him (no longer following Him). In this later usage, hupago in a sense alludes to Jesus' Ascension. Jesus' going to the Father is a vital part of John's message for it was from the Father that He had been sent on "mission," so that through Him access to the Father is could be made available (Jn 14:6).

Vine - Hupago = to go away or to go slowly away, to depart, withdraw oneself, often with the idea of going without noise or notice. Translated "depart" in Jas. 2:16, kjv, primarily and literally hupago meant "to lead under" (hupo = "under"); in its later use, it implied a "going," without noise or notice, or by stealth. In James 2:16 the idea is perhaps that of a polite dismissal, "Go your ways.

Robertson comments on John's use of 3 words that refer to going - poreuomai = go for a purpose, aperchomai = , to go away, hupago = to withdraw personally).

TDNT - Outside the Bible hupago is attested from Homer and means a. transitively (not used this way in NT). strictly "to lead under," e.g., horses under the yoke, Hom. Il., 24, 279 etc., "to lead from under," e.g., out of range, "to lead someone somewhere," before a court, Hdt., IX, 93, 3, "to bring, seduce, lead astray to something,". In the middle voice we find "to subdue a country," Josephus Ant., 7, 307, "to put oneself at someone's disposal," 5, 339, cf. 12, 398, in the perf. pass. part. "to devote oneself" to the service of Isis, 18, 70. It then means b. intransitively. (from Hdt.) "to withdraw," Hdt., IV, 120, 2; 122, 2. The imperative is common: "Go away," "be off," Aristophanes, e.g., Vesp., 290, plur. "March," Ran., 174, in popular usage. In Epictetus we often find it before another imperative, in many cases with an ironical ring: "Go, persuade someone else," Epict. Diss., III, 23, 12, "Go rather ..." III, 22, 108 etc. In the pap. it often means "to go away," "to go on a journey," P. Oxy., X, 1291, 11 (30 a.d.), "to journey to," Preisigke Sammelbuch, 1, 998, 2 (16/17 a.d.), "to go to" someone, P. Tebt., II, 417, 4 (3rd cent. a.d.), "go and receive ...," ibid., line 21 etc. (Theological dictionary of the New Testament. Volume 8, page 504)

Hupago - 79x in 75v - **NAS Usage:** get(2), go(45), go their way(1), go away(3), goes(5), going(20), going away(1), going back(1), went(1).

Matthew 4:10 Then Jesus said to him, '**Go**, (present imperative) Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

Matthew 5:24 leave your offering there before the altar and **go** (present imperative); first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.

Matthew 5:41 "Whoever forces you to go one mile, **go** (present imperative) with him two.

Matthew 8:4 And Jesus said to him, "See that you tell no one; but **go** (present imperative), show yourself to the priest and present the offering that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Matthew 8:13 And Jesus said to the centurion, "**Go** (present imperative); it shall be done for you as you have believed." And the servant was healed that very moment.

Matthew 8:32 And He said to them, '**Go** (present imperative)!' And they came out and went into the swine, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and perished in the waters.

Matthew 9:6 "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins "-- then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and **go** (aorist imperative) home."

Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he **goes** and sells all that he has and buys that field.

Matthew 16:23 But He turned and said to Peter, '**Get** (present imperative) behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Matthew 18:15 "If your brother sins, **go** (present imperative) and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

Matthew 19:21 Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, **go** (present imperative) and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Matthew 20:4 and to those he said, 'You also **go** (present imperative) into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' And so they went.

Matthew 20:7 "They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You **go** (present imperative)

into the vineyard too.'

Matthew 20:14 'Take what is yours and **go (present imperative)**, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you.

Matthew 21:28 "But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, **go (present imperative)** work today in the vineyard.'

Matthew 26:18 And He said, "**Go (present imperative)** into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your house with My disciples.'""

Matthew 26:24 "The Son of Man is to **go**, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

Matthew 27:65 Pilate said to them, "You have a guard;**go (present imperative)**, make it as secure as you know how."

Matthew 28:10 Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid;**go (present imperative)** and take word to My brethren to leave for Galilee, and there they will see Me."

Mark 1:44 and He said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone; but**go (present imperative)**, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them."

Mark 2:11 "I say to you, get up, pick up your pallet and**go (present imperative)** home."

Mark 5:19 And He did not let him, but He said to him, '**Go (present imperative)** home to your people and report to them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He had mercy on you."

Mark 5:34 And He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has made you well;**go (present imperative)** in peace and be healed of your affliction."

Mark 6:31 And He said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a secluded place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and **going**, and they did not even have time to eat.)

Mark 6:33 The people saw them **going**, and many recognized them and ran there together on foot from all the cities, and got there ahead of them.

Mark 6:38 And He said to them, "How many loaves do you have?**Go (present imperative)** look!" And when they found out, they said, "Five, and two fish."

Mark 7:29 And He said to her, "Because of this answer**go (present imperative)**; the demon has gone out of your daughter."

Mark 8:33 But turning around and seeing His disciples, He rebuked Peter and said, "**Get (present imperative)** behind Me, Satan; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's."

Mark 10:21 Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, "One thing you lack**go (present imperative)** and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

Mark 10:52 And Jesus said to him, '**Go (present imperative)**; your faith has made you well.'" Immediately he regained his sight and began following Him on the road.

Mark 11:2 and said to them, '**Go (present imperative)** into the village opposite you, and immediately as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here.

Mark 14:13 And He sent two of His disciples and said to them, **Go (present imperative)** into the city, and a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him;

Mark 14:21 "For the Son of Man is to **go** just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born."

Comment: Used here as a euphemism for "die"

Mark 16:7 "But **go (present imperative)**, tell His disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see Him, just as He told you.'"

Luke 8:42 for he had an only daughter, about twelve years old, and she was dying. But as **Hewent**, the crowds were pressing against Him.

Luke 10:3 "**Go (present imperative)**; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves.

Luke 12:58 "For while you are **going** with your opponent to appear before the magistrate, on your way there make an effort to settle with him, so that he may not drag you before the judge, and the judge turn you over to the officer, and the officer throw you into prison.

Luke 17:14 When He saw them, He said to them, **Go (present imperative)** and show yourselves to the priests." And as they were going, they were cleansed.

Luke 19:30 saying, **Go (present imperative)** into the village ahead of you; there, as you enter, you will find a colt tied on which no one yet has ever sat; untie it and bring it here.

John 3:8 "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is **going**; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

John 4:16 He said to her, **Go (present imperative)**, call your husband and come here."

John 6:21 So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were **going**.

John 6:67 So Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not want to **go** away also, do you?"

John 7:3 Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing.

John 7:33 Therefore Jesus said, "For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me.

John 8:14 Jesus answered and said to them, "Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am **going**; but you do not know where I come from or where I am **going**.

John 8:21 Then He said again to them, "**I go** away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am **going**, you cannot come."

John 8:22 So the Jews were saying, "Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, 'Where I am **going**, you cannot come '?"

John 9:7 and said to him, **Go (present imperative)**, wash in the pool of Siloam " (which is translated, Sent). So he went away and washed, and came back seeing.

John 9:11 He answered, "The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, **Go (present imperative)** to Siloam and wash'; so I went away and washed, and I received sight."

John 11:8 The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You **going** there again?"

A T Robertson - Present active intransitive use of the compound hupago to withdraw (Jn 6:21; 8:21) from this safe retreat (Vincent). It seemed suicidal madness to go back now.

John 11:31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was **going** to the tomb to weep there.

John 11:44 The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him **go**."

John 12:11 because on account of him many of the Jews were **going away** and were believing in Jesus.

John 12:35 So Jesus said to them, "For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he **goes**.

John 13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was **going** back to God,

33 "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'

36 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You **going**?" Jesus answered, "Where I **go**, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later."

John 14:4 "And you know the way where I am **going**." John 14:5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are **going**, how do we know the way?"

John 14:28 "You heard that I said to you, '**I go away**, and I will come to you.' If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

John 15:16 "You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would**go** and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

John 16:5 "But now I am **going** to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You**going**?'

John 16:10 and concerning righteousness, because I **go** to the Father and you no longer see Me;

John 16:17 Some of His disciples then said to one another, "What is this thing He is telling us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I **go** to the Father '?"

John 18:8 Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He; so if you seek Me, let these**go** their way,"

John 21:3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am**going** fishing." They said to him, "We will also come with you." They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.

James 2:16 and one of you says to them, '**Go (present imperative)** in peace (Common Jewish farewell = Jdg 18:6; 1Sam. 1:17; 20:42; 2Sa 15:9. Used by Jesus = Mk 5:34; Lk 7:50), be warmed and be filled," and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?

1 John 2:11 But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is **going** because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

Revelation 10:8 Then the voice which I heard from heaven, I heard again speaking with me, and saying, '**Go (present imperative)**, take the book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the land."

Revelation 13:10 If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he**goes**; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints.

Revelation 14:4 These are the ones who have not been defiled with women, for they have kept themselves chaste. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He **goes**. These have been purchased from among men as first fruits to God and to the Lamb.

Revelation 16:1 Then I heard a loud voice from the temple, saying to the seven angels, '**Go (present imperative)** and pour out on the earth the seven bowls of the wrath of God."

Revelation 17:8 "The beast that you saw was, and is not, and is about to come up out of the abyss and**go** to destruction. And those who dwell on the earth, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, will wonder when they see the beast, that he was and is not and will come.

Revelation 17:11 "The beast which was and is not, is himself also an eighth and is one of the seven, and he **goes** to destruction.