

1 John 4:6 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

[INDEX FOR ALL VERSES ON 1 JOHN](#)

[1 John 4:1](#)

[1 John 4:2](#)

[1 John 4:3](#)

[1 John 4:4](#)

[1 John 4:5](#)

[1 John 4:6](#)

[1 John 4:7](#)

[1 John 4:8](#)

[1 John 4:9](#)

[1 John 4:10](#)

[1 John 4:11](#)

[1 John 4:12](#)

[1 John 4:13](#)

[1 John 4:14](#)

[1 John 4:15](#)

[1 John 4:16](#)

[1 John 4:17](#)

[1 John 4:18](#)

[1 John 4:19](#)

[1 John 4:20](#)

[1 John 4:21](#)

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			

STUDY GUIDE

1 JOHN 4

What is this? On the photograph of the Observation Worksheet for this chapter you will find handwritten 5W/H questions (Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?) on each verse to help you either personally study or lead a discussion on this chapter. The questions are generally very simple and are stated in such a way as to stimulate you to observe the text to discern the answer. As a reminder, given the truth that your ultimate Teacher is the Holy Spirit, begin your time with God with prayer such as Psalm 119:12+

"Blessed are You, O LORD; Teach me Your statutes." (you can vary it with similar prayers - Ps 119:18, 26, 33, 64, 66, 68, 108, 124, 135, 171, etc) The questions are generally highlighted in yellow and the answers in green. Some questions have no answers and are left to your observations and the illuminating/teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. Some qualifying thoughts - (1) Use "As is" - these are handwritten and will include mistakes I made, etc. (2) They may not be the best question for a given verse and my guess is that on some verses you will think of a far superior 5W/H question and/or many other questions.

Dr Howard Hendricks once gave an assignment to his seminary students to list as many observations as they could from Acts 1:8. He said "So far they've come up with more than 600 different ones! Imagine what fun you could have with 600 observations on this passage. Would you like to see Scripture with eyes like that?" (P. 63 [Living by the Book](#) - borrow) With practice you can! And needless to say, you will likely make many more observations and related questions than I recorded on the pages below and in fact I pray that the Spirit would indeed lead you to discover a veritable treasure chest of observations and questions! In Jesus' Name. Amen

Why am I doing this? **Mortimer Adler** among others helped me develop a questioning mindset as I read, seeking to read actively rather than passively. Over the years I have discovered that as I have practiced reading with a 5W/H questioning mindset, it has yielded more accurate interpretation and the good fruit of meditation. In other words, consciously interacting with the inspired Holy Word of God and the illuminating Holy Spirit has honed my ability to meditate on the Scripture, and my prayer is that this tool will have the same impact in your spiritual life. The benefits of meditation are literally priceless in regard to their value in this life and in the life to come (cf discipline yourself for godliness in 1Ti 4:8+.) For some of the benefits - see Joshua 1:8+ and Psalm 1:2-3+. It will take diligence and mental effort to develop an "inductive" ([especially an "observational"](#)), interrogative mindset as you read God's Word, but it bears repeating that the benefits in this life and the rewards in the next will make it more than worth the effort you invest! Dear Christian reader let me encourage you to strongly consider learning the skills of [inductive Bible study](#) and spending the rest of your life practicing them on the Scriptures and living them out in your daily walk with Christ.

Although Mortimer Adler's advice is from a secular perspective, his words are worth pondering...

Strictly, all reading is active. What we call passive is simply less active. Reading is better or worse according as it is more or less active. And one reader is better than another in proportion as he is capable of a greater range of activity in reading. (Adler's classic book [How to Read a Book is free online](#))

[John Piper](#) adds that "Insight or understanding is the product of intensive, headache-producing meditation on two or three verses and how they fit together. This kind of reflection and rumination is provoked by asking questions of the text. And you cannot do it if you hurry. Therefore, we must resist the deceptive urge to carve notches in our bibliographic gun. Take two hours to ask ten questions of Galatians 2:20+ and you will gain one hundred times the insight you would have attained by reading thirty pages of the New Testament or any other book. Slow down. Query. Ponder. Chew.... (John Dewey rightly said) "People only truly think when they are confronted with a problem. Without some kind of dilemma to stimulate thought, behavior becomes habitual rather than thoughtful."

"Asking questions is the key to understanding."

--Jonathan Edwards

That said, below are the [5W/H questions](#) for each verse in this chapter (click page to enlarge). This is not neatly typed but is handwritten and was used for leading a class discussion on this chapter, so you are welcome to use it in this "as is" condition...

--	--

1 John 4:6 We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error

Greek hemeis ek tou theou esmen (PAI) o ginoskon (PAP) ton theon akouei (PAI) hemon os ouk estin (PAI) ek tou theou ouk akouei (PAI) hemon ek toutou ginoskomen (PAI) to pneuma tes aletheias kai to pneuma tes planes:

KJV 1 John 4:6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

BGT 1 John 4:6 με ς κ το θεο σμεν, γιν σκων τ ν θε ν κο ει μ ν, ς ο κ στιν κ το θεο ο κ κο ει μ ν. κ το του γιν σκομεν τ πνε μα τ ς ληθε ας κα τ πνε μα τ ς πλ νης.

NET 1 John 4:6 We are from God; the person who knows God listens to us, but whoever is not from God

does not listen to us. By this we know the **Spirit** of truth and the spirit of deceit.

CSB 1 John 4:6 We are from God. Anyone who knows God listens to us; anyone who is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the **Spirit** of truth and the spirit of deception.

ESV 1 John 4:6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the **Spirit** of truth and the spirit of error.

NIV 1 John 4:6 We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the **Spirit** of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

NLT 1 John 4:6 But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us. If they do not belong to God, they do not listen to us. That is how we know if someone has the **Spirit** of truth or the spirit of deception.

NRS 1 John 4:6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and whoever is not from God does not listen to us. From this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

NJB 1 John 4:6 We are from God; whoever recognises God listens to us; anyone who is not from God refuses to listen to us. This is how we can distinguish the spirit of truth from the spirit of falsehood.

NAB 1 John 4:6 We belong to God, and anyone who knows God listens to us, while anyone who does not belong to God refuses to hear us. This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit.

YLT 1 John 4:6 we -- of God we are; he who is knowing God doth hear us; he who is not of God, doth not hear us; from this we know the spirit of the truth, and the spirit of the error.

MIT 1 John 4:6 We are from God. One who knows God listens to us. One who is not derived from God does not agree with us. This explains how we differentiate intelligently between the spirit of truth and the spirit of deception.

GWN 1 John 4:6 We belong to God. The person who knows God listens to us. Whoever doesn't belong to God doesn't listen to us. That's how we can tell the **Spirit** of truth from the spirit of lies.

BBE 1 John 4:6 We are of God: he who has the knowledge of God gives ear to us; he who is not of God does not give ear to us. By this we may see which is the true spirit, and which is the spirit of error.

RSV 1 John 4:6 We are of God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and he who is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

NKJ 1 John 4:6 We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

ASV 1 John 4:6 We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he who is not of God heareth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

Wuest As for us, out of God we are. The one who is knowing God is hearing us. He who is not out of God is not hearing us. From this we know the **Spirit** of the truth and the spirit of the error.

- **are:** 1Jn 4:4 Mic 3:8 Ro 1:1 1Co 2:12-14 2Pe 3:2 Jude 1:17
- **knows** - 1Jn 4:8 Lu 10:22 John 8:19,45-50 Jn 10:27 13:20 18:37 20:21 1Co 14:37 2Co 10:7 2Th 1:8
- **By this** - 1Jn 4:1 Isa 8:20
- **spirit of truth** - John 14:17 Jn 15:26
- **and:** Isa 29:10 Ho 4:12 Mic 2:11 Ro 11:8 2Th 2:9-11
- [1 John 4 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

HOW TO KNOW THE MESSENGER IS OR IS NOT FROM GOD

Jack Arnold points out that "A Christian must know how to believe and not believe at the same time; that is, he must believe truth and reject error. The Scriptures demand that Christians be unbelievers as well as believers. This may sound contradictory but it is like breathing. In breathing one must inhale as well as exhale. Both are absolutely necessary if life is to be maintained. So it is with belief and unbelief. You cannot believe truth without rejecting error....This section in 1 John 4:1-6 tells us that it is impossible to believe truth without rejecting error. ([When Unbelief is Right](#))

Observe the striking contrast between 1 John 4:5 and 1 John 4:6...

1 John 4:5 They (false prophets/teachers) are from ([ek](#) - source/origin is from) the (anti-god) world; therefore they speak as from the (anti-god) world, and the world **listens** ([akouo](#) = present tense) to them.

We are from ([ek](#)) God; he who knows (ginosko in present tense) **God listens** ([akouo](#) = hears and obeys in present tense) **to us; he who is** (ou - absolutely) **not from ([ek](#)) God does** (ou - absolutely) **not listen** ([akouo](#) = hear and obey) **to us** - John says that if one **listens to** him (if one hears and heeds the Word of God), he **knows God** (is born from above). By the same token, if one **does not listen** to John (if one refuses to hear and heed the Word of God), they **are not from God**, not born from above.

Note the strong contrast with 1Jn 4:5 -- The lost souls of this godless world **listen** to the false prophets/teachers and do not **listen** to godly teachers (apostles, Scripture), proving that they have no intimate, personal relationship with God, and thus are souls who have bought into **the spirit of error**.

He who is (ou - absolutely) **not from ([ek](#)) God does** (ou - absolutely) **not listen** ([akouo](#) = hear and obey in present tense) **to us** - The unwillingness to listen to spiritual truth from men like John and instead to hear and follow spiritual error propounded by false prophets and false teachers shows their true colors. The verb **listen** is in the active voice and present tense indicates these people are continually making a conscious choice of their will to reject the talk of truth tellers! They can *hear* sounds but they cannot understand what they *hear* (because they do not have the Spirit of truth inside them) and it follows that they do not *heed* what they hear! Their inability to listen to God's Word shows that they are **not from God** (not believers) and by default belong to the godless, anti-god world, which propagates a spirit of error or falsehood.

Spirit-empowered preaching of the Word not only confirms the true nature of the speaker but also serves to lay bare the spiritual state of the hearer.

- D Edmond Hiebert

By this we know (ginosko in present tense, continually know by experience) **the spirit** (Spirit) **of truth** ([aletheia](#)) **and the spirit of error** ([plane](#)) - To what does **by this** refer? This one seems to refer to what was just stated but it is possible as others feel that it refers to the entire section 1Jn 4:1-6, because truth and error are the basic theme addressed.

Colin Kruse - A persistent acceptance of the gospel proclaimed by the author and his community marks those who are **from God**, and a persistent rejection of their gospel marks those who are **not from God**. (See [The Letters of John - Page 149](#))

John Stott - how can it be known that we are from God and are teaching the truth? You can tell that our message is God's message, John explains, because God's people listen to it and receive it. (Borrow [The Letters of John](#))

John MacArthur - In contrast to the demonic purveyors of falsehood (Acts 13:10; Gal. 1:7; cf. John 8:44), teachers who are **from God** proclaim His revealed Word as the source of truth (cf. 2 Cor. 6:7; 1 Tim. 2:7; Titus 1:3). The pronoun **we** primarily refers to John and the other writers of Scripture. Like them, all true teachers accurately proclaim the Word of God, and the person who knows God listens to them (cf. John 8:47; 10:4-5, 16, 26-27; 14:26; 18:37). By contrast, anyone who is **not from God** does not listen to their teachings. The completed, written revelation of the Old and New Testaments is therefore the sole authority by which Christians must test all spiritual ideologies. (See [1-3 John - Volume 5 - Page 159](#))

Jon Courson - Inspired by the Spirit, John declares those who truly know God know the Word. Those who don't know God don't listen to the Word. (See [Jon Courson's Application Commentary](#))

Steven Cole - Some understand the **we** of 1Jn 4:6 to refer to all believers. But it stands in antithesis to the **they** of 1Jn 4:5, and so it is better to interpret it as referring to the apostles. **We [apostles] are from God; the one who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us.** The one who **knows God** is synonymous with the one who is **from God**, the one who is born again. These people listen to the apostles, which means that they listen with understanding and obedience. They accept the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ as God in human flesh. As we have seen, the one who is not of God does not hear His word (John 8:47; see 1Cor. 2:14). ([Spiritual Discernment 1 John 4:1-6](#))

Hiebert - "The Holy Spirit in the heart of the speaker witnesses to the heart of the hearer and vitalizes the sense of their mutual fellowship in Christ." ([1 John 4:1-6](#))

The response to God's Word reveals the nature of the hearer - either positively (he... knows God) or negatively (he...is not from God).

John's words **he who is not from ([ek](#)) God does not listen to us** echo Jesus' words "He who is **of ([ek](#)) God hears** ([akouo](#) = hears and obeys) the words of God; for this reason (ADDRESSING PROFESSORS - Jn 8:30-31+) you do not hear *them*, because you are not of ([ek](#)) God." (Jn 8:47+)

THOUGHT - On a practical level, while we are not apostles, we do have access to their words and can speak those words to others. How many times have you been speaking with someone (in a winsome, non-confrontational manner) and you shift the conversation to the Word of God or to the Gospel of Jesus, and you begin to perceive a distinct change in their affect and demeanor? Their facial expression changes. They become fidgety. They start looking at their watch. They begin to step away. They do not want to listen to you because they are **not from God**. "*We are able to recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of the lie by observing a listener's reaction to the preaching of God's Word.*" (Kistemaker)

Paul alludes to the negative reaction many of us have received when sharing the Gospel writing "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the one (THOSE WHO ARE PERISHING) an aroma from death to death (**ED: TO THOSE WHO ARE LOST TO WHOM WE ARE THE SMELL OF DEATH THAT BRINGS DEATH OR PORTENDS THEIR ETERNAL DESTRUCTION**), to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?" (2Co 2:14-16+)

Robertson on **he who knows God listens to us** - This is one reason why sermons are dull (some actually are, others so to dull hearers) or inspiring (**Ed: I think Robertson means that the one who *always* hears the sermon as dull does so because he has no spiritual ears to hear truth from God = **he is not from God****).

THOUGHT - How do we listen to the apostles today? Clearly we listen to them through their writings - the Scriptures! Are you in the Word daily, taking it in to your heart not just your head? If you are thus holding fast to the faithful (trustworthy) Word, then when the winds of false doctrine begin to blow, you will find that the Word you held fast now holds you fast!

The test in 1Jn 4:2+ is whether people bring sincere and truthful words out of their heart, while the test in verse 6 is whether they will allow sincere and truthful words go into their heart.

John Piper - The Test of What People Hear - Verse 6 points us in this same direction. It answers the same question as 1Jn 4:2+: How can we recognize **the spirit of error and the spirit of truth**? The difference between 1Jn 4:2+ and 1Jn 4:6 is that in verse 2 the test is what people say and in 1Jn 4:6 the test is what people hear. Or another way to put it is that the test in 1Jn 4:2+ is whether people bring sincere and truthful words out of their heart, while the test in verse 6 is whether they will allow sincere and truthful words go into their heart. Mere Listening Proves Nothing. But the same question arises here that arose in 1Jn 4:2+: **Does mere listening prove anything about a person's spiritual condition?** No. No more than mere speaking proves anything in 1Jn 4:2+. The point of the verses is not merely to give a doctrinal test for recognizing false spirits. The point is to give a test also for recognizing the true Spirit. And therefore the test must be more than doctrinal, because true doctrine by itself is no sure sign of the work of the Spirit. Anybody can say true doctrines with his lips. But only the Spirit can make sinners really listen and really confess the truth of Jesus. So the great lesson that lies just beneath the surface in this text is that none of us will listen to the message of Christ unless the mighty Holy Spirit overcomes our resistance and gives us ears to hear (Acts 16:14; Dt 29:4). And none of us will confess from the heart that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh unless the mighty Holy Spirit humbles us to accept the authority of Jesus implied in that confession (cf. 1Co 12:3). John's great assumption lying just beneath 1Jn 4:2+ and 1Jn 4:6 is that hearing the gospel with openness and confessing Christ with loyalty is the work and the gift of the Holy Spirit. If this listening and this confessing could be explained in any other way, they would not be a sure sign of the Spirit's presence and power. But they are a sign of His power. For John knows that no one hears and no one confesses apart from the sovereign work of the Holy Spirit. But the answer is the same in both verses: 1Jn 4:2+ is referring not to mere words but to words from the heart. And verse 6 is referring not to mere listening but to a listening that allows words to go into the heart. Not just any listening proves the presence of the Holy Spirit. But the humble listening that accepts the truth of Christ and submits gladly to it—that listening is a sign of the Spirit of truth at work in the heart. So the testimony of the Spirit that assures us that we are the children of God is the work of the Spirit to make us listen to the gospel submissively (1Jn 4:6) and confess the Christ of the gospel heartily (1Jn 4:2+). ([Test the Spirits to See Whether They Are of God](#))

There is a certain affinity between God's Word and God's people.

John Stott - "But how can it be known that we are of God and are teaching the truth? John answers, in effect, that you can tell that our message is God's message because God's people listen to it and receive it. These statements sound the height of arrogance. So they would be if uttered by an individual Christian. No private believer could presume to say: '*whoever knows God agrees with me; only those who are not of God disagree with me.*' But this is what John says. The fact is that he is not speaking in his own name, nor even in the name of the Church, but as one of the apostles, who were conscious of the special authority bestowed upon

them by Jesus Christ. He is carrying a stage further the argument of the first three verses. There the test of doctrine was whether it acknowledged the divine-human Person of Jesus Christ; here the test is whether it is accepted by Christians and rejected by non-Christians. There is a certain affinity between God's Word and God's people. Jesus had taught that His sheep hear His voice (Jn. 10:4, 5, 8, 16, 26, 27+), that everyone who is of the truth listens to His witness to the truth (Jn. 18:37+), and that *'he who is of God hears the words of God'* (Jn. 8:47RSV+). In the same way John asserts that since we are of God (1Jn 4:6) and *ye are of God* (1Jn 4:4+), you listen to us. There is a correspondence between message and hearers. The Spirit who is in you (1Jn 4:4) enables you to discern His own voice speaking through us (1Jn 4:2+). So you can recognize God's Word because God's people listen to it, just as you can recognize God's people because they listen to God's Word. Those who do not listen to apostolic teaching, but prefer to absorb the teaching of the world, not only pass judgment on themselves but thereby also on the message to which they do give attention." (Borrow [The Letters of John](#))

In 1Cor 12:10 Paul notes that some believers have the gift of "distinguishing (discerning -diakrisis) of spirits" and in Heb 5:14+ we see that "solid food is for the mature who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil." Here in 1Jn 4:6 John says all Christians possess the ability to **know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.**

NET Note on the **spirit of truth... error** - Who or what is the spirit of truth and the spirit of deceit in 1 John 4:6? (1) Some interpreters regard the "**spirits**" in 1Jn 4:6 as human spirits. Although 1Jn 4:1a+ is ambiguous and might refer either to human spirits or spiritual beings who influence people, it is clear in the context that (2) the author sees behind the secessionist opponents with their false Christology the spirit of the antichrist, that is, Satan (1Jn 4:3b+), and behind the true believers of the community to which he is writing, the Spirit of God (1Jn 4:2+). This is made clear in 1Jn 4:4 by the reference to the respective spirits as the One who is in you and the one who is in the world.

Spirit of truth - It is interesting that the Bible translations differ on their interpretation of **the spirit of truth**. Some (NET, CSB, ESV, NIV, NLT, Good News Bible) capitalize **Spirit** indicating they believe John is speaking of the Holy Spirit, whereas others do not see it as a reference to the Spirit (NAS, RSV, NJB, YLT, KJV). This difference of translation makes the point that EVERY Bible translation (no matter how literal), has SOME DEGREE of "interpretative bias" in the English translation. This is why I think it is so important for saints to become familiar with the original languages (and there are now many wonderful Bible software programs make it relatively easy!)

Related resources-

- Bible Versions compared for how literal they translate Hebrew and Greek
- [What does it mean to test the spirits?](#)

John Stott sums up 1 John 4:1-6 - This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood, John concludes. We can test the spirits, and 'get to know' which is which (ginōskomen, present tense), by examining both the message they proclaim through their human instruments and the character of the audience which listens to them. (Borrow [The Letters of John](#))

Daniel Akin is similar to Stott - John summarizes his intentions and claims that this is how we know the Spirit of truth from the spirit of falsehood. The spirits may be tested by first examining their confession, which comes through human instruments, and then by examining the character of their audience, who would give them credence. We can know the true from the false, the Spirit of God from the spirit of the antichrist. ([1, 2, 3 John - Page 176](#))

Jon Courson - In this simple section, John has told us all we need to know to identify the cultist. That is, if a person draws people closer to God, if he embraces both the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ, if he encourages folks to read the Scriptures, he is of the Spirit. On the other hand, if he diminishes either the deity or humanity of Christ, if he makes people feel distant from God, or if he makes light of the Word, he is in error. (See [Jon Courson's Application Commentary](#))

John Piper - For believers the lesson is twofold. 1. Do not take credit for your listening ear or your confessing heart or your correct view of Christ. Give credit to the Spirit who is in you, and give God the glory. 2. When you are threatened by any deception of the evil one—any temptation, or discouragement, or anxiety, or cowardice—remind yourself that "he who is in you is greater than he that is in the world." Almighty God abides within you. Trust him. For this is the victory that overcomes the world, your faith (1Jn 5:4) in the sovereign indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. ([Test the Spirits to See Whether They Are of God](#))

A. W. Tozer had some wise counsel on **How to Try the Spirits** ([Read an elaboration on the 7 principles in Chapter 29 of Tozer's book "Man the Dwelling Place of God"](#)) giving seven tests to apply to any teaching:

- (1) How does the teaching affect my relationship with God? Is He magnified and glorified, or diminished?
- (2) How does the teaching affect my attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ? Does it magnify Him and give Him

first place? Or, does it subtly shift my focus onto myself or some experience?

(3) How does the teaching affect my attitude toward Scripture? Did the teaching come from and agree with the Word? Does it increase my love for the Word?

(4) How does the teaching affect my self-life? Does it feed self or crucify it? Does it feed pride or humility?

(5) How does the teaching affect my relationships to other Christians? Does it cause me to withdraw, find fault, and exalt myself in superiority? Or, does it lead me to genuine love for all that truly know Christ?

(6) How does the teaching affect my relationship to the world system? Does it lead me to pursue the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life? Does it lead me to pursue worldly riches, reputation, and pleasures? Or, does it crucify the world to me?

(7) How does the teaching affect my attitude toward sin? Does it cause me to tolerate sin in my life or to turn from it and grow in holiness? Any teaching that makes holiness more acceptable and sin more intolerable is genuine. ([Spiritual Discernment 1 John 4:1-6](#))

From (1537) (ek) a primary preposition denoting origin (the point whence action or motion proceeds), from, out (of place, time, or cause, literal or figurative. Out of, from, by," suggesting "the source from which something is done," is sometimes rendered "by means of," e.g., [Luke 16:9](#), RV, "by means of (the mammon of unrighteousness);" AV, "of;" 2 Cor. 1:11, "by (the) means of (many)."

1 John 4 has 8 phrases that begin with "from" (ek) - 1 John 4:1, 1 John 4:2, 1 John 4:3, 1 John 4:4, 1 John 4:5, 1 John 4:6

GINGRICH [Shorter Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#) - EK before vowels ex prep. with genitive (possessive) = **from, out of, away from—**

1. to denote separation Mt 2:15; 26:27; Mk 16:3; Jn 12:27; 17:15 ; Ac 17:33; Gal 3:13; Rev 14:13; **from among** Lk 20:35; Acts 3:23.

2. to denote the direction from which something comes from, out from Mt 17:9; Mk 11:20; Lk 5:3; in answer to the question where? at, on Mt 20:21, 23; Ac 2:25, 34.

3. to denote origin, cause, motive reason from, of, by Mt 1:3, 5, 18; Jn 1:13, 46; 1 Cor 7:7; 2 Cor 5:1; Gal 2:15; 4:4; Phil 3:5. **Because of, by** Mk 7:11; 2 Cor 2:2; Rev 8:11. **By reason of, as a result of, because of** Lk 12:15; Ac 19:25; Ro 4:2; **with** Lk 16:9. **Of, from of source or material** Mt 12:34; J 19:2; 1 Cor 9:13; Rv 18:12. **According to, in accordance with** Mt 12:37; 2 Cor 8:11, 13. ek toutou **for this reason, therefore** Jn 6:66. oi` ek nomou partisans of the law Ro 4:14.

4. in periphrasis for the partitive gen. Mt 10:29; 25:2; Lk 11:15, which may even function as subject of a sentence ek t matheton some of the disciples Jn 16:17; used with einai = belong to someone or something Mt 26:73; Ac 21:8; 1 Cor 12:15f. After verbs of filling with Lk 15:16; J n12:3; Rev 8:5. For the gen. of price or value for Mt 20:2; 27:7; Ac 1:18.

5. of time from, from this or that time on Mt 19:12; Mk 10:20; J 9:1, 32; for Lk 23:8; **after** 2 Pt 2:8.

Truth (225)(**aletheia** from **a** = indicates following word has the opposite meaning ~ without + **lanthano** = to be hidden or concealed, to escape notice, cp our English "latent" from Latin = to lie hidden) is used by John in his letter 9x in 8v (1Jn 1:6, 8, 1Jn 2:4, 21, 1Jn 3:18, 19, 1Jn 4:6, 5:6) and has the literal sense of that which contains nothing hidden, so that which is not concealed and thus that which that is expressed as it really is. Truth is the correspondence between a reality and a declaration which professes to set forth or describe the reality. To say it another way, words spoken or written are true when they correspond with objective reality. Persons and things are true when they correspond with their profession.

Error (4106)(**plane** from **planos** = deceitful, with idea of wandering; see also **planao**) in it's original literal sense describes a roaming or a wandering and then figuratively a going astray or a wandering out of the right way. In the active sense it means the leading astray or deceit of someone. In the passive sense it depicts one as being led astray. The context favors the active meaning, for the false prophets (1Jn 4:1+) clearly seek to actively deceive. In 1Jn 2:26+ John uses the related verb planaο to describe those who are actively trying to lead others astray. Similarly, in 1Jn 3:7+ John issues a command using planaο, telling them "let no one (actively) deceive you."

Vincent says **plane** is an "error which shows itself in action... It may imply deceit as accompanying or causing error." **Plane** is a wandering from the path of truth, orthodoxy or piety and into error, delusion or deceit. **Plane** is used repeatedly in letters that deal with spiritual error - 2Pe 2:18; 2Pe 3:17+; 1Jn 4:6; Jude 1:11+.

Peter warned the saints "You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand (What? See 2Pe 3:16 - "untaught and unstable distort... the Scriptures to their own destruction"), **be on your guard** (present imperative - command for us to continually be on high spiritual alert [only possible as we surrendered to and enabled by the indwelling Spirit], suggesting the danger of deception is always "just around the corner!") lest, being carried away by the **error (plane)** of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness. (2Pe 3:17+)