

1 JOHN

New Century Version

Voice of the narrator

Testimony about the Word/the Logos of God

Testimony about the Father

Testimony about the Spirit

Testimony about lies and darkness

The fellowship of believers

All Readers

Reader 1: We write you now about what has always existed, which we have heard, we have seen with our own eyes, we have looked at, and we have touched with our hands.

We write to you about the Word that gives life.

² He who gives life was shown to us. We saw him and can give proof about it.

And now we announce to you that he has life that continues forever. He was with God the Father and was shown to us.

³ We announce to you what we have seen and heard;

We want you also to have fellowship with us. Our fellowship is with God the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

⁴ **We write this so you will have fellowship with us.**

⁵ Here is the message we have heard from Christ and now announce to you:

God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all.

⁶ So if we say we have fellowship with God, but we continue living in darkness, we are liars and do not follow the truth. ⁷ But if we live in the light, as God is in the light, we can share fellowship with each other.

Then the blood of Jesus, God's Son, cleanses us from every sin.

⁸ If we say we have no sin, we are fooling ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

⁹ But if we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins, because we can trust God to do what is right. He will cleanse us from all the wrongs we have done.

¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and we do not accept God's teaching.

2 My dear children, I write this letter to you so you will not sin.

But if anyone does sin, we have a helper in the presence of the Father—Jesus Christ, the One who does what is right. ² He died in our place to take away our sins, and not only our sins but the sins of all people.

³ We can be sure that we know God if we obey his commands.

⁴ Anyone who says, “I know God,” but does not obey God’s commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person.

⁵ But if someone obeys God’s teaching, then in that person God’s love has truly reached its goal.

This is how we can be sure we are living in God:

⁶ Whoever says that he lives in God must live as Jesus lived.

⁷ My dear friends, I am not writing a new command to you but an old command you have had from the beginning. It is the teaching you have already heard. ⁸ But also I am writing a new command to you, and you can see its truth in Jesus and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

⁹ Anyone who says, “I am in the light,” but hates a brother or sister, is still in the darkness.

¹⁰ Whoever loves a brother or sister lives in the light and will not cause anyone to stumble in his faith.

¹¹ But whoever hates a brother or sister is in darkness, lives in darkness, and does not know where to go, because the darkness has made that person blind.

¹² I write to you, dear children,
because your sins are forgiven through Christ.

¹³ I write to you, fathers,
because you know the One who existed from the beginning.

I write to you, young people,
because you have defeated the Evil One.

¹⁴ I write to you, children,
because you know the Father.

I write to you, fathers,
because you know the One who existed from the beginning.

I write to you, young people,
because you are strong;
the teaching of God lives in you,

and you have defeated the Evil One.

¹⁵ Do not love the world or the things in the world. If you love the world, the love of the Father is not in you.

¹⁶ These are the ways of the world: wanting to please our sinful selves, wanting the sinful things we see, and being too proud of what we have. None of these come from the Father, but all of them come from the world. ¹⁷ The world and everything that people want in it are passing away, but the person who does what God wants lives forever.

¹⁸ My dear children, these are the last days.

You have heard that the enemy of Christ is coming, and now many enemies of Christ are already here.

This is how we know that these are the last days.

¹⁹ These enemies of Christ were in our fellowship, but they left us. They never really belonged to us; if they had been a part of us, they would have stayed with us. But they left, and this shows that none of them really belonged to us.

²⁰ **You have the gift that the Holy One gave you, so you all know the truth.**

²¹ I do not write to you because you do not know the truth but because you do know the truth.

And you know that no lie comes from the truth.

²² Who is the liar?

It is the person who does not accept Jesus as the Christ.

This is the enemy of Christ: the person who does not accept the Father and his Son.

²³ Whoever does not accept the Son does not have the Father.

But whoever confesses the Son has the Father, too.

²⁴ Be sure you continue to follow the teaching you heard from the beginning.

If you continue to follow what you heard from the beginning, you will stay in the Son and in the Father.

²⁵ And this is what the Son promised to us—

life forever.

²⁶ I am writing this letter about those people who are trying to lead you the wrong way.

²⁷ **Christ gave you a special gift that is still in you, so you do not need any other teacher. His gift teaches you about everything,**

and it is true, not false.

So continue to live in Christ, as his gift taught you.

²⁸ Yes, my dear children, live in him so that when Christ comes back, we can be without fear and not be ashamed in his presence.

²⁹ Since you know that Christ is righteous, you know that all who do right are God's children.

3 The Father has loved us so much that we are called children of God.

And we really are his children.

The reason the people in the world do not know us is that they have not known him.

² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and we have not yet been shown what we will be in the future.

But we know that when Christ comes again, we will be like him, because we will see him as he really is. ³ Christ is pure,

and all who have this hope in Christ keep themselves pure like Christ.

⁴ The person who sins breaks God's law. Yes, sin is living against God's law.

⁵ You know that Christ came to take away sins and that there is no sin in Christ.

⁶ So anyone who lives in Christ does not go on sinning. Anyone who goes on sinning has never really understood Christ and has never known him.

⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you the wrong way.

Christ is righteous. So to be like Christ a person must do what is right.

⁸ The devil has been sinning since the beginning, so anyone who continues to sin belongs to the devil.

The Son of God came for this purpose: to destroy the devil's work.

⁹ Those who are God's children do not continue sinning, because the new life from God remains in them. They are not able to go on sinning, because they have become children of God.

¹⁰ So we can see who God's children are and who the devil's children are:

Those who do not do what is right are not God's children;

those who do not love their brothers and sisters are not God's children.

(Pause)

¹¹ This is the teaching you have heard from the beginning:

We must love each other.

¹² Do not be like Cain who belonged to the Evil One and killed his brother. And why did he kill him? Because the things Cain did were evil, and the things his brother did were good.

¹³ Brothers and sisters, do not be surprised when the people of the world hate you.

¹⁴ We know we have left death and have come into life because we love each other.

Whoever does not love is still dead. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderers have eternal life in them.

¹⁶ This is how we know what real love is: Jesus gave his life for us.

So we should give our lives for our brothers and sisters.

¹⁷ Suppose someone has enough to live and sees a brother or sister in need, but does not help. Then God's love is not living in that person.

¹⁸ My children, we should love people not only with words and talk, but by our actions and true caring. ¹⁹⁻²⁰ This is the way we know that we belong to the way of truth. When our hearts make us feel guilty, we can still have peace before God.

God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

²¹ My dear friends, if our hearts do not make us feel guilty, we can come without fear into God's presence.

²² And God gives us what we ask for because we obey God's commands and do what pleases him.

²³ This is what God commands:

that we believe in his Son, Jesus Christ,

and that we love each other,

This is just as he commanded.

²⁴ The people who obey God's commands live in God, and God lives in them.

We know that God lives in us because of the Spirit God gave us.

⁴ My dear friends, many false prophets have gone out into the world. So do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see if they are from God.

² **This is how you can know God's Spirit:** Every spirit who confesses that Jesus Christ came to earth as a human is from God.

³ And every spirit who refuses to say this about Jesus is not from God. It is the spirit of the enemy of Christ, which you have heard is coming, and now he is already in the world.

⁴ My dear children, you belong to God and have defeated them;

God's Spirit, who is in you, is greater than the devil, who is in the world.

⁵ And they belong to the world, so what they say is from the world, and the world listens to them.

⁶ But we belong to God, and those who know God listen to us.

But those who are not from God do not listen to us. That is how we know the Spirit that is true and the spirit that is false.

⁷ Dear friends, we should love each other, because love comes from God.

Everyone who loves has become God's child and knows God.

⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

⁹ This is how God showed his love to us: He sent his one and only Son into the world so that we could have life through him. ¹⁰ This is what real love is: It is not our love for God; it is God's love for us. He sent his Son to die in our place to take away our sins.

¹¹ Dear friends, if God loved us that much we also should love each other.

¹² No one has ever seen God, but if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is made perfect in us.

¹³ **We know that we live in God and he lives in us, because he gave us his Spirit.**

¹⁴ We have seen and can testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

¹⁵ Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God has God living inside, and that person lives in God.

¹⁶ And so we know the love that God has for us, and we trust that love.

God is love.

Those who live in love live in God, and God lives in them.

¹⁷ This is how love is made perfect in us:

We can be without fear on the day God judges us, because *in this world* we are like him.

¹⁸ Where God's love is, there is no fear, because God's perfect love drives out fear.

It is punishment that makes a person fear, so love is not made perfect in the person who fears.

¹⁹ We love because God first loved us.

²⁰ If people say, "I love God," but hate their brothers or sisters, they are liars. Those who do not love their brothers and sisters, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have never seen.

²¹ And God gave us this command: Those who love God must also love their brothers and sisters.

⁵ Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is God's child, and whoever loves the Father also loves the Father's children.

² This is how we know we love God's children: when we love God and obey his commands.

³ Loving God means obeying his commands. And God's commands are not too hard for us,
⁴ because everyone who is a child of God conquers the world.

And this is the victory that conquers the world—

our faith.

⁵ So the one who conquers the world is the person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.⁶ Jesus Christ is the One who came by water and blood. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood.

And the Spirit says that this is true, because the Spirit is the truth.

⁷ So there are three witnesses: ⁸ the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three witnesses agree.

⁹ We believe people when they say something is true. But what God says is more important, and he has told us the truth about his own Son.

¹⁰ Anyone who believes in the Son of God has the truth that God told us.

Anyone who does not believe makes God a liar, because that person does not believe what God told us about his Son.

¹¹ This is what God told us: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

¹² Whoever has the Son has life, but whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

¹³ I write this letter to you who believe in the Son of God so you will know you have eternal life.

¹⁴ And this is the boldness we have in God's presence: that if we ask God for anything that agrees with what he wants, he hears us.

¹⁵ If we know he hears us every time we ask him, we know we have what we ask from him.

¹⁶ If anyone sees a brother or sister sinning (sin that does not lead to eternal death), that person should pray, and God will give the sinner life. I am talking about people whose sin does not lead to eternal death. There is sin that leads to death. I do not mean that a person should pray about that sin. ¹⁷ Doing wrong is always sin, but there is sin that does not lead to eternal death.

¹⁸ We know that those who are God's children do not continue to sin.

The Son of God keeps them safe;

the Evil One cannot touch them.

¹⁹ We know that we belong to God,

but the Evil One controls the whole world.

²⁰ We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we can know the True One.

And our lives are in the True One and in his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God and the eternal life.

²¹ So, dear children, keep yourselves away from false gods.