1 JOHN

Chapter 1

Verse 1. [[@Bible:1 John 1:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That which was from the beginning.** Christ, the eternal God. (***See Trapp on "John 1:2"***)

Which we have heard, &c.. The man Christ Jesus, the arch-prophet.

Which we have seen. And what so sure as sight? See ***Luke 1:2***. αὐτόπτης, this was denied to many kings and prophets, ***Luke 10:24***. To have seen Christ in the flesh was one of the three things that Austin wished, which yet St Paul set no such high price upon, in comparison to a spiritual sight of him, ***2 Corinthians 5:16***. (***See Trapp on "2 Corinthians 5:16"***)

Which we have looked upon. ἐθεασάμεθα, diligently and with delight. How sweet shall be the sight of him in heaven! With what inconceivable attention and admiration shall we contemplate his glorified body outshining the brightest cherub!

And our hands have handled. *i.e.* With whom we have most familiarly conversed, sitting with him at the same table, and eating some bushels of salt with him, as the Greek word, ***Acts 1:4***, seems to import, συναλιζόμ. from ἅλς, salt. Christ's faithful ministers that have the honour to handle his law (as the phrase is, ***Jeremiah 2:8***) come nearest to the apostles in this glorious privilege. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:1 John 1:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For the life was manifested**. Christ, who is "life essential," swallowed up death in victory, and "brought life and immortality to light by the gospel," ***2 Timothy 1:10***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:1 John 1:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Declare we unto you**. That (Theophilus-like) ye may be at a certainty, fully persuaded, ***Luke 1:1***, having a plerophory or "full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of Christ," **Colossians *2:2***. (***See Trapp on "Colossians 2:2"***)

And truly our fellowship. If any should object, Is that such a preferment to have fellowship with you? What are you? &c. He answereth, As mean as we are, we have "fellowship with the Father and Son." Union being the ground of communion, all that is theirs is ours. This made Moses cry out, "Happy art thou, O Israel!" or, "Oh the happiness of thee, O Israel!" the heaped up happiness. "Who is like unto these" ***Numbers 33:29***. The saints, how mean soever, are (in true account) the world's paragons, the only earthly angels, because in "fellowship with the Father and the Son," that is, with the Father by the Son. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:1 John 1:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And these things write we**. Out of the Scriptures, those wells of salvation, draw we waters with joy, ***Isaiah 12:4***, suck these breasts of consolation, and be satisfied, ***Isaiah 66:11***. *Nusquam inveni requiem nisi in libro et claustro,* saith one. Chrysostom brings in a man laden with inward troubles, coming into the church; where, when he heard this passage read, "Why art thou cast down, my soul, &c., hope in God," &c., he presently recovered comfort. (Hom. in Genes.) There is a singular efficacy in the promises to comfort those that are cast down, ***Romans 15:4***. (***See Trapp on "Romans 15:4"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:1 John 1:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That God is light**. He is αὐτοφως, light essential, and they that walk with him must be as so many crystal glasses with a light in the midst; for can two walk together, and they not be agreed? ***Amos 3:3***. That was a devilish sarcasm of the Manichees, that God (till he had created light) dwelt in darkness, as if God were not eternal light, and dwelt in light unapproachable, ***1 Timothy 6:16***. But what madmen were the Carpocratian heretics, who taught (even in St John's days, as Epiphanius testifieth) that men must sin, and do the will of the devils; otherwise they could not enter into heaven! These

might well be some of those Antichrists he complaineth of ***1 John 4:3, 6***, and of those libertines and liars he here argueth against. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:1 John 1:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**If we say that, &c.**. As they do that profess to know God, but in works do deny him, ***Titus 1:16***. (***See Trapp on "Titus 1:16"***)

And walk in darkness. There is a child of light that walks in darkness, ***Isaiah 50:10***, but that is in another sense. The wicked also that are here said to walk in darkness have their sparkles of light that they have kindled, ***Isaiah 50:10***, but it is as a light smitten out of a flint, which neither warms nor guides them, but dazzleth their eyes, and goes out, so that they lie down in sorrow. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:1 John 1:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**We have fellowship one, &c.**. That is, God and we; inasmuch as we are made partakers of the divine nature, and are pure as God is pure, ***1 John 3:3***, in quality though not in an equality. We have fellowship with God: 1. In his holiness. 2. In his happiness.

And the blood of Jesus. That whereas God's pure eye can soon find many a foul flaw in the best of us (our righteousness being mixed, as light and darkness, dimness at least, in a painted glass, dyed with some obscure and dim colour, it is transparent and giveth good, but not clear and pure light), lo, here is a ready remedy, a sweet support, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And God beholding us in the face of his Son, seeth nothing amiss in us; no more than David did in lame Mephibosheth, when he beheld in him the features of his friend Jonathan. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:1 John 1:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**If we say that we have**. If any should be so saucy, or rather silly, as to say with Donatus, *Non habeo, Domine, quod ignoscas,* I have no sin for Christ to cleanse me from, he is a loud liar, and may very well have the whetstone. St James for his innocent conversation was surnamed Justus; and yet, putting himself into the number, he saith, "For in many things we offend all," ***James 3:2***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:1 John 1:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**If we confess**. *Homo agnoscit, Deus ignoscit.* Man acknowledges, God forgives. And *Confessio peccati est vomitus sordium animae.* Confession of sin is the vomit of the filthy soul. (Aug.) Judah (his name signifies confession) got the kingdom from Reuben. No man was ever kept out of God's kingdom for his confessed badness; many are for their supposed goodness; as those justitiaries in the former verse, whose hearts are big swollen with high conceit of themselves; and whose lips are held close by the devil; who knows well there is no way to purge the sick soul but upwards.

He is faithful. And yet Bellarmine saith that he cannot find in all the book of God any promise made to confession of sin to God. (De Justific. i. 21.) He might have seen (besides other places not a few) ***Proverbs 28:13; Psalm 32:5***, &c., that this very text is a most heavenly promise of mercy to those that confess heartily, and not hollowly. The word faithful also refers to God's promises, as just doth to the blood of Christ (the ransom received) whereby the saints are cleansed, and it stands not with God's justice to demand the same debt twice, viz. of the surety and of the debtor.

From all unrighteousness. All without exception; why then should we put in conditions, and as it were interline God's covenant? He is a sin pardoning God, ***Nehemiah 9:31***; no God like him for that in heaven and earth, ***Micah 7:18***; he multiplieth pardon, as we multiply sin, ***Isaiah 55:7***; he doth it freely, for his own sake, naturally, ***Exodus 34:6***; constantly, ***Psalm 130:4***, and here. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth (not, he hath cleansed or will cleanse, but he doth it) daily and duly, constantly and continually. This should be as a perpetual picture in our hearts. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:1 John 1:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**We make him a liar**. For the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, ***Romans 11:32***. (***See Trapp on "Romans 11:32"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 2

Verse 1. [[@Bible:1 John 2:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That ye sin not**. Presuming upon an easy and speedy pardon. The worst sort of Papists will say, When we have sinned, we must confess; and when we have confessed, we must sin again, that we may confess again; so making account of confessing, as drunkards do of vomiting. But we have not so learned Christ. If his word dwell richly in us, it will teach us to deny ungodliness, &c.; to forsake as well as confess sin, and not after confession, to turn again to folly, or (as those that are dog sick) to their former vomit. With confession of sin must be joined confusion of sin, ***Proverbs 28:13***. We may not do as those Philistines, that confessed their error and yet sent away the ark of God, ***1 Samuel 6:3***. Nor as Saul, "I have sinned, yet honour me before the people," ***1 Samuel 15:30***. Nor yet as those perverse Israelites, "We have sinned, we will go up"; though God had flatly forbidden them at that time to go up against the Amorites; and for their presumptuous attempt brought them back by weeping cross, ***Numbers 1:41-43***, &c. Sin confessed must be, 1. Disallowed in our judgments. 2. Disavowed and declined in our wills and affections. 3. Cast out of our practice; Ephraim shall say, "What have I to do any more with idols?" ***Hosea 14:8***. He shall pollute the images that he had once perfumed: he shall angrily say unto them, Get you hence, ***Isaiah 30:22***.

And if any man sin. Being taken before he is aware, ***Galations 6:1***. (***See Trapp on "Galatians 6:1"***)

We have an advocate. Who appears for us in heaven, and pleads our cause effectually. See ***Hebrews 9:24***.

Jesus Christ the righteous. Or else he could not go to the Father for us. (***See Trapp on "John 16:10"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:1 John 2:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**He is the propitiation**. Heb. Copher; he coffers up, as it were, and covers our sins, ***Psalm 78:38***. (***See Trapp on "Romans 3:25"***) The Hebrew word רפכ used for covering and propitiating of sin, is (***Genesis 6:14***) used of the pitch or plaster whereby the wood of the ark was so fastened that no water could get in.

But also for the sins of the whole world. That is, of all the faithful, both of Jews and Gentiles, that *mundus ex mundo,* that world of whom the world is not worthy, ***Hebrews 11:38***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:1 John 2:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**We know that we know him**. By a reflex act of the soul; hence the assurance of faith, the fruit of fruitfulness, ***1 Corinthians 15:58***.

That we know him. With a knowledge not apprehensive only, but affective too.

If we keep his commandments. *Si facimus praecepta, etiamsi non perficiamus;* If we think upon his commandments to do them, ***Psalm 103:18***, aim at them, as at a mark, ***Psalm 119:6***.

> *"Non semper feriet quodcunque minabitur arcus."*

Wish well to an exact obedience which yet we cannot attain to, ***Psalm 119:4-5***; be doing at it as we can, following after righteousness, ***Proverbs 15:9***, as a poor aprentice follows his trade, though he be nothing less than his craftmaster; and lastly, be humbled for our daily aberrations, resolving and striving to do better: this is that evangelical keeping of God's commandments, which God (measuring the deed by the desire, and the desire by the sincerity thereof) will accept and crown, through Christ our propitiation. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:1 John 2:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**He that saith, I know him**. Here he disputeth against Verbalists and Solifidians. See ***James 2:14***. (***See Trapp on "James 2:14"***)

Is a liar. *i.e.* A hypocrite; his spot is not the spot of God's children, ***Numbers 32:5***, for they are children that will not lie, ***Isaiah 63:8***. They all deserve that title of honour that was given of old to Arrianus the historian, viz. φιλαλήθης, A lover of truth. They know that the God whom they serve, desireth "truth in the inward parts," ***Psalm 51:6***, and that *dicta factis deficientibus erubescant* (as Tertullian hath it), words without deeds will not bear a man out in the end. It is a question whether the desire of being, or dislike of seeming, sincere, be greater in the good heart. Not so every loose and ungirt Christian, every profligate professor, that denieth that in deed what he affirmeth in word. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:1 John 2:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**In him verily is the love of God perfected**. St John was a mere compound of sweetest love. As iron put into the fire, seemeth to be nothing but fire, so he (the beloved disciple) was turned into a lump of love. Hence he so presseth love, perfect love, to God and his people. And Jerome tells us, that living to a very great age at Ephesus, he would get up into the pulpit; and when through weakness of body he could say no more, he would say, "Little children, love one another"; *Si hoc solum fiat, sufficit,* If this be well done, all is done. (Jerome in cap. vi. ad Gal.)

That we are in him. In communion with him, and in conformity to him. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:1 John 2:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**To walk even as he walked**. This is the same with that **Colossians *2:6***, to walk in Christ; and with that, ***1 Peter 2:21***, to follow his steps. (***See Trapp on "1 Peter 2:21"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:1 John 2:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I write no new commandment**. The apostle studiously declineth the suspicion of novelty. We should ever set a jealous eye upon that which is new, and stand in the old way, ***Jeremiah 6:16***, in the ancient paths, ***Jeremiah 18:15***. God's people are called the ancient people, ***Isaiah 44:7***. And idolaters are said to sacrifice to new gods, that came newly up, ***Numbers 32:17***. Truth, as wine, is better with age, ***Luke 5:39***. And of witnesses, Aristotle well saith, the older they are, the more credible, because less corrupted, πιστότατοι οἱ παλαιοὶ, ἀδιάφθοροι γὰρ (Rhet. i.). As we prefer the newest philosophy, so the ancientest divinity; and we may justly suspect them of falsehood and delusions, who arrogate to themselves to utter oracles, to bring to light new truths, &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:1 John 2:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**A new commandment**. (***See Trapp on "John 13:34"***) "A new commandment" it is called, saith a late learned interpreter, 1. Because it was renewed by the Lord after it had been as it were antiquated, and almost extinguished. 2. Because it was commanded to such men as were new or renewed. 3. Because it was an excellent commandment. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:1 John 2:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And hateth, his brother**. As Paul presseth faith, and Peter hope, so John love, those three cardinal virtues, ***1 Corinthians 13:13***. (***See Trapp on "1 John 2:5"***)

Is in darkness. Yea, in the prince of darkness, who acteth and agitateth him, as he did Cain. Holy Greenham often prayed, that he might keep up his young zeal with his old discretion. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:1 John 2:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**None occasion, &c.**. Gr. σκάνδαλον, No scandal, *i.e.* no occasion of spiritual falling, whereby a man is made any manner of way worse, and backwarder in goodness. *Quod fieri potest vel dicto, vel facto, sive exemplo in moribus,* saith learned Lyserus, which may be done by word, deed, or evil example. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:1 John 2:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**He that hateth, &c.**. There is a passion of hatred (saith a famous divine). This is a kind of averseness and rising of the heart against a man, when one sees him so that he cannot away with him, nor speak to nor look courteously

or peaceably upon him, &c. 2. A habit of hatred, when the heart is so settled in this alienation and estrangement, that it grows to wish and seek his hurt. This is manslaughter, ***1 John 3:5***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:1 John 2:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**I write unto you, little children**. A Christian hath his degrees of growth; childhood, ***1 Corinthians 3:1-2***; youth or well grown age, when he is past the spoon, as here; old age, ***Acts 21:16***.

Because your sins are forgiven you. Though perhaps you as yet know it not, through weakness of faith and strength of corruption. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:1 John 2:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Him that is from the beginning**. The Ancient of days. Old men love to speak of ancient things. These are ancient things, ***1 Chronicles 4:22***. You know him with a knowledge of acquaintance; you have had much familiarity and intercourse with him, you are not far from knowing even as also you are known, ***1 Corinthians 13:12***. To this pitch of perfection all God's people must aspire, as all men do follow after old age.

Because ye have overcome the wicked one. "The glory of young men is their strength," ***Proverbs 20:29***. The Hebrew word there rendered young men, signifieth choice men, *sc.* for military employments; neither can they better show their valour than by resisting the devil, that he may flee from them. Weak grace may evidence pardon of sin; but it is strong grace that can overcome the temptations of Satan.

Because ye have known the Father. We say, He is a wise child that knows his father (and the Greeks have a proverb to the same purpose, Hom. Od.); but God hath no child so young that more or less knoweth him not. The bastardly brood of Rome are all for their mother. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:1 John 2:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Because ye have known him**. The same again as ***1 John 2:13***, which to a carnal heart may seem superfluous. Et certe si humano ingenio conscripti essent libri illi, quos pro sacris (ira ut verissime sunt) agnoscimus et veneramur, bonum alicubi dormitasse Homerum disceremus, said one. But far be it from us to reprehend what we cannot comprehend. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:1 John 2:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Love not the world**. You fathers, and you young and strong men, let me caution you (before I speak again to the little children, ***1 John 2:18***), to beware of worldliness. A man may be very mortified, and yet very apt to dote on the world.

If any man love the world. Have it he may, and use it too, as the traveller useth his staff (which either he keeps or casts away, as it furthers or hinders his journey), but love it he must not, unless he will renounce the love of God. (***See Trapp on "Matthew 6:24"***) (***See Trapp on "Colossians 3:2"***) Aristotle in his Politics teacheth, by the example of Thales, that philosophers may be rich; but he excellently addeth ἀλλὰ οὐ τοῦτο ἐστι περὶ οὐ σπουδάζουσι, howbeit this is not their chief study; it is but a by-business with them. (Polit. i., cap. ult.)

The love of the Father is not in him. The sunbeams extinguish the fire; so doth the love of the world the love of God. But some not so much as roving at God, make the world their standing mark. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:1 John 2:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The lust of the flesh, the lust of, &c.**. That is, pleasure, profit, preferment; the worldling's trinity, as one saith. Compare herewith Christ's threefold temptation, ***Luke 4:3-9***, and St James's character of worldly wisdom, ***James 3:15***. (***See Trapp on "James 3:15"***) It is his pleasure, his profit, and his honour (saith a divine) that is the natural man's trinity, and his carnal self that is these in unity. And to the same purpose

the Christian poet,

> *"Ambitiosus honos, et opes, et foeda voluptas,*
> *Haec tria pro trino numine mundus habet."*

But is of the world*. Base and bootless. Nec verum, nec vestrum.* To know the vanity of the world (as of a mist) you must go a little from it. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:1 John 2:17]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And the world passeth away**. As the stream of a swift river passeth by the side of a city. *Animantis cuiusque vita in fuga est,* Life itself wears out in the wearing, as a garment; all things below are mutable and momentary. Wilt thou set thy heart upon what is not? saith Solomon.

And the lust thereof. So that although thou wert sure to hold all these things of the world, yet they may be suddenly lost to thee, because thou canst not make thine heart delight in the same things still. Not the world only, but the lust thereof, passeth away; there is a curse of unsatisfiableness lies upon the creature, ἁπάντων ἡ πλησμονή, saith the orator; There is a satiety of all things. The world's comforts are sweeter in the ambition than in the fruition; for after a little while we loathe what we lusted after, as Amnon did Tamar. Men first itch, and then scratch, and then smart. *Dolor est etiam ipsa voluptas.* Even sorrow itself is enjoyable. Crueiger used often to say,

> *"Omnia praetereunt, praeter amare Deum."*

They pass by all things except to love God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:1 John 2:18]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Little children**. Children may easily be deceived, and made to take a sheep counter for an angel, because broader and brighter; so young Christians are soon seduced; hence they are cautioned. (***See Trapp on "1 John 1:5"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:1 John 2:19]]{{field-on:Bible}}**But they were not of us**. No more were our Anti-trinitarians, Arians, Anti-scripturists, ever of our Church, otherwise than as wens and botches, whatever our adversaries aver and cavil. So of old, because the Waldenses and Manichees lived in the same places, and were both held heretics, the Papists maliciously gave out that the Waldenses (those ancient Protestants) were defiled with the errors of the Manichees and Catharists, which yet they ever abhorred. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 20. [[@Bible:1 John 2:20]]{{field-on:Bible}}**But ye have an unction**. That oil of gladness, the Holy Ghost. In derision thereof, Domitian, the tyrant, cast St John into a caldron of boiling oil, but he by a miracle came forth unhurt.

Ye know all things. Not all things knowable, but all things needful to be known. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 21. [[@Bible:1 John 2:21]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Because ye know not, &c.**. Because ye are utterly ignorant; for God hath no blind children, but they all know him from the least to the greatest. Howbeit, the angels know not so much, but they would know more, ***Ephesians 3:10***. Should not we? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 22. [[@Bible:1 John 2:22]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That denieth that Jesus**. Papists deny him as a King, in setting up the pope; as a Priest, in setting up the mass; as a Prophet, in piecing their human traditions to the Holy Scriptures. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 23. [[@Bible:1 John 2:23]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The same hath not the Father**. (***See Trapp on "John 5:23"***) Mahomet speaks very honourably of Christ, but denies his Divinity, and that he was crucified. He acknowledged that he was the word and power of God, and that all that

believe in him shall be saved, &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 24. [[@Bible:1 John 2:24]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Let that therefore abide**. Persevere and hold fast the faith of the gospel without wavering in it, ***Ephesians 4:14***, or starting from it, ***2 Peter 2:20***. Be as the centre, or as Mount Sion, stedfast and unmovable. Stand fast; for ye are sure to be shaken: the tree must be shaken, that rotten fruit may fall off. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 25. [[@Bible:1 John 2:25]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Even eternal life**. Hold therefore the doctrine of faith sound and entire by the hand of faith, that ye may receive the end of your faith, the salvation of your souls. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 26. [[@Bible:1 John 2:26]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That seduce you**. That carry you into byways, highways to hell. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 27. [[@Bible:1 John 2:27]]{{field-on:Bible}}**But the anointing**. See ***1 John 2:20***. It was an aggravation of the fall of Saul, ***2 Samuel 1:21***, as "though he had not been anointed"; so for the saints to fall from their own stedfastness. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 28. [[@Bible:1 John 2:28]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Little children, abide in him**. *q.d.* Your enemies are many and crafty; therefore keep home, keep home; this shall be no grief unto you, nor offence of heart, as she said, ***1 Samuel 25:31***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 29. [[@Bible:1 John 2:29]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Is born of him**. And exactly resembles him, as a child doth his father. See ***1 Peter 1:17***. (***See Trapp on "Matthew 5:9"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 3

Verse 1. [[@Bible:1 John 3:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Behold what manner**. *Qualem et quantum,* as ***2 Peter 3:11***. (***See Trapp on "Joh 1:12"***) If Jacob was at such pains and patience to become son-in-law to Laban, if David held it a great matter to be son-in-law to the king, what is it then to be sons and daughters to the Lord Almighty? ***2 Corinthians 6:18***.

The world knoweth us not. Princes unknown are unrespected; unkent, unkist, as the Northern proverb hath it. After the sentence was pronounced upon Mr Bainham, the martyr, he was counselled by Mr Nicholas Wilson to conform himself to the Church; to whom he answered, I trust I am the very child of God, which ye, blind asses, said he, do not perceive. The "king's daughter is all glorious within," her beauty is inward, ***Psalm 45:13***; she is black, but comely as the tents of Kedar, ***Solomon's Song 1:5***; rough, but rich; as the tabernacle in the wilderness, covered with goat's hair, but within costly and curious; as Brutus's staff in the story, *cuius intus solidum aurum corneo velabatur cortice.* (Plut.) All righteous men are kings, as may appear by comparing ***Matthew 13:17;*** *cf.* ***Luke 10:24***; they are kings in righteousness as Melchisedec, but somewhat obscure ones as he; they must be content to pass to heaven as Christ their head did, as concealed men. Their glorious faith, ***James 2:1***, now not notified or regarded, shall one day be "found to praise, honour, and glory," ***1 Peter 1:7***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:1 John 3:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**What we shall be**. Great things we have in hand, but greater in hope; much in possession, but more in reversion. Let this comfort us against the contempts cast upon us by the world, blind and besides itself in point of salvation.

For we shall see him as he is. Now we see as in a glass obscurely, ***1 Corinthians 13:12***, as an old man through spectacles, as a weak eye looks upon the sun; but in heaven we shall see him as he is, so far as a creature is capable of that blissful vision. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:1 John 3:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Purifieth himself**. That is true hope that runs out into holiness. Faith and hope purge, and work a suitableness in the soul to the things believed and hoped for.

Even as he is pure. In quality, though not in an equality. There shall be *comparatio,* though not *aequiparatio.* {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:1 John 3:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Sin is the transgression**. As there is the same roundness in a little ball as in a bigger, so the same disobedience in a small sin as in a great. Papists tell us that concupiscence is not truly and properly a sin (Concil. Trident.); but St Paul saith otherwise, ***Romans 7:8***. There are among us that say that original sin is not forbidden by the law; but sure we are it is cursed and condemned by the law, as that which hath in it a tacit consent to all sin. *Peccatum est dictum, factum, concupitum contra aeternam legem,* saith Austin (contra Faust. xxii. 27). Any lack of conformity to the eternal law is sin. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:1 John 3:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**To take away our sins**. Shall sin live that killed Christ? Shall I drink the blood of these men? said David of those that but ventured their lives for him. Oh that each Christian would turn Jew to himself, and kill the red cow, &c.; present himself a whole burnt sacrifice to God; not going about to frustrate the end of Christ's incarnation and passion, by retaining that sin that he came to take away, lest that doleful sentence be passed upon him, that was once upon the stubborn Jews, "Ye shall die in your sins," ***John 8:21, 24***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:1 John 3:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Sinneth not**. Sin may rebel, it cannot reign in a saint. He sinneth not sinningly; there is no way of wickedness in him, ***Psalm 139:23-24***, he loves not sin, he lies not in it, but riseth again by repentance, and is restless till that be done,

and done to purpose. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:1 John 3:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Let no man deceive you**. As if you might pass *e coeno in coelum;* fly to heaven with dragon's wings; dance with the devil all day, and sup with Christ at night; live all your lives long in Delilah's lap, and then go to Abraham's bosom when you die. These are the devil's dirt daubers that teach such doctrine, his upholsterers that sew such pillows, ***Ezekiel 13:18***.

He that doth righteousness is righteous. Provided that he do it from a right principle. For otherwise men may naturally perform the outward act of righteousness, and yet not be righteous persons; as Ahab humbled himself. Alexander the Great, when he had killed Clitus, was troubled in conscience, and sent to all kinds of philosophers (as it were to so many ministers) to know what he might do to appease his conscience and satisfy for that sin. Uriah, that brought in the altar of Damascus, is called "a faithful witness," ***Isaiah 8:2***, true to his word; yet no man looketh upon him as righteous. It is not, saith a reverend man, in divinity as in moral philosophy, where *iusta et iuste agendo simus iusti,* by doing righteous things and righteously we are made righteous; but we have *esse* to be first, and then the *operari, &c.,* the work, the habit, and then the act. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:1 John 3:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**He that committeth sin**. ποιῶν, that makes a trade of it, and can art it (as the word properly signifieth), not act it only.

Is of the devil. Bears his image, wears his livery; is as like him as if spit out of his mouth.

For the devil sinneth. Or is a sinning; he never ceaseth to sin, he commits the sin against the Holy Ghost every moment.

That he might destroy the works. The devil then hath his works in the very hearts of the elect, for whose cause Christ came into the world, that he might unravel the devil's work, break his head, ***Genesis 3:15***. The Son of the woman, our Saviour (not the Virgin Mary, as Papists blasphemously affirm, *illa conteret tibi caput*) breaks the serpent's head, that first of the devil's works against mankind: trampled upon him and triumphed over him on the cross, and will tread him under our feet also shortly. But what a bold conceit is that of Josephus, that God, when he said "He shall bruise thy head," meant no more but this, Every son of Eve, whensoever he meeteth with a serpent, shall strike it upon the head, which containeth in it somewhat hurtful to mankind. (Antiq. Judaic, i. 2.) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:1 John 3:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For his seed**. The new nature, which causeth that sin cannot carry it away without some counter buffs. The Spirit quickens the word: as there is a spirit in the natural seed that maketh it prolific; so here.

He cannot sin. *i.e.* Sinningly, so as to be transformed into sin's image: cannot do wickedly with both hands earnestly, ***Micah 7:7-9***. He sinneth not totally and finally, he cannot so fall as apostates; for the seed of God ever abideth in him. Bellarmine is forced to confess that this is the hardest place in all the Bible, urged for proof of perseverance in grace. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:1 John 3:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**In this the children of God**. As David's daughters were known by their garments of various colours, ***2 Samuel 13:18***; so are God's children by their piety and charity. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:1 John 3:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That we should love**, &c.. This beloved disciple was all for love. (***See Trapp on "1 John 2:9"***) (***See Trapp on "1 John 2:5"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:1 John 3:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Who was of that wicked one**. Tertullian calleth Cain the devil's patriarch. Cain is dead, saith another, but I could wish that he did not

still live in his heirs and executors, *Qui clavam eius sanguine Abelis rubentem, ut rem sacram circumferunt, adorant et venerantur,* who bear about and make use of Cain's club, to knock on the head God's righteous Abels. (Bucholcer.)

And slew his brother. Gr. ἔσφαξε cut his throat. *Acerbissima sunt odia (ut ita nominem) Theologica,* saith one. These divinity hatreds are most deadly. Such fratricides were Alphonsus Diazius, and Charles, king of France, stirred up by Pope Urban to kill his brother Manford, king of Sicily.

Because his own works, &c.. The old enmity, ***Genesis 3:15***. So ***Numbers 22:3-4***. Moab was irked because of Israel, or did fret and vex at them, as ***Exodus 1:12***, yet they were allied, and passed by them in peace, and, by the slaughter of the Amorites, freed them from evil neighbours which had taken away part of their land, and might do more, as one hath well observed. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:1 John 3:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Marvel not, my brethren**. Since it was so from the beginning, and the very first man that died, died for religion; so early came martyrdom into the world. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:1 John 3:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**We know that we have passed**. Not we think, we hope, &c. If we would not have with the merchant an estate hanging upon ropes, *fortunam rudentibus aptam,* and depending upon uncertain winds, let us make sure work for our souls. This is a jewel that the cock on the dunghill meddles not with. *Sensum electionis ad gloriam in hac vita nullum agnosco,* saith Greevinchovius the Arminian, I know no such thing as assurance of heaven in this life. Papists allow us nothing beyond a conjectural confidence, unless by special revelation. Miserable comforters! They tell us that to taste though but with the tip of a rod (Jonathan-like) of this honey will hinder us in the chase of our lusts; but believe them not; for the joy of the Lord is our strength, ***Nehemiah 8:10***.

Because we love the brethren. This is to be seen in the natives of New England. The first appearance of grace in them is, their love and respect to those that are truly gracious. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:1 John 3:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Whosoever hateth his brother**. Not to love then is to hate, as not to save a man is to kill him, ***Mark 3:4***.

Is a murderer. Because he wisheth him out of the world, as Caracalla did his brother Geta, of whom he said, *Divus sit, modo non sit vivus,* I would he were in heaven or anywhere, so that I were rid of him. By like reason we may say that sin is God-murder; forasmuch as sinners are God haters, ***Romans 1:30***, and could wish there were no God, that they might never come to judgment. The godly man, on the contrary, cries out with David, *Vivat Deus,* "Let the Lord live, and blessed be the God of my salvation," &c., ***Psalm 18:46***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:1 John 3:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Because he laid down.** (***See Trapp on "John 15:13"***) (***See Trapp on "Romans 5:8"***)

We ought also to lay down our lives. If Pylades can offer to die for Orestes merely for a name, or out of carnal affection at the best; should not Christians lay down their own necks one for another, as Aquila and Priscilla did for Paul? ***Romans 16:4***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:1 John 3:17]]{{field-on:Bible}}**This world's goods**. Gr. τὸν βίον, livelihood, which is all that the world looks after.

And shutteth up his bowels, &c.. Not drawing out unto him both his sheaf and his soul, ***Isaiah 58:9***. But locking up as with a key (so the Greek κλείσῃ here signifies) both his barn and his bowels; not considering his brother's necessity and his own ability. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:1 John 3:18]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Let us not love in word**. Words are light and cheap; and there is a great deal of mouth mercy abroad. Julian the Apostate is not presently a friend to Basil, though he write unto him, φίλος φίλῳ, καὶ ἀδελφὸς ἀδελφῷ, Thou art my friend and beloved brother. The Roman legions loved Otho the emperor, saith Dio the historian, and gave him all respect, οὐκ ἀπὸ τῆς γλώττης, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς ψυχῆς, not from the teeth outward but from the heart root. (***See Trapp on "James 2:14"***) (***See Trapp on "James 2:15"***) (***See Trapp on "James 2:16"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:1 John 3:19]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And shall assure our hearts**. This, saith father Latimer, is the desert of the feast of a good conscience. There are other dainty dishes in this feast, but this is the banquet. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 20. [[@Bible:1 John 3:20]]{{field-on:Bible}}**If our keart condemn us**. Conscience is God's spy and man's overseer, *Domesticus index, iudex, carnifex;* God's deputy judge, holding court in the whole soul, bearing witness of all a man's doings and desires, and accordingly excusing or accusing, absolving or condemning, comforting or tormenting. *Quid tibi prodest non habere conscium, habenti conscientiam?* saith one; and another, *Turpe quid acturus, te sine teste time. Inprimis reverere te ipsum.* Look to conscience.

> *"Conscia mens ut cuique sua est, ita concipit intra,*
> *Pectora pro facto spemque metumque suo."* (Ovid.){{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 21. [[@Bible:1 John 3:21]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Then have we confidence**. Sincerity is the mother of serenity, *Sine qua, tranquillitas omnis tempestas est,* without which saith serenity is all a storm. Isidore. Uprightness hath boldness. It is not a peace, but a truce, that the wicked have; such a storm will befall them as shall never be blown over. Israel is the heir of peace, ***Galatians 6:16; Isaiah 32:17***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 22. [[@Bible:1 John 3:22]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And whatsoever we ask**. *sc.* According to his will. *Fiat voluntas mea, quia tua,* said Luther. I can have what I will of God, said one; for my will shall be concentric with his will.

Because we keep. The obedience of faith emboldens us; yet may no man say as the prodigal, "Give me the portion that belongeth to me." It was a proud speech of that emperor (Antonin. Philo.) that said, *Non sic Deum coluimus, aut sic viximus, ut ille nos vinceret,* We have not so served God, that the enemy should overcome us. It was much worse in that arrogant Papist that said, God forbid that we should enjoy heaven as of alms to us; no, we have it by purchase or conquest. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 23. [[@Bible:1 John 3:23]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And this is his commandment**. This is the sum and substance of the gospel, that we believe and love; and the more we believe God's love to us, the more love shall we bear one to another; for our love is but a reflex of his.

And love one another, as he gave us commandment. Lo, love is a commandment; we should therefore not only submit, but embrace it joyfully as a gift. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 24. [[@Bible:1 John 3:24]]{{field-on:Bible}}**By the Spirit**. Christ hath satisfied the wrath of the Father; and now the Father and Christ both, as reconciled, send the Spirit, as the fruit of both their loves, to inherit our hearts. And truly, next unto the love of Christ indwelling in our nature, we may well wonder at the love of the Holy Ghost that will dwell in our defiled souls. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 4

Verse 1. [[@Bible:1 John 4:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**But try the spirits**. As lapidaries do their stones, as goldsmiths do their metals. A Bristol stone may look as well as an Indian diamond; and many things glitter besides gold. Try therefore before you trust that which is doctrinally delivered unto you; being neither overly credulous,—the fool believeth everything; nor rashly censorious, as those were that said of our Saviour, "This man blasphemeth." (***See Trapp on "1 Thessalonians 5:21"***)

Because many false prophets. Both the old Church, ***Numbers 13:1***, and the new, ***Acts 20:30***, were ever pestered with them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:1 John 4:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Hereby know ye the spirit**. Bring it to this test. Gold may be rubbed or melted, it remains orient; so doth truth. Whereas error, as glass (bright, but brittle), cannot endure the hammer of fire.

That confesseth. That preacheth Christ crucified. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:1 John 4:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Is not of God**. And yet he is not called an Atheist, or an Antitheist, but Antichrist, that is, an opposite to Christ; as if his opposing should not be so much to Christ's nature or person, as to his unction and function. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:1 John 4:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And have overcome**. viz. In your Head, Christ, and by the help of his Holy Spirit, your sweet inhabitant, whereby ye are more than conquerors, because sure to overcome and triumph. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:1 John 4:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**They are of the world**. *i.e.* The seducers; fit lettuce for such lips; *Dignum patella operculum. Vos infernates estis.* "Ye are from beneath, I am from above," saith Christ, ***John 8:23***.

Therefore speak they of the world. The water riseth not (unless forced) above its source. Out of the warehouse, the shop is furnished. Carnal teachers gratify their hearers with pleasing positions. The Papists in their petition to King James for a toleration, plead this as an argument, That their religion is agreeable to men's nature: and indeed it is an alluring, tempting, bewitching religion, giving way to all licentiousness and lasciviousness. So Mahomet in his Koran tells his followers concerning venery, That God did not give men such appetites to have them frustrated, but enjoyed, as made for the gust [1] of man, not for his torment; and a great deal more of such paltry stuff.{{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:1 John 4:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Heareth us**. Christ's sheep are rational; they can discern his voice from that of a stranger, and will hear it not with that gristle only that grows upon their heads, but with the ear of their soul, which trieth doctrines as the mouth doth meat, ***Job 34:3***, and knoweth the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:1 John 4:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Beloved, let us love one another**. This beloved disciple breathes nothing but love; as if he had been born with love in his mouth, as they say. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 8. [[@Bible:1 John 4:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Knoweth not God**. If moral virtue could be seen with mortal eyes, saith Plato, it would draw all hearts unto it. If God were well known, he could not but be best beloved, and all that are his, for his sake.

For God is love. Not formally, but causally, say schoolmen; he is the fountain of love, and draws all hearts that have any knowledge of him. See ***1 John 4:16; Solomon's Song 1:3***. (***See***

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[1] Keen relish, appreciation, or enjoyment, esp. as displayed in speech or action. ŒD

Trapp on "1 John 4:16") (***See Trapp on "Solomon's Song 1:3"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:1 John 4:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**In this was manifested**. The very naked bowels of his tenderest compassions are herein laid open unto us, as in an anatomy. God so loved his Son that he gave him the world for his possession, ***Psalm 2:7***; but he so loved the world that he gave Son and all for its redemption. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:1 John 4:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Not that we loved, &c.**. *Deus prior nos amavit, tantus, tantum, et gratis, tantillos et tales.* God, though so great, loved us first and freely, though such and so worthless. "He loved us, because he loved us," saith Moses, ***Numbers 7:7-8***, the ground of his love being wholly in himself. He works for his own name's sake, ***Ezekiel 20:9, 14, 22, 44***, four different times, notwithstanding his word and oath, ***Ezekiel 20:13, 15, 23***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:1 John 4:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**If God so loved us**. His one example easily answereth all our objections, taketh off all our excuses; as that our brother is our inferior, our adversary, of whom we have better deserved, &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:1 John 4:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**No man hath seen God**. If we read that any hath seen him, we must understand it, that indeed they did see *Mercavah, velo harocheb,* the chariot in which God rode, but not the rider in it, as that Rabbi speaketh. (Rab. Maim. More Nevochim, iii. 7.)

His love is perfected in us. *i.e.* Either actively; our love is demonstrated in the excellency of it. Or else passively; the love that God beareth to us is abundantly declared perfect, in that he worketh such a gracious inclination in us. And in this latter sense understand the apostle, ***1 John 4:17***, touching love made perfect. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:1 John 4:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**He hath given us of his Spirit**. That is, of the fruits of his Spirit, his holy motions and graces. For through the two golden pipes the two olive branches empty out of themselves the golden oils of all precious graces, into the candlestick, the Church. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:1 John 4:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And we have seen**. *sc.* By special privilege (that which natural eye never saw, ***1 John 4:12***), the backparts of Jehovah, his wisdom, justice, mercy, &c.; we can see no more and live, we need see no more that we may live. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:1 John 4:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Whosoever shall confess.** (***See Trapp on "1 Corinthians 12:3"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:1 John 4:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And we have known and believed.** That is, we know by believing. (***See Trapp on "John 6:69"***)

God is love. Pellican tells of some in his time that used to read this piece of Scripture to their friends at their feasts. A pious practice surely, and well beseeming those that feast before the Lord. The primitive Christians had at such times their kiss of love, ***1 Peter 5:14***. And St Austin had these two verses written on his table,

> *"Quisquis amat dictis absentum rodere famam,*
> *Hanc mensam vetitam noverit esse sibi."{{*field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:1 John 4:17]]{{field-on:Bible}}**In the day of judgment**. Those that bear his image shall hear his *euge;* well done, he will own them and honour them, and their faith that worketh by love, "shall be found unto praise, honour, and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ," ***1 Peter 1:7***. He that was so willingly judged for them, shall give no hard sentence

against them. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:1 John 4:18]]{{field-on:Bible}}**There is no fear in love**. But complacence and acquiescence in the person beloved.

Perfect love casteth out fear. *Timorem scilicet servilem illum, non amicalem.* (Beda in ***Proverbs 1***)

Because fear hath torment. *Quem metuunt, oderunt,* Whomsoever men fear, they hate, saith the proverb. And *odium timorem spirat,* saith Tertullian. Hatred hath fear, which sets the soul on a rack, as it were, and renders it restless. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:1 John 4:19]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Because he first loved us**. (***See Trapp on "1 John 4:10"***) Mary answers not Rabboni till Christ first said unto her, Mary. Our love is but the reflex of his. And as the reflected beams of the sun are weaker than the direct, so are our affections weaker than God's. That is a memorable saying of a modern writer, As a great brightness of the air at midnight argueth the shining of the moon, and that presumeth an illumination of the sun, because these depend one upon another; so the diffusing of our charity on our neighbours proveth our love to God; and our love to God presumeth his love to us first, for the inseparable dependence they have on each other. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 20. [[@Bible:1 John 4:20]]{{field-on:Bible}}**If a man say, I love God**. If he did so, he would hardly say so in a vaunting way howsoever. "Charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up," ***1 Corinthians 13:4***. Christ loves secret service, ***Solomon's Song 2:14***. They that bear him greatest love make least show thereof before others. Master Bartlet Green, when he had been beaten and scourged with rods by Bishop Bonner, and he greatly rejoiced in the same (saith Master Fox), yet his shamefaced modesty was such that he would never express any mention thereof (lest he should seem to glory too much in himself), save that only he opened the same to one Mr Cotton of the Temple (a friend of his) a little before he suffered martyrdom. (Acts and Mon. 1684.) *Vasa quae magis continent, minus sonant.* (Seneca.) But empty casks sound loudest: and baser metals ring shrillest.

Whom he hath seen. Sight usually maketh love. Juvenal greatly wondereth at one, *Qui nunquam visae flagrabat amore puellae,* who loved a party whom he had never seen.

How can he love God. That is, saith Dr Rainolds, He that cannot endure to look on that little glimpse and ray of holiness which is in his brother, in one of the same infirmities and corruptions with himself, will much less be able to abide the light of the Sun of righteousness, and the most orient, spotless, and vast holiness that is in him. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 21. [[@Bible:1 John 4:21]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And this commandment we have from him**. Lo, here a singular evidence of God's great love to us, that he commandeth us also the love of our neighbour as well as of himself: *quasi non tam de se amando fuerit sollicitus, quam de proximo nostro diligendo,* saith Aretius. Our Saviour therefore, summing up the law, joineth those two precepts, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all," &c., and "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Yea, God prefers mercy before sacrifice; and is content that his own immediate service should be intermitted, rather than offices of love to our brother omitted. "Leave there thy gift, and go thy way; first be reconciled," ***Matthew 5:24***.

Love his brother also. If he be a good man, love him in God; if bad, for God. {{field-off:Bible}}

Chapter 5

Verse 1. [[@Bible:1 John 5:1]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Whosoever believeth**. viz. Firmly and fiducially, with assent of mind and consent of will. (***See Trapp on "1 Corinthians 12:3"***) (***See Trapp on "John 1:12"***)

Loveth him also that is begotten. His love, as Aaron's ointment, floweth down from the head to the meanest member. God's image, wheresoever it appeareth, is very lovely. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 2. [[@Bible:1 John 5:2]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That we love the children of God**. Really, aright, and not for self or sinister respects. Godliness begins in the right knowledge of ourselves, and ends in the right knowledge of God. A Christian begins with loving God for himself, but he ends in loving himself and others in and for Christ. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 3. [[@Bible:1 John 5:3]]{{field-on:Bible}}**For this is**, &c.. (***See Trapp on "John 14:15"***)

His commandments are not. (***See Trapp on "Matthew 11:30"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 4. [[@Bible:1 John 5:4]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Even our faith**. Which shows a man a better project, puts his head into heaven beforehand, gives him to taste of the hidden manna. Now his mouth will not water after homely provisions, that hath lately tasted of delicate sustenance. Are we afraid of men? saith one. Faith sets hell before us. Are we allured by the world? Faith sets heaven before us. It was by the force of his faith that Luther brake out into those words, *Contemptus est a me Romanus et favor et furor,* I care neither for Rome's fawnings nor frownings. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 5. [[@Bible:1 John 5:5]]{{field-on:Bible}}**But he that believeth**. A believer walketh about the world as a conqueror. He saith of these things here below, as Socrates did when he came into a fair, and saw there sundry commodities to be sold, *Quam multis ego non egeo? Nec habeo, nec careo, nec curo,* as another said, I neither have these things, nor need them, nor care for them. He hath his feet where other men's heads are, ***Proverbs 15:24; Revelation 12:1***. He sets not his desire upon the asses, since he is assured of the kingdom. He looks upon the world as Hiram did on the cities Solomon had given him, which he called Cabul, that is, the land of dirt. His eye is upon Uranople, the new Jerusalem, the crowns and palms of that golden country. Children admire gawds [2] and gewgaws; [3] but let a nobleman (that hath been used to the pomp and bravery of the court) pass by a whole stall of such toys and trifles, he never casts his eye towards them.{{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 6. [[@Bible:1 John 5:6]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That came by water and blood**. So to fulfil and answer the legal washings and sacrifices; so to signify that he justifieth none by his merit but whom he sanctifieth by his Spirit; and so to set forth the two sacraments of the New Testament. (***See Trapp on "John 19:34"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 7. [[@Bible:1 John 5:7]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Three that bear record**. viz. That Jesus Christ is the Son of God. These three heavenly witnesses have given testimony hereof in earth. (***See Trapp on "John 5:32"***) (***See Trapp on "John 8:18"***)

These three are one. In essence and will. As if three lamps were lighted in one chamber, albeit the lamps be different, yet the lights cannot be severed; so in the Godhead, as there is a distinction of persons, so a simplicity of nature. {{field-off:Bible}}

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[2] One of the larger and more ornamental beads placed between the decades of 'aves' in a rosary. ŒD

[3] A gaudy trifle, plaything, or ornament, a pretty thing of little value, a toy or bauble. ŒD

Verse 8. [[@Bible:1 John 5:8]]{{field-on:Bible}}**The Spirit and the water**. The Spirit of sanctification testified by saving graces and new divine gifts, the water of repentance, and the blood of Christ applied by faith. These be the three witnesses of a man's happiness here. When the waters of sanctification are troubled and muddy, let us run to the witness of blood. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 9. [[@Bible:1 John 5:9]]{{field-on:Bible}}**If we receive, &c.**. If two or three witnesses establish a truth with men, shall we deny that honour to God's testimony? {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 10. [[@Bible:1 John 5:10]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Hath the witness in himself**. Carries in his heart the counterpane of all the promises.

Hath made him a liar. As one may deny God in deed as well as in word, so he may give him the lie too in like manner, *sc.* by going away, and not heeding all the grace that he offereth by Christ; for such a one saith in effect, Tush, there is no such thing as Christ; or at least no such benefit to be reaped by his passion as they would persuade us, &c. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 11. [[@Bible:1 John 5:11]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That God hath given to us, &c.**. How plain is the Holy Scripture in things needful to salvation! These God hath written for us, as it were, with the beam of the sun, that none may plead difficulty. But we are, most of us, of the Athenian strain, of whom Cicero says the proverb went, *Athenienses scire quae recta sunt, sed facere nolle,* that they knew what was right, but had no mind to make use of it. (Cic. de Senect.) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 12. [[@Bible:1 John 5:12]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Hath life**. For he is the prince and principle of life; and all out of him are dead while they live. *Non ille diu vixit, sed diu fuit,* saith Seneca of one; *non multum navigavit, sed multum iactatus est,* of another at sea; he was long, but lived little; he was much tossed, but not much furthered; he moved much, but removed not at all, as a horse in a mill, as a dog in a wheel, &c. (***See Trapp on "John 1:4"***)

And he that hath not the Son hath not life. *Negatio contrarii auget vim affirmationis.* ***1 Kings 20:1; Deuteronomy 33:6; Proverbs 30:11; 1 Samuel 1:11***. (***See Trapp on "John 1:20"***) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 13. [[@Bible:1 John 5:13]]{{field-on:Bible}}**That ye may know that ye have eternal life**. *sc.* In the pledges and firstfruits of it, in the true graces of the Spirit, whereof there are many marks and evidences laid down in this Epistle, that we might be at a certainty; not a certainty of hope only (as Papists foolishly distinguish), but of faith too; even a full assurance.

That ye may believe. That ye may be confirmed, continued, and increased in it. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 14. [[@Bible:1 John 5:14]]{{field-on:Bible}}**According unto his will**. One said he could have what he would of God; and, *Fiat voluntas mea,* saith Luther in a certain prayer, but then he finely falls off with *mea voluntas, Domine, quia tua;* let my will be done, Lord, but so far forth as it is thy will. This was the time when he prayed for the life of Miconius (who was fallen into a deep consumption) and prevailed with God for it. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 15. [[@Bible:1 John 5:15]]{{field-on:Bible}}**We know that we have**. *Iste vir potuit quod voluit,* That man could do what he would with God, said one concerning Luther. (***See Trapp on "John 15:16"***)

We have the petitions that we desired of him. If we can perceive and discern that God listeneth, the thing is done. Now the former we may find, first, by a cast of God's countenance, by a smile of his face, ***Psalm 22:24; 34:15***, for a godly man is admitted to see as well as speak; like a good angel, he is ever looking on the face of God; and can gather by that how he shall

speed in his suit. The upright shall dwell in his presence, ***Psalm 140:13***, when the hypocrite shall not come before him, ***Job 13:16***. Secondly, By the answer of a man's own conscience, ***1 John 3:20***. God answers us by this, as he did the high priest by Urim and Thummim, and as he answered Elijah by fire from heaven that consumed his sacrifice. This faithful petitioners seldom fail of, ***Psalm 35:13; 6:8-9; Philippians 4:6, 7***. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 16. [[@Bible:1 John 5:16]]{{field-on:Bible}}**A sin which is not unto death**. When John Frith and Andrew Hewer were at the stake, Dr Cook openly admonished all the people that they should in no wise pray for them, no more than they would do for a dog at which words Frith, smiling, desired the Lord to forgive him. (Acts and Mon. fol. 946.) In its own nature all sin is mortal; but in a saint being tempered with faith and repentance, it is as quicksilver tempered with ointment and killed.

There is a sin unto death. That unpardonable sin of doing despite to the Spirit of grace. Rockwood, a chief persecutor at Calais in the days of Henry VIII, to his last breath, staring and raging, cried, He was utterly damned; and being willed to ask God mercy, he brayed and cried out, "All too late! for I have sought maliciously the deaths of a number of the most honest men in the town, whom I knew to be so; all too late, therefore, all too late." Another that had committed this sin to death, wished that his wife and children and all the world might be damned together with him. (Mr Burroughs' Mos. Choice.) {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 17. [[@Bible:1 John 5:17]]{{field-on:Bible}}**There is a sin not unto death**. All sins and blasphemies shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, &c. (***See Trapp on "Matthew 12:31"***) (***See Trapp on "Matthew 12:32"***) Every sin (in the desert considered) hales hell at the heels of it. *Flagitium et flagellum ut acus et filum.* There is no venial sin in itself. But the unpardonable sin is here distinguished from all other sins; 1. By the nature of it; it is not any one sin against the law, nor yet is it the direct breach of the whole law, ***Hebrews 10:28***; but it is a sin against the gospel, a wilful and malicious refusing of pardon upon such terms as the gospel offereth it, scorning to be beholden to God for any such free favour. 2. By the effect, it is a sin unto death, it is infallibly damning, there is no expiation, but a certain fearful expectation of fiery indignation to devour these adversaries, ***Hebrews 10:27***. God not suffering himself to be derided, nor his Spirit to be despited, smites them with an incurable blindness and reprobacy of mind; whereupon follows, 1. An impossibility of repentance, ***Hebrews 6:6*** 2. A desperate fury whereby they continue raving and raging both against the physic and the physician, to their own endless ruth and ruin. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 18. [[@Bible:1 John 5:18]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Sinneth not**. *sc.* That sin to death, ***1 John 5:16***, nor other sins, as other men do. (***See Trapp on "1 John 3:9"***)

And that wicked one toucheth him not. viz. *Tactu qualitativo,* as Cajetan expoundeth it, with a deadly touch; he thrusts not in his sting so far as to infuse the venom of that sin that is properly his sin, ***John 8:44***, and with which he toucheth their spirits that become the serpent's seed. He toucheth them not so as the needle is touched by the loadstone; so as to partake of his devilish spirit, and to be wholly carried after him. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 19. [[@Bible:1 John 5:19]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Lieth in wickedness**. As a lubber in a lake, as a carcase in its slime. *In fermento tota iacet uxor,* My wife lies down entirely drunk, saith he in Plautus. "This people is wholly set upon wickedness," said Aaron, ***Exodus 32:22***, is under the power and vassalage of the devil; *Nil mundum in mundo. Nihil aliud est totus mundus ante conversionem, nisi aut hara porcorum, aut colluvies rabidorum canum,* saith Austin. The whole world, before conversion, is not better than a filthy hog sty, or a kennel of mad dogs. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 20. [[@Bible:1 John 5:20]]{{field-on:Bible}}**And we know**. This he brings in here for a

corollary and conclusion of all. {{field-off:Bible}}

Verse 21. [[@Bible:1 John 5:21]]{{field-on:Bible}}**Keep yourselves from idols**. Negatively at least (as those 7000; in Israel, that had not bowed their knees to Baal), if not positively, by open declaration of your utter dislike, as did Daniel and his associates. Irenaeus reproveth the heretics called Gnostici, for that they carried about the image of Christ in Pilate's time, after his own proportion; using also for declaration of their affection towards it, to set garlands upon the head of it; so soon crept this cursed sin into the primitive Church. Soon after the Council of Nice, arose a sharp contention between Irene the empress and her son Constantine VI, who destroyed images; for the which she unnaturally put out his eyes. About which time, as Eutropius writeth, the sun was darkened most terribly for 17 days together; God showing by that, how much he disliked those proceedings. Letters were sent by Queen Mary and her council, to examine Mr Flower why he wore about his neck written, *Deum time, idolum fuge;* Fear God and flee idolatry, to stir up Bishop Bonner to proceed against all that did the like. Arguments and authorities alleged by Bishop Ridley against images in churches may be read, Acts and Mon. fol. 1928, &c. Martin was much grieved that this sentence of St John was set in our churches, in the place where the rood loft [4] formerly stood.{{field-off:Bible}}

[4] The cross upon which Christ suffered; the cross as the symbol of the Christian faith. Now only *arch.* ŒD