

FIRST JOHN 5:18-21

“This is the True God”

06 & 09 June 2024

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Discourse structure of 1 John

Part 1: Our Fellowship with God 1.1 – 2.17

Part 2: Our Adversaries 2.18 – 3.18

Part 3: Our Christian Faith 3.19 – 5.5

Part 4: Our Confidence with God 5.6-21

XIII. God’s Testimony 5.6-13

XIV. Answered prayers 5.14-17

XV. Reasonable conclusions 5.18-21

1 John 5:18-21, Chiastic structure

¹⁸ We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him{self}, and the evil one does not touch him.

¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding,

so that we may know him who is true;

and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ.

He is the true God and eternal life.

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

1 John 5:18a

¹⁸ We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, ... *NIV*

- We know: First of four ‘conclusions’. To know = “to see” (*oída*).
- Born: New start, supernatural new life.
- Keep on: Continuous tense. We change!
- Sinning: In 1st John, sinning = denying that the human Jesus is the divine Christ = ‘Son of God’.

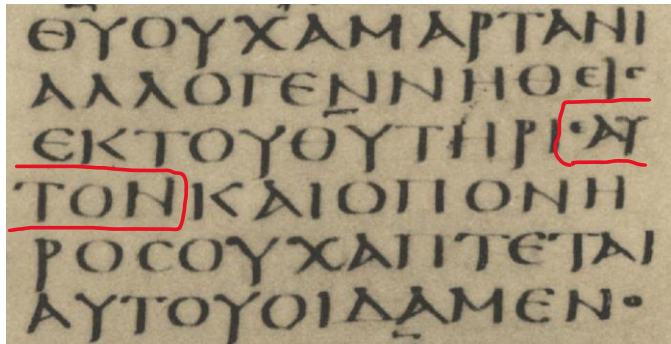
1 John 5:18b

We know that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, ... *NIV*

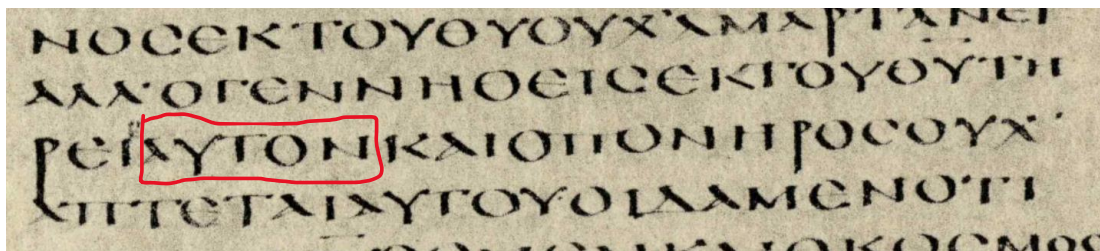
- Him: Two manuscripts and Latin read ‘him’, the rest: ‘himself’.
- Born: Jesus → ‘him’. Believer → ‘himself’.
- Protect: Keeps (safe).
- Evil: “The” + adjective → noun.
- Touch: ‘Keep a hold on.’ Continuous tense. Middle voice = ‘for himself’.

Keeps him? Or keeps himself?

Codex Sinaiticus, 4th century: εAYTON



Codex Alexandrinus, 5th century ΔYTON



1 John 5:19

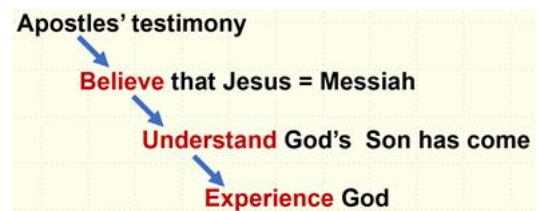
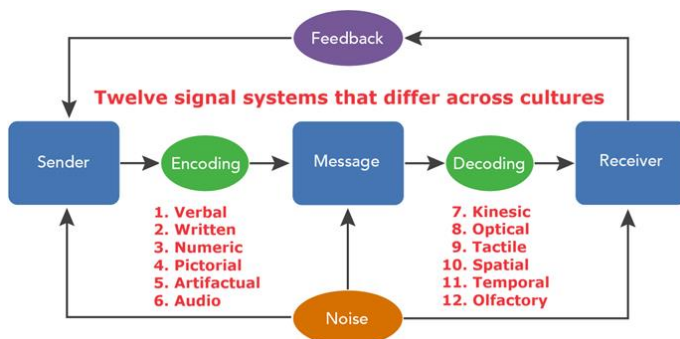
¹⁹ We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one

- Know: Second 'know' = 'see' factual know.
- From: Origin = reborn (verse 18).
- World: Creation, human system.
- Lies in: Under domination
- Evil: Pernicious: active, intentional evil.

1 John 5:20a

²⁰ And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true...

- Know: Third 'know' = 'see' factual know.
- Son: Messianic title. Jesus = the Christ.
- Understanding: Mind, intelligence, thinking. "Love the Lord with your ... mind" Mk 12:30
- Know: Fourth know = by experience (*gnosko*).
- True: Contrast idols and religions.



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1 John 5:20b

... and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ.

- In: En = a relational particle with no specific meaning.
To be 'en' a person = to be in relation with, to belong to.
- Him: God (5:19)? Or his Son (5:20)?
- True: The unique, invisible Creator?
Or the crucified, risen Messiah/Christ?

- We: (a) Jesus' apostles,
(b) Ephesian Christians,
(c) Christian believers
- Son: Psa 2:7; Mk 1:11; Jn 1:14; Hb 1:2.
- Jesus: Human name: Joshua in Hebrew, Iésous in Greek, Jesus in English.
- Christ: Divine title: the final prophet, priest & king.

1 John 5:20c

... He is the true God and eternal life.

Jesus Christ "is" (In 1 John; John 1):

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| ● Word of life | ● Word of life |
| ● True Light | ● True Light |
| ● Human flesh | ● Human flesh |
| ● Only Son | ● Only Son |
| ● The Christ | ● The Christ |
| ● Lamb of God | ● Lamb of God |

View 99 NAMES OF JESUS <https://youtu.be/6oLjc-1dOmU> at double speed.

1 John 5:201

²¹ Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

- Childen: Susceptible to deceit.
- Keep: Keep away from, be on your guard.
- Yourselves: Plural = help each other.
- Idols:
 - 1) Roman & Greek gods
 - 2) Roman emperor's image
 - 3) Local sprites and deities
 - 4) Religions and philosophies
 - 5) Ourselves or our possessions

Governor Pliny (the Younger), in *Epistles* 10.96, wrote to Emperor Trajan in about AD 110:

"I have asked them if they were Christians. If they confessed, I asked them a second and third time, threatening them with punishment. If they persisted, I commanded them to be led away for punishment. There was no doubt that pertinacious and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished, regardless of their confession. Some Roman citizens afflicted with a similar insanity were sent to Rome."