

# 1 John 5:20 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse

- [1 John 5:1](#)
- [1 John 5:2](#)
- [1 John 5:3](#)
- [1 John 5:4](#)
- [1 John 5:5](#)
- [1 John 5:6](#)
- [1 John 5:7](#)
- [1 John 5:8](#)
- [1 John 5:9](#)
- [1 John 5:10](#)
- [1 John 5:11](#)
- [1 John 5:12](#)
- [1 John 5:13](#)
- [1 John 5:14](#)
- [1 John 5:15](#)
- [1 John 5:16](#)
- [1 John 5:17](#)
- [1 John 5:18](#)
- [1 John 5:19](#)
- [1 John 5:20](#)
- [1 John 5:21](#)

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 5

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 5:20 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. This is the true God and eternal life:**

**Greek** - oidamen (1PRAI) de hoti o huios tou theou ekei (3SPAI) kai dedoken (3SRAI) hemin dianoian hina ginoskomen (1PPAS) ton alethinon kai esmen (1PPPAI) en to alethino en to huio autou lesou Christo houtos estin (3SPAI) o alethinos theos kai zoe aionios:

**Amplified** - And we [have seen and] know [positively] that the Son of God has [actually] come to this world and has given us understanding and insight [progressively] to perceive (recognize) and come to know better and more clearly Him Who is true; and we are in Him Who is true—in His Son Jesus Christ (the Messiah). This [Man] is the true God and Life eternal.

**Wuest** - We know with an absolute knowledge that the Son of God has come and is here, and that He has given us a permanent understanding in order that we may be knowing in an experiential way the One who is genuine. And we are in the Genuine One, in His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the genuine God and life eternal.

KJV 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

BGT 1 John 5:20 ο δαμεν δ τι υ ς το θεο κει κα δ δωκεν μ ν δι νοιαν να γιν σκωμεν τ ν ληθιν ν, κα σ μ ν ν τ ληθιν , ν τ υ α το ησο Χριστ . ο τ ς σπιν ληθιν ς θε ς κα ζω α νιος.

NET 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us insight to know him who is true, and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life.

CSB 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we may know the true One. We are in the true One-- that is, in His Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

ESV 1 John 5:20 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.

NIV 1 John 5:20 We know also 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--even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

NLT 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and he has given us understanding so that we can know the true God. And now we live in fellowship with the true God because we live in fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the only true God, and he is eternal life.

NRS 1 John 5:20 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.

NJB 1 John 5:20 We are well aware also that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know the One who is true. We are in the One who is true as we are in his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God and this is eternal life. Children, be on your guard against false gods.

NAB 1 John 5:20 We also know that the Son of God has come and has given us discernment to know the one who is true. And we are in the one who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

YLT 1 John 5:20 and we have known that the Son of God is come, and hath given us a mind, that we may know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ; this one is the true God and the life age-during!

MIT 1 John 5:20 We know God's son has come, and he has given to us understanding that we might know the true God. We are in the true one by being in his son, Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

GWN 1 John 5:20 We know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding so that we know the real God. We are in the one who is real, his Son Jesus Christ. This Jesus Christ is the real God and eternal life.

BBE 1 John 5:20 And we are certain that the Son of God has come, and has given us a clear vision, so that we may see 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.

RSV 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, to know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

NKJ 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

ASV 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

DBY 1 John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding that we should know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

NIRV 1 John 5:20 We also know that the Son of God has come. He has given us understanding. Now we can know the One who is true. And we belong to the One who is true. We also belong to his Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God. He is eternal life.

- **we know:** 1Jn 5:1 4:2,14)(and: Mt 13:11 Lu 21:15 24:45 Joh 17:3,14,25 1Co 1:30 2 Co 4:6 Eph 1:17-19 3:18 Col 2:2,3
- **Him Who:** Joh 14:6 17:3 Rev 3:7,14 6:10 15:3 19:11
- **and we:** 1Jn 2:6,24 4:16 Joh 10:30 14:20,23 15:4 17:20-23 2Co 5:17 Php 3:9
- **This is:** 1Jn 5:11-13 1:1-3 Isa 9:6 44:6 45:14,15,21-25 54:5 Jer 10:10 23:6 John 1:1-3 14:9 20:28 Ac 20:28 Ro 9:5 1Ti 3:16 Titus 2:13 Heb 1:8
- [1 John 5 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## THE THIRD CERTITUDE: WE KNOW CHRIST HAS COME

**Hiebert** explains that "This third assurance, the longest and most involved, is the ground and substance of the preceding two (1Jn 5:18+, 1Jn 5:19+). John again asserts the Christian certainty that the Son of God has come (1Jn 5:20a), indicates the resultant gift of understanding (1Jn 5:20b), and expresses the resultant experiential realization of believers (1Jn 5:20c)." ([The Epistles of John- An Expository Commentary](#))

Vine adds that 1Jn 5:20 "states the ground upon which believers are assured of the facts mentioned in 1Jn 5:18+ and 1Jn 5:19+, as to their relationship with God and their consequent condition regarding sin, Satan and the world. In stressing again, and finally, the divine relationship imparted to believers, the apostle recalls the truths of the preexistence of the Son of God and His incarnation. The **perfect tenses** indicate the permanent results of what is stated."

**And (de)** "is literally a mild adversative particle, contrasting the blind indifference of the world (1Jn 5:19) with the new understanding of the believer." (Cole)

**We know** ([1492](#))(**eido/oida**) means we know absolutely, beyond a shadow of a doubt and that intuitive knowledge which is divinely derived is our permanent possession (as indicated by the **perfect tense**)!

**The Son of God has come** - The Name **Son of God** speaks of the deity of Jesus and the verb **has come** speaks of the historical event of His incarnation. He has "invaded" the world so to speak, not to destroy it but to save it (Jn 3:16).

**Cole** comments on **Son of God** - Jesus came and John and his fellow apostles had to recognize Him as the Son of God. That was a title of deity. For example, Jesus said (Luke 10:21-22), "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight. All things have been handed over to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him." Jesus there claims a unique relationship with the Father that all others lack. Only He can reveal the Father to us, according to His sovereign will. If Jesus doesn't reveal the Father, we cannot know Him. In John 5:17-18, Jesus claimed that God is His Father, which the Jews understood as blasphemy, because he was making Himself equal with God. Rather than denying their charges, Jesus went on to state some of the strongest affirmations of His deity in all of Scripture. He claimed to have the power to give life to whom He wishes, to judge everyone, and to receive the same honor as the Father (John 5:21-23). He claimed that the day is coming when those in the tombs would hear His voice and come forth, either to a resurrection of life or of judgment (John 5:28-29). John and his fellow apostles recognized Jesus as the Son of God, because He had opened their eyes. This points to the historical foundation of the Christian faith. ([1 John 5:18-21 Knowing This, Guard Yourself](#))

**David Smith** - "The assurance and guarantee of it all—the incarnation, an overwhelming demonstration of God's interest in us and His concern for our highest good. Not simply a historic fact but an abiding operation—not 'came' (ēlthe) but '**hath come and hath given us**.' Our faith is not a matter of intellectual theory but of personal and growing acquaintance with God through the enlightenment of Christ's Spirit (ton alethinon), "the real" as opposed to the false God of the heretics."

**Has come (hēkō)** means to have come, have arrived, be present.

**Wuest** says "John does not use *erchomai* (to come) here, a verb which speaks only of the act of coming, but **hēkō** which includes in the idea of coming, the fact of arrival and personal presence. It is, "the Son of God has come (in incarnation), has arrived and is here." While He departed in His glorified body to Heaven, yet He is here in His presence in the Church. His coming was not like that of a meteor, flashing across the sky and then gone. He remains in His followers on earth."

**Hiebert** has a helpful note on this verb (**heko**) - The verb (hēkei, a **present tense** verb with the force of the perfect) expresses the

finality of His appearing in incarnation. In contemporary Greek pagan usage this verb was used to record the solemn appearance of a god, and indeed John 1:14 (+) portrays the solemn uniqueness of the incarnate Christ. The abiding reality of His incarnate appearing here on earth is essential for His present heavenly ministry (Heb. 2:17-18+; Heb 4:14-16+). ([The Epistles of John- An Expository Commentary](#))

## WE KNOW CHRIST HAS GIVEN US UNDERSTANDING

**Has given** (1325)(**didomi**) means to give and in context is based on decision of will of Giver and no merit of the recipients. **Has given** is in the **perfect tense**, which could be paraphrased "has given with the result that the gift is in the permanent possession of the recipient." The **perfect tense** marks the abiding nature of this gift of **understanding**.

**Cole** - This divine gift of understanding brings us into a personal relationship with the only true God, so that we come to know Him. Here John uses a different word for know, which means, to know experientially. There is a great difference between knowing about someone and actually knowing the person himself. Through the understanding that Christ gives, we come personally to "know Him who is true." The word "true" means "genuine" or "authentic." He is the only genuine God; all others are fakes or impostors. ([1 John 5:18-21 Knowing This, Guard Yourself](#))

**Understanding** (1271)(**dianoia** from **dianoéomai** = to agitate in mind in turn from **dia** = through + **noeo** = to think, **nous** = mind) is literally "a *through mind* (which) denotes the ability to pass beyond the external and superficial to discern and understand true reality. **Dianoia** (John's only use of this word) signifies a process of the mind leading to a conclusion, hence denoting the faculty of forming a conclusion from certain facts. In context what is involved is the mental ability to discern the significance of the coming of Christ (Messiah as prophesied over in the OT), specifically the incarnation of the Son of God. This enlightenment also enables John and all true believers in Christ to see through and refute the heretical claims of the false teachers. It is the work of the Holy Spirit as God's "anointing" (1Jn 2:27-+) that gives the believer this understanding." ([Hiebert](#))

**Vine** - The word **dianoia**, "mind," is not merely, like **nous**, the seat of the faculty of perception, it is the thinking faculty of reflection itself, a disposition (not a function, but a product), which may be good, e.g., He 8:10+ and He 10:16+, or evil, as here (Col 1:21+) and in Luke 1:51, "imagination."

**So that** (**hina**) is a **term of purpose** which should always cause us to pause and ponder what is the purpose? As the **NET Note** says here **hina** "gives the purpose of the preceding affirmation: "we know that the Son of God has come and has given us insight (**so that we may**) know Him who is true." (**NET Note**) In other words the chief objective of the gift of **understanding** is to lead us into a growing (**present tense**) personal (experiential) knowledge of God.

## EXPERIENTIAL KNOWING

**We may know** (1097)(**ginosko**) refers to knowledge gained by experience, a knowing intimately and not just intellectually. **Ginosko** is in the **present tense** which signifies that we continually know or we have the constant experience of knowing. Vincent says the idea is that we might "Apprehend progressively."

**Vine** explains that **know** is **ginosko** "which stresses the appropriation of knowledge rather than the possession of it (**eido/oida**); the **present tense**, too, conveys the thought of a continuous process of getting to know God. The same construction and thought are expressed in Christ's prayer in John 17:3 (see below). This power and process of the knowledge of God through the understanding given to us, is set in contrast to the darkness of the world (1Jn 5:19+; cp. Eph. 4:18+), and in contrast to the claims of the Gnostics, who regarded the Christian faith as merely an effort to communicate with the infinite. The believer is not groping in the dark."

**Jackman** points out, "**Understanding** Christian truth is not a matter of mastering doctrinal formulations, important though they are, or of grasping philosophical ideas like those the Gnostics propagated; but of meeting, knowing and submitting to the person who is truth, 'so that we may know Him Who is true.' ([The Message of John's Letters](#))

Compare Jesus prayer request to His Father "And this is eternal life, that **they may know** (**ginosko** in the **present tense** = that we may know the Father personally and continue growing in that knowledge) Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." (John 17:3)

**Robertson** on **Him Who is true** - "That is, God." [Hiebert](#) adds "It designates Him as the God Who is genuine or real as opposed to the counterfeit gods of the heretics."

**This is the true God** ("the true or real one") - To Whom does **'this'** (**houtos**) refer? This could refer to either God the Father or Jesus (see explanation of **NET Note** below). **Vincent** favors "God the Father. Many, however, refer it to the Son." **Robertson** adds

"Grammatically houtos (this) may refer to Jesus Christ or to "the True One." It is a bit tautological to refer it to God, but that is probably correct, God in Christ, at any rate. God is eternal life (John 5:26) and He gives it to us through Christ."

The **NET Note** favors **this** (one) as referring to Jesus Christ - The pronoun This one (ο τος, houtos) refers to a person, but it is far from clear whether it should be understood as a reference (1) to God the Father or (2) to Jesus Christ. R. E. Brown (Epistles of John [AB], 625) comments, "I John, which began with an example of stunning grammatical obscurity in the prologue, continues to the end to offer us examples of unclear grammar." The nearest previous antecedent is Jesus Christ, immediately preceding, but on some occasions when this has been true the pronoun still refers to God (see 1 John 2:3). The first predicate which follows This one in 5:20, the true God, is a description of God the Father used by Jesus in John 17:3, and was used in the preceding clause of the present verse to refer to God the Father (him who is true). Yet the second predicate of This one in 5:20, eternal life, appears to refer to Jesus, because although the Father possesses "life" (John 5:26, 6:57) just as Jesus does (John 1:4, 6:57, 1 John 5:11), "life" is never predicated of the Father elsewhere, while it is predicated of Jesus in John 11:25 and 14:6 (a self-predication by Jesus). If This one in 5:20 is understood as referring to Jesus, it forms an inclusion with the prologue, which introduced the reader to "the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us." Thus it appears best to understand the pronoun This one in 5:20 as a reference to Jesus Christ. The Christological affirmation which results is striking, but certainly not beyond the capabilities of the author (see John 1:1 and 20:28): This One [Jesus Christ] is the true God and eternal life. ([NET Note](#))

**True** ([228](#))(**alethinous** from **alethes** = true, one who cannot lie) is an adjective which pertains to being in accordance with historical fact - genuine, real, true, valid, trustworthy (worthy of confidence, dependable). **Alethinous** describes that which has not only the name and resemblance, but the real nature corresponding to the name, in every respect corresponding to the idea signified by the name -- thus genuine not spurious, fictitious, counterfeit, imaginary, simulated or pretended.

**Vine** explains that John means "**true** as opposed to what is spurious and unreal, not true as opposed to what is false (which would be expressed by **alethes**). Again, God is not only the source of truth, He is the one and only genuine God."

**Wuest** on **true** - "**True**" is not **alethes**, "true," that is, veracious, but **alethinous** "genuine" as opposed to the false and counterfeit, here, the genuine God as opposed to the false God of the heretics. ([Word Studies from the Greek New Testament](#))

**Drummond** on knowing God - "God very strangely condescends indeed in making things plain to me, actually assuming for the time the form of a man, that I at my poor level may better see Him. This is my opportunity to know Him. This incarnation is God making Himself accessible to human thought—God opening to man the possibility of correspondence through Jesus Christ. And this correspondence and this environment are those I seek. He Himself assures me, 'This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.' Do I not now discern the deeper meaning in Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent? Do I not better understand with what vision and rapture the profoundest of the disciples exclaims, 'The Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we might know Him that is true?' " ("Natural Law in the Spiritual World").

If you have never read it, there is a modern day classic on knowing God written by J I Packer entitled [Knowing God](#)".

**We are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ**- The Twentieth Century New Testament helps us understand the pronouns in this passage (but there is some disagreement) "and we are in union with the True God by our union with his Son, Jesus Christ." John is reminding us of our union with God. **Hiebert** adds that John "reaffirms that mystical union with God that John has repeatedly asserted (1Jn 2:5+, 1Jn 2:24+, 1Jn 2:27-28+, 1Jn 3:24+, 1Jn 4:4+, 1Jn 4:12-13+, 1Jn 4:15-16+). The relationship expressed by "in Him" brings us back to the fellowship with God with which John begins the epistle (1Jn 1:3+). Grayston adds that "The deepest level of awareness of God, is achieved only by intimate communion with the Son." ([New Century Bible Commentary](#))

**Vine** adds that "The increasing knowledge of Him that is true is possible because we are in Him. The relationship involves the knowledge... being in the Father, we are in the Son, and, vice versa, being in the Son, we are in the Father. Both facts are intimate; the one involves the other; for what is stressed in the whole statement is the essential unity of the Father and Son (cp. John 10:30; 14:9, 10). What is predicated of the Father is here likewise predicated of the Son. Thus the essential deity of Christ is declared."

**This is the true God and eternal life** - "He is both "the true God, and eternal life." The second designation, used without the article, is closely joined to the first designation; He is both true deity and life eternal. In Him Godhood and eternal life are inseparably united. This fact distinguishes Him from all false gods.

**Vine** sums this up by noting that "God is not an abstract conception, existing in the minds of people who hold certain doctrines, He is a personal reality, revealed in and through the Son, and experienced personally by believers."

**Hiebert** says "**This**" may refer either to "**him that is true**" (the Father) or to Jesus Christ. Both views have their ardent advocates... We accept a reference to **Jesus Christ** here as the true capstone of the epistle. Calling this "the clinching statement" of the epistle, Lenski asserts: "Everything depends on his deity, and his deity means no less than this, that as the Father who is made known to us by him is the only real God (1Th 1:9), so also his Son Jesus Christ "is the real God" and eternal life. If the Son is less, if he is not the

real God even as the Father is the real God, then this entire epistle and all that it declares about his blood, expiation, our fellowship with God, etc., are futile." ([The Epistles of John- An Expositional Commentary](#))

**Cole** concurs with Hiebert noting that "Conservative scholars are divided over whether the last phrase, **"This is the true God,"** refers to the Father or to Jesus. John Stott and James Boice follow B. F. Westcott in arguing that **"This"** refers to "Him who is true," in which case all three uses of **true** refer to the Father. But, many early church fathers, as well as the Reformers, argued that the phrase refers to the closest antecedent, namely, to Jesus Christ. If so, this is one of the strongest direct statements of the deity of Christ in the New Testament. In light of John's polemic against the false teachers, who denied Jesus' deity, it would seem fitting at the end of the book to refer to Jesus as **"the only true God and eternal life."** ([1 John 5:18-21 Knowing This, Guard Yourself](#))

**Vine on eternal life** - Literally., "life eternal," with stress on each word. The experience just referred to, in the preceding note, is summed up in this. Christ is embodiment, as well as the source, of the life which springs from God and is given to believers, and will forever be ministered to them. To have the life is to have the person in eternal possession (1Jn 5:12+). The apostle has stated that "God is light" (1Jn 1:5+) and that "God is love" (1Jn 4:8+, 1Jn 4:16+); he now says, in effect, that **"God is life."** At the same time he recalls his opening phrase "concerning the Word of life" (1Jn 1:1+), which forms his great subject.

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**A W Tozer - UNITED WITH CHRIST** [Mornings with Tozer: Daily Devotional Readings - Page 11](#)

We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. 1 John 5:20

The Spirit of God has impelled me to preach and write much about the believer's conscious union with Christ—a union that must be felt and experienced. I will never be through talking about the union of the soul with the Savior, the conscious union of the believer's heart with Jesus.

Remember, I am not talking about a "theological union" only. I am speaking also of a conscious union, a union that is felt and experienced.

I have never been ashamed to tell my congregations that I believe in feelings. I surely believe in what Jonathan Edwards termed "religious affections." That is man's perspective.

I am aware also that from God's perspective there are qualities in the Divine Being that can only be known by the heart; never by the intellect!

Long ago John wrote: "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us" (1 John 3:16). So it is best for us to confess that as humans we have difficulty in understanding what God has said when He says that He loves us!

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**Spurgeon on eternal life** - Many people, when they hear or read that expression, suppose that it means heaven; it does mean that, but it means much more. Eternal life commences here; it begins in the believer as soon as he is born again. Then he receives into him that same life which he will have throughout eternity. Eternal life is not a thing of changes; the river widens and deepens, as I showed you this morning, but it is ever the same river of the water of life; it always flows from the same source, it is always constituted in the same manner. The life of the new-born Christian, who only a few minutes ago began to pray, is precisely the same life which is to be found in yonder bright spirits, that have now been thousands of years in perfection at the right hand of God praising his name. Death does not transport believers into a new life; it simply rids us of certain impediments that hamper our true life in its upward flow. The life of the Christian here is the life triumphant that is to be enjoyed hereafter, it is one and the same life so far as its real nature is concerned.....There is a Saviour; that you know, but he is not your Saviour unless he has infused into you a life infinitely superior to that which, was born in you at the first(Full sermon [Eternal Life!](#))

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**A W Tozer - GOD IS SOVEREIGN** [Mornings with Tozer: Daily Devotional Readings - Page 21](#)

We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. 1 John 5:20

Oh, how I wish that I could adequately set forth the glory of the One who is worthy to be the object of our worship!

I do believe that if our new converts—the babes in Christ—could be made to see His thousand attributes and even partially comprehend His being, they would become faint with a yearning desire to worship and honor and acknowledge Him, now and forever!

I know that many discouraged Christians do not truly believe in God's sovereignty. In that case, we are not filling our role as the humble and trusting followers of God and His Christ.

And yet, that is why Christ came into our world. The old theologians called it "theanthropism"—the union of the divine and human

natures in Christ. This is a great mystery, and I stand in awe before it!

The theanthropy is the mystery of God and man united in one Person—not two persons but two natures. So, the nature of God and the nature of man are united in this One who is our Lord Jesus Christ!

**J. C. Philpot. Daily Words for Zion's Wayfarers.** October 25. "And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." 1John 5:20

When the Lord Jesus is pleased in some solemn hour to reveal himself to our soul, when he graciously condescends to take the veil from off our heart that we may behold his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, when he kindly favors us with some manifestation and discovery of himself as the Son of God, the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his Person, then we know that the Son of God has come.

How do you know that the sun rose this morning? By the light which rose with it. So we may say, spiritually, "How do you know that the Son of God has come?" By the Sun of righteousness arising upon you with healing in his wings and the shining light which he diffuses in your heart. So the Lord speaks to Zion—"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you." That is the way in which the darkness is dispersed; for he adds, "Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall rise upon you, and his glory shall be seen upon you." Did not our blessed Lord say, "I am come a light into the world, that whoever believes on me should not abide in darkness?" And has he not promised, "He that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life?" Now as God is light, when he is pleased to shine into the soul, we walk in the light as he is in the light, and then we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. This is the best, this is the surest, this is the safest way to know that the Son of God is come.

We know also that the Son of God is come by his presence; by his power put forth on our behalf; by the answers which he gives to prayer; by the way in which he appears in dark and gloomy hours, making crooked things straight and rough places plain, discovering himself to us as the Way, the Truth, and the Life, showing unto us that in him there is rest and peace, solid, abiding happiness, and in no other. He thus draws and fixes our eyes upon himself, where he sits at the right hand of the Father in the fullness of his grace, glory, and majesty. Thus we know that the Son of God has come. Every prayer, every petition, every sigh and cry, every longing look that you cast up to him, and every word of his grace, every sweet promise, every glimpse or glance of the King in his beauty, which you receive out of his fullness, are all so many testimonies that the Son of God has come, and that you know that he has come.

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**J C Philpot** - O the blessedness, which eternity itself can never exhaust, of possessing eternal life! There is something to my mind so singularly blessed in the expression "eternal life," that I cannot help dwelling upon it. How the thought, the feeling of it expands the breast! Compared with it, how poor, mean, and low is our temporal life and all its concerns—the short span which God has allotted to us here below! And do observe how our eye is directed by holy John to the true God as being Himself eternal life. He is not only the Giver, the Spring, the Subject, the Object of it; He Himself is it all. O if He has but quickened our souls by His Spirit and grace, we carry now, even now, eternal life in our breast! for this eternal life is the precious fruit on earth of that eternal life in heaven which was with the Father and was manifested unto us (1 John 1:2). But how shall we know that we have eternal life, you may ask? How do we know that we have natural life? By an inward consciousness that we are alive; by the pulse which beats, the lungs which breathe, the eye which sees, the ear which hears, the tongue which speaks, the hands which feel, by the warm play of blood through our veins, by the thoughts which pass to and fro through our mind. Similarly we know the possession of spiritual life by an inward consciousness of it and by its inward actings. And as where there is spiritual there is eternal life, as we feel the bubblings, springings, risings, and varied movements of this spiritual life in our bosom, we have a testimony that we have also eternal life; that this eternal life is in the Son of God, and from the Son of God has been breathed into and communicated unto our souls.

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**1 John 5:19 Commentary <> 1 John 5:21 Commentary**