

# 1 John 2:12-14 Commentary

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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 2

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...

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1 John 2:12 I am writing to you, **little children**, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** γραφω υμιν τεκνια οτι αφωνται υμιν αι αμαρτια δια το ονομα αυτου

**Amplified:** I am writing to you, little children, because for His name's sake your sins are forgiven [pardoned through His name and on account of confessing His name]. ([Lockman](#))

**Berkley (Modern Language):** I am writing you, dear children, because for His name's sake your sins have been forgiven you.

**ESV:** I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.

**HCSB:** I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven because of Jesus' name.

**NET:** I am writing to you, little children, that your sins have been forgiven because of his name.

**NIV:** I write to you, dear children, because your sins have been forgiven on account of his name.

**NLT:** I am writing to you who are God's children because your sins have been forgiven through Jesus.

**Phillips:** I write this letter to you all, as my dear children, because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.

**TLB:** I am writing these things to all of you, my little children, because your sins have been forgiven in the name of Jesus our Savior.

**Weymouth:** I am writing to you, dear children, because for His sake your sins are forgiven you.

**Wuest:** I am writing to you, little children, because your sins have been put away for you permanently because of His Name.

**Young's Literal:** I write to you, little children, because the sins have been forgiven you through his name;

- **write** 1Jn 2:7,13,14,21; 1:4
- **little children** 1Jn 2:1
- **your sins** 1Jn 1:7,9; Ps 32:1,2; Lk 5:20; 7:47-50; 24:47; Acts 4:12; 10:43; 13:38; Ro 4:6,7; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14
- **for** Ps 25:11; 106:8; Jer 14:7; Eph 4:32
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ENCOURAGEMENT & REASSURANCE TO CHILDREN, FATHERS & YOUNG MEN (1John 2:12-14).**

**I H Marshall** entitles 1Jn 2:12-17 "The New Status of Believers and Their Relation to the World" (Borrow [The Epistles of John in The New International Commentary on the New Testament](#))

*His purpose in writing is as much to confirm the right assurance of genuine Christians as to rob the counterfeit of their false assurance.*

**John Stott** summarizes 1Jn 2:12-14 - John has abruptly concluded his exposition of his second test. He does not mean to give his readers the impression that he thinks they are in darkness or that he doubts the reality of their Christian faith. It is the false teachers whom he regards as spurious, not the loyal members of the church. So he digresses to tell them his view of their Christian standing. His purpose in writing is as much to confirm the right assurance of genuine Christians as to rob the counterfeit of their false assurance. They are in the new age all right, and are enjoying the forgiveness, the knowledge of God and the power to overcome which had been prophesied of the new covenant (e.g. Jer. 31:31-34+).... The dear children are those newborn in Christ. The young men are more developed Christians, strong and victorious in spiritual warfare; while the fathers possess the depth and stability of ripe Christian experience. (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

**Robert Candlish** - THESE verses form, I think, a break or interruption in the apostle's line of argument. There is, as it were, a pause. John calls upon those to whom he writes to consider, not only what he is writing to them, but what they themselves are to whom he is writing what is their character and standing; what he is entitled to assume in and about them as likely to ensure a favorable reception of his message. This is a common apostolic method. It is a courteous and complimentary way of insinuating advice; taking for granted the attainments to be enforced. But it is far more than that; and it is so emphatically here. It is a trumpet-call, summoning all the faithful to a recognition of their real and true position before God; and that with a view to them receiving aright what his servant is now writing to them—or, it may be, before this letter reaches them, has written to them—of the divine fellowship of light and love. ([John 2 Commentary](#) 1 John 2:12-14 The Guileless Spirit Abiding in the Light)

**Steven Cole** - The German poet, Goethe, said, "Correction does much, but encouragement does more." The Bible has both, of course, in proportion to what we need. Here, John wants to encourage us, no matter where we're at in our level of maturity. But to

be effective, encouragement must be true, not mere flattery. The truest thing about you is what God says in His Word. If you have trusted in Jesus Christ, God says that your sins are forgiven for His name's sake. He says that you have come to know Him as Father. He wants you to grow strong through His Word, so that you will overcome the evil one. As you do, you will grow into a mature believer, who knows Him who is from the beginning. That's why John wrote these encouraging words. ([Encouragement for the Family of God 1 John 2:12-14](#))

## PROBLEM AREAS

### 1 JOHN 2:12-14

1Jn 2:12-14 has several "problem areas"...

**(1) How should one translate the Greek conjunction *hoti*** (1Jn 2:12, three times in 1Jn 2:13, twice in 1Jn 2:14, each usage following the verb *grapho*) - *Hoti* can be translated as "because" (most translations) or "that" (NET Bible). The former is **explanatory**, and gives the reason why John is writing. The latter translation is a **declaration** of fact ("[a content clause](#)"). Most favor the former, and this is discussed in more detail below.

**(2) To what or whom do the terms little children, fathers, and young men refer?** While some see this as a designation of physical or chronological age, most observers interpret John as referring to stages of spiritual development, realizing that there is some overlap. In other words, generally speaking the longer one has been a believer, the more mature he should be (in theory, but sadly not always true in practice). There are many "fathers" (physically older believers) who are still babes in the faith, because of failure to take in the Word and obey the Word taken in! There is also the sub-question (so to speak) of whether John intends 3 groups or 2. The first designation to "**little children**" (*teknon*) seems to refer to all believers because John uses the identical Greek noun *teknon* in 1Jn 2:1 (also in 1Jn 2:28; 3:7,18; 4:4, 5:21) to refer to all believers. The second mention of **children** (1Jn 2:13) is a different Greek word (*paidion*), which refers to little children under authority and in need of discipline to train them in righteousness. In summary, it seems that John is referring to three groups arranged somewhat on the basis of age, but more significantly arranged on the basis of spiritual maturity, the *paidion* in 1Jn 2:13 describing new believers, the young men more mature, vigorous believers and the fathers the more mature believers. Clearly this is somewhat arbitrary, because we all know chronologically young men (and women - [Amy Carmichael](#) was 34 when she founded the Dohnavur Fellowship in India! As an aside, if you wanted to be convicted of lackluster, lackadaisical Christianity [as I was] read her convicting biography by Elisabeth Elliot - [A Chance to Die- The Life and Legacy of Amy Carmichael](#)) who are not only vigorously holding fast the Word of Truth (Titus 1:9) and fighting victoriously over the adversary (1Jn 2:13-14) (and we praise God for these spiritually energetic, single minded men and women.)

The respected expositor **John MacArthur** sees [1 John 2:12-14 as The Stages of Spiritual Growth](#).

One of the best-loved and best-selling Christian classics *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan, traces the allegorical journey of Christian from his home in the City of Destruction to the Eternal City. Each point along this journey represents a trial, temptation, or triumph in the Christian life. John's passage also addresses the various stages of the Christian life.

**Illustration** - "Ladies and Gentlemen, Boys and Girls, Children of All Ages," shouts the ringmaster playfully as he welcomes visitors to the Greatest Show on Earth from underneath the stripes of his clownish top hat. This thunderous welcome address can be heard inside a three-ring circus as the ringmaster hopes to grab the attention of the entire audience. In 1Jn 2:12-14, the author employs a similar rhetorical device, but this is no playful, clownish exhortation.

**Illustration** - When Thomas Jefferson arrived in France as U.S. ambassador in 1785, he called on the French minister for foreign affairs. 'You replace Monsieur Franklin?' asked the minister. 'I succeed him,' was the reply. 'No one can replace him.' We would consider it a compliment if someone called us irreplaceable. In the spiritual sense, we are! No one else can step in and fulfill God's plan for us the way we can and that should be an encouragement to us in each of the seasons of faith. The value and importance of each person in God's family is obvious from today's reading.

Notice that John uses titles for family members, reminding us that the body of Christ is a family of brothers and sisters, spiritual fathers and mothers, with Jesus our elder brother and God our father (cf. Heb. 2:11).

**Candlish** feels all believers belong in the category of children and thus concludes "All alike are "little children;" but some are "fathers," ripe for glory; others are "young men," strong for work." ([John 2 Commentary](#))

**(3) What does John use repetition?**

The answer is uncertain. It may be as simple that as a good teacher John knows the value of repetition.

TWO PARALLEL LINES 1John 2:12-14		
CHILDREN	<b>I am writing</b> to you, little <b>children</b> , because your sins have been <b>forgiven</b> you for His name's sake. (1Jn 2:12)	<b>I have written</b> to you, <b>children</b> , because you <b>know the Father</b> . (1Jn 2:13)
FATHERS	<b>I am writing</b> to you, <b>fathers</b> , because you <b>know Him</b> who has been from the beginning. (1Jn 2:13)	<b>I have written</b> to you, <b>fathers</b> , because you <b>know Him</b> who has been from the beginning. (1Jn 2:14)
YOUNG MEN	<b>I am writing</b> to you, <b>young men</b> , because you have <b>overcome</b> the evil one. (1Jn 2:13)	<b>I have written</b> to you, <b>young men</b> , because you <b>are strong</b> , and the <b>word of God abides</b> in you, and you have <b>overcome</b> the evil one. (1Jn 2:14)

**(4) Why is grapho (to write) translated with present tense ("I am writing") the first three times and with the aorist tense ("I have written" the last three times?**

Sam Storms gives a good summary of the options: **(a)** The **present tense** refers to this epistle (1 John) and the aorist refers to a previous letter (perhaps the gospel of John). **(b)** The present tense refers to the whole of 1 John and the aorist refers to the first part of the letter (i.e., that part preceding 1John 2:12 = 1Jn 1:1-2:11). **(c)** Some say John was interrupted at the end of 1John 2:13 and that when he resumed he repeated what he had just written, changing from the present tense to the aorist. **(d)** "Most writers," says Marshall, "explain the use of the verb in these two tenses as a matter of stylistic variation, perhaps to relieve the monotony of 'I write' occurring six times over. In Greek it was possible to use the past (aorist) tense in a letter with the effect of a present tense (**Ed: [epistolary aorist](#)** - see more discussion below under verb **grapho**): the writer projected himself forward in time to the situation of his recipient for whom the writing of the letter would be a past event. Hence, looking at things from the recipient's point in time, the correct tense would be 'wrote' rather than 'am writing.' In this way, John made use of a stylistic device to enable him to repeat certain things for emphasis" (135-36). ([First John 2:3-17](#))

**(5) Why does he use the sequence: children, fathers, young men, rather than children, young men, fathers which would be chronological?**

The answer is uncertain.

**Hiebert** - Three tests (1Jn 2:3-11) have been presented whereby the readers may be assured of having true fellowship with God. 1Jn 2:12-14 now seem to be a disruption of that theme as John directly addresses his readers in two triads. In two sets of carefully structured statements he expresses his confidence in his readers that they are genuine believers who possess a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. But in thus emphatically assuring his readers, he shows "that what is true of the orthodox Christian was not true of the false claimants around John's church." John's expression of personal assurance concerning his readers in 1Jn 2:12-14 provides the basis for his appeal for separation from the world as a further ground for assurance (1Jn 2:15-17). John expressed his assurance concerning his readers in two sets of triads, each marked by three designations of those addressed. Each expression of affirmation consists of three elements: (1) the assertion "I write" (or "wrote") "to you," (2) a noun of direct address, and (3) an affirmation introduced by "because" (hoti). Careful structure is obvious. The first triad (vv. 1Jn 2:12-13b ). The three designations for those being addressed have evoked much discussion. That mere physical age distinctions are not intended seems clear, as is evident from the fact that John used "little children" (**teknion**) elsewhere to include all his readers (1Jn 2:1, 28; 3:18; 5:21). The words **little children** convey the author's expression of endearment but also suggest "their need of instruction and their state of dependence upon God and upon teachers such as himself." ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**Steven Cole** has an excellent introduction to 1Jn 2:12-14 - Years ago, a "Dear Abby" (Arizona Daily Sun [1/10/99]) column ran a story by a retired schoolteacher. One day she had her students take out two sheets of paper and list the names of the other students in the room. Then she told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down by their names. She took the papers home that weekend and compiled a list for each student of what the others had said about him or her. On Monday she gave each student his or her list. Before long, everyone was smiling. "Really?" one whispered. "I never knew that meant anything to anyone." "I didn't know anyone liked me that much!" Years later, the teacher went to the funeral of one of her former students, who had been killed in Vietnam. Many who had been in that class years before were there. After the service, the young man's parents approached the teacher and said, "We want to show you something. Mark was carrying this when he was killed." The father pulled out of a wallet the list of all the good things Mark's classmates had said about him. "Thank you so much for doing that," Mark's mother said. "As you can see, Mark treasured it." A group of Mark's classmates overheard the exchange. One

smiled sheepishly and said, "I still have my list. It's in my top desk drawer at home." Another said, "I have mine, too. It's in my diary." "I put mine in our wedding album," said a third. "I bet we all saved them," said a fourth. "I carry mine with me at all times." At that point, the teacher sat down and cried. And, she used that assignment in every class for the rest of her teaching career. **That story shows how much we all need encouragement.** The apostle John has been dishing out some strong words as he warns the flock about the false teachers who were trying to deceive them. He has just said (1Jn 2:11) that if you don't love your brother, you're in the darkness—not saved! He is about to say that if you love the world, you don't have the Father's love in you (1Jn 2:15). **But before he says that, he inserts this short section to encourage those who may have been troubled by what he had written. John wants his readers, at whatever stage in the Christian life they are at, to consider what God has done in their lives. He wants them to know that they have authentic faith.** (John inserts other similar assuring clarifications in 1Jn 3:19-22 and 1Jn 4:17-18.) John Calvin put it (Calvin's Commentaries [Baker], p. 182), "having faithfully spoken of good works, lest he should seem to give them more importance than he ought to have done, he carefully calls us back to contemplate the grace of Christ." Six times John uses the **perfect tense** in the explanatory ("because") clauses. It describes action completed in the past with ongoing results. John Stott (BORROW [The Letters of John](#) p. 98) explains, "John is laying emphasis on the assured standing into which every Christian has come, whatever his stage of spiritual development." To grow, we must be assured and encouraged about what God has done and is doing in our lives. In many ways this is a difficult text to understand. It raises several questions: (1) Why does John use "write" in the present tense three times and then shift to the aorist three times? (The NIV obscures this, translating them all the same.) (2) Why does he use different terms for "children"? (The NIV also obscures this; I recommend that you use the NASB or the ESV as a study Bible.) (3) Why does he say the particular things that he says with each group? Is there a reason for each emphasis? (4) Why does he repeat the exact words about the fathers, and almost repeat identical information about the other groups? (5) Why does he use the sequence: children, fathers, young men, rather than a chronological one? ([Encouragement for the Family of God 1 John 2:12-14](#))

**John Piper** - Why John Addresses Three Groups Here - Let's get one obstacle out of the way right off the bat. When John addresses children, fathers, and young men, he does not mean that what he says of one group is not true of the other. That's obvious as you read the whole letter and see each of these privileges applied to the church as a whole. I think the three groups of "children," "fathers," and "young men" originated something like this. In these verses John wants to reach out to the church with affection and encouragement. So he begins by calling them all children, just like he does five other times (1Jn 2:1, 18; 3:18; 4:4; 5:21). Then he pauses and thinks: "I certainly don't want to give offense to the leaders in the church—the venerable old men or the virile young men—with this affectionate term 'children.' Perhaps I should address these two groups directly this once." And so he applies truths that are valid for the whole church to these two specific groups: **the venerable fathers have knowledge**, and **the virile young men have conquered**. But don't skip over these verses if you don't happen to be in one of those groups. What is true for them is true for all believers... John knows that his letter is tough. The main burden of this letter is that you can have assurance that your hope in the foxhole is real when you start shooting your machine gun. But he knows that's not all he needs to say. In this text his burden is to say, "Fellow soldiers—fellow sinners—there is good reason for hope. Sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. You know that Christ has been king forever. And be assured that his enemy and yours is defeated." ([The Strong Need Strength](#))

**B F Westcott** - Hitherto St John has stated briefly the main scope of his Epistle. He has shewn what is the great problem of life, and how the Gospel meets it with an answer and a law complete and progressive, old and new. He now pauses, as it were, to contemplate those whom he is addressing more distinctly and directly, and to gather up in a more definite form the charge which is at once the foundation and the end of all he writes. The section is divided into two parts. The Apostle first gives the ground of his appeal (vv. 12–14); and then he gives the appeal itself (15–17).

**W A Criswell** - This section consists of six sentences, each beginning with the verb **write** (grapho) and containing both an address to a particular group and a commendation. The author counsels three groups: "**little children**," "**fathers**," and "**young men**." Most likely, "**children**" is a general title for believers (cf. 1Jn 2:1, 18; 3:7; 5:21; etc.), while **fathers** and **young men** refer to mature Christians and new Christians, respectively. These poetic statements are intended to encourage and affirm the confidence of the readers.

**William Barclay** - This is a very lovely passage and yet for all its beauty it has its problems of interpretation. We may begin by noting two things which are certain. **First**, as to its form, this passage is not exactly poetry but it is certainly poetical and strongly rhythmical. Therefore, it is to be interpreted as poetry ought to be. **Second**, as to its contents, John has been warning his people of the perils of the dark and the necessity of walking in the light and now he says that in every case their best defense is to remember what they are and what has been done for them. No matter who they are, their sins have been forgiven; no matter who they are, they know him who is from the beginning; no matter who they are, they have the strength which can face and overcome the Evil One. When Nehemiah was urged to seek a cowardly safety, his answer was: "Should such a man as I flee?" (Neh 6:11). **And when the Christian is tempted, his answer may well be: "Should such a man as I stoop to this folly or stain my hands with this evil?" The man who is forgiven, who knows God and who is aware that he can draw on a strength beyond his own, has a great defense against temptation in simply remembering these things.** ([1 John 2 - Daily Study Bible](#))



## I AM WRITING, WRITING, WRITING

**I am writing (grapho)** in the **present tense** (Similar use of present tense in Gal. 1:20; 1Cor 14:37; 2Cor 1:13; 1Ti 3:14) which speaks of the continuing effect John intends for his words to have on the hearts and minds of his readers. Many of his uses (see below) in First John could be interpreted as explaining his purpose for writing this letter.

**NET Note** entitles this section (1Jn 2:12-14) "**Words of Reassurance**": **I am writing to you**. The author appears to have been concerned that some of his readers, at least, would accept the claims of the opponents as voiced in 1Jn 1:6, 8, 10. The counterclaims the author has made in 1Jn 1:7, 9, 2:1 seem intended to strengthen the readers and **reassure** them (among other things) that their sins are forgiven. Further assurances of their position here is in keeping with such a theme, and indeed, the topic of **reassurance** runs throughout the entire letter (see the purpose statement in 1Jn 5:13). Finally, in such a context the warning which follows in 1Jn 2:15–17 is not out of place because the author is dealing with a community that is discouraged by the controversy which has arisen within it and that is in need of exhortation.

**Grapho** is used 13 times in 10 verses in 1John = 1John 1:4; 2:1, 7-8, 12-15, 21, 26; 5:13; twice in 2Jn 1:5, 12 and twice in 3John 1:9, 13;

(1 John 1:4) These things we **write**, so that our joy may be made complete.

(1 John 2:1) My little children, I am **writing** these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

(1 John 2:7) Beloved, I am not **writing** a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from the beginning; the old commandment is the word which you have heard.

(1 John 2:8) On the other hand, I am **writing** a new commandment to you, which is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away and the true Light is already shining.

(1 John 2:12) **I am writing (present tense)** to you, little children, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

(1 John 2:13) **I am writing (present tense)** to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. **I am writing (present tense)** to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. **I have written (aorist tense - see [epistolary aorist](#))** to you, children, because you know the Father.

(1 John 2:14) **I have written (aorist tense)** to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. **I have written (aorist tense)** to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

**Comment:** Note that the first 3 occurrences of **grapho** (1Jn 2:12-13) are in the **present tense** and the last 3 (1Jn 2:13b, 1Jn 2:14) are in the **aorist tense**.

**William Barclay** asks - (In 1Jn 2:12-14) Why does John say three times **I am writing** and three times **I have written**? The **Vulgate** translates both by the Latin present tense *scribo*, and it has been argued that John varies the tense simply to avoid the monotony that six successive present tenses would bring. It has also been argued that the past tenses are what Greek calls the **epistolary aorist**. Greek letter-writers had a habit of using the past instead of the present tense because they put themselves in the position of the reader. To the writer of a letter a thing may be present because at the moment he is doing it; but to the reader of the letter it will be past because by that time it has been done. To take a simple instance, a Greek letter-writer might equally well say, "I am going to town today," or "I went to town today." That is the Greek epistolary or letter-writer's aorist. If that be the case here, there is no real difference between John's **I am writing** and **I have written**. More likely the explanation is this. When John says **I am writing** he is thinking of what he is at the moment writing and of what he still has to say; when he says **I have written** he is thinking of what has already been written and his readers have already read. The sense would then be that the whole letter, the part already written, the part being written and the part still to come, is all designed to remind Christians of **who** and **Whose** they are and of **what** has been done for them. For John it was of supreme importance that the Christian should remember the status and the benefits he has in Jesus Christ, for these would be his defense against error and against sin. ([1 John 2 - Daily Study Bible](#))

**Marvin Vincent** favors the **epistolary aorist** - The past tense, I wrote, does not refer to some previous

writing, as the Gospel, but, like the present, to this Epistle. The present, **I write**, refers to the immediate act of writing: the aorist is the epistolary aorist, by which the writer places himself at the reader's standpoint, regarding the writing as past. [See comment](#) on 1 Pet. 5:12. I write, therefore, refers to the Apostle's immediate act of writing; I have written, or I wrote, to the reader's act of reading the completed writing.

**W. E. Vine** - The tense of the verb rendered "I have written" is the [epistolary aorist](#). In letter-writing among the Greeks it was customary for the writer to project his thoughts to the time when the recipient, or recipients, would be reading the letter. From their point of view he "wrote" it a considerable time before they received it; accordingly he speaks of it in that way, having regard not only to the completed letter, but to the time of its perusal by the readers.

(1 John 2:21) I have not **written** to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

(1 John 2:26) These things I have **written** to you concerning those who are trying to deceive you.

(1 John 5:13) These things I have **written** to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

**Little children** ([teknion](#) - "little born ones") - "Not children in age, but addressed to the readers generally." (Vincent)

Most commentators interpret the **little children** ([teknion](#)) as a reference to all believers and if you observe the 7 other uses in First John, they all generally refer to all believers, to all who have been born again. For example, **Steven Cole** says "what John writes to the little children also applies to every stage of the Christian life. Even mature believers need to remember that our sins have been forgiven and that we know God as our Father. Also, the little children in the faith and the young men need to see clearly the goal of becoming spiritual fathers, who "know Him who has been from the beginning." And the children need to be prepared for the battles against the enemy that they must win in order to grow to maturity. But the point is clear, both here and in other Scriptures, that we should never be complacent with where we're at in our Christian walk, but should daily strive to know Christ better in order to grow to maturity." ([Encouragement for the Family of God 1 John 2:12-14](#))

**Guy King** - John begins with a general and inclusive remark, embracing all believers, and calling them **all little children** - a different word in the Greek from that used in 1Jn 2:13 (**paidion**). The reason seems to lie between one or other of two explanations. (a) He is by now an old man, and is in the habit of addressing younger people by this title, as ancients often do. (b) He is writing particularly for those who, as a matter of fact, are his children in the faith - so he uses this affectionate, fatherly, family name. ([The Progress of the Fellowship](#))

**Little children** (5043) (**teknion** is the diminutive of **teknon** from **tikto** = bring forth, bear children, be born) is literally My "born ones", the diminutive expresses affection accounting for some of the translations as "my dear children." **Teknion** designates a little child and is used by John to address those who are true followers of Jesus. From John's repetitive use of [teknion](#) in this epistle, one might say it is an epistle for little children! But the subjects with which John deals are not "child's play," but have serious implications regarding one's spiritual life, now and in eternity future! The Apostle John used **teknion** in warning his readers of spiritual dangers. Clearly the 8 NT uses of [teknion](#) strongly infer that the recipients of this title are genuine born again ones.

**TDNT (borrow)** says **teknion** "is a nursery term for a "small child." It is a term of affection used by a teacher to His disciples under circumstances requiring a tender appeal, as when Jesus addressed His Twelve disciples just before His death.

**Marvin Vincent** compares John's two words translated "little children" ([teknion](#) in 1Jn 2:12, and **paidion** in 1Jn 2:13) in this section observing that **little children** ([teknion](#)) "emphasizes the idea of **kinship**, while [paidion](#) emphasizes the idea of **subordination** and consequent **discipline**. Hence [paidion](#) the more appropriate word when spoken from the stand-point of authority rather than of affection." ([1 John 2 - Vincent's Word Studies](#))

**Barclay - Little children** is one of John's favourite expressions. He also uses it in 1 John 2:1; 1 John 2:28; 1 John 3:7; 1 John 4:4; 1 John 5:21; and it is clear in the other cases that he is not thinking of little children in terms of age but of Christians whose spiritual father he is. By this time he must have been very nearly a hundred years old; all the members of his churches were of a far younger generation and to him they were all little children in the same way as a teacher or professor may still think of his boys after the boys have long since become men. ([1 John 2 - Daily Study Bible](#))

**B F Westcott** - The word which expresses fellowship of nature ([teknion](#)) is connected with that which is the sign of it, the forgiveness of sins... Both from the symmetry of the structure (little children, fathers, young men), and from the general scope of the passage, it is evident that the title (here as elsewhere) is addressed to all St John's readers and not to a particular class of children in age.



**Teknon** was used in secular Greek writings as a form of familiar, tender or affectionate address to speak of one kindly even if they were adults referring to them as "my son" or "my child". For example in a use that parallels 1Jn 2:12, **Jesus** says to the paralytic "**Take courage** (present imperative) My **son** ( "my child" = **teknon**), your sins are forgiven." (Mt 9:2)

The root word **teknon** views the child in relation to his parents or family and this use is especially significant in the New Testament, in which we see all of mankind divided into one of two families from a spiritual standpoint -- either the family of God or the family of the Devil. As such we can apply the common saying "Like father, like son". In one of the most scathing discourses of Jesus against the Jews (who had "believed" in Him in John 8:30, but not with a belief unto salvation as context shows, eg, these same Jews "picked up stones to throw at Him" in John 8:59) we read the following interchange "They (the Jews who had "*believed*" in Jesus - Jn 8:30-31) answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you are Abraham's **children (teknon)**, do the deeds of Abraham." (John 8:39, read Jn 8:40-43) **Jesus** went on to tell these Jews who had "*believed*" (their belief did not bring about a new birth into a new family - Jn 1:12-13, 1Jn 3:1). "You are of your father the devil." (Jn 8:44)

John is the only writer to use **teknon** and there are no uses in the Lxx

John 13:33 "**Little children**, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, 'Where I am going, you cannot come.'

1 John 2:1 My **little children**, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;

1 John 2:12 I am writing to you, **little children**, because your sins have been forgiven you for His name's sake.

1 John 2:28 Now, **little children**, abide in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.

1 John 3:7 **Little children**, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous;

1 John 3:18 **Little children**, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth.

1 John 4:4 You are from God, **little children**, and have overcome them; because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world.

1 John 5:21 **Little children**, guard yourselves from idols.

**Hiebert** on 1Jn 2:12-14 - Views differ as to how many groups are in view. **Some suggest** three distinct groups as representing "three stages of spiritual growth." (ED: JOHN MACARTHUR, RAY STEDMAN, etc I ALSO FAVOR 3 GROUPS ESPECIALLY BECAUSE HE DISTINGUISHES "CHILDREN" IN 1Jn 2:13) But this is questionable (ED: IN HIEBERT'S VIEW) in view of the inclusive usage of **little children** as well as the unusual order, **little children, fathers, young men**. Those who hold to three groups tend to reverse the order in their discussions. **A second view** is that John first addressed all his readers and then subdivided them into "fathers" and "young men." Houlden suggested that these two terms were formal designations of church officials, "the elders" and "the deacons." More probable is the view that the readers are now divided "by the length of their Christian experience." **A third view** holds that all the readers are included each time, the designation being true of the experience ascribed to them. It is difficult to decide between the last two views. This author inclines to the second view, yet he recognizes the force of Plummer's remarks. There is, however, something to be said for the view that all John's readers are addressed in all three cases, the Christian life of all having analogies with youth, manhood, and age; with the innocence of childhood, the strength of prime, and the experience of full maturity. ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**John Stott** on the groups in 1Jn 2:12-14 - The author divides his readers into three groups, whom he names dear children, fathers and young men, and addresses each group twice. He is indicating not their physical ages, as some have thought, but stages in their spiritual development, for God's family, like every human family, has members of differing maturity. (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

## **THE GREATEST GIFT: FORGIVENESS OF SINS!**

**Because your sins ([hamartia](#)) have been forgiven ([aphiemi](#))** - perfect tense - forgiven when they initially received Christ with permanent effect) **you for His (JESUS') Name's sake - Because** (hoti) - It behooves the diligent student of the Word (cp 2Ti 2:15+), to develop the "spiritual discipline" of pausing to ponder the text (see Meditate or Primer on Biblical Meditation), and terms of explanation like **because** (and **for**) provide an excellent opportunity to practice this discipline (there are 1426 uses of **because** in the NAS95, which should provide many golden opportunities to interact with the Living and Active Word [Heb 4:12-13+], as led by the Living and Active Spirit - 1Cor 2:10-13+).

While some see the **because** as declarative, [B F Westcott](#) says "There can be no doubt that the particle is causal (because) and not declarative (that). St John does not write to make known the privileges of Christians, but to enforce the duties which follow from the enjoyment of them."

**Sam Storms** - If "**because**" is the correct rendering, John is saying: " Since these things are true of you, I felt it important to write this epistle to deepen your assurance of faith and with additional instructions about how you should live out your life in Christ." Others argue that we should render the Greek *hoti* as **that** and understand John to be affirming "**that** their sins have been forgiven." (**Ed**: After much study on this passage, I favor "because"). ([1 John 2:3-17](#))

As someone has well said "not a step can be taken in the Christian life, until we know that we are forgiven and accepted." In light of the hard truths he had just written, he wanted his readers to know that they were children of God who had received His unqualified forgiveness and eternally "**accepted in the Beloved**," Christ Jesus. (Eph 1:6KJV+) (See in depth study of Accepted in the Beloved)

**Sins** ([266](#))(**hamartia**) literally conveys the idea of missing the mark as when hunting with a bow and arrow (used this way by Homer some 100 times to describe a warrior hurling his spear but missing his foe). Later **hamartia** came to mean missing or falling short of any goal, standard, or purpose. **Hamartia** in the Bible signifies a departure from God's holy, perfect standard of what is right in word or deed (righteous). **Hamartia** pictures the idea of missing God's appointed goal (His will) which results in a deviation from what is pleasing to Him. In short, **sin** is conceived as a missing the true end and scope of our lives, which is the Triune God Himself. As Martin Luther put it "Sin is essentially a departure from God."

**John** is saying the penalty of our sins (death - Ro 6:23+) has been completely and forever paid. We can be eternally sure of our salvation in Christ Jesus.

O to grace how great a debtor  
Daily I'm constrained to be!  
Let Thy goodness, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee.  
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it,  
Prone to leave the God I love;  
Here's my heart, O take and seal it,  
Seal it for Thy courts above.

[Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing](#)

**B F Westcott** - The proclamation of the forgiveness of sins was the message of the Gospel: Luke 24:47 ("repentance for forgiveness of sins"); Acts 13:38 ("through Him [Jesus] forgiveness of sins is proclaimed"). This includes potentially the fulfilment of man's destiny as man.

**Spurgeon** - The child of God who was born but yesterday is not as completely sanctified as he will be. He is not as completely instructed as he will be. He is not as completely conformed to the image of Christ as he will be. But he is as completely pardoned as the full-grown saint! He that just now passed the Gate of Pearl—did you not hear the shout as he entered, like a shock of corn fully ripe that comes in his season?—he, I say, was not more truly pardoned than you who but an hour ago believed in Christ unto the salvation of your soul! The dying thief had not many minutes found mercy and yet the Lord Jesus said to him, "Today shall you be with Me in Paradise!" It is plain, therefore, that he had been perfectly cleansed in a moment! ([Sermon to the Lord's Little Children](#))

For believers knowing that their sins are forgiven and that they have a heavenly Father are similar to the truth the writer of Hebrews called 'the elementary teachings about Christ' (Heb. 6:1).

*God's forgiveness includes the putting away of our sins,  
their guilt, defilement, and penalty, at the Cross.*

-- Kenneth Wuest

**Have been forgiven** ([863](#))(**aphiemi** from **apo** = prefix implies separation + **hiemi** = put in motion, send, used in Lxx of scapegoat Lev 16:10+; noun aphesis) conveys the basic idea of an action which causes separation and means to send from one's self, to hurl away, to put away, to disregard, to put off. Sadly it was used for sending away a spouse (divorce - 1Co 7:11+). **Aphiemi** depicts an action which causes total separation from a previous condition, in 1Jn 2:12 describes total separation from the penalty and power of Sin in our life! Amazing grace indeed! The penalty has been borne away by the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29+)! In one secular writing **aphiemi** is used to declare "let the pot drop" (aphiemi). From this early literal use the word came to mean leave or let go. Beloved, that is what has happened to our sins, but that's not all. It gets even better when you understand John's use of the verb tense.

**Aphiemi** is in the perfect tense which indicates that the sins were forgiven at a point in time in the past (the moment of belief and

reception of Christ and His fully atoning substitutionary, sacrificial work on Calvary's Cross). But that is not all the truth conveyed by the **perfect tense** for it means that our sins will remain forgiven forever!

**THOUGHT**- Perhaps you have never understood the great truth of the extent of God's forgiveness. Perhaps you don't "feel" like God has forgiven you of all your sins. Frankly, it is not about how you feel but about what God's Word of Truth clearly declares - "Little children... your sins have been forgiven." Compare Mt 9:2, 9:5 and Mk 2:5, 2:9, and Lk 5:20, 5:23. If you struggle with guilt and/or regrets from past sins (something I am sure most of us do), set your mind on the truth of the fullness of God's forgiveness (Read Ps 103:12, Isa 38:17, Isa 43:25, Micah 7:18-19 and like Corrie Ten Boom said put up a "No fishing" sign for Mic 7:19!), and applying the principle of Jesus' promise in John 8:32+, allow the Spirit of Jesus to use that truth to make you free in this area of your spiritual life. Let me encourage you to take a few minutes and read the wonderful sermon from **J C RYLE** entitled **FORGIVENESS**.

**Hiebert** - The **perfect tense** denotes the past experience of sins forgiven, leading to the present state of being forgiven **Ed**: And the eternal state of forgiveness!). Without this assurance there can be no effective Christian life and service. ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**Kenneth Wuest** - The verb **forgiven** ([aphiemi](#)) is in the perfect tense, which tense speaks of a past completed action having present and in some instances, permanent results (paraphrased as "your sins have been put away for you permanently"). Our sins were put away at the Cross, with the result that they are never more remembered against us. Our Lord cried on the Cross, "**It Is Finished**". The perfect tense is used in Jn 19:30+. The atonement, to which He had reference, was effected at the Cross and became forever the all-sufficient (and "all efficient") payment for sin. The translation should read, "It stands finished." ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used by permission)

As an aside note that in 1Jn 2:12-14 John uses the perfect tense (past completed action with ongoing effect in the and future = speaks of permanence) six times in the descriptions of the children, young men and fathers = **have been forgiven** (1Jn 2:12), **you** (fathers) **know Him Who has been from the beginning** (1Jn 2:13), **you** (young men) **have overcome** (1Jn 2:13), **you** (children) **know the Father** (1Jn 2:13), **you** (fathers) **know Him Who has been from the beginning** (1Jn 2:14), **you** (young men) **have overcome** (1Jn 2:14).

**John Stott** adds "It is significant that in each of these six messages the verb is in the perfect tense, which indicates the present consequence of a past event. John is laying emphasis on the assured standing into which every Christian has come, whatever his stage of spiritual development."(BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

John goes on to explain why (how) their sins have been forgiven. How can he be so certain? He explains that it is **for His Name's sake**." The Name represents both the Person and His saving work (Acts 4:12+) Whose Name? This is surely Jesus, the **Name** above all names (Php 2:9-11+, cp " God in Christ also has forgiven you" = Eph 4:32+) The reason their sins are forgiven is because of Jesus Who accomplished the work His Father had assigned Him to complete as the God-Man ((1Jn 1:7+; 1Jn 2:1-2+, Jn 4:34+, Jn 17:3-4+), so that on the Cross our Christ could confidently cry out "**TETELESTAI**" (**IT IS FINISHED! PAID IN FULL!** [See in depth study](#)).

A debtor to mercy alone, of covenant mercy I sing;  
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on, my person and off'ring to bring.  
The judgments of your holy law with me can have nothing to do;  
My Savior's obedience and blood hide all my transgressions from view.

[A Debtor to Mercy Alone - Vocal](#)

[A Debtor to Mercy Alone - Instrumental](#)

**John Phillips** on **sins are forgiven** - That's where family life in the household of God begins—we are born into the family as little children. The most simple, basic, and elementary concept we have as children of God is that of forgiveness of sins. That is indeed a blessed truth, but we eventually must get beyond forgiveness, otherwise we will remain babes in Christ. One simple soul found faith in Christ at the end of a service through reading John 3:16. Her counselor had given her a New Testament and marked the verse for her. After she retired to bed that night, however, doubts began to arise about her newly received salvation. She decided Satan was filling her mind with these troublesome thoughts, and she reasoned further that since Satan was said to love darkness rather than light he must be under her bed, the darkest place in the room. She turned on a light, found the marked place in her Bible, put her finger on the verse, and thrust the New Testament under the bed. "Here," she said to the Devil, "read it for yourself!" That was good enough for a start! She would soon need to know much more than that. ([Exploring the Epistles of John](#))

**ILLUSTRATION** - An unmarked tombstone outside of Sydney, New York, has but one word on it, three syllables: "Forgiven" (Cited by Dr. D. James Kennedy, founder of Evangelism Explosion).

**I Howard Marshall on sins are forgiven** - They are people whose sins have been forgiven; they have fulfilled the condition laid down in 1Jn 1:9+, (ED: CLEARLY HE INTERPRETS THAT PASSAGE AS INITIAL CONFESSION OF FAITH) and as a result of their confession of their sin, they know the joy of forgiveness. **Forgiveness**, however, does not depend on human confession in the sense that this secures favor and pardon from God; it is granted "**on account of His Name**," a phrase which directs our minds back to what John has said about the blood of Jesus and His role as advocate and offering for sin (1Jn 1:7+; 1Jn 2:1-2+), and which also leads forward to the need for belief in His Name (1Jn 3:23; 1Jn 5:13). The act of forgiveness is expressed by a perfect tense; John is thinking of the conversion of his readers, whereas in 1Jn 1:9 his thought was more of the continual forgiveness for which the Christian daily prays. If John is thinking here of new converts, the appropriateness of this statement is manifest. The experience of forgiveness is the center of the Christian experience of conversion. "No man can properly rank as a Christian, in the sense of the New Testament, who has not received the forgiveness of sins, or who is not conscious that through its impartation something has happened of decisive moment for his relation to God," wrote H. R. Mackintosh. In a day when many find the essence of Christianity elsewhere John's "recall to fundamentals" deserves attention. (Borrow [The Epistles of John NICNT - 1974](#))

**Forgiveness in Ps 103:12:** There is a definite point that is "north" and another that is "south," the North and South Poles. But there are no such points for "east" and "west." It doesn't matter how far you go to the east; you will never arrive where west begins because by definition west is the opposite of east. The two never meet. They never will meet and never could meet because they are defined as opposites. To remove our sins "as far as the east is from the west" is by definition to put them where no one can ever find them. That is the forgiveness God has granted us!

## **THE NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES**

**For His Name's sake** (cp similar phrase Mt 10:22; 24:9; Mk 13:13; Lk 21:17; Jn 15:21; Rev 2:3) - What does this phrase us about the ultimate motivation in God's heart for his redemptive work in Christ? Note that **for** is the preposition **dia** which can also mean "*through*", so that this phrase could be read "**through His Name**." See related study **through Him = through Christ**.

The **Name** Jesus represents both his person and his saving work - "And **there is salvation in no one else**; for there is **no other name** under heaven that has been given among men by which **we must be saved**." (Acts 4:12)

**Steven Cole - Forgiveness of sins is for His name's sake**, not for anything you have done or can do. All you can do is receive it by faith. The enemy will repeatedly come to accuse and condemn you for your sins. Answer him every time, not with your performance, but with the name and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Hiebert - For His Name's sake** emphasizes the true basis for the assurance of sins forgiven. "His name," as White observes, "is but shorthand for the whole character and work of Christ, the incarnate Son." "God forgives sin not because of any merit in the sinner, but because of the infinite merit of the Saviour." His dear children are to beware of being led astray from God's provision by the new theories of the false teachers. ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**Spurgeon on Assurance** -Spurgeon is quoted as saying that he was so sure of his salvation that he could grab on to a cornstalk and swing out over the fires of hell, look into the face of the devil, and sing, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!" When the storms of life, the winds of trouble, and the sea of discomfort and emotional agony seem to overwhelm, we have to say with the songwriter,

"Our hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness..."

We dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name."

Too many believers try to punish themselves for past sins, instead of standing on God's assurance of sins forgiven and even better hiding in the "Promise Keeper" Himself.

*The flames can't get to us.*

*We are standing where the fire has already been.*

**ILLUSTRATION - HE'S ENDURED THE FIRE OF GOD'S WRATH** - The story is told of a time, many years ago, when a father and his daughter were walking through the grass on the Canadian prairie. In the distance they saw a prairie fire, which would soon engulf them. The father knew there was only one way of escape: they must quickly build a fire right where they were and burn a large patch of grass. When the huge prairie fire drew near, they could stand on the section that had already burned. When the flames did approach them, the girl was terrified, but her father assured her, "The flames can't get to us. We are standing where the fire has already been." So it is with the forgiven when they see the judgment of God approaching. They are where the flames have already been and therefore are safe.

*We as Christians can rejoice that the work of salvation did not go to the "lowest bidder"*

**ILLUSTRATION - SECURITY IS BASED ON TAKING REFUGE IN HIS GREAT NAME** - Several years ago one of the astronauts who walked on the moon was interviewed and asked, "What do you think about as you stood on the moon and looked back at the earth?" The astronaut replied, "I remembered how the spacecraft was built by the lowest bidder." We as Christians can rejoice that the work of salvation did not go to the "lowest bidder" but was performed by an infinite God. There will never be a deficiency in his work. Our salvation is as sure as the architect of that salvation, Almighty God.

*What we have done as sinners, is forgiven  
for the sake of what He has done, as Saviour.*

**Guy King** - Oh, the bliss of it, that what we have done as sinners, is forgiven for the sake of what He has done, as Saviour. We repeat, this is true of all Christians, however long or short a time we have been such.

*The Name, as in the Lord's Prayer ("Hallowed be Thy Name"),  
is the expression of the sum total of the Divine Being.*

**Vincent** on His Name ([onoma](#)) - **Name** expresses the sum of the qualities which mark the nature or character of a person. To believe in the Name of Jesus Christ the Son of God, is to accept as true the revelation contained in that title. Compare Jn 20:31+. The Name, as in the Lord's Prayer ("Hallowed be thy name"), is the expression of the sum total of the divine Being."

**Wuest** - The permanent putting away of sin was "**for His Name's sake.**" The words "**the Name,**" are an Old Testament term expressing the sum of the qualities which mark the nature or character of a person, in this case, the Person of God. It refers to all that is true of God in His glory, majesty, and might. The expression here refers to our Lord (1Jn 2:1), and includes all that He is in His glorious Person. Paul in Php 2:9-11 tells us that in view of the self-emptying of our Lord as He chose the Cross rather than remain in Glory ("who instead of the joy then present with Him, endured the Cross" Heb 12:2), God the Father exalted Him and gave Him "The Name"; placed upon the shoulders of the Man Christ Jesus, all the majesty, glory, and splendor of Deity. Because of what our Lord was in His Person as very God of very God, God the Father put away our sins, recognizing and accepting the atonement He offered on the Cross.

**B F Westcott** - **For Christ's sake** the Father forgives those who are united with Him... Forgiveness is granted to men because Christ is indeed what He is revealed to be and what His '**Name**' expresses. It is of course assumed that Christians acknowledge Him as being what He is (Mt. 28:19)... For *dia to onoma* (through His **Name**) see Mt. 10:22, 24:9 and parallels; Jn 15:21; Rev 2:3. *Dia tou onomatou* in Acts 4:30, 10:43; 1Cor 1:10. In two other places of the Epistle **the Name** of Christ is mentioned as the object of faith in different aspects. The commandment of God is that we believe the **Name** of His Son Jesus Christ (1Jn 3:23), that is, that we accept the revelation conveyed in that full title as true. And again those who believe in the **Name** of the Son of God (1Jn 5:13), who cast themselves wholly upon the revelation, are assured of the possession of life eternal (comp. John 1:12). With these passages must be compared Jn 20:31, where John says that the object of his Gospel was that his readers may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and believing may have life in His **Name** (*en to onomati autou*), in fellowship with Him as He has thus been made known. The pregnant use of '**the Name**' as summing up that which is made known of Christ, explains how it came to be used as equivalent to "**the faith**" - 3John 1:7.

**William Barclay** - He can bring his request only because he knows the Name--the character of God. "Some boast of chariots," says the Psalmist, "and some of horses; but we boast of the name of the Lord our God" (Ps 20:7+). Some people put their trust in earthly helps but we will trust God because we know his nature. So, then, John means that we are assured of forgiveness because we know the character of Jesus Christ. We know that in him we see God. We see in him sacrificial love and patient mercy; therefore we know that God is like that; and, therefore, we can be sure that there is forgiveness for us. ([1 John 2 - Daily Study Bible](#))

We see this same principle even in the Old Testament - the OT saints believed in His great Name, looking forward to the Cross, while we believe in His great Name and look back to His finished work on the Cross.

And so **David** prayed "**For Your name's sake**, O LORD, Pardon my iniquity, for it is great." (Ps 25:11) **Spurgeon** comments on David's prayer - "This sentence of prayer would seem out of place were it not that prayer is always in its place, whether in season or out of season. Meditation having refreshed the Psalmist, he falls to his weighty work again, and wrestles with God for the remission of his sin. For thy name's sake, O Lord. Here is a blessed, never failing plea. Not for our sakes or our merit's sake, but to glorify thy mercy, and to show forth the glory of thy divine attributes. Pardon mine iniquity. It is confessed, it is abhorred, it is consuming my heart with grief; Lord forgive it; let thine own lips pronounce my absolution. For it is great. It weighs so heavily upon me that I pray thee remove it. Its greatness is no difficulty with thee, for thou art a great God, but the misery which it causes to me is my argument with thee for speedy pardon. Lord, the patient is sore sick, therefore heal him. To pardon a great sinner will bring thee great glory, therefore for thy name's sake pardon me. Observe how this verse illustrates the logic of faith, which is clean contrary to that of a legal spirit; faith looks not for merit in the creature, but hath regard to the goodness of the Creator; and instead of being staggered by the demerits of sin it looks to the precious blood, and pleads all the more vigorously because of the urgency of the case."



[\(Treasury of David—Psalm 25\)](#)

(Ps 31:3) For Thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me.. **Spurgeon** comments - The psalmist argues like a logician with his fors and therefore. Since I do sincerely trust thee, saith he, O my God, be my director. To lead and to guide are two things very like each other, but patient thought will detect different shades of meaning, especially as the last may mean provide for me. The double word indicates an urgent need—we require double direction, for we are fools, and the way is rough. Lead me as a soldier, guide me as a traveler! lead me as a babe, guide me as a man; lead me when thou art with me, but guide me even if thou be absent; lead me by thy hand, guide me by thy word. The argument used is one which is fetched from the armory of free grace: not for my own sake, but **for thy name's sake** guide me. Our appeal is not to any fancied virtue in our own names, but to the glorious goodness and graciousness which shines resplendent in the character of Israel's God. It is not possible that the Lord should suffer his own honour to be tarnished, but this would certainly be the case if those who trusted him should perish. This was Moses' plea, "What wilt thou do unto thy great name?" ([Treasury of David—Psalm 31](#))

The **psalmist** writes "Nevertheless **He saved them for the sake of His name**, That He might make His power known." (Ps 106:8) **Spurgeon** writes - "When he could find no other reason for his mercy he found it in his own glory, and seized the opportunity to display his power. If Israel does not deserve to be saved, yet Pharaoh's pride needs to be crushed, and therefore Israel shall be delivered. The Lord very jealously guards his own name and honour. It shall never be said of him that he cannot or will not save his people, or that he cannot abate the haughtiness of his defiant foes. This respect unto his own honour ever leads him to deeds of mercy, and hence we may well rejoice that he is a jealous God." ([Treasury of David—Psalm 106](#))

Other occurrences of **for His Name's sake** - Ps 23:3; 31:3; 79:9; 109:21; 143:11; Jer 14:7.

**Phillips** on His **Name**- Remember the story of Ali Baba and the forty thieves? Ali Baba was a poor peasant who happened to discover the cave where a gang of thieves kept their plunder. It was a magic cave, the door to which would open only if the proper password was spoken. The robbers would say, "Open sesame," and the door would open, then close behind them when they had passed the portal. Ali Baba used the password once the thieves were gone and gained entrance to the treasure. The door closed behind him, and the peasant forgot everything in his rapture at finding this vast fortune. He ran the gold and the jewels through his fingers, gloated over the rosy future he foresaw for himself, and filled his pocket with choice samples. He forgot all about time and the peril he would be in if the thieves came back. At last he decided it was time to leave but, to his horror, he could no longer remember the magic word. He wracked his brains, remembering that it was some kind of cereal. He called, "Open wheat!" He called again, "Open barley!" "Open corn!" It was no use. He had forgotten the word. One thing only a babe in Christ has to remember—the name of Jesus! That name fills the hosts of hell with fear. That name opens the gates of glory, unlocks the vaults of heaven, and is the key to the Father's heart. John impresses upon the "little children" the importance of that name. "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake."

**Ironsides** - If you have made Christ your only ground of confidence, and are now able to say, **On Christ the solid rock I stand, / All other ground is sinking sand,** then you are numbered among the children of verse 12 (1 John 2:12)... He has given us in 1John 1:7 the basis of that forgiveness: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." There is no other way that sin can be blotted out. No other way that guilty men can be given a standing in the presence of a holy God. No other way is needed, for on Calvary's tree our Lord shed His precious atoning blood. Thank God that **"Sinners plunged beneath that flood, / Lose all their guilty stains."** These are the children of God.

**ILLUSTRATION - Forgiveness** - A man named John Oglethorpe, in talking to John Wesley, once made the comment, "I never forgive." Mr. Wesley wisely replied, "Then, Sir, I hope that you never sin."

**ILLUSTRATION - Forgiveness Without an "Asterisk" (or Caveat)!** - There is a commonly known story that comes from the life of Martin Luther. It is said that the devil approached Luther one day and tried to use the fact that every person is fallible. He presented the Reformer with a long list of sins of which he was guilty. When he had finished reading, Luther said to Satan, "Think a little harder; you must have forgotten some." This the devil did and added other sins to the list. At the conclusion of this exchange, Martin Luther simply said, "That's fine. Now write across that list in red ink, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.."  
There was nothing the devil could say to that.

In sum, John assures this group (which includes new believers) that indeed their sins have been forgiven (1Jn 2:12). He then John assures these new believers of their relationship with the Father (in 1Jn 2:13). Just as it was true in John's day, it's still the case that **these two areas are frequently the most doubted by those who are new to the faith** So John reminds them of these foundational truths: their sins have been completely forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ (1Jn 1:7) and they are now children of God, the Father (1Jn 3:1).

**Today in the Word** - Don't let any of the designations used in the passage make you feel excluded! The term **father** could be expanded to include anyone who has known the Lord for a long time and who has nurtured others in the faith. The term **child**



includes all who are relatively young in the faith. And **young man** refers to those who are somewhere in between; this person is progressing in the faith and has experienced God's victory in some areas. Reflect on your "stage."

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**J C RYLE - FORGIVENESS** - excerpt from his sermon - There is a clause near the end of the Apostle's Creed, which, I fear, is often repeated without thought or consideration. I refer to the clause which contains these words, "I believe in the Forgiveness of sins." Thousands, I am afraid, never reflect what those words mean. I propose to examine the subject of them in the following paper, and I invite the attention of all who care for their souls, and want to be saved. Do we believe in the "Resurrection of our bodies"? Then let us see to it that we know something by experience of the "Forgiveness of our sins."

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**C H Spurgeon - A sermon to the Lord's little children - 1 John 2:12** (See full sermon [A Sermon to the Lord's Little Children](#))

Observe that our text is addressed to the 'little children'. It is thought by many wise interpreters that under this term John includes the whole church of God, and that afterwards he divides that church into two companies, the fathers and the young men: those who under one aspect are all 'little children', are under another regarded as young men or fathers. There is very much to support this view in several instances in this epistle. John is evidently addressing all the saints when he speaks of them as 'My little children,' as, for instance, in 1 John 3:18 and also in the closing verse, 'Little children, keep yourselves from idols.' Surely, all the saints are included in these exhortations. There is a sense in which every Christian is still a little child, a sense in which he ought to be so, ever dependent upon the great Father, ever ready to receive the word of the Father without questioning, ever teachable, ever restful in the Father's care, and full of love to him who is his all in all. Of necessity we must ever be 'children before God' for our finite capacity is so limited that we are mere babes in knowledge in the presence of Infinite wisdom, and babes in understanding when contrasted with the great Father of spirits. We know enough to make us know that we know very little. The most advanced intellects in the church are infants compared with the Ancient of Days; 'we are but of yesterday, and know nothing': with all our experience, with all our study, with all our meditation, with all our illumination, we remain 'little children' when measured by the boundless knowledge of the Lord.

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**John Bennett - SINS FORGIVEN** (Day by Day - Bible Promises)

The artless simplicity of this verse may hide the depth of meaning that lies beneath the surface:

'I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake', 1 John 2:12.

The apostle first shows a causal relationship between revelation—'I write unto you, little children', and redemption—'because your sins are forgiven'. Without reading too much into this statement, our relationship as children to the Father is a direct result of entering into forgiveness of sins through our Lord Jesus Christ. And further, the scriptures have been written to us, and opened to our hearts, because of this relationship. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned', 1 Cor. 2:14.

What does it mean to be forgiven? It certainly does not mean that God ignores or overlooks sin. Forgiveness involves five steps when an offence is committed.

First, the damage is assessed according to a righteous standard. Second, someone must pay for those damages in full. Third, the offended party must be satisfied with that payment. Fourth, the offender must take responsibility for the damage done, and, in sincerity, confess the wrong, forsaking any future course of action that would perpetuate it. Finally, the offended must accept the offender's confession in good faith.

These five steps in scripture are called condemnation, redemption, propitiation, repentance, and reconciliation. Very often in human relations the process breaks down in one of the last two steps—either the offender is not repentant or the offended does not accept the confession. To all such the solemn warning is given, 'But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses', Mark 11:26.

There is a second causal relationship mentioned at the end of the verse. The 'little children' are forgiven 'for his name's sake'. John feels no obligation to explain to whom he is referring. Of course, the children know the One with that name. They owe everything to Him.

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**Who are the "Little Children?" James Smith**

1. 1 John 2:12, 13, 14 decides.
2. Observe three stages of growth:
  - a. Spiritual babyhood, or infancy.

- b. Spiritual youth.
- c. Spiritual maturity.

3. Little children are in particular need of a word about forgiveness (2:12), victory over sin (2:1), power of overcoming (4:4), etc.

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### **[A Letter From C. S. Lewis](#)**

Bible in a Year : 2 Chronicles 34-36

I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. — 1 John 2:12

Today's Scripture : 1 John 2:9-17

In September 1961, Harvey Karlsen, a high school student in Brooklyn, New York, wrote to C. S. Lewis in England. Harvey had read Lewis' book *The Screwtape Letters* and asked the author, "When you wrote this book, did Satan give you any trouble, and if he did, what did you do about it?"

Three weeks later, Lewis penned a reply in which he affirmed that he still had plenty of temptations. He said that in facing them, "Perhaps . . . the most important thing is to keep on; not to be discouraged however often one yields to the temptation, but always to pick yourself up again and ask forgiveness."

The New Testament letters of John are filled with encouragement to persevere in the face of temptation. "I write to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake. I write to you, fathers, because you have known Him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one" (1 John 2:12-13).

Whatever our age or experience, we are in a spiritual battle together. "The world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever" (v.17).

Let us cling to God and keep on! By: David C. McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, I get discouraged when I've given in again to one of Satan's schemes. I'm thankful, though, that Christ paid for that sin on the cross. Help me to confess it and then to keep on relying on You for my spiritual growth.

To master temptation, let Christ master you.

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**Legacy Of Forgiveness - David C. McCasland** -Five years after World War II ended, Marvin Maris met Taizo Fujishiro at a theological seminary in Chicago. Even though the men had served on opposite sides during the bitter conflict, Maris befriended Fujishiro, typed class notes for him, taught him to drive, and invited him to his home for Christmas. After Taizo returned to Japan, they stayed in touch.

Four decades later, Maris' granddaughter, Connie Wieck, went to Japan to teach English. She phoned Fujishiro and introduced herself. The next day they met for lunch, and Taizo told her all about her grandfather—his first American friend.

Connie later wrote: "Growing up in a town whose veterans were still bitter . . . , I had come to believe that forgiveness was beyond any first hand witnesses to that history. The lasting friendship between my grandfather and Taizo proved otherwise."

The apostle Paul described the marvel of salvation by writing, "When we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son" (Romans 5:10). And John said that those who are forgiven are to love others (1 John 2:9-12).

God's legacy of forgiveness extends from generation to generation as we humbly receive His gift of mercy in Christ and pass it on to others. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Jesus came our debt to pay,  
Saved our soul in grace one day,  
So in love we all should live,  
Ready always to forgive. —Bosch

**Forgiven sinners know love and show love.**

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1 John 2:13 I am writing to you, **fathers**, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, **young men**, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, **children**, because you know the Father. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**EXPLANATORY NOTE FROM THE NET Note:** The versification of 1Jn 2:13 and 1Jn 2:14 (so also NAB, NRSV, NLT) follows that of the NA27 and UBS4 editions of the Greek text. Some English translations, however, break the verses between the sentence addressed to children and the sentence addressed to fathers (KJV, NKJV, NASB, NIV). The same material has been translated in each case; the only difference is the versification of that material.

**Greek:** γραφω υμιν πατερες οτι εγνωκατε τον απι αρχης γραφω υμιν νεανισκοι οτι νενικηκατε τον πονηρον εγραψα υμιν παιδια οτι εγνωκατε τον πατερα

**Amplified:** I am writing to you, fathers, because you have come to know (recognize, be aware of, and understand) Him Who [has existed] from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have been victorious over the wicked [one]. I write to you, boys (lads), because you have come to know (recognize and be aware) of the Father. ([Lockman](#))

**Berkley (Modern Language):** I am writing you, fathers, because you know Him who is from the beginning. I am writing you, young men, because you have conquered the evil one. I have written you, children, because you have come to know the Father.

**ESV:** I am writing to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, children, because you know the Father.

**HCSB:** I am writing to you, fathers, because you have come to know the One who is from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have had victory over the evil one. (**Address to the children who know the Father is placed at beginning of 1Jn 2:14 in this translation**).

**NET:** I am writing to you, fathers, that you have known him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young people, that you have conquered the evil one. (**Address to the children who know the Father is placed at beginning of 1Jn 2:14 in this translation**).

**NIV:** I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father.

**NLT:** I am writing to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning. I am writing to you who are young in the faith because you have won your battle with the evil one. (**Address to the children who know the Father is placed at beginning of 1Jn 2:14 in this translation**).

**Phillips:** I write to you who are now fathers, because you have known him who has always existed. And to you vigorous young men I am writing because you have been strong in defeating the evil one. (**Address to the children who know the Father is placed at beginning of 1Jn 2:14 in this translation**).

**TLB:** I am saying these things to you older men because you really know Christ, the one who has been alive from the beginning. And you young men, I am talking to you because you have won your battle with Satan. And I am writing to you younger boys and girls because you, too, have learned to know God our Father.

**Weymouth:** I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has existed from the very beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the Evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

**Wuest:** I am writing to you, fathers, because you have come to know experientially the One who is from the beginning, and as a present result are possessors of that knowledge. I am writing to you, young men, because you have gained the victory over the Pernicious One and as a present result are victorious over him. (**Address to the children who know the Father is placed at beginning of 1Jn 2:14 in this translation**).

**Young's Literal:** I write to you, fathers, because ye have known him who is from the beginning; I write to you, young men, because ye have overcome the evil. I write to you, little youths, because ye have known the Father:

- **fathers** 1Jn 2:14; 1 Timothy 5:1
- **because** 1Jn 2:3,4; 5:20; Psalm 91:14; Luke 10:22; John 8:19; 14:7; 17:3
- **him that** 1Jn 1:1; Ps 90:2

- **young** 1Jn 2:14; Ps 148:12; Proverbs 20:29; Joel 2:28; Zechariah 9:17; Titus 2:6
- **because** 1Jn 4:4; 5:4,5; Ephesians 6:10-12; 1 Peter 5:8,9
- **the wicked** 1Jn 3:12; 5:18; Matthew 13:19,38
- **little** 1Jn 2:1,12
- **ye have known** Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22; John 8:54,55; 14:7,9; 16:3; 17:21; 2 Corinthians 4:6
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Luke 10:22 "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."

John 8:19 So they were saying to Him, "Where is Your Father?" Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father; if you knew Me, you would know My Father also."

John 14:7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him."

John 17:3 "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

## TO THE FATHERS

**I am writing** (grapho) **to you, fathers** ([pater](#)), **because you know** ([ginosko](#) - perfect tense) **Him who has been from the beginning** ([arche](#)). **I am writing** (grapho) **to you, young men** ([neaniskos](#)), **because you have overcome** ([nikao](#) - perfect tense) **the evil one. I have written** (grapho) **to you, children** (paidion), **because you know** ([ginosko](#) - perfect tense) **the Father** ([pater](#)) - **I am writing** (grapho) in the **present tense** which speaks of the continuing effect John intends for his words to have on the hearts and minds of his readers.

Here he addresses the **fathers**, "those among John's readers who are older in the faith and are characterized by spiritual maturity." (Hiebert [1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**B F Westcott** - Believers, who are one in the possession of the gift of forgiveness, are distinguished by the circumstances of life. Differences of experience correspond generally to differences of age. Mature Christians, in a society like that which John addressed, would be '**fathers**' in years. The difference of '**fathers**' and '**young men**' answers to that of 'the thinkers, and the soldiers in the Christian army,' to the two main applications of the Faith. It is a spring of wisdom; and it is also a spring of strength. In the natural sequence action is the way to that knowledge through which wisdom comes. Christian wisdom is not speculative but first the fruit of work and then the principle of work. The characteristic of '**fathers**' is knowledge, the fruit of experience ([ginosko](#)): that of '**young men**,' victory, the prize of strength. John bases his appeal to each class on that which they had severally gained. [1 John 2:12-17 Commentary](#))

**Fathers** ([3962](#))([pater](#)) is used 413x in 366v in the NT and strictly speaking refers to the one who imparts life (the progenitor), and thus one who brings into being and passes on the potential for likeness. **Pater** in the context of **1Jn 2:13** refers to more mature believers ("you know Him," also presumably older men), who are able to provide moral and intellectual upbringing to younger believers. Paul alludes to **pater** in his instructions to Timothy (a younger man) instructing him "Do not sharply rebuke an **older man** ([presbuteros](#)), but rather appeal ([parakaleo](#)) to him **as a father** ([pater](#)), to the younger men as brothers." (1Ti 5:1)

**B F Westcott** - **Pater** is used naturally of those who stand in a position of responsible authority. Thus it is applied in the O.T. to prophets (2 Ki 2:12; 6:21; 13:14), priests (Jdg 17:10; 18:19), teachers (Pr. 1:8-note). Comp. Mt. 23:9; 1Cor. 4:15; Acts 7:2; 22:1. Here the natural characteristic of age is combined with that of eminence in the Christian body. ([1 John 2:12-17 Commentary](#))

**Vine** - (**Fathers** is) suggestive both of maturity and authority. They are the older men in the heavenly family, those who by reason of experience are looked up to for sympathy and guidance and assistance.

Spiritual parents who are mature in years, have passed from basic knowledge of God to what John Stott calls a 'deep communion with the Father.'

**TDNT (borrow)** says that **pater** in the ancient world "is first genealogical, then legal and sociological for the kindly but severe and authoritative head of the house in a patriarchal order... The Stoics regard children as subject to their **fathers** as elders, benefactors, and superiors. But there is also an emphasis on **fatherly love**. **Fathers** are teachers by word and example. Thus Philo states that they should engender and uphold good resolves and brave actions... Parents rank only after the gods. This does not entail ancestor worship... The Roman patria potestas. Roman law vests authority and power in the head of the house. Civil law combines here with

sacral law, for the father is also the priest. The father's power continues over all children until his death and embraces slaves as well. It includes disciplinary and penal power, the right to marry and divorce children, and the right to adopt and emancipate. The Roman view affects Greek law, and Jews who are Roman citizens adopt it... the family laws of Israel give primacy to the father, especially in matters of property and inheritance."

- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia [Father](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia [Father](#)
- American Tract Society [Father](#)
- Bridgeway Bible Dictionary [Father](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Father](#)
- Easton's Bible Dictionary [Father](#)
- Fausset Bible Dictionary [Father](#)
- Holman Bible Dictionary [Father](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible [Father](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Father](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [Father](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Father](#)
- Vines' Expository Dictionary [Father](#)
- Watson's Theological Dictionary [Fathers](#) [Father](#)
- Nave Topical Bible [Father](#)

**Because - term of explanation** - Ask what is John explaining? **Remember** Who your Teacher is = The Holy Spirit! (1Cor 2:10-13, 1Jn 2:20, 27, compare Jn 14:17, Jn 14:26, Jn 15:26, Jn 16:7, 1Cor 3:16, 1Cor 6:19-20-note, Ro 8:9-note)

**You know Him** - Who is Him, God the Father or Jesus? The fact that John never speaks of the First Member of the Trinity under any designation but God or the Father, along with the context would strongly support "Him" in this phrase as referring to Jesus.

**You know Him** by experience, because you have had a personal experience with Him. You have come into a personal relationship with Jesus. Many people "know" Jesus, but they lack a genuine, personal relationship with Him.

**THOUGHT** - This begs the question dear reader, do you know Him or just know *about* Him? Your answer has implications not only in this life but in the life to come! (See Jesus' clear warning in Mt 7:21-23+)

**Hiebert - Fathers** naturally implies some authority and leadership as characteristic of those mature in their faith. Van Gorder suggests that the term implies that they were "believers in Christ who themselves had grown in grace and had begotten children in the gospel (1Cor 4:15)." John felt assured about them "because you know Him who has been from the beginning". ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**Vine** - Their knowledge has been gained as the fruit of experience.

**Marvin Vincent** - Knowledge is the characteristic of fathers (**Ed**: Or at least it should be - compare Heb 5:12-14-note).

**William Barclay** on **knowledge** - There is the gift of increasing knowledge of God. John no doubt was thinking of his own experience. He was an old man now; he was writing about A.D. 100. For seventy years he had lived with Christ and he had thought about him and come to know him better every day. For the Jew knowledge was not merely an intellectual thing. To know God was not merely to know him as the philosopher knows him, it was to know him as a friend knows him. In Hebrew to know is used of the relationship between husband and wife and especially of the sexual act, the most intimate of all relationships (compare Ge 4:1). When John spoke of the increasing knowledge of God, he did not mean that the Christian would become an ever more learned theologian; he meant that throughout the years he would become more and more intimately friendly with God. ([1 John 2 - Daily Study Bible](#))

The verb **ginosko** is in the **perfect tense** which indicates that the **fathers** had come to know Jesus personally as Lord and Savior at some point in the past (the moment of their **new birth** by grace through faith - Eph 2:8-9-note) and are still (and forever) in the state of knowing Him by virtue of their immutable **covenant union** with Him. **Wuest** adds that "The perfect tense shows that this knowledge was a well-rounded matured knowledge, the results of which were a permanent possession of these men grown old in the Christian life." **Hiebert** says "**Know (perfect tense)** suggests a past knowledge that remains and grows, a knowledge centering in a Person characterized by His permanency." ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**Know** (1097) (**ginosko**, source of the English word **Gnosticism**) means to acquire information through experience and is not simply as a result of the accumulation of facts ("head knowledge"). **Ginosko** also implies an intimate, personal relationship between the

fathers and the Father! "These fathers were the older men, mature in the Christian life, having lived in fellowship with the Lord Jesus for many years, and thus having gained much personal knowledge of Him by experience." (Wuest)

**Him Who has been from the beginning** - Him Who? Yes God, but in context more specifically Jesus Christ as noted in 1Jn 1:1-note (from the beginning repeated in 1Jn 2:7, 14, 24, 1Jn 3:8, 11).

**D Edmond Hiebert** on the reference to **the beginning** - to what time does it refer? - "The expression echoes 1Jn 1:1 and 1Jn 2:7 (and) it could refer to eternity past, the Incarnation as the beginning of God's redemptive work in His Son (cf. 1Jn 1:1), or possibly to the beginning of the Christian church (1Jn 2:7). The second view seems most probable here. In writing to the "**fathers**" John drew assurance from his realization that their years of pondering the Gospel message and their experiences with the incarnate Christ had stabilized them so that they would not be misled by the novel (false) "Christologies" of the Gnostics." ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**Henry Morris** - **Fathers** must mean those who, like John himself, were Christians **from the beginning**, (1Jn 2:13,14) dating from the time of Jesus' earthly ministry, and thus, presumably, older Christians both physiologically and spiritually.

**H A Ironside** - There are not many **fathers** in the faith. People may be very old in Christ and yet not be fathers in a spiritual sense. Sadly, many who have been Christians for years are still very worldly minded and know little of true fellowship with Christ. Paul earnestly prayed, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Philippians 3:10). It is this personal knowledge of God that constitutes one a father in Christ. This is the height of Christian maturity, and comes through a life of intimate fellowship with Christ. Does your soul long to know Him? Do you seek to know Him better through the years? There is only one way that you will ever become a father in Christ-it is to know Him. Many people are quite clear regarding certain great doctrines, or convinced as to where they stand on the fundamental and liberal controversy. They have rigid ideas as to how the people of God should meet together, and yet there is one thing very evident-they do not know Christ in this intimate relationship that is indicated here. How do you get to know a person? By living with them day after day. How do you get to know Christ? By living in intimate fellowship with Him day after day throughout the years. You know Him when He ministers to you in your sorrow. You know Him when you put Christ first and find your chief joy and gladness in Him. To know Him! This is to be a father in Christ. John does not add a word of exhortation. Why? Because when Christ becomes the sole object of the heart, nothing more can be added to that. The heart completely devoted to Christ is delivered from the power of sin, saved from worldliness, and kept from jealousy, envy, and everything that is of the flesh. These things will not be present in the heart where Christ is all in all. ([1 John 2 - Ironside's Notes](#))

The great apostle Paul's deepest desire was for deeper knowing and intimacy with His Lord writing "that I may **know (ginosko)** Him, and the **power (dunamis)** of His resurrection (cp his prayer that the "surpassing greatness of His power" be the personal possession the saints at Ephesus - Eph 1:18-20-note) and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death; in order that I may attain to the resurrection from the dead." (Php 3:10-11-note) Indeed, this is a **Pauline inspiration** that is a worthy **personal aspiration**, one that should be the **warp and woof** of every believer's heart!

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, does this describe your heart's desire, your life's goal, your [summum bonum](#)? We see this same principle even in the Old Testament prophetic book of Daniel where we can apply the principle that "The people that **know** their God shall be strong (display strength), and do exploits (take action)." (Da11:32+)

*Such knowledge (of Jesus) moves the heart, steels the will,  
nerves the arm, to adventure for GOD!*

As **Guy King** says "such (intimate, experiential) **knowledge** (of Jesus) moves the heart, steels the will, nerves the arm, to adventure for GOD! Ned Weeks, a man uneducated and ungifted, but with a heart aflame with love for GOD and for men, did such a remarkable work in the town of Northampton that they gave him a public funeral, when crowds lined the streets with every evidence of real sorrow as the cortege passed. A stranger standing by, on asking who this was, and why all this demonstration, was given, in the rough vernacular, the explanation, "You see, he was wonderfully thick with the Almighty." Ah yes, he knew Him. To be educated - grand; to be gifted - grand; to be enthusiastic - grand; but grandest of all is to "**know Him**", for this will over-rule any disability, caused through no fault of our own, and enable us to dare and do for Him." ([The Progress of the Fellowship](#)) **Amen or O my!**

**H A Ironside** - It is quite possible to have been a Christian for many years, and yet not be **afather** (speaking of spiritual maturity). There are many who have been saved a great many years but are spiritually dwarfed because they give so little attention to spiritual things. They give so little time to the Word of God, are so seldom exercised in holy things, and know so little of the blessedness of prayer and communion with the Lord, that they do not grow. But when the apostle spoke to the fathers, he was speaking to those who through long years have availed themselves of their Christian privileges, learned to love the Word of God, sought to walk with Christ, labored for the blessing of others, and learned experientially to know the blessed Lord in all His fullness. When John said, "Ye have known him [that is] from the beginning," he did not mean, "Ye have known concerning him," or "known about him," but "ye have known him." Spiritual fathers have lived in fellowship with Him, walked with Him, and talked with Him. He has become dearer and



nearer and more real to them than any earthly friend. He draws very near to His own, and, if I may coin an expression, He presences Himself with them. He shows them His hands and feet, and says, "It is I myself: handle me, and see" (Luke 24:39). He asks us to remember that it was for us He bore the wounds and endured the agony of the cross, in order that we might become His own. So the fathers are those who have learned to know Him throughout the years. They have learned to appreciate His love. The world has lost its power over their souls because Christ has filled the eyes of their hearts. ([1 John 2 - Ironside's Notes](#))

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**THE CIRCLE OF THE WISE** - David Roper - I used to serve on the elder board of a church in California. One elder, Bob Smith, who was older than most of us, frequently called us back to the Word of God for guidance.

On one occasion we were discussing a leadership shortage in the church and had spent an hour or more working through various solutions. Bob was silent throughout the discussion. Finally, he said quietly, "Gentlemen, we've forgotten Jesus' solution to our leadership issue. Before we do anything, we must first 'ask the Lord of the harvest ... to send out workers'" (Luke 10:2 niv). We were humbled, and spent the rest of our time praying that God would raise up workers and send them into the field.

C. S. Lewis said, "The next best thing to being wise oneself is to live in a circle of those who are." Proverbs 1:5 says, "A man of understanding will attain wise counsel." Bob's comment is just one example of the value of wise men and women who "have known Him who is from the beginning" (1 John 2:13-14) and whose minds are saturated with the Word of God.

Let's take to heart the counsel of those who have lived in the Lord's presence and are mature in His wisdom. They are God's gift to us and our churches. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The older saints who trust God's Word  
Have trod the paths that we now walk;  
They've fought the battles we now fight—  
Their wisdom teaches truth and right.  
—Branon

**That one is truly wise  
who gains wisdom from the experience of others.**

(Ed: Let us live in the "circle of the wise" fathers John describes!)

## **YOUNG MEN OVERCAME THE EVIL ONE**

**I am writing (grapho) to you** - See above. Luther once said, "The devil hates goose quills," and, doubtless, he has good reason, for ready writers, by the Holy Spirit's blessing, have done his kingdom much damage.

**Young men** ([neaniskos](#)) generally describes men in the prime of their life between 20-40 years of age. Most commentators favor that this group is composed of believers younger in the faith as well as younger physically.

Almost everything that is great has been done by youth.—Benjamin Disraeli

At age 27, Spurgeon built the great Metropolitan Tabernacle in London.

Billy Graham was 31 at the time of his now-famous Los Angeles Crusade.

Billy Sunday left home plate for the pulpit at 33.

John Wesley began his real life's work at 35.

Jesus Christ began the greatest work of all time at about age 30 culminating the greatest event of all time at about age 33.

**A recommended read** - [Thoughts for Young Men - J C Ryle \(a classic!\) \(or here\)](#)

**John Phillips** - The **young men** do the work and fight in the frontline. One does not expect much from little children, nor does one expect the older men to go forth to battle, except in emergencies. Old men give counsel; **young men** get things done... The **fathers** live increasingly in the past and are custodians of the great truths, traditions, and triumphs of the church in history. The **young men**, however, catch the vision of wrongs to be righted, of causes to be espoused, of harvest fields to be reaped, of worlds to be conquered, of foes to be routed in battle. ([Exploring the Epistles of John](#))

**Henry Alford** - the proper attribute of youth is, to carry on the active parts of life: if soldiers, to be engaged in all active service: that of age, to contemplate, and arrive at sound and matured knowledge. The latter have conquered as well, but the burden and heat of their struggle is past. ([1 John 2 - Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

**Because** - term of explanation - Again ask what is John explaining? Remember the old adage "Practice makes perfect!" So keep practicing interrogation of the text!

**You have overcome** ([nikao](#) in perfect tense) **the evil one** ([poneros](#)) - Note the definite article (ton) precedes "evil one" indicating a very definitive and specific evil entity, clearly Satan! Further, the word for **evil one**, [poneros](#), means actively harmful, hurtful, evil in effect or influence. Beloved, our mortal enemy is not "playing around" but "playing for keeps!" **Wuest** paraphrases it "You have gained the victory over the Pernicious One" adding that "They fought their fight to a finish and were enjoying the fruits of victory, a life lived **in the power of the Spirit** where their victory over Satan was a consistent one."

*They had overcome, not temptation, but the Tempter!*

-- D Edmond Hiebert

While **"you"** refers to the **young men**, the truth that Satan has been overcome clearly applies to all believers (cp 1Jn 4:4). **Every** child of God can be assured of overcoming the enemy by standing firm against him as Paul exhorts the saints in Ephesus (Eph 6:11+, Eph 6:14+)

**John Stott** - In between the children and the fathers are the young men, busily involved in the battle of Christian living. The Christian life, then, is not just enjoying the forgiveness and the fellowship of God, but fighting the enemy. The forgiveness of past sins must be followed by deliverance from sin's present power, justification by sanctification. (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

How did they **overcome the evil one**? It by the same secret as every young man can do - "not I, but Christ Who lives in me." (Gal 2:20-note) The Bible tells us that the serpent was "more cunning than any beast of the field" (Genesis 3:1). No ominous hissing or rattling warned of danger. He didn't ask, "Pardon me, may I have 20 minutes to destroy your life?" Public Enemy No. 1 uses the same tactics today as he did back then. He appeals to our sinful desires (1 John 2:15-16). Satan even disguises himself as an angel of light, and his cohorts appear as ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:14-15; 1 John 2:18-19).

When sin entices and allures,  
Its lies must be ignored;  
The strength to gain the victory  
Comes when we trust the Lord.  
—Sper

*You need to know God's truth  
to see through Satan's lies.*

**Overcome** ([3528](#)) ([nikao](#)) means to conquer, gain the victory, subdue, to be victorious or to prevail in the face of obstacles. Ro 3:4 + speaks of God prevailing as in a legal accusation against Him! **Overcome** describes the quality of a true saint who may stumble and fall but who God always picks up and he continues onward and upward in the power of the Spirit, motivated by the victory that Christ has won for us at Calvary. **Webster's** (1828) says **overcome** means to conquer; to vanquish; to subdue; as, to overcome enemies in battle. To surmount; to get the better of; as, to overcome difficulties or obstacles. To gain the superiority; to be victorious.

**Nikao** - 28x in 24v Lk 11:22; Jn 16:33; Ro 3:4; 12:21; 1Jn 2:13-14; 4:4; 5:4-5; Rev 2:7, Rev 2:11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 5:5; 6:2; 11:7; 12:11; 13:7; 15:2; 17:14; 21:7).

**Note that EVERY believer is an overcomer** (Read 1Jn 5:4-5) and priceless privileges are promised by Jesus to all who overcome (i.e., to all believers!) (Ponder the list of 7 privileges that are promised to you dear overcomer - Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 26+; Rev 3:5, 12, 21+).

In this verse **John** renders **overcome** with the perfect tense which describes a past completed action with continuing effect, thus speaking of the permanence of the victory! (cp Rev 19:1-6±) Assuming "evil one" to be a synonym for Satan, when was Satan defeated? The obvious answer is at Calvary when the Father "**disarmed** (see study of the interesting word *apekduomai* = stripped off and divested Satan and his minions of their authority and power) the rulers and authorities (Yes, Satan is still the prince of the power of the air [Eph 2:2+], but he and his fiends no longer have authority over believers who are walking in the light! Hallelujah!), He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him (Christ). (Col 2:15+ = the fulfillment of the [Protevangelium](#), the prophecy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Ge 3:15+, cp Jn 12:31+, Heb 2:14+)

**Vine** - The perfect tense indicates the abiding results of past victories. There is of course no suggestion that there are not further conflicts in store.

**Hiebert** - The perfect tense **have overcome** does not mean that the battle is already over but rather, having encountered the enemy, they now stand as assured of victory. ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

As **Henry Alford** aptly remarks, "Whatever conflict remains for them afterwards, is with a baffled and conquered enemy." ([1 John 2:13 - Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

Knowing that in Christ the devil is a defeated foe (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), the young men have in faith resisted the devil and put him to flight (1Pe 5:9+; James 4:7+). Such a position of victory must be maintained daily with a firm faith in Christ and resolute striving against the devil and his temptations.

*Every victory we have over Satan or his demonic henchmen  
is based on Jesus' victory at Calvary*

Every victory we have over Satan or his demonic henchmen is based on Jesus' victory at Calvary, a victory which assured defeat of all three of our inveterate (firmly established by long persistence) enemies of our soul - the **world**, the **flesh** and the **devil**. Jesus encouraged His disciples (and us) when He declared "These things (What things? John 13-16 - The entire Upper Room Discourse!) I have spoken to you, (Why did He give them this "Discourse"?) so that **in** (note the positional nature of this preposition) Me (see related study **in Christ**) you may have peace (**eirene**). In the world you have tribulation (**thlipsis**) (One of those divine "Promises" we would rather not receive!), but **take courage** (**present imperative** - the only way to obey this command is by continually yielding and depending on the enabling power of the Holy Spirit); I have overcome (**nikao** again in the **perfect tense** - see significance above) the world (**kosmos**)." (John 16:33+)

*Because Jesus has overcome,  
we can overcome!*

**A T Robertson** - **Nikao** in the perfect active indicative (which speaks of) a permanent victory after conflict. The masculine article *ton* (preceding "evil" = "the evil one") shows that the prince of darkness is the one defeated in this struggle, clearly stated as the devil in 1Jn 3:8,10 (cp Jn 8:44; Jn 13:2).

**H A Ironside** - In the book of Revelation we read, "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony" (Rev 12:11). When John said, "I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one," we can be sure that it is through their faith in the atoning blood of Christ that they have been able to turn away from the world that crucified Him. They have said farewell to anything that has no place for their Lord. *My old companions, fare you well, I cannot go with you to hell; I mean with Jesus Christ to dwell, I will go.* Do you remember an experience like that? Have you turned from the world that rejected your Savior, and clinging to Him, taken His place of rejection? If so, then even when Satan seeks to terrify you by bringing before you your past sins, you are able to plead the infinite value of Christ's atoning blood. That is the way to overcome. ([1 John 2 - Ironside's Notes](#))

**Guy King** writes - Many a contest with the Satanic myrmidons had these "young men" waged, and many a victory they had gained. You see, there is a secret of victory which these had learned - and we shall learn it in a later Study of this very Epistle. It is, alas, sadly true that many third-rate, poor-grade, Christians are living defeated lives: such an unsatisfactory thing for themselves, such a bad example to others, such a poor advertisement for the faith. How different are those spoken of by Paul, in Ro 5:17-note, that "they which receive abundance of grace ... shall reign in life". Reign, not over people nor kingdoms, but over feelings, and fears, and circumstances, and habits, and sins. You see, these "young men" are triumphant overcomers, because "Ye are strong" (1Jn 2:14) - a weak Christian is a contradiction in terms, for the purposes of GOD never contemplate such a thing. Unfortunately, there are not a few delicate, invalid Christians; and all such should attend at once the Great Physician's clinic, to discover what is wrong, and to get things put right. Among the common symptoms of this spiritual debility are (a) A lack of good food - seen in the fact of no appetite for the Word; (b) A lack of good, fresh air - the mountain breezes that blow about the footstool of prayer; (c) A lack of good exercise - in the service of GOD. Nowhere is it more certain that idleness is the precursor of illness. How frequently, in both Testaments, do the Scriptures exhort us to "**Be strong**" - whether in Joshua 1:9, 18, Hag 2:4; or in Eph 6:10-note. Wherefore, let us heed the injunction, not only for our sake, but for others, since "we then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak", Ro 15:1-note. ([1 John 2:12-14 The Progress of the Fellowship](#))

**Robert Candlish** on **young men**- As good soldiers of Christ (2Ti 2:3-4), I would remind you of your high vocation; of what is committed to you; of what is expected of you. Your sphere is the field of battle. The quiet of contemplative study may best suit aged saints, advanced disciples, "fathers;" who may best serve the cause by enlarging, under the Spirit's teaching, their own and the Church's knowledge of the Eternal Word; elevating their own and the Church's views of the Son in the bosom of the Father. But the vigor of spiritual youth points to the never-ending conflict between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Genesis 3:15), as your special department. For you are called to wage war with the wicked one. And you have every encouragement to do so. You have overcome him already in Christ, for He has overcome him. You have but to follow up and follow out the conquest. ([John 2 Commentary](#) 1 John 2:12-14 The Guileless Spirit Abiding in the Light)

**The evil one** (**poneros**) - Some versions capitalize this name because they interpret it as a proper name for our Adversary (1Pe 5:8+), "the great dragon... , the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives (planao in the present tense = this is

continually his seductive, stealth attack even as it was at the beginning in perfect setting in paradise = Ge 3:1-6 = He questions and distorts the Word of Truth!) the whole world." (Rev 12:9-[note](#)) **Vincent** observes that "the abrupt introduction of the word here, (indicates) something familiar."

**EVIL ONE** - (ton poneros): Nearly all peoples who have expressed their religious thought and feeling believe in a spirit that presides over the destinies of men for their good. They believe that there is also a spirit, a person, whose work it is to lead men into temptation: a spirit of light and a spirit of darkness. Feelings and preferences may have much to do with the conclusions. In Mt 5:37,39,45; 6:13, the King James Version gives "evil," the Revised Version (British and American) "the evil one," margin, "evil," the personal form referring to the enemy of the race known by various terms: Satan, "the adversary" or "the accuser," occurs 50 times; Beelzebub is found 7 times; devil, 35 times; it means "accuser," "calumniator."

How grateful we can be that **Jesus** prayed for us "I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the **evil one**." (Jn 17:15)

**Evil One** (Pernicious One) ([4190](#))(**poneros** from **poneo** = work or toil, **Robertson** says the idea is that labor is an annoyance, bad, evil; Noun **poneria**) means evil as descriptive of a malignant pernicious character, a good description of Satan. **Poneros** also describes a determined, aggressive, and fierce evil that actively opposes God and all that is good and right and true!

**Evil one** - 10x in the NAS (note concentration in First John) - Matt. 13:19; Matt. 13:38; Jn. 17:15; Eph. 6:16; 2 Thess. 3:3; 1 Jn. 2:13; 1 Jn. 2:14; 1 Jn. 3:12; 1 Jn. 5:18; 1 Jn. 5:19

**Hiebert** adds that John's use of the moniker (name/nickname) "**the evil one**" is a term for the devil which clearly "depicts his nature as vicious, injurious, and destructive. It describes him as utterly bad. While admittedly the devil uses men as his agents in his conflict with believers, the devil (**diabolos**), aided by his cohorts, is their real and persistent enemy (cf. Eph 6:10-12+). ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**Henry Alford** - the **Evil One** is he in whom, in whose power, the whole world lieth, 1Jn 5:19, Jn 12:31; Jn 14:30; John 16:11; the **diabolos**, who deceives from the beginning, Jn 8:44, 1 John 3:8; 1Jn 3:10; 1Jn 3:12; whose works Christ came into the world to destroy, 1 Jn 3:8. He is conquered once and for all, by those who have passed from darkness to light (Col 1:12-14, Acts 26:18), and from the power of Satan to God, to communion with the Father and the Son, 1Jn 5:18. Whatever conflict remains for them afterwards, is with a baffled and conquered enemy: ([1 John 2 - Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

It is interesting that we are told to **flee** (present imperative = enabled by [the Holy Spirit to obey](#) this command all of these commands) youthful lusts (2Ti 2:22+), **flee** (present imperative = enabled by the Spirit continually obey this command) immorality (1Cor 6:18+, cp Ge 39:11-12), **flee** (present imperative = enabled by the Spirit continually obey this command) idolatry (1Cor 10:14+, cp 1Jn 5:21+), **flee** (present imperative = enabled by the Spirit continually obey this command) from love of money (1Ti 6:10, 11+) but we are not told to flee from the devil but "**Submit** (aorist imperative = do this now, don't delay!) therefore to God. **Resist** (aorist imperative = do this now, don't delay!) the devil and **he will flee** from you." (Jas 4:7+) The word for **resist** in Greek means to set one's self against, to arrange in battle against. **Anthistemi** suggests vigorously opposing, bravely resisting, standing face-to-face against an adversary, standing your ground. Just as an **antihistamine** puts a block on histamine (often causing the symptoms of allergy to "flee!"), [anthistemi](#) tells us that with the authority and spiritual weapons granted to us we can withstand the evil one and his destructive demonic hordes. Even as Jesus stood against Satan in the wilderness temptation (Mt 4:1-11+), we too are to stand against him (in the strength of the Spirit of Jesus, not our strength!) Remember, before you can resist, you have to submit!

*Remember, before you can resist,  
you have to submit!*

**Vine** says that **poneros** is "not only evil (passively bad), but evilly disposed (actively harmful), whether in matters of false doctrine, or temptations in the moral sphere. The young men who are addressed have so far proved faithful, and have not yielded themselves to the corrupting influences around them."

**Wuest** - The Greek has two words for the idea of wickedness, **kakos**, "evil in the abstract," and **poneros**, "evil in active opposition to the good." The **kakos** man is content to perish in his own corruption. The **poneros** man seeks to drag everyone else down with him into his ultimate downfall. Satan is of the latter character, pernicious."

**Webster's** definition of **pernicious** - highly injurious, exceedingly harmful; having the quality of killing, destroying or injuring; very injurious or mischievous. Destructive; tending to injure or destroy. Evil examples are pernicious to morals. Intemperance is a pernicious vice. **Pernicious** implies irreparable harm done through evil or insidious corrupting or undermining (the claim that pornography has a pernicious effect on society).

**Phillips** - Satan is pictured as being full of labor (recall that the root word of **poneros** is **poneo** = work or toil) and pain in working wickedness, travailing as a woman with child who has come to the birth and is straining to bring forth evil. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus urged us to ask God to "deliver us from evil" (evil one; Mt. 6:13-note). In the parable of the sower, the seed, and the soil, the Lord reveals that it is this same Wicked One who snatches away the good seed of the Word of God from the minds of those whose hearts have not been prepared to receive it (Mt. 13:19). Likewise, in the parable of the wheat and the tares, it is the Evil One who sows his counterfeit agents into the world to deceive. These counterfeit ministers, missionaries, and seminary professors are actually called "the children of the wicked one," and that "wicked one" is identified as the Devil (Mt. 13:38-39). In His high-priestly prayer, the Lord Himself prayed for us that we might be kept from evil (evil one; John 17:15). ([Exploring the Epistles of John](#))

**Young men** (and all believers for that matter) need to recognize that **poneros** does not just describe the enemy of our souls as only bad in character (which is true!), but as a fierce fiend who is bad in the effects he produces (seeking to decimate our spiritual health) and the havoc he wreaks! I fear that too often I forget this truth, thinking I can dabble with the darkness and deception of sin (Heb 3:13-note), and not at the same time make myself vulnerable to his vicious, opportunistic attacks!

**PRAYER** - Dear Father Who art in heaven, may we all be "young men" (regardless of our age) who are ever alert (1Pe 5:8+), ever fully clothed (Eph 6:10-18+, Ro 13:14+), and ever ready to fight the good fight of faith (1Ti 1:18+, 1Ti 6:12+, 2Ti 4:7+) in the power (dunamis) of the Spirit (Zech 4:6, Lk 4:14+, 1Jn 2:6+, 1Pe 2:21+) and for the glory of the Lamb (Jn 1:29+, Rev 12:11+, Rev 21:22-23+, Rev 22:3-5+). Amen

The prince of darkness grim,  
We tremble not for him,  
His rage we can endure,  
For lo his doom is sure:  
One little word will fell him.

[A Mighty Fortress by Steve Green](#)

## GOD IS OUR FATHER!

**I have written** (grapho) **to you** - See comments above regarding John's switching from the present to the aorist tense in this section.

**Children** ([paidion](#)) - Here in 1Jn 2:13 **paidion** "is used to address the youngest believers in the family of God. In that usage it is to be distinguished from [teknion](#), the term John used to address all his readers (1Jn 2:1,12,28). Here **paidion** seems to emphasize the fact that a child is a learner, one who needs guidance, while [teknion](#) stresses the fact that the child was born into the family." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

A **paidion** describes a child young in experience, and in need of training and discipline.

**Because you know** ([ginosko](#) in perfect tense - speaks of permanence) **the Father** ([pater](#)) - "The realization of the Fatherhood of God belongs to the youngest believer. The Spirit Himself bears witness with their spirit that they are the children of God (Ro 8:16+). The fathers have entered into the deeper truths relating to Christ as the center of the divine counsels. The babes have learned to cry "Abba, Father" because they have been born to God." (Vine)

**Because** - term of explanation - Keep interrogating this word **because** until this mindset becomes virtually an "automatic reflex" as you read the Scriptures! Remember that you will have 1436 opportunities (all the uses of **because**) in the NASB (1995)!

**You** ([ginosko](#) in perfect tense - speaks of permanence) **the Father** ([pater](#)) - They **know** or have a personal relationship with the Father through the Son and because the Son so wills. As Jesus said "All things have been handed over to Me by My **Father**; and no one **knows** (epiginosko) the Son except the **Father**; nor does anyone **know** (epiginosko) the **Father** except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal **Him** (the Father)." (Matt 11:27+, Lk 10:22+)

As an aside, the Bible uses 3 dominate metaphors to describe believers - **sheep** to shepherd; **child** to father; **bride** to bridegroom. Notice that all are relational terms.

### Related Resources:

- **RBC Booklet** - [God Our Father](#) - What it means to be His child
- [How should I understand the concept of the Father God?](#)
- [What does it mean that God is our Abba Father? | GotQuestions.org](#)



**John Stott** - They rejoice in the forgiveness of their sins through Christ and in their consequent fellowship with God. The Holy Spirit within them makes them aware of their filial relationship to God and causes them to cry 'Abba! Father!' (Ro. 8:15-16; Gal. 4:6)... The verb is the same as that used of the little children. All Christians, mature and immature, have come to **know** (egnōkate) God. But their knowledge of him ripens with the years. (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

It is easy to read through this section and not be overwhelmed by the truth that we as believers can boldly approach God and call Him "**Father**." Take a few moments to ponder and sing to our great Father as you listen to **Fernando Ortega's** beautiful vocal version...

### [This Is My Father's World](#)

This is my Father's world, and to my listening ears  
All nature sings, and round me rings the music of the spheres.  
This is my Father's world: I rest me in the thought  
Of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;  
His hand the wonders wrought.

**J. I. Packer** has a good reminder writing that "If you want to judge how well a person understands Christianity, find out how much he makes of the thought of being God's child, and having God as his Father. If this is not the thought that prompts and controls his worship and prayers and his whole outlook on life, it means that he does not understand Christianity very well at all." (Borrow [Knowing God](#)). (See also 1 John 3:1 Commentary)

As **Thomas Watson** said "Since God has a Son of His own, and such a Son, how wonderful God's love in adopting us! We needed a Father, but He did not need sons."

In a most enigmatic, but instructive episode in John 8, **Jesus** addressed a group of Jews who had "**believed**" in Him (Jn 8:30, 31), but clearly had not believed with saving faith (they possessed only intellectual belief - for elucidation of what constitutes genuine, saving faith see study of **pisteuo**) because He dogmatically declared "you have **not** come to **know** (**eido** = speaks of an intuitive knowing that only the Holy Spirit can give) **Him** (the Father) but I **know Him**; and if I say that I do not **know Him**, I shall be a liar like you (because these Jews did not truly know God the Father), but I do **know Him**, and keep His word (something these Jews did not do, their disobedience being the rotten fruit [see their evil response to Jesus' rebuke in Jn 8:58-59 when He claimed to be God!] that proved they were still in their sins [Jn 8:24] and of their father the devil - Jn 8:44-47). (Jn 8:55, cp Jesus' Upper Room warning to His disciples - Jn 16:1-3)

John alludes to the evil one and explains who belongs to his family (there are only 2 spiritual families - in Christ or in Adam, the former having God as Father, the latter having Satan as father) - "For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another; not as Cain, who was of the **evil one** (**poneros**) (clearly "like father, like son"!)) and slew his brother. And for what reason did he slay him? Because his deeds were **evil** (**poneros**), and his brother's were righteous. (1John 3:11-12)

**John's** final two uses of **evil one** (**poneros**) are in the closing section where he writes "We know that **no one** who is born of God sins (John uses the word signifying absolute negation - no born again one continually, habitually, without abatement keeps on sinning); but He who was born of God keeps him, and the **evil one** does not touch him (i.e., the Sovereign God places definite limits on Satan's influence or power - cp Job 1:12, Job 2:4-6. Beloved God always limits Satan! Recall the truths in Ro 8:31-39, 1Jn 4:4, Php 1:6, 1Thes 5:24, Ro 5:10, 2Ti 1:12, 2Ti 4:18, etc). We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the **evil one**." (1John 5:18-19)

Again **Jesus** explained what it meant to **know the Father** as He answered doubting Thomas declaring "I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the **Father**, but through Me. If you had known Me, you would have **known My Father** also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him. Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the **Father**, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to **know Me**, Philip? He who has **seen Me** has **seen the Father**; how do you say, 'Show us the Father'? (Jn 14:6-9)

**Paul** alludes to knowing **the Father** declaring that "God (the Father), Who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," (Ge 1:3) is the One Who has shone in our hearts (The same God Who turned on physical lights at Creation, turns on the spiritual lights at our regeneration! cp Col 1:13-note, Acts 26:18) to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God (i.e., His Spirit gives us spiritual light or insight to know that Christ is God in the flesh) in the face of Christ." (2Cor 4:6-note) In other words, as **John MacArthur** explains "To be saved, one must understand that the **glory of God** shone in Jesus Christ. That is the theme of John's Gospel (cp Jn 1:4-5)." (MacArthur Study Bible)

**Know** ([1097](#))(**ginosko**) speaks of experiential knowledge, not simply a head knowledge. The **children** know the **Father** because of their personal (salvation) experience with Jesus, the only One through Whom anyone can come to know and experience God the



Father (Jn 14:6).

**The Father** (3962)(**pater**) is clearly God **the Father**. Contrary to popular opinion, not everyone has the right (or privilege) to address God as "**Father**," but only those who have become members of His family, children of God (note also that **not everyone** is a **child of God!**) John explains that "as many as received Him (Jesus), to them He gave the right to become **children of God**, even to those who believe (received = believe in this context) in His Name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (Jn 1:12-13+) Again John writes "See how great a love **the Father** has bestowed upon us, that we should be called **children of God**; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know (**ginosko**) us, because it **did not know (ginosko) Him**." (1Jn 3:1+)

## DEFINITIONS OF GREEK WORDS

**Young men** (3495)(**neaniskos** a diminutive of **neanias** [from **neos** = new, young] = a youth, young man, Acts 7:58, 20:9) describes a youth in the prime of life (from 20 to 40 years of age) (Mt 19:20), an older boy (Acts 23:18) and possibly a young man functioning as a servant (Lxx of Ge 14:24, Ex 24:5) In the Lxx **neaniskos** also refers to soldiers (Spoken also of soldiers - 2Sa. 6:1; 1Chr 19:10). In Acts 5:10, **neaniskos** refers to the younger members of the Christian community. Similarly in 1Jn 2:13-14 **neaniskos** refers to physically younger men, who are younger in the faith (compared to the fathers), but are strong in the faith, abide in the Word and overcome the evil one.

In classical Greek the primary meaning of **neaniskos** is "young man," though the specific age referred to covers a rather broad spectrum. In a few instances the word means "servant." The Septuagint uses **neaniskos** also in reference to "young man," but again the exact age range is not specific. For example, the word is used to speak of very young men (even "boys") in Genesis 25:27, but also of young men who are certainly beyond their teens (Genesis 19:4). ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Another secular source says "A **neanias** is between 20 and 40 years old and a **neaniskos** is at the lower end of that range—between 22 and 28 (Pythagoras in Diogenes Laertes Lives of the Eminent Philosophers 8.10; Creation 105, following Hippocrates)"

**Neaniskos** - 11x in 11v - **NAS Usage**: young man(7), young men(4).

Matthew 19:20 The (Rich = Mt 19:22) **young man** said to Him, "All these things I have kept; what am I still lacking?"

Matthew 19:22 But when the **young man** heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property.

Mark 14:51 A **young man** was following Him, wearing nothing but a linen sheet over his naked body; and they seized him.

Mark 16:5 Entering the tomb, they saw a **young man** sitting at the right, wearing a white robe; and they were amazed.

Luke 7:14 And He came up and touched the coffin; and the bearers came to a halt. And He said, "**Young man**, I say to you, arise!"

Acts 2:17 'AND IT SHALL BE IN THE LAST DAYS,' God says, 'THAT I WILL POUR FORTH OF MY SPIRIT ON ALL MANKIND; AND YOUR SONS AND YOUR DAUGHTERS SHALL PROPHECY, AND YOUR **YOUNG MEN** SHALL SEE VISIONS, AND YOUR OLD MEN SHALL DREAM DREAMS;

Acts 5:10 And immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her last, and the **young men** came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

Acts 23:18 So he took him and led him to the commander and said, "Paul the prisoner called me to him and asked me to lead this **young man** to you since he has something to tell you."

Acts 23:22 So the commander let the **young man** go, instructing him, "Tell no one that you have notified me of these things."

1 John 2:13 I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, **young men**, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, children, because you know the Father.

1John 2:14 I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, **young men**, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

**Neaniskos** - 108v in the non-apocryphal Septuagint -Ge 4:23; 14:24; 19:4; 25:27; 34:19; 41:12; Ex 10:9; 24:5; Nu 11:27; Dt 32:25; Josh 2:1, 23; 6:21-23; Jdg 14:10; 18:3, 15; 19:19; 1Sa 9:27; 20:22; 2Sa 10:9; 2Chr 11:1; 36:17; Ezra 10:1; Job 29:8; Ps 78:63; 148:12; Pr 20:11; Eccl 4:15; 11:9; Isa 3:4; 9:17; 13:18; 20:4; 23:4; 31:8; 40:30; 62:5; Jer 6:11; 9:21; 11:22; Jer 15:8; 18:21; 31:13; 48:15; 49:19, 26; 50:30, 44; 51:3, 22; Lam 1:18; 2:21; 5:13; Ezek 9:6; 23:6, 12, 23; 30:17; Da 1:4, 13, 15, 17; 6:4; Joel 2:28; Amos 2:11; 4:10; 8:13; Zech 9:17

**Septuagint: Neaniskos** translates the following Hebrew words = אָנוֹשׁ 'ənôsh - Man (Jos 2:1,23). בַּחֹרֶר bāchūr = Young man, chosen one (Dt 32:25, Jdg 14:10, Jer 50:44). בַּחַר bāchar = Choice man (2 Sa 10:9). יְלֵד yēledh = Man, youth (Ge 4:23, Da 1:4,13,15,17). נַעַר na'ar = Boy, young man (Ge 25:27, Lam 5:13); servant (1Sa 9:27). עֵלֶם 'elem = Youth (1Sa 20:22).

**Children (3813)** (**paidion** diminutive of **pais** = child) is a little child of either sex, ranging from an infant (Mt 19:13, 14; Mk 10:13-15; Lk 18:16, 17, etc) to children who are older (Mt 11:16; Mt 14:21; 15:38; 18:2-5, etc) **Paidion** is used repeatedly of the infant Jesus in Matthew (Mt 2:8-9, 11, 13-14, 20-21) **Paidion** is used as a term of comparison, Jesus making the point that we are to become like a little child (Mk 10:15 Lk 18:17), the implication of course being that this is not an infant but a child old enough to express saving faith in the Messiah!. **Paidion** stresses the need for moral training and guidance. As a term of address, **paidion** occurs in the NT only in 1John 2:14, 18 and John 21:5.

**William Barclay** says that "**teknion** indicates a child young in age and **paidion** a child young in experience, and, therefore, in need of training and discipline. ([1 John 2 - Daily Study Bible](#))

Another has said that **teknion** emphasizes more the relationship, the dependence or weakness of the infant, the community of nature and kinsmanship between parent and child, while **paidion** stresses the immaturity of the child, the need to be under instruction or direction.

**Marvin Vincent** compares John's two words translated **little children** (**teknion** in 1Jn 2:12, and **paidion** in 1Jn 2:13) in this section observing that **little children** (**teknion**) "emphasizes the idea of **kinship**, while **paidion** emphasizes the idea of **subordination** and consequent **discipline**. Hence **paidion** the more appropriate word when spoken from the stand-point of authority rather than of affection." ([1 John 2 - Vincent's Word Studies](#))

Paul uses **paidion** figuratively exhorting the Corinthian saints to not be toddlers in their understanding (1Cor 14:20), to not be those who are ignorant, child-like or immature. In contrast, Paul encourages the Corinthians instead to grow up and become "spiritual adults," those who are mature.

The writer of Hebrews uses **paidion** as an endearing term for believers or as BDAG says "one who is treasured in the way a parent treasures a child." (Heb 2:13-14, Lxx of Isa 8:18). In a similar use, Jesus warmly addressed His disciples as His **children** (**paidion**) in much the same way a father addresses his children with endearment. (Jn 21:5)

Here in 1Jn 2:18 **paidion** is used "as a form of familiar address on the part of a respected person, who feels himself on terms of fatherly intimacy w. those whom he addresses." (BDAG)

In classical Greek the primary meaning of **paidion** (diminutive of **pais** [3679]) is an "infant" or "young child" up to 7 years of age (Liddell-Scott).

**TDNT (borrow)** - **Paidion** means "small child" with reference to age or descent, and it may also denote "servant" (social position). Figuratively it carries the sense of undeveloped understanding but is also used in affectionate address (cf. Jn. 21:5; 1 Jn. 2:18).

- Nave Topical Bible [Children](#)
- Scofield Reference Index [Children](#)
- The Topic Concordance [Children](#)
- Torrey Topical Textbook [Children](#)
- American Tract Society [Children](#)
- Baker Evangelical Dictionary [Child, Children](#)
- Charles Buck Dictionary [Children](#)
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT [Child, Children Children](#)
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary [Children](#)
- Smith Bible Dictionary [Children](#)
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopaedia [Children](#)
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia - [Child; Children](#)

**Paidion** - 52x in 49v - **NAS Usage:** boy's(1), Child(10), child(21), child's(2), children(17), children's(1). **KJV Usage:** child 25, little

Matthew 2:8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the **Child**; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him." **2:9** After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the **Child** was.

Matthew 2:11 After coming into the house they saw the **Child** with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Matthew 2:13 Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the **Child** and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the **Child** to destroy Him." **2:14** So Joseph got up and took the **Child** and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt.

Matthew 2:20 "Get up, take the **Child** and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life are dead."

Matthew 2:21 So Joseph got up, took the **Child** and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

Matthew 11:16 "But to what shall I compare this generation? It is like **children** sitting in the market places, who call out to the other children,

Matthew 14:21 There were about five thousand men who ate, besides women and **children**.

Matthew 15:38 And those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and **children**.

Matthew 18:2 And He called a **child** to Himself and set him before them, **3** and said, "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like **children**, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. **4** "Whoever then humbles himself as this **child**, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. **5** "And whoever receives one such **child** in My name receives Me;

Matthew 19:13 Then some **children** were brought to Him so that He might lay His hands on them and pray; and the disciples rebuked them.

Matthew 19:14 But Jesus said, "Let the **children** alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Mark 5:39 And entering in, He said to them, "Why make a commotion and weep? The **child** has not died, but is asleep." **40** They began laughing at Him. But putting them all out, He took along the **child's** father and mother and His own companions, and entered the room where the child was. **41** Taking the **child** by the hand, He said to her, "Talitha kum!" (which translated means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!").

Mark 7:28 But she answered and said to Him, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs under the table feed on the **children's** crumbs."

Mark 7:30 And going back to her home, she found the **child** lying on the bed, the demon having left.

Mark 9:24 Immediately the boy's father cried out and said, "I do believe; help my unbelief."

Mark 9:36 Taking a **child**, He set him before them, and taking him in His arms, He said to them, **37** "Whoever receives one **child** like this in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me does not receive Me, but Him who sent Me."

Mark 10:13 And they were bringing **children** to Him so that He might touch them; but the disciples rebuked them. **14** But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, "Permit the **children** to come to Me; do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. **15** "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a **child** will not enter it at all."

Luke 1:59 And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the **child**, and they were going to call him Zacharias, after his father.

Luke 1:66 All who heard them kept them in mind, saying, "What then will this **child** turn out to be?" For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him.

Luke 1:76 "And you, **child**, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS;

Luke 1:80 And the **child** continued to grow and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Luke 2:17 When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this **Child**.

Luke 2:27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the **child** Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law,

Luke 2:40 The **Child** continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Luke 7:32 "They are like **children** who sit in the market place and call to one another, and they say, 'We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; we sang a dirge, and you did not weep.'

Luke 9:47 But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took **achild** and stood him by His side, 48 and said to them, "Whoever receives this **child** in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great."

Luke 11:7 and from inside he answers and says, 'Do not bother me; the door has already been shut and my **children** and I are in bed; I cannot get up and give you anything.'

Luke 18:16 But Jesus called for them, saying, "Permit the **children** to come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 17 "Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a **child** will not enter it at all."

John 4:49 The royal official said to Him, "Sir, come down before my **child** dies."

John 16:21 "Whenever a woman is in labor she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the **child**, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.

John 21:5 So Jesus said to them, '**Children**, you do not have any fish, do you?' They answered Him, "No."

1 Corinthians 14:20 Brethren, do not be **children** in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature.

Hebrews 2:13 And again, "I WILL PUT MY TRUST IN HIM." And again, "BEHOLD, I AND THE **CHILDREN** WHOM GOD HAS GIVEN ME." 14 Therefore, since the **children** share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil,

Hebrews 11:23 By faith Moses, when he was born, was hidden for three months by his parents, because they saw he was a beautiful **child**; and they were not afraid of the king's edict.

1 John 2:13 I am writing to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I am writing to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I have written to you, **children**, because you know the Father.

1 John 2:18 **Children**, it is the last hour; and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour.

**Paidion** - 88v in the non-apocryphal Septuagint -

Gen 17:12; 21:7f, 12, 14ff; 25:22; 30:26; 31:17, 28; 32:15, 22; 33:1f, 5, 13; 44:20, 22, 32ff; 45:19; 48:16; 50:23; Exod 2:3, 6ff; 4:20, 25f; 21:4f, 22; 22:24; Lev 22:28; 25:54; Num 3:4; 14:3, 31; Deut 1:39; 3:6; 11:2; 22:7; 25:6; Josh 1:14; 8:30; Judg 13:8, 12; 19:19; Ruth 4:16; 1 Sam 1:2, 5f; 2 Sam 6:23; 12:15; 1 Kgs 3:25ff; Job 1:19; 21:11; 39:3; 41:5; Isa 3:5; 7:16; 8:4, 18; 9:6; 10:19; 11:6ff; 34:15; 38:19; 46:3; 49:15; 53:2; 66:8, 12; Jer 31:20; Lam 4:10

**Septuagint** translates a number of Hebrew words with **paidion**:

בְּכוֹר = bekōr , Firstborn (Dt 25:6). בֵּן = bēn , Child, young one (Ge 31:17, Lev 22:28, Isa 66:8). אֶפְסָרָה = aph , Little ones, children (Ge 45:19, Nu 14:3, Jos 1:14). יוֹנֵקֶת = yōneqeth , Shoot (Isa 53:2). יָלֵד = yāladh , Child (1 Kgs 3:26). יֵלֵד = yeledh , Child (Ge 33:1-2., 1Sa 1:2, Isa 8:18). נַעַר = na'ar , Boy, young person (Ge 21:17-20, Job 1:19, Isa 7:16). נַעֲרָה = na'ārāh , Maiden (Job 41:5). עֶבֶד = 'evedh , Servant (Jdg 19:19—Codex Vaticanus only).

1 John 2:14 I have written to you, **fathers**, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, **young men**, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**EXPLANATORY NOTE FROM THE NET Note:** The versification of 1Jn 2:13 and 1Jn 2:14 (so also NAB, NRSV, NLT) follows that of the NA27 and UBS4 editions of the Greek text. Some English translations, however, break the verses between the sentence addressed to children and the sentence addressed to fathers (KJV, NKJV, NASB, NIV). The same material has been translated in each case; the only difference is the versification of that material.

**Greek:** ἐγράψα ὑμῖν πατέρες ὅτι ἐγνώκατε τὸν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἐγράψα ὑμῖν νεανίσκοι ὅτι ἰσχυροὶ ἐστέ καὶ ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν μένει καὶ νενίκηκατε τὸν πονηρὸν

**Amplified:** I write to you, fathers, because you have come to know (recognize, be conscious of, and understand) Him Who [has existed] from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong and vigorous, and the Word of God is [always] abiding in you (in your hearts), and you have been victorious over the wicked one. ([Lockman](#))

**Berkley (Modern Language):** I have written you, fathers, because you have learned to know Him who is from the beginning. I have written you, young men, because you are vigorous; God's message stays in your hearts and you have conquered the evil one.

**ESV:** I write to you, fathers, because you know him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

**HCSB: I have written to you, children, because you have come to know the Father.** I have written to you, fathers, because you have come to know the One who is from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, God's word remains in you, and you have had victory over the evil one.

**NET: I have written to you, children, that you have known the Father.** I have written to you, fathers, that you have known him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young people, that you are strong, and the word of God resides in you, and you have conquered the evil one.

**NIV:** I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one. I write to you, dear children, because you have known the Father.

14 I write to you, fathers, because you have known him who is from the beginning. I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

**NLT: I have written to you who are God's children because you know the Father.** I have written to you who are mature in the faith because you know Christ, who existed from the beginning. I have written to you who are young in the faith because you are strong. God's word lives in your hearts, and you have won your battle with the evil one.

**Phillips: Yes, I have written these lines to you all, dear children, because you know the Father,** to you fathers because of your experience of the one who has always existed, and to you young men because you have all the vigour of youth, because you have a hold on God's truth and because you have defeated the evil one.

**TLB:** And so I say to you fathers who know the eternal God, and to you young men who are strong with God's Word in your hearts, and have won your struggle against Satan:

**Weymouth:** I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has existed from the very beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong and God's Message still has a place in your hearts, and you have overcome the Evil one.

**Wuest: I write to you, little children under instruction, because you have come to know the Father experientially, with the present result that you are possessors of that knowledge.** I write to you, fathers, because you have come to know experientially the One who is from the beginning, and are as a present result possessors of that knowledge. I write to you, young men, because you are strong with endowed strength and the word of God in you is abiding, and you have gained the victory over the Pernicious One, and as a present



result are victorious over him.

**Young's Literal:** I did write to you, fathers, because ye have known him who is from the beginning; I did write to you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God in you doth remain, and ye have overcome the evil.

- **fathers** 1Jn 2:13
- **because you are** Ephesians 6:10; Philippians 4:13; Colossians 1:11; 2 Timothy 2:1
- **the word** Ps 119:11; John 5:38; 8:31; 15:7; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 8:10; 2 John 1:2; 3 John 1:3
- **ye have overcome** Revelation 2:7-3
- [1 John 2 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## FATHERS AND YOUNG MEN

I have written ([grapho](#)) to you, fathers (pater), because you know ([ginosko](#) perfect tense) Him who has been from the beginning ([arche](#)). I have written ([grapho](#)) to you, young men ([neaniskos](#)), because you are strong ([ischuros](#)), and the word ([logos](#)) of God abides ([meno](#)) in you, and you have overcome ([nikao](#)) the evil one ([poneros](#)) - I have written - John switches from present to **aoist tense** which speaks of past completed action. (see [epistolary aorist](#)) As in 1Jn 2:13, **know** is **ginosko** in the perfect tense indicating that the **fathers** had come to know Jesus personally as Lord and Savior at some point in the past (the moment of their [new birth](#) by grace through faith - Eph 2:8-9+) and are in still (and forever) in the state of knowing Him! They had an abiding, intimate knowledge of Jesus. They came to know Jesus through their belief in Jesus Christ, Who is the One Who has revealed the Father (Lk 10:22).

**Young men** ([neaniskos](#)) means in the prime of life and vigorous physically and spiritually (they are spiritually "strong" as discussed below).

**Because you are** (present tense) **strong** ([ischuros](#)) - In this context, [ischuros](#) refers primarily to their continuing to be strong in the faith, not necessarily to their inherent physical strength (to which [ischuros](#) can refer). The best way to **overcome** the **evil one** is not by physical strength, but spiritual strength: (1) Take up the **shield of faith** with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. (Eph 6:16-note) **Remember** that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of Christ (Ro 10:17-note) (If your faith is weak, could this be a clue?) and (2) Wielding the **sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God**(Eph 6:17-note)

In the Septuagint of 1Chr 7:2 we read of David's "mighty men of valor" [Who were the mighty men of David?](#) where the Greek use [ischuros](#) combined with **danamis** to describe these **mighty men**. As **mighty men** of valor they were fit for physical war, even as these mighty **young men** were fit for spiritual warfare with their deadly, deceptive adversary!

The glory of **young men** is their strength."

-- Proverbs 20:29

**Wuest - Ischuros** refers to power as an endowment. Strength to overcome Satan is part of the salvation given the believer. It takes the form of the spiritual energy supplied the yielded saint by the Holy Spirit.

**John Phillips** rightly reminds us that "Throughout history, God has had His **strong young men**. [Martin Luther](#) was twenty-seven when he marched down the stairs of the [Scala Sancta \(picture\)](#) in Rome, realizing that salvation was by faith not by works. He was thirty-four when he nailed his monumental Ninety-five Theses to the door of that Wittenberg church. [George Muller](#) was twenty-seven when he moved to Bristol, sure that God wanted him to open an orphanage strictly on the basis of faith. With no money in hand, he was committed to telling his needs only to God. [John Bunyan](#) was thirty-two when he was jailed for preaching without the permission of the established church. In that prison he wrote his immortal Pilgrim's Progress. [William Booth](#) was thirty-six when he founded the [Salvation Army](#). He threw himself into the dens and stews of London's East End to rescue the poor, the wretched, and the despised. [David Brainerd](#) was twenty-five when he set out to convert the American Indians. He was only twenty-nine when he died. [William Carey](#) ([see also](#)) was still in his teens when he could read the Bible in six languages. He was thirty-two when he went to India and launched the modern missionary era. **Such are God's strong young men**. The world is a better place because of them and the church more glorious for all eternity. ([Exploring the Epistles of John](#))

**And (kai)** - Not surprisingly, John connects the strength of the young men with their intake of the Word of God. "The source of their strength is not innate but has been imparted to them." (Hiebert [1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

The **psalmist** understood this dynamic when he asked - "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Your **Word**. With all my heart I have sought You; Do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your **Word** I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against You." (Ps 119:9-11)

**Spurgeon** writes - **Young man**, the Bible must be your chart (a map to aid navigation), and you must exercise great watchfulness that your way may be according to its directions. You must take heed to your daily life as well as study your Bible (Mt 4:4), and you must study your Bible that you may take heed to your daily life (2Ti 2:15). With the greatest care a man will go astray if his map misleads him; but with the most accurate map he will still lose his road if he does not take heed to it. The narrow way was never hit upon by chance, neither did any heedless man ever lead a holy life (Mt 7:13-14). We can sin without thought, we have only to neglect the great salvation and ruin our souls; but to obey the Lord and walk uprightly will need all our heart and soul and mind (Mk 12:29-31). Let the careless remember this. Yet the "**Word**" is absolutely necessary; for, otherwise, care will darken into morbid anxiety, and conscientiousness may become superstition. A captain may watch from his deck all night; but if he knows nothing of the coast, and has no pilot on board, he may be carefully hastening on to shipwreck. It is not enough to desire to be right; for ignorance may make us think that we are doing God service when we are provoking Him (cp Mt 7:21-28), and the fact of our ignorance will not reverse the character of our action, however much it may mitigate its criminality. Should a man carefully measure out what he believes to be a dose of useful medicine, he will die if it should turn out that he has taken up the wrong vial, and has poured out a deadly poison: the fact that he did it ignorantly will not alter the result. Even so, a **young man** may surround himself with ten thousand ills, by carefully using an unenlightened judgment, and refusing to receive instruction from the word of God. Wilful ignorance is in itself wilful sin, and the evil which comes of it is without excuse. Let each man, whether young or old, who desires to be holy have a holy watchfulness in his heart, and keep his Holy Bible before his open eye. There he will find every turn of the road marked down, every slough and miry place pointed out, with the way to go through unsoiled; and there, too, he will find light for his darkness, comfort for his weariness, and company for his loneliness, so that by its help he shall reach the benediction of the first verse of the Psalm, which suggested the Psalmist's enquiry, and awakened his desires... **Thy word have I hid in mine heart.** His heart would be kept by the Word because he kept the Word in his heart. All that he had of the Word written, and all that had been revealed to him by the voice of God, -- all, without exception, he had stored away in his affections, as a treasure to be preserved in a casket, or as a choice seed to be buried in a fruitful soil: what soil more fruitful than a renewed heart, wholly seeking the Lord? The Word was God's own, and therefore precious to God's servant. He did not wear a text on his heart as a charm, but he hid it in his heart as a rule. He laid it up in the place of love and life, and it filled the chamber with sweetness and light. We must in this imitate David, copying his heart work as well as his outward character. First, we must mind that what we believe is truly God's Word; that being done, we must hide or treasure it each man for himself; and we must see that this is done, not as a mere feat of the memory, but as the joyful act of the affections. That I might not sin against thee. Here was the object aimed at. As one has well said, -- **Here is the best thing -- "thy Word"; hidden in the best place, -- "in my heart;" for the best of purposes, -- "that I might not sin against thee."** This was done by the Psalmist with personal care, as a man carefully hides away his money when he fears thieves, - in this case the thief dreaded was sin. Sinning "against God" is the believer's view of moral evil; other men care only when they offend against men. God's word is the best preventive against offending God, for it tells us his mind and will, and tends to bring our spirit into conformity with the divine Spirit. No cure for sin in the life is equal to the Word in the seat of life, which is the heart. There is no hiding from sin unless we hide the truth in our souls. ([Psalm 119 Commentary - The Treasury of David](#)) (See related topics - Meditate or Primer on Biblical Meditation; Memorizing His Word OR Memory Verses by Topic)

**The Word of God abides** (resides, is at home) **in you** - The **Word of God** dwells in the young men as one would dwell in a home.

**THOUGHT** - Dear reader, does this describe your heart? Is there a "Welcome Mat", so to speak, at the door of your heart for Christ's Word of Life. Moses

"Take to your heart all the words with which I am warning you today, which you shall command your sons to observe carefully, even all the words of this law. 47 "For it is not an idle word for you; indeed it is your life. And by this word you will prolong your days in the land, which you are about to cross the Jordan to possess." Dt 32:46-47+).

**Kenneth Wuest** - The **Word of God**, residing in their hearts in an unhindered, welcome state, was that which, together with the power of the Holy Spirit (cf Acts 1:8), gave these young men victory over Satan, the Pernicious One, who sought to drag them down with himself into the ruin that someday will be his. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used by permission)

**Henry Alford** of the **Word of God abides** - the whole announcement of the good news of the gospel in Christ has found entrance into your hearts and an abiding place there, and there dwells and works. ([1 John 2 - Greek Testament Critical Exegetical Commentary](#))

**W E Vine** - The means of their victory is their strength, and the secret of their strength is the Word of God. For the Word of God is the revelation of His will and the means of receiving the fullness of Christ; it is likewise the all-sufficient counteractive against the errors of the time.

**Steven Cole** - It is only when you allow the Word of God to abide in you that you will overcome the enemy's schemes. The Lord Jesus overcame the tempter every time by citing Scripture (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10). The only way that you will grow strong spiritually and

overcome the evil one is to let the Word of God dwell in your heart by meditating on it day and night (Ps. 1:2) and treasuring it in your heart (Ps. 119:9, 11). ([Encouragement for the Family of God 1 John 2:12-14](#))

*All big Christians have been Bible Christians;*

*all who have been greatly blessed to others have been themselves steeped in it.*

**Guy King** - The description proceeds "**The Word of God abideth in you**" (1Jn 2:14) - here is one of the big secrets for the development of moral muscle and spiritual sinew. All big Christians have been Bible Christians; all who have been greatly blessed to others have been themselves steeped in it. I read in Acts 18:24 of Apollos, that he was "mighty in the Scriptures" - that was, of course, only the Old Testament, and he had much to learn of New Testament truth; but what he possessed him, so that, out of his knowledge of the Sacred Writing, he was able, with eloquence, and with fervent enthusiasm, to teach and help many. Such a grasp of the Bible is not to be acquired easily, or quickly; to begin the day with the, sometimes hurried, reading of the day's portion is not enough (**ED**: Nor just reading a devotional, tantamount to someone else's "digested" truth. No, let it daily be the "pure milk of the Word"- 1Pe 2:1-2+) - it is good so far as it goes, but it doesn't go far enough. Time must be found, and stuck to, for a regular weekly period of real study in some selected Book or Subject - so that gradually we begin to grasp the Bible, and the Bible begins to grip us. (**ED**: Might I suggest the wonderful discipline of inductive Bible study) I note again that the Word "abideth" in these virile Christians - it lives there! With some it pays but a brief fleeting visit - that five or ten minutes in the morning, and then off again till next day; but with these it has come to take up its residence in them. They have given it such a welcome that it has come to stay. It has become part of themselves (Ed: This sounds very similar to the blessed discipline of Biblical Meditation). It is always there to consult, to advise, to cheer (Ed: How so? Most efficiently by Memorizing His Word). Something of this sense lies behind Paul's exhortation in Colossians 3:16+, "**Let** the word of Christ **dwell** (**present imperative**) - command for this to be the habitual practice of our life! Something we can obey/accomplish only as we daily yield to the filling of the Holy Spirit [Eph 5:18+, cp Gal 5:16+], Who alone gives us the desire and the power [cp Php 2:12+, Php 2:13NLT+] to continually let the Word dwell in our heart) in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing ... with grace in your hearts ... " How that verse reminds me of the late Mr. George Goodman - of ever blessed memory. Often have I heard him at a Question Hour; and always he would begin his answer with a Scripture quotation - the Word dwelling in him richly. And what grace was in his heart! ([1 John 2:12-14 The Progress of the Fellowship](#)) (May his tribe increase. Amen!)

**Ray Stedman** favors 1Jn 2:12-14 as reflecting maturation in the Christian walk - What makes one who is a spiritual child become a spiritual young man? The Word of God abiding in him? What makes a young man become a father? The Word of God abiding in him! That is the secret of growth. That is what will move him from one stage to another until at last he becomes a father, able to reproduce himself in others... It is absolutely impossible to grow up as a Christian, or as a real man or woman, unless the Word of God abides in you. This is why the devil fights this whole matter of Bible study, the building of your life around the centrality of the Scriptures, and why there is loosed a constant barrage of attack at this level. It is the supremely important thing to move us into maturity. Though the devil cannot stop us from being Christians, he can certainly keep us from becoming strong Christians, and this is exactly the way he does it. He tries to divert our attention and get us off onto spiritual sidetracks. He brings in certain apparent shortcuts that offer to bring us to maturity in an instant. Instant spirituality, instant maturity! Across the experience of years I have watched many things prevent maturity by diverting attention from the divinely designed instrument that will bring it about, the knowledge of the Word of God. I am not talking merely about Bible study. There is a very mechanical, wooden approach to Bible study that can acquaint a person with the teachings of the Bible, but that is not enough. This passage, remember, says the **Word of God** "lives." That means a knowledge of the Bible plus obedience to the Spirit. When the Scriptures speak of knowing the Word of God, they are never merely talking about the instrument of the Bible; it is always the Bible plus the Spirit. It is the Word understood in the light of the illuminating, searching power of the Holy Spirit. It takes these two together to produce maturity. It is not a matter merely of taking the teaching of the Word into the mind, but it is something deeper. The Word lays hold of us. We first lay hold of it, and then it lays hold of us, and thus the Word lives, it penetrates to the conscience, it lays hold of the will, it exposes "the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12b), and that is what produces maturity. This means that our studying must be deliberate. The knowledge of the Word must be more than a hobby or a diversion with us, an option in life, a kind of low-calorie dessert that we can take or leave as we please. No, this demands time and strength. The exhortations of Scripture are to be diligent in this. Be diligent about searching the Scriptures and studying the Word. ([1 John 2:12-14: The Maturing Process](#))

**D Edmond Hiebert** - **And (kai)** again connects the following with what has preceded: "and you have overcome the evil one". The Word indwelling them was the true source of their abiding victory over the devil. Satan cannot resist the power of God's Word, as illustrated in the temptation of Jesus (Mt 4:1-11; Lk 4:1-13). ([1 John 2:7-17 Exposition](#))

**You have overcome (nikao)** - The verb means to conquer, to be victorious, in this case over Satan. **Wuest** translates **nikao** giving a great picture of the significance of the perfect tense (past completed action with ongoing effects/results) writing that these young men "have gained the victory over the Pernicious One, and as a present result are standing on his neck!" (This is what a conquering power would do to it's enemy as a sign of utter defeat. This remind us of Paul's closing words to the saints at Rome that "The God of peace will **soon crush (suntribo) Satan under your feet**. The grace of our Lord Jesus (cp 2Ti 2:1-note) and note that be strong is a

command for continual dependence - present imperative) be with you (depending on His grace would assure their victory over the evil one)." (Ro 16:20-note)

**John Stott** - The forgiveness of past sins must be followed by deliverance from sin's present power, justification by sanctification. So in both messages to the young men it is asserted that they have overcome (NEB = 'mastered') the evil one. Their conflict has become a conquest. (BORROW [The Letters of John](#))

**Wayne Barber** asks "Could you say you are overcoming? Well, if you are you are saying, "It's because I am fully obedient to whatever God wants in my life."

**The evil one** ([4190](#))(**ho poneros**) - see above. A clear reference to Satan.

**William Barclay** on overcoming the **Evil One** - There is the gift of victorious strength. John looks on the struggle with temptation as a personal struggle (James 1:13-15-note). He does not speak in the abstract of conquering evil; he speaks of conquering **the Evil One**. He sees evil as a personal power which seeks to seduce us from God. Once Robert Louis Stevenson, speaking of an experience which he never told in detail, said, "You know the Caledonian Railway Station in Edinburgh? Once I met Satan there." There can be none of us who has not experienced the attack of the tempter (cp Mt 4:3, 1Th 3:5), the personal assault on our virtue and on our loyalty (**Ed**: Now it is doubtful that any of us have ever personally been confronted by Satan himself, for he is finite, not omnipresent, but his minions are continually attacking us with fiery missiles, etc). It is **in Christ** we receive the power (**dunamis**) to meet and to defeat this attack. To take a very simple human analogy we all know that there are some people in whose presence it is easy to be bad and some in whose presence it is necessary to be good. When we walk with Jesus, we are walking with Him whose company (and Whose indwelling Spirit) can enable us to defeat the assaults of **the Evil One**. ([1 John 2 - Daily Study Bible](#))

**I Howard Marshall** sums up the significance of 1Jn 2:12-14 - It is good for Christians to be reminded in this way of their spiritual standing. Too often we have to hedge such declarations with conditions: "We can be sure we know him—if we obey his commands" (1Jn 2:3+). Of course this is necessary to avoid complacency and moral laxity. But it is possible to make Christian salvation into a very precarious possession that needs to be re-possessed every moment; such a faith lacks self-confidence. It is good to remember that in the last analysis our salvation depends on the promise and power of God, so that we can boldly declare that we have peace with God and that we know whom we have believed. John's statements here are meant to awaken such confidence among his readers (cf. 1Jn 5:13), but the importance of Christian assurance is one of the notes in this Epistle which has aroused surprisingly little echo among expositors. Nor should we be reticent in expressing the joy that comes from this knowledge: "Let those refuse to sing, Who never knew our God; But servants of the heavenly King, May speak their joys abroad." (Isaac Watts) (Borrow [The Epistles of John NICNT - 1974](#))(Bolding Added)

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**Strong** (loud, mighty, severe, strong man) ([2478](#)) (**ischuros** from **ischuo** = to be able) is an adjective which means strong, powerful, mighty (usually referring to inherent physical strength), able, forcible. Strong, having moral power. Inherently strong. Ischuros denotes power or ability and places "stress on the actual power that one possesses rather than on the mere principle of power.

**Ischuros** can describe...

- (1) **People** - spoken of the powers both of body and mind, physical and moral (Mt. 3:11; Mk 1:7; Lk 3:16). In Heb 11:34, "**mighty** in war" meaning able to overcome.
- (2) **Angels** (Rev 5:2; 10:1; 18:21)
- (3) **God** (Rev. 18:8; In the Lxx Dt. 10:17; Neh. 1:5; 9:32). John the Baptist uses **ischuros** of Jesus in Mt 3:11, Mk 1:7, Lk 3:16.
- (4) **Things: strong** wind (Mt 14:30 - NAS drops the adjective "strong" for some reason), **a severe** famine (Lk 15:14), or loud (strong) cries of Jesus when on earth as the God-Man (Heb 5:7). The **loud** (strong) cry of the angel at the fall of Babylon (Rev 18:2). Strong or loud (mighty peals) of thunder (Rev 19:6). **Strong** encouragement (Heb 6.18).
- (5) **Satan** - **strong** man in Mt 12:29; Mk 3:27.

**Ischuros** is used figuratively in 1Cor 1:27 to convey the sense of strong in influence and authority, mighty, honorable

Paul's letters were strong, "powerful" (serious, impressive, weighty, forceful) (2Cor 10:10). The **strong** man (Satan) must be bound before his house can be plundered. Jesus accomplished the "binding" of the Evil One (Mt 12:29; Mk 3:27.).

God demonstrated His strength in the "weakness" of the Cross, and for this reason His weakness is "mightier" than men's strength (1Cor 1:25), and His weakness puts to shame the "mighty things" of this life (1Cor 1: 27: cf. Rev 6:15).

**Wuest - Ischuros** speaks of indwelling strength embodied or put forth either aggressively or as an obstacle to resistance, as an army or a fortress.

**Ischuros** (see **ischus**) is one of four great power words in the NT = (1) **Exousia** = delegated authority (2) **Ischuros** = great strength (especially physical); (3) **Kratos**, dominion authority. (4) **Dunamis** means energy, power, might, great force, great ability, strength

**Young men** are described as "strong", presumably referring to their faith (1John 2:14).

**Ischuros in Classic Greek** - Described the quality of being "strong, powerful, mighty," especially persons. Could describe a "strong" taste or odor, a **loud** sound, or the "**power**" of the government. The picture of "Intensity" is a key thought conveyed by **ischuros**. Thus a "**violent**" wind described an intense wind. An army's "force" reflected the intensity of the force.

#### **Webster's 1828 Definition of mighty:**

1. Having great bodily strength or physical power; very strong or vigorous; as a mighty arm.
2. Very strong; valiant; bold; as a mighty man of valor. Jdg 6.
3. Very powerful; having great command. - Cush begat Nimrod; he began to be a mighty one on the earth. Ge 10:9.
4. Very strong in numbers; as a mighty nation. Ge 18.
5. Very strong or great in corporeal power; very able.  
Woe to them that are mighty to drink wine. Isa 5:11, 22.
6. Violent; very loud; as mighty thunderings. Ex 9. Ps. 68.
7. Vehement; rushing with violence; as a mighty wind or tempest. Ex. 10. Rev. 6.
8. Very great; vast; as mighty waters. Neh. 9.
9. Very great or strong; as mighty power. 2Chr. 26.
10. Very forcible; efficacious; as, great is truth and mighty. Esdras.
11. Very great or eminent in intellect or acquirements; as the mighty Scaliger and Selden. Echard.
12. Great; wonderful; performed with great power; as mighty works
13. Very severe and distressing; as a mighty famine. Luke 15:12.
14. Very great, large or populous; as a mighty city. Rev. 18.
15. Important; momentous.

I'll sing of heroes and of kings, In mighty numbers mighty things. Cowley.

**Ischuros** - 29x in 27v - **NAS Usage:** loud(1), mightier(3), mighty(3), mighty men(1), severe(1), strong(13), strong man(1), strong man's(1), strong man's(1), stronger(3). **KJV Usage** - mighty 10, strong 9, strong man 5, boisterous 1, powerful 1, valiant 1

Matthew 3:11 "As for me, I baptize you with water for repentance, but He who is coming after me is **mightier** than I, and I am not fit to remove His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Matthew 12:29 "Or how can anyone enter the **strong** man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the **strong** man? And then he will plunder his house.

**Comment:** In Mt 12:28 Jesus declared the **kingdom of God** had come, because He had displayed His sovereign rule and power over even the strong man (Satan) and his demonic hordes! Jesus is stronger, beloved. In fact, there is simply no comparison because one is the Creator and the other the created creature!

Matthew 14:30 But seeing the (**strong**) wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!"

Mark 1:7 And he was preaching, and saying, "After me One is coming who is **mightier** than I, and I am not fit to stoop down and untie the thong of His sandals.

Mark 3:27 "But no one can enter the **strong** man's house and plunder his property unless he first binds the **strong** man, and then he will plunder his house.

**MacArthur Study Bible** - One must be stronger than Satan in order to enter his domain ("strong man's house"), bind him (restrain his action), and free ("plunder") people ("his property") from his control. Only Jesus had such power over the devil. Cf. Ro 16:20; Heb 2:14, 15.

Luke 3:16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is **mightier** than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Luke 11:21 "When a **strong** man, fully armed, guards his own house, his possessions are undisturbed. 22 "But when someone **stronger** than he attacks him and overpowers him, he takes away from him all his armor on which he had relied and distributes his plunder.

Luke 15:14 "Now when he had spent everything, a **severe** famine occurred in that country, and he began to be impoverished.

1 Corinthians 1:25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is **stronger** than men.

**Comment:** The idea is that the more one looks to himself and depends on himself, the worse his spiritual situation becomes. As his dependence on his his strength increases, so do his problems. His great need is "the weakness of God" because even if God could possess a weakness (which in my opinion, He does not possess), this weakness would still be stronger than the greatest strength a man could muster. As John MacArthur says "God's power is real power, power that means something and accomplishes something. It is not of men but it is offered for men. It is the power of salvation from sin, of deliverance from Satan, of life in God's very presence for all eternity." (1 Corinthians Commentary. Chicago: Moody Press)

1 Corinthians 1:27 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are **strong**,

1 Corinthians 4:10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are **strong**; you are distinguished, but we are without honor.

1 Corinthians 10:22 Or do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not **stronger** than He, are we?

2 Corinthians 10:10 For they say, "His letters are weighty and **strong**, but his personal presence is unimpressive and his speech contemptible."

Hebrews 5:7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with **loud** crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety.

Hebrews 6:18 so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have **strong** encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.

**Wuest - Ischuros** speaks of indwelling strength embodied or put forth either aggressively or as an obstacle to resistance, as an army or a fortress. Thus the encouragement which God's promise and God's oath afford is a strong army or a fortress against doubt and discouragement. God's promise and God's oath should keep these Jews from apostatizing through the encouragement they give.

Hebrews 11:34 quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, became **mighty** in war, put foreign armies to flight.

1 John 2:14 I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has been from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are **strong**, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the evil one.

Revelation 5:2 And I saw a **strong** angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals?"

Revelation 6:15 Then the kings of the earth and the great men and the commanders and the rich and the **strong** and every slave and free man hid themselves in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains;

**Comment: Ischuros** here probably refers to political and/or military status which was great in the world's eyes (but not God's!)

Revelation 10:1 I saw another **strong** angel coming down out of heaven, clothed with a cloud; and the rainbow was upon his head, and his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire;



Revelation 18:2 And he cried out with a **mighty** voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird.

Revelation 18:8 "For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is **strong**.

Revelation 18:10 standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the **strong** city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'

Revelation 18:21 Then a **strong** angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer.

Revelation 19:6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of **mighty** peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

Revelation 19:18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of **mighty men** and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

**Ischuros** - 118v in the non-apocryphal Septuagint - Ge 14:5; 41:31; 50:10; Ex 19:19; Nu 13:18, 31; 20:20; 24:21; Dt 4:38; 7:1; 9:1, 14; 10:17; 11:23; Josh 4:24; 6:20; 10:2; 23:9; Jdg 5:13, 22; 6:12; 9:51; 14:14, 18; 2Sa 15:12; 2Sa 22:31-33, 48; 23:5; 1Kgs 11:28; 2Kgs 24:15; 1Chr 5:24; 7:2, 4-5, 7, 9, 11, 40; 8:40; 9:13; 12:8; Ezra 4:20; Neh 1:5; 9:31-32; Job 22:13; Job 33:29; 34:31; 36:22, 26; 37:5, 10, 18; Ps 7:11; Pr 6:2; 8:28-29; 16:32; 21:14; 24:5; 27:27; 30:26, 30; Eccl 6:10; Isa 8:7, 11; 21:17; Isa 27:1, 3; 28:2; 33:16; 43:16-17; 53:12; Jer 5:16; 9:23; 30:21; 32:18; 33:3; 46:5-6; 48:14; 49:22; 50:34; Lam 1:15; Ezek 30:22; 34:4, 16, 20; Da 1:15; 2:37, 40, 42; 3:20; 4:3; 6:20; 7:7; 8:9, 24; 9:4; 10:1, 7; 11:23-25, 37, 39, 44; Joel 1:6; 2:2, 5, 11; Amos 2:9; 5:12; Mic 4:3, 7;

**Septuagint Usage: Ischuros** occurs quite commonly in the Septuagint where it translates as many as 25 Hebrew words or phrases. The diversity of definition found in classical sources continues in the Septuagint. Thus it can describe a "severe" famine (Ge 41:31) or "bitter" weeping (Ge 50:10). The comparative form is used of "stronger" military forces (Nu 13:31; cf. Dt 2:10; 1Chr 7:4). "The strong" equals the lion in Samson's riddle (Jdg 14:14). "Mighty things" include the promise of God to come and heal and save His people (the Jews) and to return them from captivity and into the Land of Israel (Jer 33:3). (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)