



#### Chapter 4

- 1 **Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world** - Every spiritual experiences must be tested according to the Word of God (Cf. 1 Corinthians 14:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
- 7 **Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God** - "dear friends" is literally, "those who are loved." "Those who are loved, let us love one another" (*agapetoi agapomen*).
- 8 **Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love** – God is love *NOT* "Love is God."
- 19 **We love because he first loved us** - "Now remember, we never make ourselves love Christ more by flogging ourselves for not loving him more. We come to love those better whom we love by knowing them better . . . If you want to love Christ more, think more of him, think more of what you have received from him." (Spurgeon)

#### Chapter 5

- 3 **This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome** – Cf. Matthew 11:28-30
- 5 **Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God** – Cf. John 16:33; Revelation 3:21-22  
"Look at any Greek lexicon you like, and you will find that the word [faith or believe] does not merely mean to believe, but to trust, to confide in, to commit to, entrust with, and so forth; the very marrow of the meaning of faith is confidence in, reliance upon." (Spurgeon)
- 7 **For there are three that testify: <sup>8</sup>the Spirit, the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement** – The NKJV reads:  
<sup>7</sup>For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one. <sup>8</sup>And there are three that bear witness on earth: the Spirit, the water, and the blood; and these three agree as one. NKJV  
*See notes on next page:*

#### "Comma Johanneum"

The passage is absent from every known Greek manuscript except eight [all of which date from the Middle Ages], and these contain the passage in what appears to be a translation from a late recension of the Latin Vulgate. Four of the eight manuscripts contain the passage as a variant reading written in the margin as a later addition to the manuscript. (Bruce M. Metzger)

When [the Dutch Christian humanist scholar and contemporary of Luther Desiderius] Erasmus prepared his printed edition of the Greek Testament, he rightly left those words out, but was attacked for this by people who felt that the passage was a valuable proof-text for the doctrine of the Trinity. He replied (rather incautiously) that if he could be shown any Greek manuscript which contained the words, he would include them in his next edition. Unfortunately, a Greek manuscript not more than some twenty years old was produced in which the words appeared: they had been translated into Greek from Latin. Of course, the fact that the only Greek manuscript exhibiting the words belonged to the sixteenth century was in itself an argument against their authenticity, but Erasmus had given his promise, and so in his 1522 edition he included the passage. (History of the Bible in English [F. F. Bruce New York: Oxford University Press, 1978], 141–42)

From Erasmus's Greek New Testament the passage found its way into the Textus Receptus, the Greek text used by the King James Version translators. That this passage is not part of the inspired text does not affect the biblical doctrine of the Trinity, which does not rest on this spurious insertion. (*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1-3 John* Copyright © 2007 by John MacArthur)

- 14 **This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us** – Cf. John 15:7
- 16 **If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that** – Cf. Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5); 1 Corinthians 11:29-30.
- 20 **We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life** - "Everything depends on His deity, and his deity means no less than this, that as the Father who made known to us by Him is the only real God (1Thess 1:9), so also His Son Jesus Christ "is the real God" and eternal life. If the Son is less, if He is not real God even as the Father is real God, then this entire epistle and all that it declares about His blood, expiation, our fellowship with God, etc., are futile." (Lenski page 542)
- 21 **Dear children, keep yourselves from idols** – If they are not worshipping the real Jesus of the Bible, they are worshipping idols.