

A Purely Literary Analysis of the First Letter of John with a Reading of the Text in the way that the Writer always intended:

(My proposal for this paper was turned down. I am presenting it here, therefore. I include my Chart of 1 John at the foot of this document. What is missing is any guide through my chart: this I was going to give verbally in the seminar, but believe here that readers will manage without it.)

David G Palmer

In the 1990s, Räisänen made a plea for a purely literary analysis of the gospels. I answered his call first of all with doctoral research on Mark's Gospel. I then took a second run through the four Gospels, Acts and the Revelation (on which I had published in 1988). By 2003, I thought I ought to take a little look at the 'letters' just in case they were constructed like the 'books'. As I looked into the three letters of John for the first time in this new way, literary compositional indicators simply jumped out at me from here, there and everywhere in the text!

In my paper, we will review the previous attempts, discern what the researchers have missed and read 1 John in the way that the writer always intended. Not only this, *we will know* we are reading it as the writer always intended. We will see how the text demonstrates full compliance with the rules of Greek compositional writing in an era of oral/aural communication. And we will see also how it totally justifies the searches of those who have been involved in this quest throughout the era of modern biblical criticism.

The history of writing on 1 John is littered with failure when it comes to discerning its structure and style. Many have grappled with these things. In the modern biblical critical era, the list includes: B F Westcott (in 1886), A Plummer (also in 1886), Robert Law (in 1909), A E Brooke (in 1912), C H Dodd (in 1946), P de Ambroggi (in 1947), A N Wilder (in 1957), M Boegaert (in 1958), R Bultmann (in 1967), R Schnackenberg (in 1968), F F Bruce (in 1970), P R Jones (also in 1970), A Feuillet (in 1972), E Malatesta (in 1973), J L Houlden (also in 1973), I H Marshall (in 1978), S Smalley (in 1984), J Stott (in 1988), R Brown (in 1995), S E Porter and C A Evans (also in 1995), J A du Rand (in 1997), C G Kruse (in 2000), J V McGee (in 2008) and J Lieu (also in 2008). What none of them has been able to do is define the repeating literary unit which is essential to reading this document, its structure and style.

It was in the latter part of the nineteenth century that scholars started to grapple with the structural difficulties of 1 John. The first to do so decided it was 'extremely difficult' to determine the structure of this Epistle: 'No single arrangement is able to take account of the complex development of thought which it offers, and of the many connections which exist between its different parts.' At the same time, 1 John was described as 'a collection of aphorisms only, that did not have any logical or organized structure', but were a compound of doctrine and exhortation. What was identified was 'spiral movement'. At the beginning of the twentieth century, commentators agreed with the view of earlier interpreters who 'found' that 1 John had no logical structure. For one scholar, 'no portion of Scripture displayed a greater diversity of opinion on its plan.' Earlier use of the term 'spiral' to describe the structure of 1 John got repeated. Not long after this, and completely to the contrary,

‘the aphoristic character of the writer’s meditations was said to be the real cause of there being a diversity of views about its arrangement. By the middle of the twentieth century, the term ‘spiral’ began to be used again to describe the letter’s structure. ‘Aphorisms’ and ‘spirals’? The words of previous commentators came around again! It proved, at least, that they were reading what others had said, even if they could not work out what the writer had done.

Many began to think that ‘the attempt to analyze the Epistle should be abandoned as useless.’ It was judged that ‘there is little direct progression... Any attempt to divide the work into orderly paragraphs and sections must be largely arbitrary...’ This ‘difficult structure’ was then likened to the river Meander which flowed through the province of Asia. Another, Bultmann, acknowledged the apparent randomness of 1 John, arguing that the original composition ended at 2:27. To others he was conjecturing on the content of the letter alone. In 1995, Raymond Brown noted that others had argued against Bultmann ‘for the paradoxical reason that they cannot explain why anyone would have added pieces that say little or nothing which was not already said in 1:5- 2:27.’ Brown himself was hardly less complimentary: he wrote, ‘The author’s logic is so obscure that one could move around units almost at will and still 1 John would read just as well as it does now.’ More recently, another has spoken of its ‘free association of ideas’. Others, more recently, have returned to the term ‘spiral’ and still others have settled on ‘a number of cycles of argument’. And one of the latest analyses has observed patterns in the sub-structure, but no formal structure overall. On the problem of the structure and argument of 1 John, F. F. Bruce (1970) ruefully summarized, ‘Attempts to trace a consecutive argument throughout 1 John have never succeeded.’

I present 1 John as I have been reading it and teaching it now for the last twenty-one years.

A long time ago now, I had correspondence over my analysis of 1 John with I Howard Marshall, also a Methodist Minister as myself and a member of the British New Testament Society till his death. Here are his Professorial challenges and my responses:

‘I confess to a suspicion of a scheme which accepts the authenticity of 5:7-8... and then rejects 5:21....’

I understand your reaction, but I am following the literary argument each time. The textual argument is strong indeed. But the literary argument for authenticity (or not) is stronger. JA Bengel (in 1742 in his Gnomon) thought so, also John Wesley (in 1754 in his Notes...)

Verse 5.7, from the Vulgate, completes the balanced, ABB’, whole, 5.6-8:

This is the one who came	(a)	a	A
by water	(b)		
and blood,	(b')		
Jesus Christ,	(a)	b	
not in the water only	(b)		
but in the water and in the blood	(b')		
and the Spirit is <u>the one testifying</u> ,	(a)	b'	
because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷	(a')		
<u>Because three there are</u>	(a)	a	B
<u>the ones testifying</u>	(b)		
[<u>in heaven:</u>	(b')		
the Father,	(a)	b	
the Word	(b)		
and the Holy Spirit,	(b')		
<u>and these</u>	(a)	b'	
<u>the three</u>	(b)		
<u>one are.</u>	(b')		
<u>And three there are</u>	(a)	a	B'
<u>the ones testifying</u>	(b)		
<u>in the earth:</u>] ⁸	(b')		
the Spirit	(a)	b	
and the water	(b)		
and the blood,	(b')		
<u>and the three</u>	(a)	b'	
in the <u>one</u>	(b)		
<u>are.</u> ⁹	(b')		

This variant reading is likely original to the letter because it establishes the B and B' parts of this ABB' construction as parallels of each other, as everywhere found throughout the letter. Without this reading, this 'whole' (5.6-8) is incomplete.

What can this possibly mean? That the Vulgate preserved what was previously preserved in earlier Latin manuscripts, as well as in the Greek manuscript which its translator(s) possessed? That is the simplest possible explanation. (Others are not so simple and, therefore, are not so worthy of entertaining here.)

Or if this is incorrect, then we have the interesting discovery that another, other than the rhetor (?), knew, or observed, the composition's ABB' writing style, and seeing something lacking at this point, wanted to improve on it!

Verse 5.21, as I state at the end of my literal English translation, replicates an anaphora and an address ('Little children...') that is much in use elsewhere in the letter ('Little children' 6x; 'Children' 2x; 'Beloved' 6x – all as opening addresses and starters of new sub-sections), but, at 5.21, it is not followed by anything, other than five words! As an addition, at the very end of the Letter, it really does look as though it discloses its writer's ignorance of the rhetor's writing style and his ignorance of the rhetor's structure of the letter, which is complete in its Four Sections, in every way without it!

‘You may well have unearthed a style of writing by the author in which he says something (A) and then adds two comments (B B’) that take it further in some way. That would be the way in which his mind works, and if so it is helpful to spot it.... But how are the B and B’ sections related to one another and to A? What kind of logic is at work. Consider how many modern sermons have three points: what would lead you to analyse these as A B B’ rather than A B C?’

The rhetor is disciplined in his writing method. Each whole part of the Letter comprises three parts, ABB’, where A is the introductory part, B is the first development and B’ is the second, often paralleling, completing development.

This method works at the level of sectional structure (three parts per Section in all, ABB’), at the sub-sectional level (each with three whole parts, ABB’) and at each of the lower structural levels too.

It is possible that three part sermons (surely, now ‘old fashioned’?) are better described by ABB’ than ABC. ABC suggests linear progression. B leaving A behind? C leaving B behind? Yes?

In ***all the NT Books***, the rhetors employ this ABB’ (abb’) writing style. I think of the following as one of the clearest examples:

In the beginning was the Word	a
and the Word was with God	b
and the Word was God. (or lit. ‘and God was the Word’)	b’

The third line, b’, of these three lines, balances the second line, b, and so completes the construction which is the opening, whole piece of John’s Gospel.

‘.... what reasons would you give why I should accept your analysis rather than any of the other analyses that are around?’

My analysis takes account of *the writing style* and *the compositional method* of the rhetor. Other analyses do not.

‘What I need to ask is how adoption of your structure affects how I read and interpret the letter.’

What matters is that we read this letter in the way that the rhetor intended. If we do not, we will make many things of it. We may begin reading a passage from a starting point that the writer never intended. We may then conclude reading a passage, again, where he did not intend. As a result we will read the letter differently from each other and from what the rhetor intended!

In NT scholarship, the latter is what we have been doing for centuries with the NT Books. The *discipline* for reading - as the rhetors intended - has never been known. Reading to the writer's divisions and sub-divisions discloses his purpose for writing as well as the meanings of his text. See the titles to the sections in the chart above. These summarise the writer's teachings.

'The syntactical analysis is helpful....

... I suppose that the important thing would be for you to write up a summary of each of the 4 main sections, showing that there is a connected and coherent topic being expounded in each, and how the complementary sections match one another.'

In my Greek and literal English presentations, in part 1.1-4, I provide cross reference to 4.14, and in 1.5-7 cross reference to 4.16: consider 'we looked upon' and 'we testify' for juxtaposed repetitions, and for the sectional similarities, in the first 'God is light' and the last 'God is love'. The first Section, A, well ends emphatically with repetitions, 'I am writing to you'/'I wrote to you'. They 'know' the 'father' and 'him who is from the beginning'. That is, as this Section presents: they will live in the 'light' and not in the 'darkness' of 'sin'. The last Section, A', ends as emphatically as the first, with three statements beginning with 'We know'.

This Section develops the theme of living in God's love and knowing 'life' and 'life eternal'. ('Love of brother' is common to both sections: see 2.10,11 and 4.20-21.)

The inner two Sections B and B' are a pair: in the one, the opening exhortation is 'Love not...' and in the other, it is 'Love...'. Section B begins with 'Love not the world' and as a Section it warns about the things of the world, the desires of the world, the ways of the world (denying Christ), their deceivers and the works of the devil. Section B' begins with 'Love one another'. As a Section, it five times uses this phrase, which is nowhere found in the letter outside of this section. As in B so also in B', warnings are given that the 'antichrist' is already present (see 2.18 and 4.3).

The Letter is a four Section chiasm, ABB'A'. Seven other books of the NT use this for their primary structure: they are Mark, Galatians, Ephesians, II Timothy, James, I Peter and III John.

'... some explanation of the consequences of the analysis for exegesis, or some indication of how exegesis supports the analysis (there is a dialectic here!).'

I am often challenged that what I am doing (in my analysing of the NT texts) is giving my interpretation of the texts. But my work is not in hermeneutics in the first place. My concern is primarily with exegesis; it is with reading the texts in the way that the writers intended; it is with taking account of their discipline in composition and writing (to the rules of ancient rhetoric) and discovering what is (already) there. Style and structure are evident in all the NT texts: there are no better assists than these for accurate exegesis.

Additional Notes:

Anaphoras (opening words to new pieces) to be noted:

'Beloved':	used	6 x	
'Children':		6x	
'Brothers':		1x	
'I wrote...' (varied)	7x		(se 2.1, for 'Children' as well as 'I wrote')
TOTAL USE:		19 of the 36 pieces	

Marshall, in his commentary, presents seven possible structures (of others) and then presents an eighth, his own. Of the first seven, he says that none are 'free from difficulty' and that, therefore, it 'seems preferable to regard the Epistle as being composed of a series of connected paragraphs whose relationship to one another is governed by association of ideas rather than by a logical plan', and that it is 'not meant to be divided into large sections on a logical basis'.

My view is that all the NT Books have a plan and that this plan is best discerned by recourse to rhetorical analysis coupled with 'reverse parsing' (that is parsing with the purpose of defining the literary units).

I Howard Marshall (NICNT, *The Epistles of John*, Eerdmans, 1978) wrote in his 'Invitation': 'The task of the commentator is to serve the text and *to help* to make it comprehensible to the reader; no commentary was ever meant to be read for its own sake but only as a means to an end, the *understanding* of the text.'

The understanding of the text is my primary reason for my analysis. I sense I have liberated not only 1 John but also its writer. If I had been the writer, I'd have been very upset that people were not reading my text in the way that I intended. I'd have said I gave you every help and you turned my help down. You didn't think to keep looking. You judged my work as having no structure. One of you even said you could swap pieces of my text around and it would make no real difference as to how it was read. You even imposed chapter and verse over my references in the number of five chapters when I had provided only four sections to the classical chiasm, ABB'A'. Your ignorance of first century Greek composition is complete!

22 February 2024 revised 03 May 2024

2,715 words (with chart 5,439)

Section A: 1.1-2.14

Testimony; God is Light, Live in His Light

A What was from the beginning, A
 what we have heard,
 what we have seen with our eyes,
 what we looked upon (see 4.14)
 and our hands touched
 concerning the word of the life
 (and the life was manifested
 and we have seen
 and **we testify** (see 4.14)
 and **we announce to you the life eternal**
 which was with the Father
 and was manifested to us),
 what we have seen and heard
 we announce also to you
 that you also
 may have fellowship
 with us
 and indeed our fellowship is with the Father
 and with the son of Him,
 Jesus Christ,
 and these things we write to you
 that our joy may be complete.

And this is the message B
 which **we have heard** from Him
 and **we announce to you**
 that God is light (see 4.16)
 and in Him is no darkness at all.
 If **we say we have fellowship** with Him
 and in the darkness walk,
 we lie
 and do not the truth.
 But if **we** in the light walk,
 as He is in the light
 we have fellowship with each other
 and the blood of Jesus His son
 cleanses us from all sin

If **we say** that we have no sin B'
 ourselves we deceive
 and the truth is not in us.
 If **we** confess our sins
 faithful He is
 and righteous
 that He may forgive our sins
 and may cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 If **we say** that we have not sinned,
 a liar we make Him
 and His word is not in us.

B My little children, A
 these things I write to you
 in order that you do not sin.

And if anyone sins,
 an advocate we have with the Father,
 (the) righteous Jesus Christ.
And He is a propitiation concerning our sins,
 but not for ours only
 but also for the sins of the whole world.

And by this we know B
 that we have known Him,
 if we keep His commandments.

The one saying,
 "I have come to know Him,"
 but does not keep His commandments
 is a liar,
 and in him the truth is not; ⁵
 but whoever keeps His word,
 truly in this one
 the love of God is perfected.

By this we know B'
 that in Him
 we are. ⁶

The one saying,
 "In Him,
 I abide,"
 he ought,
 as that one walked,
 also himself thus to walk.

B' Beloved, A
 no new commandment
 I write you,
 but an old commandment
 that you have had
 from the beginning;
 the old commandment
 is the word
 that you have heard. ⁸

Yet a new commandment
 I am writing you
 that is true
 in Him
 and in you,
 because the darkness is passing away
 and the true light is already shining. ⁹

The one saying, "I am in the light,"
 while hating his brother,
 is still in the darkness. ¹⁰

The one loving his brother
 remains in the light,
 and in him is no cause for stumbling. ¹¹

But the one hating his brother
 is in the darkness,
 and in the darkness walks,
 and knows not where he is going,
 because the darkness
 has blinded
 his eyes.

I am writing to you. B
 little children,
 because your sins are forgiven
 on account of his name.

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 conquered
 the evil one.

I wrote to you. B'
 young children,
 because you know the Father.

I wrote to you,
 fathers,
 because you know Him
 who is from the beginning.

I wrote to you,
 young men,
 because you are strong
 and the word of God abides in you,
 and you have overcome the evil one.

Section B: 2.15-3.10

Love not the World, Resist the Devil's Ways

A Love not the world A
 nor the things in the world:
 if anyone loves the world,
 the love of the Father is not in him,
 because everything in the world,
 the desire of the flesh,
 and the desire of the eyes,
 and the pride in riches,
 is not from the Father
 but is of the world. ¹⁷

And the world B
 it is passing away
 and the desire of it.
But the one doing the will of God
 he remains
 in eternity.

Children, B
 the last hour
 it is!
And just as you heard
 that antichrist is coming,
 also now many antichrists have come
 whence we know
 that the last hour
 it is. ¹⁹

From us they went out,
 but they were not of us;
 for if they had been of us,
 they would have remained with us,
 but (they went out)
 that it might be made plain
 that they are not all of us. ²⁰

And you B'
 an anointing have
 from the Holy One,
 and all of you know. ²¹

I wrote not to you, B'
 because you do not know the truth,
 but because you know it,
 and because every lie -
 of the truth -
 it is not. ²²

Who is the liar
 except the one denying:
 'Jesus is not the Christ?'
This is the antichrist,
 the one denying the Father
 and the Son. ²³

Everyone denying the Son
 has not the Father.
The one confessing the Son
 has the Father also. ²⁴

B Let what you heard from the beginning A
 in you
 remain.

If in you remains B
 what you heard from the beginning,
 also you in the Son
 and in the Father
 remain. ²⁵

And this is the promise
 which He promised us,
 life eternal.

These things B
 I wrote to you
 concerning your deceivers. ²⁷

And you,
 the anointing
 that you received from Him
 remains in you,
 and no need
 you have
 that anyone should teach you.
But as His anointing teaches you about all things,
 and is true
 and is not a lie,
 also just as it has taught you,
 remain in Him.

And now, B'
 little children,
 remain in Him,
 that if He is revealed
 we may have confidence
 and not be ashamed
 before Him
 at His coming.

If you know that He is righteous,
 you know
 that everyone also practising righteousness
 of Him
 has been born. ¹

See what manner of love the Father has given us,
 that we should be called children of God
 and we are,
 therefore the world does not know us
 because it did not know Him. ²

B' Beloved, A
 now we are God's children;
 and it is not yet revealed
 what we shall be,
 we know
 that when He is revealed,
 like Him
 we will be,
 because we will see Him
 as he is ³

and everyone who has this hope in him
 will purify himself,
 just as He is pure.

Everyone committing sin B
 is guilty also of lawlessness;
 and sin is lawlessness. ⁵

And you know
 that that one was revealed
 that He might take away sins.

And in Him there is no sin. ⁶
 Everyone remaining in Him
 does not sin.
 Everyone who sins
 has neither seen Him
 nor known Him. ⁷

Little children, B'
 let no one deceive you.
 The one doing what is right
 righteous is,
 just as He is righteous. ⁸

The one committing sin
 of the Devil is;
 because from the beginning
 the Devil sins.

For this B
 the Son of God was revealed
 that He might destroy the works of the Devil:⁹
 everyone born of God does not sin,
 because His seed in him remains
 and he cannot sin,
 because he has been born of God. ¹⁰

By this B
 the children of God are revealed
 and the children of the Devil:
 everyone not doing what is right
 is not from God
 and the one not loving his brother.

Section B': 3.11-4.13

Love One Another, Let God dwell in you

A For this is the message A
 that you have heard from the beginning,
 that **we should love one another**. ¹²

Not like Cain
 who was of the evil one
 and murdered his brother.
And for the sake of what did he murder him?
 Because his own works were evil,
 but the works of his brother righteous. ¹³

Do not be astonished, B
 brothers,
 if the world hates you. ¹⁴

We know
 that we have passed
 from death
 into life
 because we love one another.

The one not loving,
 remains
 in death.
Everyone hating his brother,
 a murderer is,
 and you know
 that no murderer has life eternal
 remaining in him. ¹⁶

By this, B'
 we have known love,
 because that one
 on our behalf
 laid down His life
 and we ought
 on behalf of the brothers
 to lay down our lives. ¹⁷

Whoever has the worldly means of life
 and sees his brother
 having need
 and hides his heart from him,
 how does the love of God remain in him?

B Little children, A
 let us not love in word,
 or in speech,
 but in work
 and truth. ¹⁹

And by this we will know
 that of the truth
 we are
 and before Him,
 our heart shall persuade
 that if our heart condemns;
 that God is greater than our heart,
 and He knows everything. ²¹

Beloved, B
 if our heart does not condemn,
 we have boldness before God; ²²
 and whatever we ask,
 we receive from Him
 because we keep His commandments
 and do the pleasing things before Him

And this is His commandment,
 that we should believe
 in the name of his Son,
 Jesus Christ,
 and love one another,
 just as He gave commandment to us. ²⁴

And the one keeping His commandments,
 in Him remains,
 and he in Him.

And by this we know
 that He remains in us;
 by the Spirit
 whom He has given to us.

Beloved, B'
 do not believe every spirit,
 but test the spirits
 if of God they are;
 because many false prophets
 have gone out
 into the world. ²

By this you know the Spirit of God:
 every spirit
 that confesses
 that Jesus Christ
 has come in the flesh
 is of God, ³

and every spirit
 that does not confess Jesus
 is not of God.
And this is the one of the antichrist,
 of which you have heard
 that it is coming;
 and now
 in the world
 is already. ⁴

B' You are of God A
 little children,
 and have conquered them;
 because greater is
 the one in you
 than the one in the world. ⁵

They are of the world;
 therefore of the world they speak,
 and the world hears them. ⁶

We are from God:
 the one knowing God
 hears us;
 and the one who is not from God
 does not hear us.

By this we know
 the spirit of truth
 and the spirit of error.

Beloved, B
 let us love one another,
 because love is from God.
And everyone loving
 of God is born
 and knows God. ⁸

The one not loving
 does not know God,
 because God is love. ⁹

By this is revealed the love of God in us:
 that His only born Son
 God sent
 into the world
 that we might live through Him. ¹⁰

In this is love,
 not that we loved God
 but that He loved us
 and sent his Son
 a propitiation for our sins. ¹¹

Beloved, B'
 since God so loved us,
 we also ought to love one another. ¹²

God no one has ever seen;
 if **we love one another**,
 God dwells in us
 and His love
 in us
 is perfected.

By this we know
 that in Him we dwell
 and He in us,
 because of His Spirit
 He has given to us. ¹⁴

Section A': 4.14-5.20

Testimony; God is Love, Live in His Love

A And **we have looked on** A
 and **we testify**
 that the Father
 has sent his Son
 as Saviour of the world. ¹⁵

Whoever confesses
 that Jesus is the Son of God,
 God dwells in him
 and he in God. ¹⁶

And we have known
 and have believed
 the love that God has for us.

God is love. B
 and the one remaining in love
 in God remains,
 and God
 in him remains. ¹⁷

By this is perfected love among us
 that we may have boldness
 on the day of judgment,
 because just as that one is,
 also are we in this world. ¹⁸

There is no fear in love,
 but perfect love
 outside
 casts fear;
 because fear has to do with punishment,
 and the one fearing
 has not been perfected in love. ¹⁹

We love B'
 because he first loved us. ²⁰

If anyone says, "I love God,"
 and hates his brother,
 he is a liar;
 for the one not loving his brother,
 whom he has seen,
 the God he has not seen
 he cannot love. ²¹

And this commandment we have from Him:
 that the one loving God
 loves also his brother.

B Everyone believing A
 that Jesus is the Christ
 of God is born.
And everyone loving the parent
 loves the one born of him. ²

By this we know
 that we love
 the children of God,
 when we love God
 and do His commandments. ³

For the love of God is this:
 that we keep His commandments,
 and His commandments are not burdensome.
Because everyone born of God
 conquers the world.
And this is the victory that conquers the world,
 our faith. ⁵

Who is the one conquering the world
 if not the one believing
 that Jesus is the Son of God?

This is the one who came B
 by water
 and blood,
 Jesus Christ,
 not in water only
 but in the water and in the blood.
And the Spirit is the one testifying,
 because the Spirit is the truth. ⁷

There are three that testify
 [in heaven:
 the Father, the Word and the Holy Spirit,
 and these three are one:
And there are three that testify
 in the earth:] ⁸
 the Spirit and the water and the blood,
 and the three are in one. ⁹

If we receive the testimony of men, B'
 the testimony of God
 is greater;
 because this is the testimony of God:
 because He has testified
 concerning his Son, ¹⁰
 the one believing in the Son of God
 has the testimony in him;
 the one not believing in God has made
 Him a liar,
 because he has not believed
 in the testimony
 that God has testified
 concerning His Son. ¹¹

And this is the testimony:
 God gave to us
 life eternal.
And this life is in His Son: ¹²
 the one having the Son
 has life;
 the one not having the Son of God
 has not life.

B' These things I wrote to you A
 that you may know that you have life eternal,
 the ones believing
 in the name
 of the Son of God.
And this is the boldness which we have towards Him,
 that if we ask anything
 according to His will,
 He hears us. ¹⁵

And if we know
 that He hears us
 whatever we ask,
 we know
 that we have the requests
 that we asked of Him. ¹⁶

If anyone sees his brother
 sinning a sin
 not to death
 he shall ask,
 and He will give him life,
 to the ones sinning not to death.

There is sin to death;
 not concerning that do I say
 that you should ask. ¹⁷

All unrighteousness is sin,
 but there is sin
 that is to death.

We know B'
 that everyone born of God sins not,
 but the one born of God,
 He keeps him,
 and the evil one does not touch him. ¹⁹

We know
 that of God we are,
 and that the whole world in the evil one lies. ²⁰

And we know
 that the Son of God has come
 and has given us understanding
 that we may know the true one;
 and we are in the one who is true,
 in His Son Jesus Christ:
 this is
 the true God
 and life eternal.

1 JOHN
‘The Life Eternal’

A First-Century-Style Reading (of the ‘Original’ Greek Text?)
presented in Literal English by David G Palmer, August 2018

