

healed in John 5:14
 "Don't sin any more."

A TN The description of the Holy Spirit as "Paraclete" is unique to the Gospel of John (14:16, 26; 15:26; and 16:7).

Here, in the only other use of the word in the NT, it is Jesus, not the Spirit, who is described as *παράκλητος* (*paraklētos*). The reader should have been prepared for this interchangeability of terminology, however, by John 14:16,

where Jesus told the disciples that he would ask the Father to send them 'another' paraclete (*ἄλλος, allos*, "another of the same kind"). This implies that *Jesus himself had been a paraclete* in his earthly ministry to the disciples. This does not answer all the questions about the meaning of the word here, though, since it is not Jesus' role as an advocate during his earthly ministry which is in view, but his role as an advocate in heaven before the Father. The context suggests intercession in the sense of legal advocacy, as stress is placed upon the righteousness of Jesus (*Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν δικαίον, Iēsou Christon dikaiōn*). The concept of Jesus' intercession on behalf of believers does occur elsewhere in the NT, notably in Rom 8:34 and Heb 7:25. Something similar is taking place here, and is the best explanation of 1 John 2:1. An English translation like "advocate" or "intercessor" conveys this.

B TN Or "Jesus Christ the righteous."

C TN A suitable English translation for this word (*ἱλασμός, hilasmos*) is a difficult and even controversial problem. "Expiation," "propitiation," and "atonement" have all been suggested. L. Morris, in a study that has become central to discussions of this topic (*The Apostolic Preaching of the Cross*, 140), sees as an integral part of the meaning of the word (as in the other words in the *ἱλασκομαι* [*hilaskomai*] group) the idea of turning away the divine wrath, suggesting that "propitiation" is the closest English equivalent. It is certainly possible to see an averting of divine wrath in this context, where the sins of believers are in view and Jesus is said to be acting as Advocate on behalf of believers. R. E. Brown's point (*Epistles of John* [AB], 220–21), that it is essentially cleansing from sin which is in view here and in the other use of the word in 4:10, is well taken, but the two connotations (averting wrath and cleansing) are not mutually exclusive and it is unlikely that the propitiatory aspect of Jesus' work should be ruled out entirely in the usage in 2:2. Nevertheless, the English word "propitiation" is too technical to communicate to many modern readers, and a term like "atoning sacrifice" (given by Webster's *New International Dictionary* as a definition of "propitiation") is more appropriate here. Another term, "satisfaction," might also convey the idea, but "satisfaction" in Roman Catholic theology is a technical term for the performance

advocate^A with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One,^B and he himself is the atoning sacrifice^C for our sins, and not only for our sins but also for the whole world.^D

Keeping God's Commandments

³ Now^E by this we know that we have come to know God:^F if we keep his commandments.⁴ The one who says "I have come to know God"^G and yet does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in such a person.⁵ But whoever obeys his^H word, truly in this person^I the love of God has been perfected. By this we know that we are in him.⁶ The one who says he resides^J in God^K ought himself to walk^L just as Jesus^M walked.

⁷ Dear friends, I am not writing a new commandment to you, but an old commandment which you have had from

of the penance imposed by the priest on a penitent.

SN The Greek word (*ἱλασμός, hilasmos*) behind the phrase *atoning sacrifice* conveys both the idea of "turning aside divine wrath" and the idea of "cleansing from sin."

D TN Many translations supply an understood repetition of the word "sins" here, thus: "but also for the sins of the whole world."

E TN The translation of *καί (kai)* at the beginning of 2:3 is important for understanding the argument, because a similar *καί* occurs at the beginning of 1:5. The use here is not just a simple continuative or connective use, but has more of a presumptive force, pointing back to the previous use in 1:5.

SN Now. The author, after discussing three claims of the opponents in 1:6, 8, and 10 and putting forward three counterclaims of his own in 1:7; 1:9, and 2:1, now returns to the theme of "God as light" introduced in 1:5. The author will now discuss how a Christian may have assurance that he or she has come to know the God who is light, again by contrast with the opponents who make the same profession of knowing God, but lack the reality of such knowledge, as their behavior makes clear.

F TN Grk "know him." (1) Many take the third person pronoun *αὐτον (auton)* to refer to Jesus Christ, since he is mentioned in 2:1 and the pronoun *αὐτός (autos)* at the beginning of 2:2 clearly refers to him. But (2) it is more likely that God is the referent here, since (a) the assurance the author is discussing here is assurance that one has come to know God (all the claims of the opponents in 1:5–2:1 concern knowing and having fellowship with the God who is light); (b) when Jesus Christ is explicitly mentioned as an example to follow in 1 John 2:6, the pronoun *ἐκεῖνος (ekeinos)* is used to distinguish this from previous references with *αὐτός*; (c) the *καί (kai)* which begins 2:3 is parallel to the *καί* which begins 1:5, suggesting that the author is now returning to the discussion of God who is light, a theme introduced in 1:5. The author will now discuss how a Christian may have assurance that he or she has come to know the God who is light.

G TN Grk "know him." See the note on the phrase "know God" in 1 John 2:3 for explanation.

HTN The referent of this pronoun is probably to be understood as God, since God is the nearest previous antecedent.

ITN Grk "in him."

J TN The Greek verb *μένω (menō)* is commonly translated into contemporary English as "remain" or "abide," but both of these translations have some problems: (1) "Abide" has become in some circles almost a "technical term" for some sort

of special intimate fellowship or close relationship between the Christian and God, so that one may speak of Christians who are "abiding" and Christians who are not. It is accurate to say the word indicates a close, intimate (and permanent) relationship between the believer and God. However, it is very important to note that for the author of the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles every genuine Christian has this type of relationship with God, and the person who does not have this type of relationship (cf. 2 John 9) is not a believer at all (in spite of what he or she may claim). (2) On the other hand, to translate *μένω* as "remain" removes some of these problems, but creates others: In certain contexts, such a translation can give the impression that those who currently "remain" in this relationship with God can at some point choose not to "remain," that is, to abandon their faith and return to an unsaved condition. While one may easily think in terms of the author's opponents in 1 John as not "remaining," the author makes it inescapably clear in 2:19 that these people, in spite of their claims to know God and be in fellowship with God, never really were genuine believers. (3) In an attempt to avoid both these misconceptions, this translation renders *μένω* as "reside" except in cases where the context indicates that "remain" is a more accurate nuance, that is, in contexts where a specific change of status or movement from one position to another is in view.

SN The Greek word *μένω (menō)* translated *resides* indicates a close, intimate (and permanent) relationship between the believer and God. It is very important to note that for the author of the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles every genuine Christian has this type of relationship with God, and the person who does not have this type of relationship (cf. 2 John 9) is not a believer at all (in spite of what he or she may claim).

K TN Grk "in him." Context indicates a reference to God since a different pronoun, *ἐκεῖνος (ekeinos)*, is used later in the same verse to indicate a reference to Jesus. See the note on "Jesus" later in this verse.

L TN That is, ought to behave in the same way Jesus did. "Walking" is a common NT idiom for one's behavior or conduct.

M TN Grk "that one." Context indicates a reference to Jesus here. It is clear that