

# First John 2:9-14

## 2:9 – “Whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness.”

3588 [e]	3004 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	5457 [e]	1510 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]	846 [e]	3404 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	4653 [e]	1510 [e]	2193 [e]	
HO	legōn	en	tō	phōti	einai	kai	ton	adelphon	autou	misōn	en	tē	skotia	estin	heōs	
9	Ὁ	λέγων	ἐν	τῷ	φωτὶ	εἶναι	, καὶ	τὸν	ἀδελφὸν	αὐτοῦ	μισῶν	, ἐν	τῇ	σκοτίᾳ	ἐστὶν	ἕως
	The [one]	claiming	in	the	light	to be	and	the	brother	of him	hating	in	the	darkness	is	even until
	Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	Art-DNS	N-DNS	V-PNA	Conj	Art-AMS	N-AMS	PPro-GM3S	V-PPA-NMS	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-PIA-3S	Prep

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- Third time in 2:3-11 John begins with “the one who says” or “anyone who claims” from the Greek **ho legon**:
  - 2:4 – “know him”
  - 2:6 – “live in him”
  - 2:9 – “be in the light”
- These are all claims of the secessionist
- Claims to be in the light as those who were opposing John and his teaching.
- John is writing about people who are in the community of believers
- John is speaking to the issue where a group of people had separated from John’s church and rejected the brotherhood of believers.
- They hate the “brothers” who are still in the truth and their hatred includes hatred for John. See 3 John 9-10 – *“I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.”*
- The very fact they hate the brothers who are in the Truth indicates the secessionists were NOT in the light, not in the Truth, did not know God and did not live in God.

## 2:10 – “Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for stumbling.”

3588 [e]	25 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]	846 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	5457 [e]	3306 [e]	2532 [e]	4625 [e]	1722 [e]	846 [e]	3756 [e]	
ho	agapōn	ton	adelphon	autou	en	tō	phōti	menēi	kai	skandalon	en	autō	ouk	
10	ὁ	ἀγαπῶν	τὸν	ἀδελφὸν	αὐτοῦ	, ἐν	τῷ	φωτὶ	μένει	, καὶ	σκάνδαλον	ἐν	αὐτῷ	οὐκ
	The [one]	loving	the	brother	of him	in	the	light	abides	and	cause for stumbling	in	him	not
	Art-NMS	V-PPA-NMS	Art-AMS	N-AMS	PPro-GM3S	Prep	Art-DNS	N-DNS	V-PIA-3S	Conj	N-NNS	Prep	PPro-DM3S	Adv

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- This statement is the antithesis of 2:9, but with one addition.
- Literally: “and there is nothing to cause stumbling in him/it.”
  - This could refer to:
    - Nothing in the light (it) to stumble on

- Nothing in the man (him) to stumble on.
- “in him there is no cause for stumbling” or “there is nothing in him to make him stumble.”
- “Stumble” is *skandalon* which is used 15x in NT
  - Making others stumble into sin:
    - John 6:61; 16:1
    - Luke 17:1
    - Matthew 13:41;16:23; 18:7
    - Romans 14:13; 16:17
    - 1 John 2:10
    - Revelation 2:14
  - Causing people to be shocked by immorality or violation of a standard so they reject the truth:
    - Romans 9:33
    - 1 Corinthians 1:23
    - Galatians 5:11
    - 1 Peter 2:8
  - Making yourself stumble:
    - John 11:9
  - Judgment
    - Romans 11:9
- In the lives of those who walk in the light there is nothing to make them sin.
- “Sin” in this context of 1 John would be the sin of joining the secessionists in their denial of the Truth and false doctrine of Jesus. (Like the sin in the book of Hebrews is failing to continue in Christ and returning to a religious system.)

**2:11 – “But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.”**

3588 [e]	1161 [e]	3404 [e]	3588 [e]	80 [e]	846 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	4653 [e]	1510 [e]	2532 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	4653 [e]	4043 [e]				
ho	de	μισῶν	τον	ἀδελφὸν	αὐτοῦ	ἐν	τῇ	σκοτία	ἐστὶν	καὶ	ἐν	τῇ	σκοτία	περιπατεῖ				
11	ὁ	δὲ	μισῶν	τὸν	ἀδελφὸν	αὐτοῦ	,	ἐν	τῇ	σκοτία	ἐστὶν	,	καὶ	ἐν	τῇ	σκοτία	περιπατεῖ	;
The [one]	however	hating	the	brother	of him	in	the	darkness	is	and	in	the	darkness	walks				
Art-NMS	Conj	V-PPA-NMS	Art-AMS	N-AMS	Pro-GM3S	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-PIA-3S	Conj	Prep	Art-DFS	N-DFS	V-PIA-3S				

2532 [e]	3756 [e]	1492 [e]	4225 [e]	5217 [e]	3754 [e]	3588 [e]	4653 [e]	5186 [e]	3588 [e]	3788 [e]	846 [e]		
kai	ouk	oiden	pou	hypagei	hoti	hē	skotia	etyphlōsen	tous	ophthalmous	autou		
καὶ	οὐκ	οἶδεν	ποῦ	ὑπάγει	,	ὅτι	ἡ	σκοτία	ἐτύφλωσεν	τοὺς	ὀφθαλμοὺς	αὐτοῦ	.
and	not	knows	where	he is going	because	the	darkness	has blinded	the	eyes	of him		
Conj	Adv	V-RIA-3S	Adv	V-PIA-3S	Conj	Art-NFS	N-NFS	V-AIA-3S	Art-AMP	N-AMP	Pro-GM3S		

- Not only are they standing in darkness, they are moving around in the darkness. A person could be safe hiding in darkness, but once you start to move around the danger is unknown and unseen.
- “walking in darkness” is equal to “not knowing where he is going”
  - John 12:35
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## 2:12-14 – An Affirmation for the Believers

1. “I write to you”
2. John is going to affirm to his readers that they already:
  - a. Have sins forgiven
  - b. Know him who is from the beginning
  - c. Overcome the evil one
  - d. Strong because the Word of God dwells in them
3. These words of affirmation separate John’s readers from the secessionists and what was said previously to condemn the secessionists.
4. These words of affirmation set the readers up for the words of exhortation that follow in 2:15ff.
5. “I write to you” or **grapho** is always found in the present tense between 1:1-2:13 (1:4; 2:1; 2:7; 2:12; 2:13 twice). But, beginning in 2:14 (3x) *grapho* is written in the aorist tense **egrapsa**, “I wrote to you.”
  - a. “I write to you” (*grapho*) in 2:12-13 refers what John is writing and may indicate he is writing the first three lines (children, fathers, young men) to affirm the true faith of his readers from the present mistakes of the secessionists.
  - b. “I wrote to you” (*egrapsa*) in 2:14 because John is now referring back and repeating the affirmations in the first three lines to children, fathers, and young men because they were written in the past (immediate past!) to push his readers into the greater growth he addresses beginning in 2:15.
6. What does “children”, “young men” and “fathers” refer to?
  - a. A simple (but, likely wrong) explanation is that these are three levels or groups of believers that are in John’s community/church/fellowship.
  - b. The word “children” (2:12 – *teknia*; 2:13 – *paidia*) is used throughout John’s letter to refer to the believers he is writing to. This reflects the author’s attitude toward the readers, his affection for them and the fact that he is their senior leader/apostle. It is unlikely that only here in 2:12-13 “children” refers to a younger, less mature believer. “Children” refers to ALL those who are in the church that John is writing. This means there are only two groups left to identify: young men and fathers.
  - c. “Young men” (*neaniskoi*) and “Fathers” (*pateres*) could refer to spiritual maturity or it could refer to physical age. Since “children” does not refer to the spiritually young, immature, then this probably does not refer to those who are partly mature and fully mature especially when you read what they are commended for.
  - d. The only other place in the NT where believers are referred to as fathers in is 1 Timothy 5:1 where Timothy is told to treat the older man as if he were your father. This is a reference to physical age and has nothing to do with spiritual development.
  - e. Likewise in the same place in 1 Timothy 5:1 Paul tells Timothy to “Treat younger men as brothers.”
  - f. The word *hoti* translated “because” or “that”.
    - i. “Because” would indicate these people have the spiritual position and potential to achieve.
    - ii. “That” would be making a declarative statement. You have been forgiven! You have known him who is from the beginning! You have overcome the evil one!

**2:12 – “I am writing to you, little children,  
because your sins are forgiven for his name's sake.**

1125 [e]	4771 [e]	5040 [e]	3754 [e]	863 [e]	4771 [e]	3588 [e]	266 [e]	1223 [e]
Graphō	hymīn	teknia	hoti	apheōntai	hymīn	hai	hamartiai	dia
12 Γράφω	ὑμῖν ,	τεκνία ,	ὅτι	ἀφεώνται	ὑμῖν	αἱ	ἁμαρτίαι ,	διὰ
I write	to you	little children	because	have been forgiven	you	[your]	sins	for the sake of
V-PIA-1S	PPro-D2P	N-VNP	Conj	V-RIM/P-3P	PPro-D2P	Art-NFP	N-NFP	Prep

3588 [e]	3686 [e]	846 [e]
to	onoma	autou
τὸ	ὄνομα	αὐτοῦ .
the	name	of him
Art-ANS	N-ANS	PPro-GM3S

- Sins have been forgiven in the perfect tense. This is the point of salvation and a continuation according to 1 John 1:7 and 9.
- This is the state of every believer at all times.
- “the Name” – this is the first use of “the Name” (will be repeated in 3:23; 5:13; 3 John 7 and used in John 20:30-31). It was Jesus who did this and knowing the Name is having the power of that name in effect.

**2:13 – “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.”**

1125 [e]	4771 [e]	3962 [e]	3754 [e]	1097 [e]	3588 [e]	575 [e]	746 [e]	1125 [e]
graphō	hymīn	pateres	hoti	egnōkate	ton	ap'	archēs	graphō
13 γράφω	ὑμῖν ,	πατέρες ,	ὅτι	ἐγνώκατε	τὸν	ἀπ’	ἀρχῆς .	γράφω
I am writing	to you	fathers	because	you have known	him who [is]	from	[the] beginning	I am writing
V-PIA-1S	PPro-D2P	N-VMP	Conj	V-RIA-2P	Art-AMS	Prep	N-GFS	V-PIA-1S

4771 [e]	3495 [e]	3754 [e]	3528 [e]	3588 [e]	4190 [e]	1125 [e]	4771 [e]	3813 [e]
hymīn	neaniskoi	hoti	nenikēkate	ton	ponēron	egrapsa	hymīn	paidia
ὑμῖν ,	νεανίσκοι ,	ὅτι	νενικήκατε	τὸν	πονηρόν .	ἔγραψα	ὑμῖν ,	παιδιά ,
to you	young men	because	you have overcome	the	evil [one]	I have written	to you	children
PPro-D2P	N-VMP	Conj	V-RIA-2P	Art-AMS	Adj-AMS	V-AIA-1S	PPro-D2P	N-VNP

3754 [e]	1097 [e]	3588 [e]	3962 [e]
hoti	egnōkate	ton	Patera
ὅτι	ἐγνώκατε	τὸν	Πατέρα .
because	you have known	the	Father
Conj	V-RIA-2P	Art-AMS	N-AMS

- “Him who is from the beginning:

- This is Jesus. (Not the Father because he is addressed with the “children”
  - The Word of life 1:1,2
- The “beginning” is pointing back to the beginning of the message. This is a strike against all the NEW teaching that was not in the beginning, but was recently “revealed” to the secessionist which means it is not from the beginning.
- “Overcome the Evil One”
- “Known the Father” - connected with “forgiven sins” we have a perfect mirror of the promise of the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34...knowledge of God and forgiveness of sins!

**2:14 – “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.”**

1125 [e]	4771 [e]	3962 [e]	3754 [e]	1097 [e]	3588 [e]	575 [e]	746 [e]	1125 [e]
egrapsa	hymīn	pateres	hoti	egnōkate	ton	ap'	archēs	egrapsa
14 ἔγραψα	ὑμῖν ,	πατέρες ,	ὅτι	ἐγνώκατε	τὸν	ἀπ'	ἀρχῆς .	ἔγραψα
I have written	to you	fathers	because	you have known	him who [is]	from	[the] beginning	I have written
V-AIA-1S	PPro-D2P	N-VMP	Conj	V-RIA-2P	Art-AMS	Prep	N-GFS	V-AIA-1S

4771 [e]	3495 [e]	3754 [e]	2478 [e]	1510 [e]	2532 [e]	3588 [e]	3056 [e]	3588 [e]	2316 [e]	1722 [e]	4771 [e]
hymīn	neaniskoi	hoti	ischyroi	este	kai	ho	logos	tou	Theou	en	hymīn
ὑμῖν ,	νεανίσκοι ,	ὅτι	ἰσχυροί	ἐστε ,	καὶ	ὁ	λόγος	τοῦ	Θεοῦ	ἐν	ὑμῖν
to you	young men	because	strong	you are	and	the	word	-	of God	in	you
PPro-D2P	N-VMP	Conj	Adj-NMP	V-PIA-2P	Conj	Art-NMS	N-NMS	Art-GMS	N-GMS	Prep	PPro-D2P

3306 [e]	2532 [e]	3528 [e]	3588 [e]	4190 [e]
menēi	kai	nenikēkate	ton	ponēron
μένει ,	καὶ	νενικήκατε	τὸν	πονηρόν .
abides	and	you have overcome	the	evil [one]
V-PIA-3S	Conj	V-RIA-2P	Art-AMS	Adj-AMS

- The young men are strong now because the Word of God abides in them and they will continue to overcome the evil one in practice.
- Word of God abides (present tense) refers to the Word of Life revealed by and in Jesus Christ as seen in 1:1 and 1:5 and 2:3 and 2:5.