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SENTENCE FLOW · CLAUSE STRUCTURE · GREEK

1 John 4 — clausal layout

ΙΩΑΝΝΟΥ Α' Δ'

Each line is one clause or discrete phrase of the standard critical text, colored by syntactic type; indentation marks levels of subordination. The verse numbers sit in the left gutter; the small tag on each line names the clause type and its function.

independent relative purpose cause content conditional dashed = verbless / suspended

Flush-left = a main (independent) clause. Each dependent line begins directly beneath the word it attaches to in the line above — the anchor word is dotted-underlined, and lights up when you hover its dependent clause; each tag also names the attachment. A dashed border marks verbless, elliptical, or suspended lines. Where a long sentence's staircase runs wider than the page, the diagram scrolls sideways. (In print, or without JavaScript, lines fall back to stepped indent columns.)

Test the spirits 4:1–6

VV. 1–3 — THE CONFESSION CRITERION: COME IN THE FLESH

- 1 Ἀγαπητοί, μὴ παντὶ πνεύματι πιστεύετε, independent — the prohibition — credulity forbidden
- ἀλλὰ δοκιμάζετε τὰ πνεύματα independent — the counter-imperative — assay them

εἰ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν, content — indirect question — the test's object

ὅτι πολλοὶ ψευδοπροφητῶν ἐξεληλύθασιν εἰς τὸν κόσμον. cause — the ground — the secession already under way

2 ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκετε τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ θεοῦ. independent — the ἐν τούτῳ formula — pointing forward to the twin tests

πάν πνεῦμα ὃ ὁμολογεῖ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθότα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν, content — the positive test — ἐληλυθότα: the confession of the incarnate one

3 καὶ πάν πνεῦμα ὃ μὴ ὁμολογεῖ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔστιν. content — the negative test — the antithesis pair completed

καὶ τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου, independent — the identification — τὸ τοῦ ἀντιχρίστου, the ellipse supplying πνεῦμα

ὃ ἀκηκόατε ὅτι ἔρχεται, relative — prolepsis — ὃ lifted out of the ὅτι clause into ἀκηκόατε

καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐστὶν ἤδη. independent — John's escalation — breaking out of the report: not coming but here

VV. 4–6 — YOU / THEY / WE: TWO ORIGINS, TWO AUDIENCES

4 ὑμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστε, τέκνια, independent — emphatic ὑμεῖς — the first of the triad of origins

καὶ νενικήκατε αὐτούς, independent — perfect — the victory stands won

ὅτι μείζων ἐστὶν ὁ ἐν ὑμῖν ἢ ὁ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. cause — the ground — the indwelling one outweighs the world's

5 αὐτοὶ ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου εἰσίν. independent — emphatic αὐτοί — the second origin

διὰ τοῦτο ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου λαλοῦσιν independent — the consequence — speech betrays source

καὶ ὁ κόσμος αὐτῶν ἀκούει. independent — like speaks to like

6 ἡμεῖς ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐσμεν. independent — emphatic ἡμεῖς — the apostolic witness, the third origin

ὁ γινώσκων τὸν θεὸν ἀκούει ἡμῶν, independent — the hearing test, positive

ὃς οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἀκούει ἡμῶν. independent — headless relative as subject — asyndetic negative counterpart

ἐκ τούτου γινώσκουμεν τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς πλάνης. independent — the close — ἐκ τούτου, the section's only ἐκ-form of the formula

God is love — love one another 4:7–12

VV. 7–8 — LOVE IS FROM GOD; GOD IS LOVE

- 7 Ἀγαπητοί, ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους, independent — hortatory — the beloved called to love
| ὅτι ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν, cause — the ground — love's origin
| καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀγαπῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ γεγέννηται καὶ γινώσκει τὸν θεόν. independent — the corollary — begetting and knowledge in one breath
- 8 ὁ μὴ ἀγαπῶν οὐκ ἔγνω τὸν θεόν, independent — the antithesis — aorist ἔγνω: never knew him at all
| ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν. cause — the first thesis — articular subject, anarthrous predicate: God is love, not love God

VV. 9–10 — THE MANIFESTATION: THE SON SENT

- 9 ἐν τούτῳ ἐφανερώθη ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν ἡμῖν, independent — the formula again — ἐν ἡμῖν: among us, the sphere of the showing
| ὅτι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἀπέσταλκεν ὁ θεὸς εἰς τὸν κόσμον content — expegetic ὅτι — τὸν μονογενῆ fronted; perfect ἀπέσταλκεν:
sent and still standing sent
| ἵνα ζήσωμεν δι' αὐτοῦ. purpose — the purpose — life through the Son
- 10 ἐν τούτῳ ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, independent — the definition announced
| οὐχ ὅτι ἡμεῖς ἠγαπήκαμεν τὸν θεόν, content — the false definition denied — emphatic ἡμεῖς
| ἀλλ' ὅτι αὐτὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς content — the true definition — the initiative wholly his
| καὶ ἀπέστειλεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἰλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν. content — coordinate in the ὅτι — ἰλασμὸν in apposition: love defined by
the atoning gift

VV. 11–12 — THE OBLIGATION, AND THE UNSEEN GOD MADE VISIBLE IN LOVE

- 11 Ἀγαπητοί, εἰ οὕτως ὁ θεὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς, conditional — protasis — leans on the obligation below; οὕτως: with that kind of love
| καὶ ἡμεῖς ὀφείλομεν ἀλλήλους ἀγαπᾶν. independent — apodosis — the debt of love
- 12 θεὸν οὐδεὶς πώποτε τεθέαται independent — the axiom — θεὸν fronted; echoing John 1:18

ἐὰν ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους, conditional — protasis — leans on the double apodosis below

ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν μένει independent — apodosis — the unseen God present in mutual love

καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη αὐτοῦ τετελειωμένη ἐν ἡμῖν ἐστίν. independent — coordinate apodosis — periphrastic perfect: brought to its goal

The Spirit, the confession, and the abiding 4:13–16

13 Ἐν τούτῳ γινώσκουμεν independent — the formula — now for the assurance of abiding

ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ μένομεν καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν ἡμῖν, content — the content — the second limb elliptical, mutual abiding

ὅτι ἐκ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ δέδωκεν ἡμῖν. cause — τούτῳ unpacked — partitive ἐκ: a share of his own Spirit

14 καὶ ἡμεῖς τεθεάμεθα καὶ μαρτυροῦμεν independent — the eyewitness ἡμεῖς — echoing 1:1–2

ὅτι ὁ πατὴρ ἀπέσταλκεν τὸν υἱὸν σωτῆρα τοῦ κόσμου. content — the testimony — σωτῆρα, double-accusative predicate

15 ὃς ἐὰν ὁμολογήσῃ conditional — relative-protasis — ὃς ἐάν ≈ εἴαν τις; leans on the abiding below

ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἐστίν ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ, content — the confession's content — the christological test restated

ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει independent — apodosis — the abiding formula

καὶ αὐτὸς ἐν τῷ θεῷ. independent — the reciprocal limb — verbless

16 καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐγνώκαμεν καὶ πεπιστεύκαμεν τὴν ἀγάπην independent — twin perfects — knowledge and faith with one object, the love

ἣν ἔχει ὁ θεὸς ἐν ἡμῖν. relative — on τὴν ἀγάπην — ἐν ἡμῖν: toward and among us

ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν, independent — the thesis repeated (v. 8) — again articular subject, anarthrous predicate

καὶ ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ ἐν τῷ θεῷ μένει independent — the inference — to remain in love is to remain in God

καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτῷ μένει. independent — the reciprocity completed

Perfect love, fear, and the brother 4:17–21

VV. 17–18 — PERFECT LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR

- 17 ἐν τούτῳ τετελείωται ἡ ἀγάπη μεθ' ἡμῶν, independent — ἐν τούτῳ read as pointing back to the mutual abiding of v. 16
ἵνα παρρησίαν ἔχωμεν ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῆς κρίσεως, purpose — the issue of perfected love — παρρησία before the judge
ὅτι καθὼς ἐκεῖνός ἐστιν καὶ ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ τούτῳ. cause — grounds the boldness — καθὼς ... καί: conformity to ἐκεῖνος (Christ)
 already now
- 18 φόβος οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ, independent — the axiom — anarthrous φόβος fronted
ἀλλ' ἡ τελεία ἀγάπη ἔξω βάλλει τὸν φόβον, independent — the counter-statement — ἔξω βάλλει: expels it
ὅτι ὁ φόβος κόλασιν ἔχει, cause — the ground — κόλασιν ἔχει: fear carries punishment within it
ὁ δὲ φοβούμενος οὐ τετελείωται ἐν τῇ ἀγάπῃ. independent — the verdict — δέ turns back to the person: fear proves love unfinished

VV. 19–21 — WE LOVE BECAUSE HE FIRST LOVED

- 19 ἡμεῖς ἀγαπῶμεν, independent — emphatic ἡμεῖς — indicative, not exhortation: the fact of our loving
ὅτι αὐτὸς πρῶτος ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς. cause — the ground of all of it — πρῶτος: his priority, our response
- 20 ἐάν τις εἴπῃ conditional — protasis — leans on the verdict below
ὅτι Ἀγαπῶ τὸν θεόν, content — the claim quoted — ὅτι recitativum
καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ μισῇ, conditional — the protasis resumes — the claim and the hatred held together
ψεύστης ἐστίν· independent — apodosis — the verdict, John's harshest label (1:10; 2:4, 22)
ὁ γὰρ μὴ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ ὃν ἐώρακεν, independent — the ground — subject suspended, the seen brother in view
τὸν θεὸν ὃν οὐχ ἐώρακεν οὐ δύναται ἀγαπᾶν. independent — the resumption — fronted τὸν θεόν with the mirrored relative; οὐ δύναται: cannot
- 21 καὶ ταύτην τὴν ἐντολὴν ἔχομεν ἀπ' αὐτοῦ, independent — the close — ταύτην pointing forward; ἀπ' αὐτοῦ: from God (or Christ)
ἵνα ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν θεὸν ἀγαπᾷ καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ. content — epexegetic ἵνα — the commandment's content: the two loves made one

Analysis. 1 John 4 moves in John's signature short strokes, and the shape shows it: long flush-left purple columns of asyndetic main clauses — the you/they/we triads of vv. 4–6, the abiding formulas of vv. 15–16 — with the dependents hanging shallow (the page never goes deeper than two steps). The recurring hinge is the ἐν τούτῳ formula (vv. 2, 9, 10, 13, 17): each time, the epexegetic ὅτι- or clause-lines that unpack the 'this' hang directly beneath τούτῳ, so the eye can see the demonstrative being filled in. Olive protases lean forward on their apodoses four times (vv. 11, 12, 15, 20) — v. 15's ὃς ἐάν is laid out as a relative-protasis, and v. 20's protasis carries the quoted Ἀγαπῶ τὸν θεόν as indented content before the verdict ψεύστης ἐστὶν lands back at the margin. Cruxes the layout takes a side on: in v. 3, καὶ νῦν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐστὶν ἤδη is set as John's own flush-left escalation, breaking out of the ὁ ἀκηκόατε report — not merely 'coming', but already here; in v. 17, ἐν τούτῳ is read as pointing back to the mutual abiding of v. 16, with ἵνα giving the issue of perfected love (boldness at the judgment) and ὅτι grounding that boldness, not the perfecting; the twin theses ὁ θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστὶν (vv. 8, 16) are tagged for the articular-subject/anarthrous-predicate point — the statement is not reversible; and the ἵνα of v. 21 is taken as epexegetic (the commandment's content), against the true purpose ἵνα of v. 9.

The clause segmentation, the type assigned to each line, and the indentation are interpretive — one defensible reading of the syntax, chosen to match the analysis in the chapter's interlinear (word-level syntax tier and discourse notes); other analyses divide or attach some lines differently. The Greek text is identical to the chapter data behind the interlinear and follows the standard critical text.