either here or below, refer to the declaration  
in this present Epistle: it is the  
general declaration, in word and writing,  
of which the **write we** below, ver. 4, is  
the special portion at present employed)  
**to you that life which is eternal, the  
which** (“ that very before-mentioned life,   
which was with the Father”) **was with the  
Father** (see on John i.1, ‘The preposition  
implies not juxta-position only, but relation: hardly however, as some here,  
*love*: at the same time it sets forth plainly the distinction of Persons), and  
was manifested to us (here the parenthesis ends, and the construction of ver. 1 is resumed. But on account of the distance  
at which that verse now stands, the  
leading particulars of its sense are recapitulated): {3} **that which we have heard  
and seen we declare to you also** (this  
**also** here seems to give to the Epistle the  
character of being addressed to some special  
circle of Christian readers, beyond those  
addressed at the conclusion of the Gospel,  
ch. xx. 31, or we may take it as indicating  
“you, who did not hear, nor see, nor  
handle with your hands the Word of life.”  
But the other is more likely), **in order  
that ye also** (see above) **may have fellowship with us** (*with us*, the Apostles and  
eye-witnesses: being hound in faith and  
love to them, as they were to Christ): **and  
indeed** (the thought rises to the immeasurably  
more solemn and glorious character  
of the second fellowship as compared with the first: as if it were, “and  
this *fellowship with us* will not stop  
here? for we are but your admitters  
into another and a higher fellowship”)  
**our fellowship is with the Father and  
with** (observe the repeated with, distinguishing  
the Personality, while the  
very fact of the *fellowship* with Both  
unites the Two in the Godhead, It is not,  
fellowship with God and us, but with us,  
whose fellowship is with God, the Father  
and the Son) **His Son Jesus Christ** (the  
personal and the Messianic Names are  
united, as in John i, 17, where He is first  
mentioned, as here. ‘The question has been  
sometimes asked, why we have not here,  
“*and with the Holy Ghost*?” ‘The answer  
to which is not, as Lucke, because the divine Personality of the Holy Ghost was not   
not found in the apostolic mode of thought,  
but because, the blessed Spirit being God  
dwelling in man, though we may be said  
to have “*the fellowship of the Holy  
Ghost,*” 2 Cor. xiii. 13,—we would hardly  
be said to have “*fellowship with the Holy  
Ghost*”), {4} **And these things** (i.e. this  
whole Epistle: not, the foregoing, nor, the  
immediately following) **we write, that  
our** (our, i.e. of *us and of you*: not, *of  
us*, as distinguished from *you*) **joy may be  
fall** (the joy spoken of is the whole complex  
of the Christian life here and hereafter: its,  
whole sum is, JOY. As Diisterdieck beautifully  
says, “The peace of reconciliation,  
the blessed consciousness of sonship, the  
happy growth in holiness, the bright prospect of future completion and glory,—all  
these are but simple details of that ‘which  
in all its length and breadth is embraced  
by one word, Eternal Life, the real possession of which is the immediate source of  
joy. We have joy, Christ’s joy, because are blessed, because we have Life  
itself in Christ.” ‘It has been noticed  
before, that this verse fills the place of  
the *greeting* so common in the opening of  
Epistles, and gives an epistolary character  
to what follows).

**5—II. 28.]** FIRST PART OF THE EPISTLE:  
the message, that *if we would have  
fellowship with Him who is Light, we must*