

Introduction

This paper represents a second stage in an ongoing project researching literary clues for reading 1 John. Last year in Pretoria, I presented on the role of 1 John 5:9–12 when viewed through Johannine repetition, specifically through testimony (μαρτυρία). My last writing project examined reading the Fourth Gospel with attention to repetition. This paper builds on those efforts and explores some difficulties around the structure of 1 John 2 and 4.

Proposal

Although the normal presentation begins with a thesis and argument — in this paper the better place to start is with the conclusion. Due to the intricacy of the arguments surrounding structure, I present my outline as a means for orienting the remainder of the discussion. I propose the following overall flow for 1 John 1:1–5:13. (*Harstine Proposal A*)

1:1–2:14	Opening and Content Introduction
1:4	Hinge Verse
1:5–2:11	Chiastic Structure focused on 2:1a “Writing so you do not sin”
2:12–14	Hinge verses
2:15–3:24	On Eternal Life or Abiding in the Father and the Son
2:15–29	Chiastic Structure centered around 2:23 “Having the Father”
3:1	Hinge Verse
3:2–10	Chiastic Structure focused on 3:6 “Abiding in the Son”
3:11–18	Recalls 1:1–3 and Doctrinal teaching on loving with action
3:19–24	Chiastic Structure centered around 3:23 “Believe and Love” ¹
4:1–5:12	On Fellowship or Testing the Spirits
4:1–6	Chiastic Structure (ABCB´C´A´) on testing the spirits
4:7–11	Chiastic Structure (ABB´CCA´) on Love
4:12–16	Doctrinal Teaching on God

¹ Uses Longacre’s proposal as discussed below.

4:17–18	Hinge Verses
4:19–5:5	Recapitulation of Prior Ideas
5:6–12	Recalls 1:1–4 and Doctrinal teaching on the Testimony
5:13	Hinge Verse recalling 1:4

The Argument

This past year, my research has explored whether discourse analysis might help determine the structure of 1John.² In this paper I compare three proposals which focus on 1John: a 1979 article by Jan A. du Rand, a chapter by Robert E. Longacre from 1992, and the 1998 dissertation by Daniel Tao-Chung Wu. In addition, the findings of H. van Dyke Parunak presented in *JBL* in 1983 present a further coordinate of orientation. I will briefly summarize these works prior to addressing my argument on the structure.

J.A. Du Rand

Du Rand identifies 196 cola organized into a 5-part structure within the text of 1John. (*Du Rand Proposal A*)

1:1-4	Introduction: Witness about Jesus Christ, the life which aims at fellowship (cola 1–3).
1:5–2:17	Fellowship: with God (who is Light) – walk in the light (cola 5–45).
2:18–4:6	Filiation: of God (identity) – Identify yourself (through conduct) as children of God (cola 14–129).
4:7–5:5	Love: of God (who is love) – walk in the love (cola 130–165).
5:6–21	Conclusion and Resumé: Witness about Jesus Christ, the life which aims at certainty of the possession of life (cola 166–196). ³

² I use 1John as a referent for the text itself and 1 John or 1Jn when referencing a segment of the text.

³ J A du Rand, “A Discourse Analysis of 1 John,” *Neot* 13 (1979): 29.

He further states the theme of the letter as “We know that we possess eternal life. We must show this in our way of life. The source of this certainty lies in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The forms of certainty are fellowship, filiation, and love.”⁴ He finds a spiral pattern in the text although this does not “offer a complete picture of the mutual coherences of 1 John as a whole.”⁵ (*Du Rand Proposal B*)

A. Christocentric witness (1)

B. Sin (2.1)

C. Brotherly Love (2.2)

D. Identification test by virtue of confession against the *antichristoi* (3.1)

B' Sin (3.3)

C' Brotherly love (3.4)

D' Identification test by virtue of confession against the false spirits (3.6)

C'' Brotherly love (4.2)

A' Christocentric witness (5.1)⁶

R.E. Longacre

Longacre devises his structure from four elements: 1) “surface structure,” 2) the use of (γράφω) and other performative verbs, 3) imperative verbs, and 4) “peaks” in the discourse.⁷ These guidelines result in a 3-part structure.⁸ (*Longacre Proposal*)

1:1–2:29	Introduction
3:1–4:21	Body
5:1–21	Restatement and Closure

⁴ Du Rand, 1979, 30.

⁵ Du Rand, 1979, 35.

⁶ Du Rand, 1979, 35. He does not utilize alphabet numbers, rather dotted lines to link the sections. The references indicate his 5 sections and the sub-units rather than the text of 1John.

⁷ Robert E. Longacre, “Towards an Exegesis of 1 John Based on the Discourse Analysis of the Greek Text,” in *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis*, edited by David Alan Black. Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992, 271.

⁸ Longacre, 1992, 272–76.

Longacre identifies doctrinal and ethical peaks in both the introduction and the body sections of the text. He locates the first ethical peak at 2:12–17 with the doctrinal peak following in 2:18–27. Within the body portion of the text he locates the doctrinal peak at 4:1–6 with the ethical peak following in 4:7–10 and 11–21. He notes this second paragraph acts as a “paraphrase and recapitulation” of the first.⁹ He phrases the message of the ethical peaks as “believe correctly with the center of our belief resting on the fact of the incarnation” and the doctrinal peaks as “don’t love the world but love God, and above all love our fellow Christians.”¹⁰

The identification of peaks in the text, and the analysis that follows, allows him to locate a macrostructure “summary or précis or abstract” at 3:19–24 which includes both a thesis and antithesis.¹¹ Within this paragraph he recognizes a chiasmic structure with two elements at the central “that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another.”¹² This macrostructure statement follows a pattern of thesis and comment, which he notes also forms the pattern for 5:1–12. Longacre argues that 5:1 restates the macrostructure found in 3:23.¹³ He thus concludes that the book’s theme is openly and “strategically placed ... immediately before and after the twin peaks of the body” of the letter.¹⁴

⁹ Longacre, 1992, 279

¹⁰ Longacre, “Exegesis on 1 John,” 281

¹¹ Longacre, 1992, 280–81.

¹² Longacre, 1992, 282–283

¹³ Longacre, 1992, 283. He notes the similarity as “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God” which is followed by a more confusing statement on loving the begotten and the one who begat, which he summarizes as “believe in Jesus and love God and our fellow Christians.”

¹⁴ Longacre, 1992, 283.

Daniel Wu

An exploration of Cohesion Shift analysis and *inclusio* forms the methodological basis for Wu's dissertation.¹⁵ He identifies both High-Level and Median-Level cohesion shifts, of which he finds 14 and 36 respectively.¹⁶ Wu also suggest 13 *inclusio* elements within the text.¹⁷ Using his 50 cohesion shifts as a guide, he deduces the intent of the text in three parts: "purpose statements, Christological passages, and exhortations to change behavior or belief."¹⁸ Wu locates two purpose statements, 1:3 and 5:13, while noting that these two statements have "essentially the same purpose of participating in God's character."¹⁹ The text itself is replete with "exhortations that are the means for attaining that life and exposing what is inconsistent with it."²⁰ His resulting 5-part structure is based on these two discourse elements: cohesion shifts and *inclusio*. (Wu Proposal)

1:1–4	Prologue: The Word of Life
1:5–2:27	Light and Darkness
2:28–4:6	The Privileges and Responsibilities of God's Children
4:7–5:12	Faith in God and Love One Another
5:13–21	Epilogue: Final Remarks ²¹

¹⁵ Daniel Tao-Chung Wu, "An Analysis of the Structure of 1 John Using Discourse Analysis." (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1998), 72.

¹⁶ Wu, 1998, 105–114.

¹⁷ Wu, 115–128. 1:1 = 1:3, 1:6 = 1:7, 2:3 = 2:6, 2:28 = 3:10, 3:1 = 3:10, 3:4–7 = 3:8–10, 3:11 = 3:18, 3:11 = 3:23, 3:19 = 3:24, 4:1 = 4:6, 4:7 = 4:11, 5:1 = 5:5, 5:13 = 5:10

¹⁸ Wu, 179

¹⁹ Wu, 179

²⁰ Wu, 179

²¹ Wu, 187–188

A brief look at these three proposals from the realm of discourse analysis demonstrates obvious disagreement on the structure of 1 John, especially at the end of Chapter 2 – where du Rand provides a major break after 2:17, Longacre after 2:29 and Wu after 2:28 – and the end of Chapter 4 where du Rand breaks after 5:5, Longacre after 4:21, and Wu after 5:12.²² The main conclusion I can draw is that John Callow was fairly accurate twenty-five years ago when he wrote,

The number and diversity of the structures proposed for 1 John show only too clearly that the data are not yet being handled adequately from a discourse analysis perspective. It is doubtless naive to hope that the insights of discourse analysis will mean that in, say, ten years time, there will be a generally agreed structural analysis of 1 John.²³

H.v.D. Parunak

Parunak's work focused on transitions in the Bible. He accentuated the difference between the British and Continental schools of thought, with the first starting at what could be called the micro level of the verse and the second the macro level of larger portions of the text.²⁴ Parunak categorizes five types of linguistic similarity:

1) Phonological, 2) Morphological, 3) Lexical, 4) Syntactic, and 5) Logical or Rhetorical.²⁵ His analysis leads to three prominent techniques used in the biblical text: 1) Keyword, 2) Link, and 3) Hinge. He provides a significant caveat for his categories.

²² The beginning segment of Chapter 4 finds some agreement since both du Rand and Wu start a major segment at 4:7 and Longacre identifies 4:1–6 as an ethical peak and 4:7–10 as the start of the doctrinal peak.

²³ John Callow, "Where Does 1 John 1 End?" in *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: Approaches and Results*, edited by Jeffrey T. Reed and Stanley E. Porter. London: Bloomsbury, 1999, 406.

²⁴ H. Van Dyke Parunak, "Transitional Techniques in the Bible," *JBL* 102 (1983): 525-26.

²⁵ Parunak, 1983, 528. For 5 he cites Longacre, *Anatomy of Speech Notions*, 98-164.

An important characteristic of architectural patterns in literature is that they are recursive; that is, the units they form can be joined together by the same patterns into larger units, to which the patterns may yet again apply to form even larger units.²⁶

Keyword and Link transitions are identified most frequently by a repeated content word. The Hinge transition forms a unit of text, “independent to some degree from the larger units on either side, which has affinities with each of them and does not add significant information to that presented by its neighbors.”²⁷ He provides an example for the Hinge transition at 1 John 2:3–11 based on the changes in the personal pronouns. First John 2:3–6 and 9–11 employs the 1st and 3rd personal pronouns, We and He, while 7–8 engages the 1st and 2nd person, I and You. He further notes that verse 7 recalls vv. 3–6 while verse 8 introduces vv. 9–11.²⁸ He identifies the similarity for 1 John 2:3–11 as the lexical type.²⁹

These four proposals serve as the main conversation partners for my research. My proposal distinguishes itself from those presented by du Rand, Longacre, and Wu in that rather than identifying different major elements in 1John, I argue that Eternal Life and Fellowship represent the same key idea. As I noted in my 2023 presentation, “The writer reminds them that only 1 thing matters, Eternal Life, and that life is only experienced in Fellowship with the Godhead and the children of God.”³⁰ I now seek to

²⁶ Parunak, 1983, 541.

²⁷ Parunak, 1983, 540–41.

²⁸ Parunak, 1983, 542.

²⁹ Parunak, 1983, 548.

³⁰ Stan Harstine, “The Rhetorical Role of 1 John 5:9–12 When Viewed Through Johannine Repetition” (Paper presented at the international Meeting of the SBL, Pretoria, South Africa, 7 July 2023), 12.

clarify this point further as I examine the structure of 2:15 ff. through the lenses of rhetoric and repetition.

Analysis

The remainder of my presentation will address the structure of 1 John 2 and 4. I turn first to 1 John 2. Since diversity of opinion appears to dominate the analysis of 1 John 2, I willingly throw my proposal into the fray. Many scholars identify a major break in the text after 2:17,³¹ while several English translations identify a paragraph boundary there.³² I anticipate chiasmic materials in the text of 1 John since 1:1–3 itself provides hints of chiasmic structure.³³ Charles Talbert noted that persons culturally in tune with contemporaneous writing styles would catch the parallelism and anticipate more.³⁴ My research identifies parallel structures within 1:4–2:14. Much to my surprise, this section also consists of fifteen sections, just like Alan Culpepper’s “most widely accepted proposal”³⁵ for the Prologue’s chiasmic structure.³⁶ (*Harstine Proposal B*)

A 1 Jn 1:4

We write these things

³¹ Notably Du Rand; John Christopher Thomas, “The Literary Structure of 1 John,” *NovT* 40 (1998): 369–81; Alicia D. Myers, *Reading John and 1, 2, 3 John*, Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys (2019), and Rudolf Bultmann (1973). Wu’s cohesion shifts finds High-Level shifts after 2:11, 14, and 17.

³² Callow, “Where Does 1 John 1 End?” 393.

³³ Charles Talbert, *Reading John* (Macon: Ga: Smyth & Helwys, 2005), 14. A – 1:1, B – 1:2, A’ – 1:3–4, B’ – 1:5. Myers refers to this as a “circling prologue.” Myers, *Reading John*, 233.

³⁴ Charles H. Talbert, “Artistry and Theology: An Analysis of the Architecture of Jn 1:19–5:47,” *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (July 1970): 364–65. “For a person conditioned by his culture to expect such forms, these instances of chiasmus at the very beginning of the Gospel would be enough to set up a rhythm and to create expectancy in the reader. In becoming receptive this far, he would become receptive to still more. He would *feel* with the author in this rhythm.”

³⁵ U.C. von Wahlde describes Culpepper’s work as “the most widely accepted proposal” for a chiasmic arrangement. Urban C. von Wahlde, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, vol. 2 of *The Gospel and Letters of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 24.

³⁶ R. Alan Culpepper, “The Pivot of John’s Prologue,” *NTS* 27 (1980): 1-31.

B	1 Jn 1:5	God is Light not darkness
C	1 Jn 1:6	If we say yet walk in darkness we lie
D	1 Jn 1:7	If we walk in light we have fellowship
E	1 Jn 1:8	If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves
F	1 Jn 1:9	If we confess our sins we are cleansed
G	1 Jn 1:10	If we say we haven't sinned we make God a liar
H	1 Jn 2:1a	I am writing so you don't sin
F'	1 Jn 2:1b–2	If anyone sins we have an advocate with God
G'	1 Jn 2:3	We know God when we keep his Commandments
E'	1 Jn 2:4	If we say but don't keep his commandments we lie
D'	1 Jn 2:5	God's love is perfected in those who keep his word
C'	1 Jn 2:6	if we say we abide we should walk in the same way
B'	1 Jn 2:7–11	The Darkness is passing away, the True Light shines
A'	1 Jn 2:12–14	I am writing/have written

The opening and closing segments (A and A') show characteristics of Parunak's Hinge definition since they are "independent to some degree from the larger units on either side, ... and [do] not add significant information to that presented by its neighbors."³⁷

As I noted at the end of my **Argument** section, I identify a unified theme of Eternal Life/Fellowship as the overarching content for the text. My structural outline (*Harstine Proposal A*) indicates two major sections which I identify as "On Eternal Life" from 2:15–3:24 and "On Fellowship" from 4:1–5:12. Hinge verses and chiasmic structure exist within these partitions. Both sections utilize negated imperative verbs in their opening clauses. Longacre noted that verbs of command are significant despite their less frequent occurrence rate in 1John.³⁸ While at first glance one may consider placing such intense focus on these negated imperative verbs a bit awkward,³⁹ using a negative as a marker

³⁷ Parunak, 1983, 540–41.

³⁸ Longacre, 1992, 277–78.

³⁹ Negated imperatives occur at 2:15, 3:7, 3:13, and 4:1. Only 3:7 departs from the 2nd Plural Present verb pattern and is found in the 3rd Singular present. Non-negated imperatives appear at 2:24, 27, 28, 3:1, 4:1, and 5:21.

to begin a discussion follows the literary pattern the text establishes at 1:6. In addition, 1:5 introduces a positive/negative contrast thematically, “God is Light and absolutely no darkness exists in Him.” The text’s writer creates an early understanding with the reader that those having fellowship with the Father can, by association, have no darkness existing in them. Thus, after 2:15 the text continues to present various positive and negative categories which fall under the thematic imagery of Light and Darkness, that is to say, of Life with, or apart from, God.

One rationale for identifying 2:15–29 as a unified segment can be found in the use of these positive and negative (~) statements throughout. For purposes of observation and categorization, I analyzed the segments of cola which du Rand demarcated using the themes of Life and Fellowship (or their opposites). Anti-Life statements dominate the initial segment of 2:15–17.⁴⁰ Both positive and negative statements around the theme of Fellowship dominate the next segment, 2:18–27.⁴¹ The rationale for locating 2:28–29 within this unified segment lies in the continuation of this theme of Fellowship, here presented with the specific term abide (μένω). A series of parallel statements help to organize 2:15–29. (*Harstine Proposal C*)

~Z 2.15	Do not love the world
2.15b	The love of the Father is not in him
2.16	The world’s stuff is not from the Father
2.17a	The world is passing away
Z 2.17b	The one in God lives forever

⁴⁰ 2:15a, b, c; 16; and 17a-b. Du Rand identifies 2:12–17 as an AB unit with 15–17 forming the B section. The positioning of 2:15–17 within structural outlines is diverse. Du Rand, 1979; Peter Rhea Jones, “A Structural Analysis of 1 John,” *RevExp* 67 (1970): 433–44; Rudolph Bultmann, 1973; John Christopher Thomas, 1998; Charles Talbert, 2005; and Alicia Myers, 2019 all conclude their first section at 2:17. George Parsenios, *First, Second, and Third John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014) begins his section at 2:12. Wu, 1998, begins a major section at 2:15. Longacre, 1992, establishes 12–17 as its own paragraph in his opening with the Performative verb.

⁴¹ 2:19, 20b-21, 23–24, 27b, and g. Du Rand identifies 2:18–27 as an ABC unit with vv. 22 and 24 starting B and C.

~A 2.18	It is the Last Hour
2.18b	Many antichrists have appeared
2.18c	It is the last hour
~B 2.19	These went out from us
2.19b	They were not of us
2.19c	They went out to show they are not of us
C 2.20	Anointing from the Holy One
D 2.21a	Not Written because You don't know the Truth
E 2.21b	You know the Truth
~F 2.22a	Who is the liar, the antichrist
~G 2.22b	Denies the Father and the Son
~H 2.23a	Deny the Son doesn't have the Father
H 2.23b	Confesses the Son has the Father
G 2.24a	Let what you heard abide in you
F 2.24b	If it does, you will abide in the Son and Father
E 2.25	The promise is eternal life
D 2.26	Written about those trying to deceive you
C 2.27a	Anointing from Him
2:27b	His anointing is true not a lie
B 2.27c	You abide in him
A 2.28a	Abide in him
2.28b	When he appears
2.28c	At his coming
Z 2.29	Those who practice Righteousness are born of him

While I will not address 1 John 3 further in this paper, it bears noting that the pattern of parallelism found in 3:1–10 confirms maintaining a structural separation between these two segments. (*Harstine Proposal D*)

A	1 Jn 3:1–2	The Children of God identified
B	1 Jn 3:3	The Children of God are like the Son of God
C	1 Jn 3:4	Those who practice Sin identified
D	1 Jn 3:5	The Son of God has no darkness from Sin
E	1 Jn 3:6	Abide in the Son
D´	1 Jn 3:7	The Son of God practices righteousness
C´	1 Jn 3:8ab	Those who practice sin identified
B´	1 Jn 3:8cd–9	The Children of God are like the Son of God
A´	1 Jn 3:10	The Children of God identified

1 John 4

This section of my paper will focus on the last half of 1 John 4 and its relationship to 1 John 5. For du Rand this latter segment continues through 5:5, while Longacre views 4:21 as completing an ethical peak which begins at 4:11.⁴² My work categorizing the cola structure of du Rand uncovered a third type of statement which did not easily fall into my Life/Fellowship paradigm. I label this third type Doctrinal/Teaching statements and they occur throughout 2:18–4:16. My thematic categorization shows Fellowship and Doctrinal statements dominating 4:12–16, which includes the second “God is Love” statement (4:8 & 16).

However, the theme shifts at 4:17 and a series of Life statements continues through 5:5. No Doctrinal statements appear in this segment. This abrupt return to the thematic topic alone helps to demarcate the structure. The use of the words “love” (ἀγάπη) and “completed” (τελειόω) at 4:17–18 forms its own *inclusio*. I recognize these two verses as an example of the hinge technique. While these verses continue the earlier discussion on love, they introduce new themes of confidence (παρρησία) and fear (φόβος) depending on whether one has this type of perfect love.

⁴² Longacre, 1992, 275–76.

A number of concepts introduced earlier in 1 John reappear after 4:19. Such repetition might suggest evidence for a spiral pattern. However, for du Rand these verses form section 4.3 while his spiral pattern incorporates sections 4.2 and 5.1.⁴³ Examples of these repeated ideas include at 4:20 – which reflects on the teaching found in 3:14–17 regarding how one “loves” those within the community of faith.⁴⁴ Another connection exists as 4:21 rephrases the initial Ὅτι αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγγελία ἣν ἠκούσατε ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους found at 3:11. The combined use of “command” in 4:21 rather than “promise,” of the demonstrative pronoun with both words, and of the verb “love” (ἀγαπάω) appearing in the subjunctive mood in both places demonstrates their resemblance. Further examples are found in 1 John 5. Believing in Jesus as Messiah at 5:1 reflects the “commandment” stated at 3:23 while 5:2–3 references “commandments” again. Finally, the idea of “overcoming,” first introduced at 2:13–14, appears once more in 5:4–5 along with a direct reference to 4:4 with the reuse of word (κόσμος) world. I conclude that 4:19–5:5 should be understood as a singular, structural segment providing a recapitulation of prior ideas within the text.⁴⁵

Doctrinal statements dominate 5:6–9 before the themes of Life and Fellowship resurface at 5:10–13 along with the Testimony concept. The reappearance of the theme

⁴³ Du Rand identifies 1 John 4:7–11 as 4.1, 1 John 4:12–18 as 4.2, 1 John 4:19–5:5 as 4.3, and 5:6–13 as 5.1.

⁴⁴ Given the context of discord behind the Johannine letters I believe that the better reading of brother(s) (ἀδελφός) should be individuals, both male and female, within the Johannine audience.

⁴⁵ Thomas identifies 4:7–5:5 as a section (C') in his chiasmic structure and parallels it with 2:3–17. He notes the number of contact points between the two sections and the return of earlier themes which were absent in the intermittent time. Thomas, 1998, 377. In contrast, Ron Bigalke notes that “First John 5:1–12 may be understood as an extended exposition of 4:1–21, which is evident by the repetition of the two doctrinal truths that prove the receiving of the Holy Spirit.” Ron J. Bigalke, “First John structure resolved: Exegetical Analysis, Part 2” *HvTst* 69 (2013), 5.

Testimony recalls 1:1–3 for the reader, and functions as an *inclusio* for the larger text. Additionally, in 5:6–12 the author emphasizes truthful testimony with references to the Spirit, God’s own testimony regarding His Son, and human response to God’s testimony.⁴⁶ Even though this segment of the text might appear distinct from 5:1–5, several Lexical similarities argue against a total break in the text.⁴⁷ Belief in Jesus forms one crucial link (see 5:1, 5 & 10). A second, more subtle, link can be found in the idea of agency, especially God’s agency. First John 5:1–5 describes God acting through the birthing activity (5:1, 4), the commandments He gives (5:2), and the love that originates with God (5:3). The focus on God’s agency in 5:6–12 takes shape in the testimony by God’s Spirit (5:6), the greater testimony God provides regarding His Son (5:9, 10), and the giving of Life (5:11, 12).

Conclusion

As a reminder, this paper represents ongoing research on the text of 1John. My larger project examines repetition within Johannine literature and whether concentrated repetition provides insight for understanding the text as an ancient auditor might. For good or for ill, this paper reflects a type of Episode 5 in the Star Wars original trilogy. It doesn’t tell all the back story or answer all the questions that might be raised within.

Second, while presenting some chiasmic patterns in the structure of 1John, I keep in mind the words written by John Christopher Thomas more than 25 years ago, “It goes without saying that many ‘alleged’ chiasmic structures are visible only to those scholars who propose them.”⁴⁸ During my research into this section, I sought to avoid forcing my

⁴⁶ Harstine, “Rhetorical Role,” 11

⁴⁷ Parunak, 1983, 528. Lexical is his third category.

⁴⁸ Thomas, “Literary Structure,” 1998, 372.

own chiasmic structures into the text and willingly explored other scholars' proposals. For instance, I have not yet observed parallelism in 3:11–18, Longacre presents a chiasmic structure for 3:19–24, which my research corroborates, but my thematic schema does not substantiate the proposal by Leithart for two intertwined chiasmic structures in 4:12–20.⁴⁹

Finally, the goal for this paper was to determine whether contributions from Discourse Analysis might help establish a “consensus” structure for 1John. My research would force me respond to this goal in the negative. With that stated, whenever scholars using diverse methodologies recognize a structural unit, serious consideration should be given to such findings. This cross-methodological fertilization does not come easily. As I noted in my paper at Pretoria, “a strong tendency exists among researchers ... to narrow their focus to the smallest detail possible.”⁵⁰ Many factors in academia pressure scholars like ourselves to gravitate toward micro-analysis and singular approaches, perhaps with a goal of making one's mark in this world [or gaining a publication for tenure] rather than explaining the text itself for others. As a guild of scholars, we serve “the greater good” when we engage in conversation with those employing differing methodologies and finding consensus wherever it may present itself.

⁴⁹ Peter Leithart, “Chiasm in 1 John 4” https://theopolisinstitute.com/leithart_post/chiasm-in-john-2/

⁵⁰ Harstine, “Rhetorical Role,” 11.