

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 1ST-2ND, 2019 // BOOK OF 2 JOHN

THE ELECT LADY (2 JOHN 1-3)

THE "LADY AND HER CHILDREN"

"The elder" that John mentions is himself. An elder is an overseer of the church that helps ensure the church's integrity. The "elect lady" can either be a literal woman or figuratively mean the congregation.

- More than likely, 2 John is another letter to a sister church of Ephesus, the church addressed in 1 John.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS ARE GROUNDED IN TRUTH

John mentions that he loves the church "in the truth" along with "all who know the truth." Basically, their relationship is built upon their understanding of the truth that is Jesus Christ.

- We often get this wrong. This doesn't mean that we cannot have unbelieving friends.

SO WHO CAN BE OUR FRIENDS?

We've been taught to stay away from non-believers, but **the Word tells us to stay away from those that claim to believe but don't follow the commands of God (1 Cor. 5:11).**

- **Befriending hypocritical "Christians" taints the reputation of God and without befriending non-believers, the gospel doesn't spread.**

THE TRUTH MUST BE GUARDED!

If the truth sets us free (Jn. 8:32), then guarding it must be extremely important. That is why **addressing heresy and calling each other out in love is imperative to the health and survival of the church!**

- **We must get over our fear of offending and not being accepted. Truth will win in the end.**

GRACE, MERCY AND PEACE

Not only does John love these people, but he explains where grace, mercy, and peace come from: "God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Son of the Father."

- John also mentions the approach he is going to take in this short letter: "truth and love."

WHAT IS LOVE? (2 JOHN 4-6)

WALKING IN TRUTH

John had heard that "some of your children" are "walking in truth." The children are congregants of the church and possibly other churches planted from this one.

- In order for others to "walk in truth," they must be disciplined. **Discipleship must be one of the largest focuses of the church community!**

WHAT IS WALKING IN TRUTH?

For one to walk in truth, they must follow the commands of Christ. The 2nd greatest command that Christ told us to live out is to properly love each other.

- **Not only are we to live righteously by adhering to the teachings of the Bible, but we are to care for others and lead them into righteousness.**

WHAT IS LOVE?

Patient, not envious or arrogant, selfless, honorable, not rude, rejoices with truth (1 Cor. 13:4-7). Loving regardless of how bad people may be (Pr. 17:17, Matt. 5:43-48). True love hates evil and doesn't enable bad behavior.

- **"Love" has been distorted by culture! If we are to love correctly, we must know the scripture.**

WE CANNOT SINGLE-HANDEDLY FIX EVERYONE

Though we are to love our enemies and help the down-trodden, we cannot do everything for all people.

- **And though we have been commissioned by God to teach truth, not all people will accept it, though all people will be held accountable!**
- **Galatians 6:10 (CSB)**

LOVE IS SHOWN IN OBEDIENCE

We show our love to God by doing what He tells us to do (John 15:14). When we follow the commands of God, we will naturally love others as well (60%).

- **The commands of God are from a loving Father for our benefit, not superfluous rules from a dictator. God wants what is best for us!**

A LOVE OF TRUTH (2 JOHN 7-11)

"MANY DECEIVERS HAVE GONE OUT..."

This can mean two things. First, this can mean divisive people that have left the church to follow false teachers. Second, this can mean dangerous false teachers.

- **There is no room in the church for divisiveness and heresy. It must be quickly addressed and snuffed out. You can't rationalize with wolves.**

THE IDENTITY OF JESUS IS VITALLY IMPORTANT

John had to deal with the Gnostics that taught Jesus had not come "in the flesh," but we deal with many ways in which the identity of Christ has been twisted.

- The spirit of such distortions is from Satan and is antichrist. To heed their teachings is to jeopardize salvation. **If truth liberates, lies enslave!**

ANYONE WHO "GOES BEYOND IT"

John warns that anyone "who does not remain in Christ's teaching but goes beyond it does not have God." "Beyond it" means to take things past what the scripture says.

- This is why John tells us in Revelation to not add to the text. Adding to what God already says is a dangerous game to play!

DID THEY HAVE THE FAITH TO BEGIN WITH?

Theologians and churches debate whether one who defects from the faith ever had it. The main point is that defecting from faith is evidence of a lack of God in your life.

- **The conversation about whether salvation can be lost or not sometimes takes attention away from Godly living. Focus on majors!**

"...DON'T GREET HIM"

John tells the church to not receive or greet people who teach heresy. This part seems harsh, but it shows the importance of where we get our influence from.

- This doesn't mean that we are not kind to people we disagree with, **but that we are not to allow false teachings to flourish around us.**

TURNING A BLIND EYE IS A SIN

There are sins of **commission** (sinful action) and **omission** (sinful inaction). If we see heretical teaching and do nothing to stop it we are engaging in evil just like if we were funding it.

- **To know truth and not act on it is sin (Js 4:17). We must be willing to be unpopular for the sake of the gospel.**

FACE TO FACE (2 JOHN 12-13)

"THE CHILDREN OF YOUR ELECT SISTER"

This salutation gives some evidence that the "lady" is probably a local church and not a literal woman.

- Notice that one church was greeting another church! We can play well with each other!

IT IS ALWAYS BETTER IN PERSON!

Though John had a lot more to say to his "elect lady," he decided to talk about those things in person.

- **When it comes to difficult or deep conversations, FACE TO FACE IS ALWAYS BETTER. How many situations could've been resolved if people had the guts to talk in person?**

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR THE CHURCH

- **Know the truth well enough to spot a counterfeit.** This means coming to church and reading the Bible are important!
- **Be obedient to the commands of God.** Without obedience there is no relationship with God.
- **Know what biblical love is.** Love God and let His love permeate through us onto others. **Love others in a way that propels them forward** and doesn't keep them where they are.
- **Identify false teaching, call it out, and stay away from it.**
- Resolve your conflicts with face to face interactions if possible. If you've been offended, **follow Jesus' teaching on being offended (Mt. 18), grow thicker skin, show grace, and BE A CHRISTIAN ADULT ABOUT THINGS.**