


Walking in the Truth II John FBC Canton Sunday am May 10, 2026

Introduction: Walking in the truth rejoices the hearts of parents, walking in lies destroys greatly.

Unmasking Satan's Biggest Lies



John 8:44 (NKJV)
You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Lies destroy lives. John 8:44

- Individually.
- Families.
- Future families.

Today I want you to thank your mothers for leading you to love and the truth...both physical and spiritual mothers.

Today I want mothers to be steeled in their resolve to walk in love and truth.

- I. **If you walk in love you have to walk in truth. V. 1-6**
 - a. **Truth abides in us providing: v. 3**
 - i. **Grace: God doing for you what you cannot do for yourself.**
 - 1. You can be more than you are right now.
 - 2. Pride is the opposite of grace.
 - ii. **Mercy: Give mercy as you have been given.**
 - 1. To yourself.
 - 2. To others.
 - iii. **Peace.**
 - 1. No fear of missing out
 - 2. No drama mama.
 - 3. No fear of delays and detours in life or a complete course change.
 - 4. No fear of questions without answers

- o 1. From whom these blessings are craved,

- (1.) *From God the Father*, the God of all grace. He is the fountain of blessedness, and of all the blessings that must bring us thither.
- (2.) *From the Lord Jesus Christ*. He is also author and communicator of these heavenly blessings, and he is distinguished by this emphatic character-*the Son of the Father*; such a Son as none else can be; such a Son as is *the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*, who, with the Father, is also *eternal life*, [1 Jn. 1:2](#).
- 2. What the apostle craves from these divine persons.
 - (1.) *Grace*-divine favour and good-will, the spring of all good things: it is grace indeed that any spiritual blessing should be conferred on sinful mortals.
 - (2.) *Mercy*-free pardon and forgiveness; those who are already rich in grace have need of continual forgiveness.
 - (3.) *Peace*-tranquility of spirit and serenity of conscience, in an assured reconciliation with God, together with all safe and sanctified outward prosperity. And these are desired *in truth and love*, either by sincere and ardent affection in the saluter (in faith and love he prays them *from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ*), or as productive of continued truth and love in the saluted; these blessings will continually preserve true faith and love *in the elect lady and her children*; and may they do so!

b. Love is not just love! V. 4-6

- i. **Defined: Decision to compassionately, responsibly, righteously seek the well-being of another: Tony Evans.**
- ii. **Divine love has boundaries: I Corinthians 13**

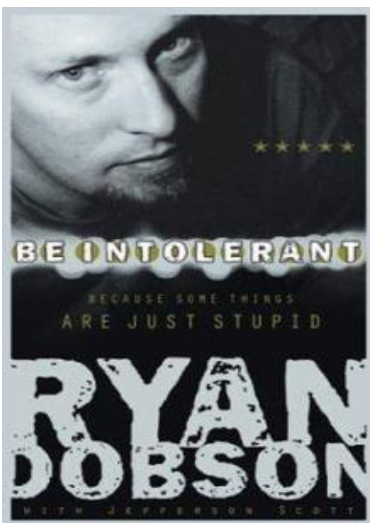
“Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)



iii. Healthy relationships have boundaries. Proverbs

1. Walking according to the commandments.
2. Law of Christ is to love one another.

- II. **Walking in love protects truth. V. 7-11**
 - a. **Truth is not a social construction, it is a person. John 14:1-6**
 - b. **Truth protects us from the lies. V. 7**
 - i. **Many deceivers; Satan does not care what lie you believe.**
 - 1. **Jesus is not fully God and nor fully man.**
 - c. **How to live in the truth?**
 - i. **Be convinced of absolute truth.**
 - 1. **Satan's best lies are the ones that are closest to the truth. Matthew 4**
 - 2. **#1 There is no absolute truth, and therefore you can never be sure.**
 - a. **If this were true...it would be an absolute truth!**

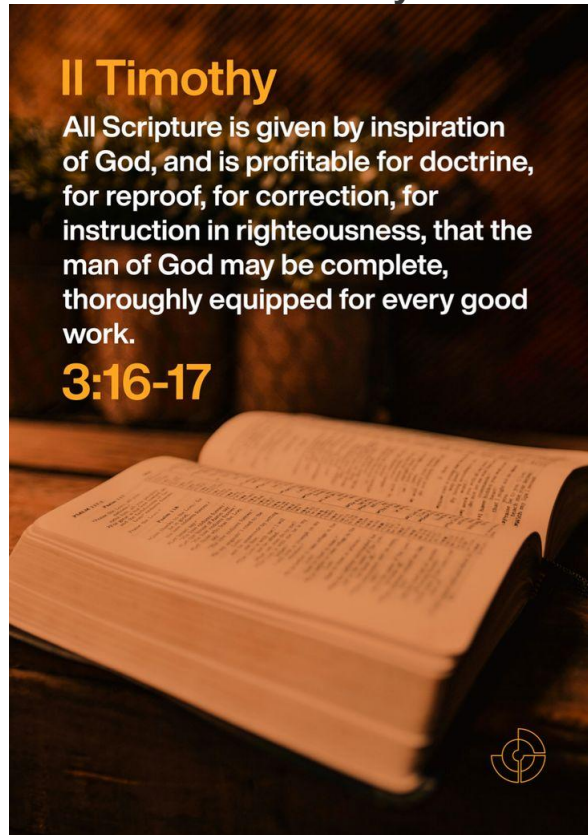


ISBN: 1590521528 ISBN13: 9781590521526

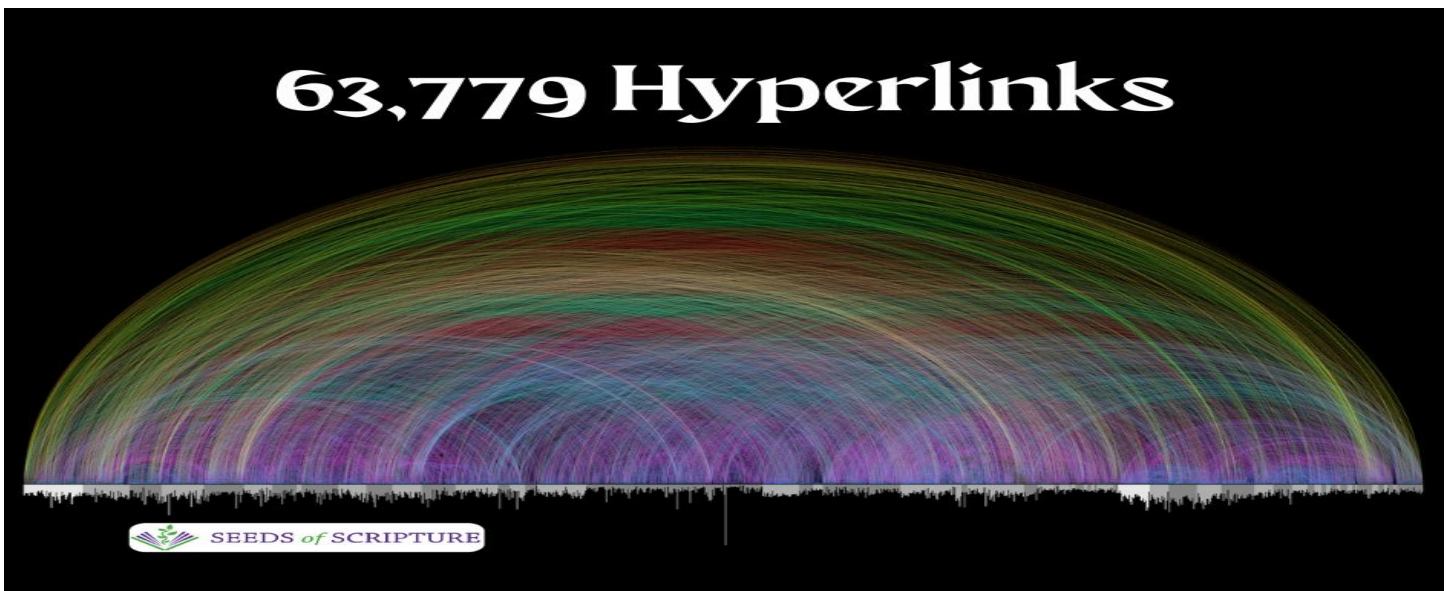
Be Intolerant: Because Some Things Are Just Stupid By [Ryan Dobson](#)

"Whatever" is now the password into civilized youth culture. Alarming numbers of Christians eighteen to twenty-five years old believe that there is no such thing as absolute truth. Yet, Ryan Dobson proclaims, we can't even function if we believe that everything is relative. In his first book, the impassioned youth speaker explains God's establishment of absolutes, using relevant examples to awaken Christians to the world's desperate hunger for absolute truth -- and the church's duty to proclaim it. This description may be from another edition of this product.

3. The Bible is absolutely true! II Timothy 3:16



1. Prophetically perfect.
2. Historically accurate.
3. Understand creation.
4. Internally consistent.



ii. Read the truth.

Reading the Bible regularly, especially four or more times a week, has profound positive effects on individuals, including improved mental health, reduced negative behaviors, and increased spiritual growth.

Key Findings on Bible Engagement

1. **Frequency Matters:** Research conducted by the Centre for Bible Engagement revealed that engaging with the Bible at least four times a week leads to significant life changes. In contrast, reading it once or twice a week showed little to no impact on individuals' lives.

2. **Transformative Effects:** The study found that individuals who read the Bible four or more times a week experienced remarkable improvements in various areas of their lives, including:

2 Sources

- Decreased feelings of loneliness by 30%
- Reduced anger issues by 32%
- Lowered bitterness in relationships by 40%
- Decreased alcoholism by 57%
- Reduced spiritual stagnation by 60%
- **Decreased exposure to pornography by 61%.**

1 Source

3. **Increased Positive Behaviors:** Regular Bible reading also correlated with positive outcomes, such as:

- A 200% increase in sharing one's faith
- A 230% increase in forming disciples
- **A 407% improvement in retaining God's Word.**

1 Source

Community Engagement and Programs

• **The Institute for Bible Reading emphasizes the importance of engaging with Scripture in a community setting. Programs like Immerse encourage congregations to read large portions of the Bible together, fostering deeper connections and understanding of the text.**

• **The findings underscore the necessity of making Bible reading a regular part of life for spiritual growth and community building. The more frequently individuals engage with Scripture, the more they can experience its transformative power.**

3 Sources

Conclusion

The impact of reading the Bible is profound, influencing not only individual lives but also the broader community. Regular engagement with Scripture can lead to significant im

provements in mental health, relationships, and spiritual vitality, making it a vital practice for those seeking to deepen their faith and connection with God.

The Transformational Power of Bible Reading: Why 4+ Days a Week Changes Everything

Does Reading the Bible Really Change Your Life? Science Says Yes!

Many people struggle with Bible study habits, wondering, *Does reading the Bible really make a difference in my life?*

The answer is a resounding YES.

A groundbreaking study by the [Institute for Biblical Research \[LINK\]](#) revealed that Bible engagement—specifically reading Scripture at least four days per week—is the key to deep spiritual transformation.

The Data: How Bible Reading Impacts Your Life

The study examined the effects of reading the Bible daily versus occasional reading:

- 1 Day a Week: Almost no measurable impact.
- 2-3 Days a Week: Some effect, but minimal.
- 4+ Days a Week: This is where major transformation happens.

When believers consistently engage with the Bible, the changes are undeniable:

228% more likely to share their faith

407% more likely to memorize Scripture

59% less likely to view pornography

30%+ less likely to struggle with loneliness, depression, or anxiety

The study confirms that the Bible is the most powerful tool for spiritual growth—but only when it becomes a regular part of your life.

Why Does Reading the Bible Four Days a Week Matter?

Think of Bible reading like fitness:

- Going to the gym once a week won't change your body.
- Twice? A little better, but results are slow.
- Three times? You're on track, but not transformed.
- Four+ days? Now you see real, lasting change.

The same is true for spiritual growth through Scripture. When God's Word becomes a core part of your routine, it starts shaping your mindset, decisions, and faith journey.

Bible Engagement and the Mission of Global Point Ministries

At Global Point Ministries, we don't just talk about reading the Bible—we're committed to ensuring that people worldwide have access to the Word of God.

We've distributed over 25,000 Bibles in remote areas.

We bring God's Word to communities that have never had a Bible before.

We equip new believers with resources to grow in their faith through Scripture. Why? Because when people engage with the Bible, their lives are transformed.

How You Can Build a Life-Changing Bible Reading Habit

Want to see real change in your life? Here's how to start reading the Bible consistently:

Set a goal: Start with one chapter a day for four days a week.

Find a Bible reading plan: Use YouVersion, the Bible app, or a printed study guide.

Join a community: Reading Scripture with others strengthens your commitment.

Make it a habit: Set a reminder or tie Bible reading to your morning or evening routine.

Be Part of the Mission: Help Others Engage with God's Word

At Global Point, our mission is to share the power of Scripture with as many people as possible.

Here's how you can make an impact:

Read the Bible at least four days a week—let it transform you.

Pray for those receiving Bibles in unreached areas.

Partner with Global Point Ministries to help bring Bibles to those in need.

Will you join us in this mission?

Jesus didn't come to make small changes—He came to transform lives.

And when we engage with His Word consistently, that transformation begins.

Let's make sure no one is left without the truth that changes everything

iii. Study so you know how to put it into practice.

Conclusion: Will you live to give rejoicing? Or destroying?

David Guzik

Study Guide for 2 John 1

WALKING IN THE TRUTH

"This epistle is more remarkable for the spirit of Christian love which it breathes than for anything else. It contains scarcely anything that is not found in the preceding; and out of the thirteen verses there are at least eight which are found, either in so many words or in sentiment, precisely the same with those of the first epistle." (Adam Clarke)

A. Greeting.

1. (2 John 1:1-2) To **the elect lady and her children**.

THE ELDER, To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever.

a. **The Elder**: The writer of this book identifies himself as **the Elder**. Presumably, his first readers knew exactly who he was, and from the earliest times, Christians have understood this was the Apostle John writing.

i. "John the apostle, who was now a very old man, generally supposed to be about ninety, and therefore uses the term presbyter or elder, not as the name of an **office**, but as designating his advanced age. He is allowed to have been the oldest of all the apostles, and to have been the only one who died a natural death." (Clarke)

b. **To the elect lady and her children**: Perhaps this was an individual Christian woman John wanted to warn and encourage by this letter. Or, the term might be a symbolic way of addressing this particular congregation.

i. "The phrase is, however, more likely to be a personification than a person — not the church at large but some local church over which the elder's jurisdiction was recognized, **her children** being the church's individual members." (Stott)

ii. "This appears to have been some noted person, whom both her singular piety, and rank in the world, made eminent, and capable of having great influence for the support of the Christian interest." (Poole)

iii. John probably did not name himself, **the elect lady** or **her children** by name because this was written during a time of persecution. Perhaps John didn't want to implicate anyone by name in a written letter. If the letter was intercepted and the authorities knew who it was written to by name, it might mean death for those persons.

c. **Whom I love in truth, and not only I**: Whomever **the elect lady** was, she was loved by all who **have known the truth**. If we know and love the truth, we will love those who also know and love the truth — **the truth which abides in us** also lives in others who know the truth.

i. We see John quite focused on the idea of truth, as he was in all of his writings. He used the word **truth** some thirty-seven times in his New Testament writings.

ii. This shows that what binds Christians together is not social compatibility or political compatibility or class compatibility. What binds us together is a common **truth**. This is why truth is important to Christians.

d. **Will be with us forever**: The truth does not change. The truth will be true **forever**, and we will have the truth forever in eternity. Many people today think that the truth changes from age to age and from generation to generation, but the Bible knows that the truth **will be with us forever**.

2. (2 John 1:3) John's salutation to his readers.

Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

a. **Grace, mercy, and peace**: John presents a slightly expanded version of the standard greeting in New Testament letters. He didn't just wish these for his readers; he confidently bestowed them by saying they **will be with you from God the Father**.

b. **In truth and love**: John can hardly write a verse without mentioning these two of his favorite topics. The **grace, mercy, and peace** God has for us are all given **in truth and love**. Apart from God's **truth and love**, we can never really have **grace, mercy, and peace**.

i. "What deep, sweet rhythm of meaning there is in the first three verses of this letter! One reads them over and over again. Oh, that the grace, mercy, and peace, may be with us, from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and in love." (Meyer)

c. **The Son of the Father**: "The apostle still keeps in view the *miraculous conception* of Christ; a thing which the *Gnostics* absolutely denied; a doctrine which is at the ground work of our salvation."

B. How to walk.

1. (2 John 1:4) John's joy to find they are **walking in truth**.

I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father.

a. **I rejoiced greatly**: This is a pastor's heart — to know that his people are **walking in truth**. While **truth** is not the **only** concern of a pastor, it is a great concern; and it is a great comfort for a pastor to see those he loves and cares for **walking in truth**.

i. "The **children** mentioned here may either be **her own children**, or those **members of the Church** which were under her care, or some of **both**." (Clarke)

b. **I have found some of your children walking in truth**: John rejoiced because when God's people are **walking in truth**, they also abide in God. The same idea is expressed in [1 John 2:24](#): *Therefore let that abide in you which you heard from the beginning. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, you also will abide in the Son and in the Father.* Truth is not only important for its own sake, but also our **walking in truth** shows we are walking with the Lord.

i. Trapp on the idea of **walking in the truth**: "Not taking a step or two, not breaking or leaping over the hedge to avoid a piece of foul way, but persisting in a Christian course, not starting aside to the right hand or the left."

2. ([2 John 1:5](#)) The commandment to love one another.

And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another.

a. **I plead with you, lady**: John was not too proud to beg on such an important matter — not when it came to something as vital in the Christian life as the **commandment** that we must **love one another**.

b. **Not as though I wrote a new commandment**: John knew this was nothing new to his readers (he repeated the theme all through 1 John and his gospel). Yet because it was so essential, it had to be repeated and used as a reminder.

c. **That we love one another**: The integrity of our Christian life can be measured by our love for one another (as in [John 13:35](#) and [1 John 4:20-21](#)).

3. ([2 John 1:6](#)) Showing the love of God.

This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.

a. **This is love, that we walk according to His commandments**: If we love God, we will obey His commandments. We do this not because we think His commandments are heavy burdens, but because we see that they are best for us. They are guides and gifts to us from God.

b. **Walk according to His commandments**: Real love will walk this way. Perhaps John warned against those who thought the only important thing in the Christian life was a vague love that had no heart for obedience.

i. "Perhaps you fail to distinguish between love and the emotion of love. They are not the same. We may love without being directly conscious of love, or being able to estimate its strength and passion. Here is the solution to many of our questionings: They love who obey."
(Meyer)

4. ([2 John 1:7-9](#)) A warning against the presence and dangers of false teachers.

For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward. Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

a. **Many deceivers have gone out into the world**: John was aware false teachers were a danger to the church in his day.

i. "The immediate problem in [2 John] is that of traveling teachers or missionaries. According to Christian ethics all who thus traveled about were to be shown hospitality by Christians in the town to which they came." (Boice)

b. **This is a deceiver**: John mainly had in mind the danger in his own time, of those who thought that Jesus, being God, could have no real connection with the material world. They said that He only had an apparent connection with the material world.

i. To combat this, John made a plain declaration: we must **confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh**. This means Jesus came as a real man in His first coming, but also means He will come as a human being — although glorified humanity, and that added to His eternal deity — a real flesh and blood Jesus will come again to the earth.

c. **This is a deceiver and an antichrist**: Against this false idea of Jesus, John insists those **who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh** are the deceivers and have the spirit of the antichrist.

i. John warned us against these antichrists in his first letter ([1 John 2:18-23](#), [4:3](#)). They are those who not only oppose Jesus, but also offer a substitute "Christ."

ii. This spirit of antichrist will one day find its ultimate fulfillment in the Antichrist, who will lead humanity in an end-times rebellion against God.

d. **Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God**: There is nothing noble, sincere, courageous, or admirable in a false Jesus. To deny the Biblical Jesus is always to reject the Father and the Son both. John here draws a critical line of truth, over which it is heresy to transgress.

i. In our own day, we must deal with modern denials of the Biblical Jesus with the same passion John did in his day. Today, with our "scholarly" denials of Jesus and the historical record of the Gospels, it is more important than ever to know who the true Jesus is according to the Bible and to love and serve the true Jesus.

ii. "To say no to God's way of revealing himself is to say no to God himself, for he will not let himself be known by men except on his own terms." (Marshall)

e. **Transgresses**: The word *transgresses* has the idea of “going beyond a boundary.” We never go “beyond” the teaching of Jesus, of who He is and what He has done for us. Anyone who thinks we have or should go beyond what the Bible plainly says about Jesus *transgresses*.

i. “There is a true progress in the Christian life, but it is progress based upon a deeper knowledge of the historical, biblical Christ. Progress on any other ground may be called progress, but it is a progress that leaves God behind and is, therefore, not progress at all.” (Boice)

ii. “When the teaching of the Bible needs to be supplemented by some ‘key’ to the Bible or by some new revelation, it is a sure sign that ‘advanced’ doctrine is being put forth.” (Marshall)

f. **Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for**: To depart from the true Jesus means you put yourself in jeopardy to lose the things the apostles and other faithful saints **worked for**. This shows us that it isn’t enough for us to start out right, we must finish in faith to **receive a full reward**.

5. (2 John 1:10-11) Instructions for dealing with the false teachers.

If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

a. **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine**: If someone comes to us, denying the true doctrine of Jesus, and promoting a false doctrine of Jesus, John says we should give no hospitality, no aid, to the ones who promote their own false version of Jesus. To do so is to share **in his evil deeds**.

i. “The words mean, according to the eastern use of them, ‘Have no religious connection with him, nor act towards him so as to induce others to believe you acknowledge him as a brother.’ ” (Clarke)

ii. “Suppose the visiting teacher claimed to be a Christian missionary or even a prophet but taught what was clearly false doctrine. Hospitality would demand that he be provided for, but to do so would seem to be participation in the spread of his false teachings. Should he be received or not?” (Boice)

b. **He who greets him**: John means **greet** in a much more involved context than our own. In that culture, it meant to show hospitality and give aid. Yet, for the weak or unskilled believer, it is best if they do not even **greet** (in the sense of speaking to) those who promote a false Jesus (like the Mormons or Jehovah’s Witnesses).

i. These words sound severe, but John has not lost his love. We must consider these three points:

- John is not talking about **all** error, but only error which **masquerades** as true Christianity.
- John is not talking about all who **hold** the error which masquerades as true Christianity, but about those who **teach** those errors which masquerade as true Christianity.
- John is not talking about all **teachers** who err, but those who err in the most **fundamental** truths, and those who are active in spreading those fundamental errors.

ii. This does not mean that we should have nothing to do with those who are caught by the cults. As John indicates, we should make a distinction between those who **teach** these Christ-denying doctrines (those who **bring this doctrine**) and those who merely **believe** the doctrines without trying to spread them.

c. **Do not receive him into your house nor greet him**: This may also be translated **do not receive him into the house**. John may be referring most specifically to not allowing these heretical teachers to come into **the house** where Christians meet together.

i. “Perhaps, therefore, it is not private hospitality which John is forbidding so much as an official welcome into the congregation, with the opportunity this would afford to the false teacher to propagate his errors.” (Stott)

ii. “We see how such [false] teachers were treated in the apostolic Church. They held no communion with them; afforded them no support, as **teachers**; but **did not persecute** them.” (Clarke)

d. **Shares in his evil deeds**: We are defined by what we **reject** as much as by what we **accept**. In this, some are so **open minded** that they are **empty headed**. It is wise to keep an open mind on many things; but one would never keep an open mind about which poisons a person might try. You may say **yes** to all the right things; but one must also say **no** to what is false and evil. We need to become good at rejecting what should be rejected.

i. “They were persons who claimed to be leaders; they were advanced thinkers, they were progressive. The Gnostic teachers of the time were claiming that while the gospel of the historic Jesus might be all very well for unenlightened people, they had a profounder knowledge. Such were to receive no hospitality.” (Morgan)

ii. In the late 19th Century, the rise of theological liberalism brought forth generations of Christian pastors, leaders, and theologians who denied many of the fundamentals of Biblical Christianity. Though it was a broad and varied movement, at its root theological liberalism thought that Christianity had to re-evaluate all its doctrines in the light of modern science, philosophy, and thinking. They rejected the idea that a doctrine was true simply because the Bible taught it; it also had to be proved true by reason and experience. They believed that the Bible was not an inspired message from a real God, but the work of men who were limited by the ignorance and superstitions of their time. For them, the Bible was not either inspired or

supernatural. The importance of the Bible and its message was not in its literal or historical truth, but in its changing spiritual message.

C. Conclusion.

1. (2 John 1:12) John anticipates a future visit.

Having many things to write to you, I did not wish *to do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

a. **I hope to come to you and speak face to face:** We must generally sympathize with John's preference for personal, face to face communication rather than the writing of letters — though we are thankful for this letter.

2. (2 John 1:13) Conclusion.

The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

a. **The children of your elect sister:** Telling us that the *elect lady* (2 John 1) has an **elect sister**, and that they both have **children** does little to identify with certainty who John is writing to. Perhaps all it tells us is that if John used the term *elect lady* as a symbol for the church, he used it rather loosely (saying that she has a sister and children). The most likely idea is that the *elect lady* (a particular church) had an **elect sister** — other "sister" churches from which John brings a greeting.

b. **The children of your elect sister:** This last reference to the **elect sister** and her **children** remind us that though we must be on guard against false teachers, the true followers of Jesus are more than just our group. If we allow our desire to defend the truth to make us unloving and intolerant, Satan has won a great victory.

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Updated: August 2022

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The Bible Says 2 John 1:1-3 Meaning

This letter is attributed to the Apostle John based on early church tradition. He begins the letter by addressing himself as The elder. John was an apostle of Jesus, and could have addressed himself as such. With that authority, he could have commanded. But it seems his goal here was to serve as a protector to the church, which is the proper role of the elders. And in his role as protector, he is careful not to lord over, but rather to serve in truth and love ([1 Peter 5:1-4](#)).

The term translated elder is the Greek word "presbyteros." This word is translated "elder" throughout the gospels to refer to leaders in Israel. So it is borrowed from Jewish culture, and applied to the Christian church. John of course is Jewish, having been a disciple of Jesus. The Greek word borrowed from Greek culture that is also translated "elder" is "episkopos." They apply in the same way.

The job of elders is to protect the church, as a shepherd protects a flock of sheep. They are to serve as under-shepherds, for Jesus is the Chief Shepherd, and the church is His flock ([1 Peter 5:1-4](#)). John will exercise this function in this letter. John addresses the letter to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth. The term chosen lady likely refers to a church, and her children refers to those within the church, perhaps including those individuals who meet in homes within that city ([Romans 16:5](#); [1 Corinthians 16:19](#); [Colossians 4:15](#); [Philemon 1:2](#)).

This seems likely since John addressed himself as "elder," which is an appropriate position of authority to address a church, but not so much to address a particular woman. It also seems likely that this is a church based on John's phrase at the end of the letter: "the children of your chosen sister greet you." This phrase indicates that John is writing from another church, and is sending greetings from the "children" of that church, meaning those who attend the sister church. It seems out of context to think of the Apostle John sending greetings between two women and their children, while addressing a single person regarding false teaching.

It could well be that John used what sounds to us as an obscure greeting in order to protect the intended recipients from persecution, in the event that the letter is intercepted. The fact that this letter does not mention any names or places would also support this idea.

John calls this church the *chosen lady*. The word translated *chosen* is sometimes translated "elect." It is used throughout the New Testament to refer to believers' position with God. The word is used in the LXX (Greek translation of the Old Testament) to refer to something deliberately selected, as well as to indicate favor, as in the seven "favored/chosen" fat cows in the dream Joseph interpreted ([Genesis 41](#)). Both apply.

The Bible makes clear that each individual has a genuine choice whether to believe in Christ, a choice for which they will be held responsible ([John 3:14-16](#); [Acts 17:27](#)). But the Bible also maintains that God determines all things, including selecting believers before the foundation of the world ([Ephesians 1:4](#)). This fits the paradoxical nature of God, whose kingdom is the true and abiding kingdom, but not of this world, and who tells us that the way to save our life is to lose it, and the way to be first is to be last ([Matthew 16:25](#); [20:16](#)). His ways are higher than our ways, but they are also true, and right. It is up to us to do what we are given the responsibility to do, and that is to make the choice to trust God, to believe that what He says is in our best interest really is.

The Bible makes clear that all believers are justified in the sight of God as a matter of grace ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). Grace is God's favor, extended as a matter of His mercy. So the *lady* (church) could be *chosen* in the sense of having been granted favor in God's sight, and having received His mercy. In the instance of being justified in the sight of God, God extends His favor to those who believe in Jesus, because of what Jesus did on our behalf ([John 3:14-16](#)).

John says the believers in this church are those *whom I love in truth*. The fact that he adds "truth" to his expressed love for those in the church sets up the admonition he will soon make for the church to walk in the truth. It is not only John who loves this church *in truth*. This church is also loved by *all who know the truth*. John here is saying that if anyone actually knows the truth, then they will love this church *in truth*.

That will of course mean that anyone who tries to lead believers astray from the *truth* does not love them, but is preying upon them. The job of an elder, like John, is to shepherd the flock of believers, and protect them from being devoured by deceiving wolves, who desire to prey upon them. That means the job of an elder is based in truth. The true expression of love by an elder is to confront false teaching. It is to oppose what is false, and elevate what is true.

John gives a reason why both he, as well as *all who know the truth*, will love this church *in truth*. It is *for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever*. The truth *abides in*

us, because Christ abides in all believers. Clearly John is a believer in Christ, and is addressing a group who are believers in Christ. There is no doubt expressed to question whether they are in Christ or not. Quite the opposite. John insists that the truth abides "in us." By using "us," John includes the "children" of the church, as well as himself. Jesus Christ is the truth, and the truth both abides in them and will be with them forever.

John recorded these words of Jesus in his gospel:

"So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, 'If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.'"

(John 8:31-32)

This verse from the gospel of John indicates that we ingest the truth through drinking in "My word." Here in John's gospel, Jesus says "My word" in the singular, rather than "My words." This would indicate that "My word" is synonymous with Jesus. John indicates in 2 John that the truth which abides in us, is also truth that will be with us forever. Since the truth will be with us forever, it seems John is referring here to Jesus as the living truth. To know the truth is to know Jesus, and to know Jesus is to know the truth.

This introduces the primary topic of the letter: truth, and abiding in the truth in love. John's elder job is to protect the church from false teaching. And he does so by standing for the truth, and against false teaching.

John now gives a salutation, saying:

Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

John does not say this as a prayer, as do many letters. He makes a factual statement. He asserts that grace, mercy and peace will be with us. He does not wish or hope for grace, mercy and peace. He asserts that these things will be with us. This comes from God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father. And the grace, mercy and peace that John asserts will come to them will come in truth and love.

This is a theme of John's gospel, in which he writes: "For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ"

([John 1:17](#)).

Since grace and truth were realized through Jesus, then as believers walk with Jesus, we will walk in grace and truth. When we walk in Christ, *grace, mercy and peace will be with us*.

Grace is the Greek word "charis" and means "favor." Context determines who is giving favor to whom, and for what reason. "Charis" is translated "favor" in [Luke 2:52](#) to describe "favor" being given to Jesus by both God and men, because he was growing in wisdom and stature. God gives "favor" or **grace** to anyone who believes on Jesus, by bestowing the unmerited favor of forgiveness ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). But God also bestows favor, or grace ("charis") by exalting/rewarding those who humble themselves before Him ([1 Peter 5:5-6](#)). God never owes anyone favor, so God's favor is never merited in the sense that anyone can demand anything from God. But God does make clear what He honors, and promises to grant favor, or rewards, if we believe Him, and follow His ways.

Any time God bestows any favor upon us, it is an act of **mercy**. Paul prayed that Onesiphorus would be given mercy at the judgement seat of Christ for the good deeds he had done ([2 Timothy 1:18](#)). God never owes anyone. His rewards stem from His mercy. Thankfully, God is a God of mercy ([Psalm 86:15](#)).

The **peace** that the Jewish John states *will be with us* is likely the Jewish idea of "Shalom." This is used as a greeting in Israel to this day. It carries the idea of a holistic harmony of life, including all things spiritual as well as physical. John asserts that *grace, mercy and peace* will come to them all through *truth and love*. And that comes from *God the Father, and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father*. The church is a part of the Body of Christ. And we have all these blessings when we abide in Him.

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You can access the original article here: [2 John 1:1-3 Meaning](#)

Chuck Smith Study Guide for 2 John

v. 1 John refers to himself as "the elder."

We don't know the identity of the "elect lady" to whom this letter is addressed. The "truth" is central to the message of this letter.

[v. 5](#) The commandment to love was given to the believers at the beginning of Christ's ministry.

[v. 6](#) The commandment is to walk in love ([John 13:34](#)).

[v. 7](#) This should be translated "... who confess not that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh." Jehovah's Witnesses don't believe that Christ will come again in the flesh.

[v. 10](#) The doctrine John refers to is that Jesus is coming in the flesh and that we should worship the Father and the Son.

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Matthew Henry Commentary on 2 John 1

An Exposition, With Practical Observations, of

The Second Epistle of John

Chapter 1

The apostle here salutes an honourable matron and her children ([v. 1-3](#)). Recommends to them faith and love ([v. 5, 6](#)). Warns them of deceivers ([v. 7](#)), and to take heed to themselves ([v. 8](#)). Teaches how to treat those who bring not the doctrine of Christ ([v. 10, 11](#)). And, referring other things to personal discourse, concludes the epistle ([v. 12, 13](#)).

[2Jo 1:1-4](#)

Ancient epistles began, as here, with salutation and good wishes: religion consecrates, as far as may be, old forms, and turns compliments into real expressions of life and love. Here we have, as usually,

- I. The saluter, not expressed by name, but by a chosen character: *The elder*. The expression, and style, and love, intimate that the penman was the same with that of the foregoing epistle; he is now *the elder*, emphatically and eminently so; possibly the oldest apostle now living, the chief elder in the church of God. An elder in the ancient house of Israel was reverend, or to be revered, much more he who is so in the gospel Israel of God. An old disciple is honourable; and old apostle and leader of disciples is more so. He was now old in holy service and experience, had seen and tasted much of heaven, and was much nearer than when at first he believed.
- II. The saluted—a noble Christian matron, and her children: *To the elect lady and her children*. A lady, a person of eminent quality for birth, education, and estate. It is well that the gospel has got among such. It is a pity but lords and ladies should be acquainted with the Lord Christ and his religion. They

owe more to him than others do; though usually *not many noble are called*. Here is a pattern for persons of quality of the same sex. *The elect lady*; not only a choice one, but one chosen of God. It is lovely and beautiful to see ladies, by holy walking, demonstrate their election of God. *And her children*; probably the lady was a widow; she *and her children* then are the principal part of the family, and so this may be styled an economical epistle. Families may well be written to and encouraged, and further directed in their domestic love, and order, and duties. We see that children may well be taken notice of in Christian letters, and they should know it too; it may avail to their encouragement and caution. Those who love and commend them will be apt to enquire after them. This *lady and her children* are further notified by the respect paid them, and that,

- 1. By the apostle himself: *Whom I love in the truth*, or in truth, whom I sincerely and heartily love. He who was the beloved disciple had learnt the art or exercise of love; and he especially loved those who loved him, that Lord who loved him.
- 2. By all her Christian acquaintance, all the religious who knew her: *And not I only, but also all those that have known the truth*. virtue and goodness in an elevated sphere shine brightly. Truth demands acknowledgment, and those who see the evidences of pure religion should confess and attest them; it is a good sign and great duty to love and value religion in others. The ground of this love and respect thus paid to this lady and her children was their regard to the truth: *For the truth's sake* (or true religion's sake) *which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever*. Christian love is founded upon the appearance of vital religion. Likeness should beget affection. Those who love truth and piety in themselves should love it in others too, or love others upon the account of it. The apostle and the other Christians loved this lady, not so much for her honour as her holiness; not so much for her bounty as her serious Christianity. We should not be religious merely by fits and starts, in certain moods and moons; but religion should still dwell within us, in our minds and hearts, in our faith and love. It is to be hoped that where religion once truly dwells it will abide for ever. The Spirit of Christianity, we may suppose, will not be totally extinguished: *Which shall be with us for ever*.
- III. The salutation, which is indeed an apostolical benediction: *Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love*, v. 3. Sacred love pours out blessings upon this honourable Christian family; to those who have shall more be given. Observe,
 - 1. From whom these blessings are craved,
 - (1.) *From God the Father*, the God of all grace. He is the fountain of blessedness, and of all the blessings that must bring us thither.
 - (2.) *From the Lord Jesus Christ*. He is also author and communicator of these heavenly blessings, and he is distinguished by this emphatic character-*the Son of the Father*; such a Son as none else can be; such a Son as is *the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*, who, with the Father, is also *eternal life*, 1 Jn. 1:2.

- 2. What the apostle craves from these divine persons.
 - (1.) Grace-divine favour and good-will, the spring of all good things: it is grace indeed that any spiritual blessing should be conferred on sinful mortals.
 - (2.) Mercy-free pardon and forgiveness; those who are already rich in grace have need of continual forgiveness.
 - (3.) Peace-tranquility of spirit and serenity of conscience, in an assured reconciliation with God, together with all safe and sanctified outward prosperity. And these are desired in truth and love, either by sincere and ardent affection in the saluter (in faith and love he prays them from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ), or as productive of continued truth and love in the saluted; these blessings will continually preserve true faith and love in the elect lady and her children; and may they do so!
- IV. The congratulation upon the prospect of the exemplary behaviour of other children of this excellent lady. Happy parent, who was blessed with such a numerous religious offspring! I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in the truth, as we have received commandment from the Father, v. 4. Possibly the lady's sons travelled abroad, either for accomplishment and acquaintance with the world, or on the account of their own business or the common affairs of the family, and in their travels might come to Ephesus, where the apostle is supposed to have now resided, and might there happily converse with him. See how good it is to be trained up to early religion! Though religion is not to be founded upon education, yet education may be and often is blessed, and is the way to fortify youth against irreligious infection. Hence too let young travellers learn to carry their religion along with them, and not either leave it at home or learn the ill customs of the countries where they come. It may be observed, also, that sometimes election runs in a direct line; here we have an elect lady, and her elect children; children may be beloved for their parents' sake, but both by virtue of free grace. From the apostle's joy herein we may observe that it is pleasant to see children treading in good parent's steps; and those who see this may well congratulate their parents thereupon, and that both to excite their thankfulness to God for, and to enlarge their comfort in, so great a blessing. How happy a lady was this, who had brought forth so many children for heaven and for God! And how great a joy must it be to her ladyship to hear so good an account of them from so good a judge! And we may further see that it is joyful to good old ministers, and accordingly to other good old disciples, to see a hopeful rising generation, who may serve God and support religion in the world when they are dead and gone. We see here also the rule of true walking: the commandment of the Father. Then is our walk true, our converse right, when it is managed by the word of God.

2Jo 1:5-6

We come now more into the design and substance of the epistle; and here we have,

- I. The apostle's request: Now, I beseech thee, lady. Considering what it is that he entreats, the way of address is very remarkable; it is not any particular boon or bounty to himself, but common duty and

observance of divine command. Here he might command or charge; but harsher measures are worse than needless where milder will prevail; and the apostolical spirit is, of all other, the most tender and endearing. Whether out of deference to her ladyship, or apostolical meekness, or both, he condescends to beseech: *And now I beseech thee, lady.* He may be supposed speaking as another apostle does to a certain master to whom he writes: *Wherefore, though I might be very bold in Christ* (and according to the power with which Christ hath entrusted me) *to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet, for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such a one as the aged, the elder.* Love will avail where authority will not; and we may often see that the more authority is urged the more it is slighted. The apostolical minister will love and beseech his friends into their duty.

- II. The thing requested of *the lady and her children*-Christian sacred love: *That we love one another,* [v. 5](#). Those that are eminent in any Christian virtue have yet room to grow therein. *But, as touching brotherly love, you need not that I write unto you; for you yourselves are taught of God to love one another. But we beseech you, brethren* (and sisters), *that you increase more and more,* [1 Th. 4:9, 10](#).
 - 1. This love is recommended,
 - (1.) From the obligation thereto-*the commandment.* Divine command should sway our mind and heart.
 - (2.) From the antiquity of the obligation: *Not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning,* [v. 5](#). This commandment of mutual Christian love may be said to be a *new* one in respect of its new enaction and sanction by the Lord Christ; but yet, as to the matter of it (mutual holy love), it is as old as natural, Jewish, or Christian religion. This commandment must every where attend Christianity, that the disciples of it must love one another.
 - 2. Then this love is illustrated from the fruitful nature of it: *And this is love, that we walk after his commandments,* [v. 5](#). This is the test of our love to God, our obedience to him. This is love to ourselves, to our own souls, that we walk in obedience to divine commands. *In keeping them there is great reward.* This is love to one another, to engage one another to walk in holiness; and this is the evidence of our sincere, mutual, Christian love-that we (in other things) walk after God's commands. There may be mutual love that is not religious and Christian; but we know ours to be so, by our attendance to all other commands besides that of mutual love. Universal obedience is the proof of the goodness and sincerity of Christian virtues; and those that aim at all Christian obedience will be sure to attend to Christian love. This is a fundamental duty in the gospel-charter: *This is the commandment, that, as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it* ([v. 6](#)), that is, walk in this love. The foresight of the decay of this love, as well as of other apostasy, might engage the apostle to inculcate this duty, and this primordial command, the more frequently, the more earnestly.

[2Jo 1:7-9](#)

In this principal part of the epistle we find,

- I. The ill news communicated to the lady-seducers are abroad: For many deceivers have entered into the world. This report is introduced by a particle that bespeaks a reason of the report. "You have need to maintain your love, for there are destroyers of it in the world. Those who subvert the faith destroy the love; the common faith is one ground of the common love;" or, "You must secure your walk according to the commands of God; this will secure you. Your stability is likely to be tried, for many deceivers have entered into the world." Sad and saddening news may be communicated to our Christian friends; not that we should love to make them sorry, but to fore-warn is the way to fore-arm them against their trials. Now here is,
 - 1. The description of the deceiver and his deceit-he confesses not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh (v. 7); he brings some error or other concerning the person of the Lord Jesus; he either confesses not that Jesus Christ is the same person, or that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the anointed of God, the Messiah promised of old for the redemption of Israel, or that the promised Messiah and Redeemer has come in the flesh, or into the flesh, into our world and into our nature; such a one pretends that he is yet to be expected. Strange that after such evidence any should deny that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God and Saviour of the world!
 - 2. The aggravation of the case-such a one is a deceiver and an antichrist (v. 7); he deludes souls and undermines the glory and kingdom of the Lord Christ. He must be an impostor, a wilful deceiver, after all the light that has been afforded, and all the evidence that Christ has given concerning himself, and the attestation God has given concerning his Son; and he is a wilful opposer of the person, and honour, and interest of the Lord Christ, and as such shall be reckoned with when the Lord Christ comes again. Let us not think it strange that there are deceivers and opposers of the Lord Christ's name and dignity now, for there were such of old, even in the apostle's times.
- II. The counsel given to this elect household hereupon. Now care and caution are needful: Look to yourselves, v. 8. The more deceivers and deceits abound, the more watchful the disciples must be. Delusions may so prevail that even the elect may be endangered thereby. Two things they must beware of:-
 - 1. That they lose not what they have wrought (v. 8), what they have done or what they have gained. It is a pity that any religious labour should be in vain; some begin well, but at last lose all their pains. The hopeful gentleman, who had kept the commands of the second table from his youth up, lost all for want of less love to the world and more love to Christ. Professors should take care not to lose what they have gained. Many have not only gained a fair reputation for religion, but much light therein, much conviction of the evil of sin, the vanity of the world, the excellency of religion, and the power of God's word. They have even tasted of the powers of the world to come, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit; and yet at last lose all. You did run well, who hindered you, that you should not obey (or not go on to obey) the truth? Sad it is that fair and splendid attainments in the school of Christ should all be lost at last.

- o 2. That they lose not their reward, none of it, no portion of that honour, or praise, or glory that they once stood fair for. That we (or you, as in some copies) receive a full reward. "Secure you as full a reward as will be given to any in the church of God; if there are degrees of glory, lose none of that grace (that light, or love, or peace) which is to prepare you for the higher elevation in glory. Hold fast that which thou hast (in faith, and hope, and a good conscience), that no man take thy crown, that thou neither lose it nor any jewel out of it," Rev. 3:11. The way to attain the full reward is to abide true to Christ, and constant in religion to the end.
- III. The reason of the apostle's counsel, and of their care and caution about themselves, which is twofold:-
 - o 1. The danger and evil of departure from gospel light and revelation; it is in effect and reality a departure from God himself: Whosoever transgresseth (transgresseth at this dismal rate), and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. It is the doctrine of Christ that is appointed to guide us to God; it is that whereby God draws souls to salvation and to himself. Those who revolt thence, in so doing revolt from God.
 - o 2. The advantage and happiness of firm adherence to Christian truth; it unites us to Christ (the object or subject-matter of that truth), and thereby to the Father also; for they are one. He that abideth (rooted and grounded) in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. By the doctrine of Christ we are enlightened in the knowledge of the Father and the Son; by it we are sanctified for the Father and the Son; thereupon we are enriched with holy love to the Father and the Son; and thereby prepared for the endless enjoyment of the Father and the Son. Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken to you, Jn. 15:3. This purity makes meet for heaven. The great God, as he has set his seal to the doctrine of Christ, so he puts a value upon it. We must retain that holy doctrine in faith and love, as we hope or desire to arrive at blessed communion with the Father and the Son.

2Jo 1:10-11

Here,

- I. Upon due warning given concerning seducers, the apostle gives direction concerning the treatment of such. They are not to be entertained as the ministers of Christ. The Lord Christ will distinguish them from such, and so would he have his disciples. The direction is negative.
 - o 1. "Support them not: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine (concerning Christ as the Son of God, the Messiah and anointed of God for our redemption and salvation), receive him not into your house." Possibly this lady was like Gaius, of whom we read in the next epistle, a generous housekeeper, and hospitable entertainer of travelling ministers and Christians. These deceivers might possibly expect the same reception with others, or with the best who came there (as the blind are often bold enough), but the apostle allows it not: "Do not welcome them into your family." Doubtless such may be relieved in their pressing necessities, but not encouraged for ill service. Deniers of the

faith are destroyers of souls; and it is supposed that even ladies themselves should have good understanding in the affairs of religion.

- 2. "Bless not their enterprises: Neither bid him God speed. Attend not their service with your prayers and good wishes." Bad work should not be consecrated or recommended to the divine benediction. God will be no patron of falsehood, seduction, and sin. We ought to bid God speed to evangelical ministration; but the propagation of fatal error, if we cannot prevent, we must not dare to countenance. Then,
- II. Here is the reason of such direction, forbidding the support and patronage of the deceiver: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. Favour and affection partake of the sin. We may be sharers in the iniquities of others. How judicious and how cautious should the Christian be! There are many ways of sharing the guilt of other people's transgressions; it may be done by culpable silence, indolence, unconcernedness, private contribution, public countenance and assistance, inward approbation, open apology and defence. The Lord pardon our guilt of other persons' sins!

[2Jo 1:12-13](#)

The apostle concludes this letter,

- 1. With an adjournment of many things to personal conference: Having many things to write unto you I would not write with paper and ink; but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. Here it is supposed that some things are better spoken than written. The use of pen and ink may be a mercy and a pleasure; but a personal interview may be more so. The apostle was not yet too old for travel, nor consequently for travelling service. The communion of saints should be by all methods maintained; and their communion should tend to their mutual joy. Excellent ministers may have their joy advanced by their Christian friends. That I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me, [Rom. 1:12](#).
- 2. With the presentation of service and salutation from some near relations to the lady: The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Grace was abundant towards this family; here are two elect sisters, and probably their elect children. How will they admire this grace in heaven! The apostle condescends to insert the nieces' duty (as we should call it), or dutiful salutation, to their aunt. The duty of inferior relations is to be cherished. Doubtless the apostle was easy of access, and would admit all friendly and pious communication, and was ready to enhance the good lady's joy in her nieces as well as in her children. May there be many such gracious ladies rejoicing in their gracious descendants and other relations! Amen.

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Jamieson, Fausset & Brown
Introduction to 2 John

The Second and Third Epistles General of John

Commentary by A. R. FAUSSET

INTRODUCTION

AUTHENTICITY.--That these two Epistles were written by the same author appears from their similarity of tone, style, and sentiments. That John, the beloved disciple, was the author of the Second and Third Epistles, as of the First Epistle, appears from IRENAEUS [*Against Heresies*, 1.16.3], who quotes [2Jo 1:10, 11](#); and in [3.16.8], he quotes [2Jo 1:7](#), mistaking it, however, as if occurring in First John. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA (A.D. 192) [*Miscellanies*, 2.66], implies his knowledge of other Epistles of John besides the First Epistle; and in fragments of his *Adumbrations* [p. 1011], he says, "John's Second Epistle which was written to the virgins (*Greek*, "*parthenous*"; perhaps *Parthos* is what was meant) is the simplest; but it was written to a certain Babylonian named *the Elect lady*." DIONYSIUS OF ALEXANDRIA (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 7.25]) observes that John never names himself in his Epistles, "not even in the Second and Third Epistles, although they are short Epistles, but simply calls himself the presbyter, a confutation of those who think John *the apostle* distinct from John *the presbyter*." ALEXANDER OF ALEXANDRIA cites [2Jo 1:10, 11](#), as John's [SOCRATES, *Ecclesiastical History*, 1.6]. CYPRIAN [*Concerning the Baptism of Heretics*], in referring to the bishops at the Council of Carthage, says, "John the apostle, in His Epistle, has said, if any come to you" ([2Jo 1:10](#)); so that this Epistle, and therefore its twin sister, Third John, was recognized as apostolic in the North African Church. The MURATORI fragment is ambiguous. The Second and Third Epistles were not in the *Peschito* or old *Syriac* version; and COSMAS INDICOPLEUSTES in the sixth century says that in his time the Syriac Church only acknowledged three of the Catholic Epistles, First Peter, First John, and James. But EPHREM THE SYRIAN quotes the Second Epistle of John. EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*,] reckons both Epistles among the *Antilegomena* or *controverted* Scriptures, as distinguished from the *Homologoumena* or *universally acknowledged* from the first. Still his own opinion was that the two minor Epistles were genuine, remarking, as he does in *Demonstration of the Gospel* [3.5], that in John's "*Epistles*" he does not mention his own name, nor call himself an apostle or evangelist, but an "elder" ([2Jo 1:1](#) [3Jo 1:1](#)). ORIGEN (in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25]) mentions the Second and Third Epistles, but adds, "*not all* admit (implying that *most* authorities do) their genuineness." JEROME [*On Illustrious Men*, 9] mentions the two latter Epistles as attributed to John the presbyter, whose sepulcher was shown among the Ephesians in his day. But the designation "elder" was used of the apostles by others (for example, PAPIAS, in EUSEBIUS [*Ecclesiastical History*, 3.39]), and is used by Peter, an apostle, of himself ([1Pe 5:1](#)). Why, then, should not John also use this designation of himself, in consonance with the humility which leads him not to name himself or his apostleship even in the First Epistle? The *Antilegomena* were generally recognized as canonical soon after the Council of Nicea (A.D. 325). Thus CYRIL OF JERUSALEM, A.D. 349, enumerates fourteen Epistles of Paul, and seven Catholic Epistles. So GREGORY NAZIANZEN, in A.D. 389. The Councils of Hippo, 393, and Carthage, 397, adopted a catalogue of New Testament books exactly agreeing with our canon. So our oldest extant *Greek* manuscripts. The Second and Third Epistles of John, from their brevity (which ORIGEN notices), and the private nature of their contents, were less generally read in the earliest Christian assemblies and were also less quoted by the Fathers; hence arose their non-universal recognition at the first. Their private nature makes them the less likely to be spurious, for there seems no purpose in their forgery. The style and coloring too accord with the style of the First Epistle.

TO WHOM ADDRESSED.--The Third Epistle is directed to Gaius or Caius; whether Gaius of Macedonia ([Act 19:20](#)), or Gaius of Corinth ([Rom 16:23](#) [1Cr 1:14](#)), or Gaius of Derbe ([Act 20:4](#)), it is hard to decide. MILL believes Gaius, bishop of Pergamos [*Apostolic Constitutions*, 7.40], to be the person addressed in [3Jo 1:1](#).

The address of the Second Epistle is more disputed. It opens, "The elder unto the Elect lady" ([2Jo 1:1](#)). And it closes, "The children of thy elect sister greet thee" ([2Jo 1:13](#)). Now, [1Pe 1:1, 2](#), addresses the elect in Asia, &c., and closes ([1Pe 5:13](#)), "The Church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you." Putting together these facts, with the quotations (above) from CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, and the fact that the word "Church" comes from a Greek word (kyriake) cognate to the Greek for "lady" (kyria; "belonging to the Lord," kyrios); WORDSWORTH'S view is probable. As Peter in Babylon had sent the salutations of the elect Church in the then Parthian (see above on CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA) Babylon to her elect sister in Asia, so John, the metropolitan president of the elect Church in Asia, writes to the elect lady, that is, Church, in Babylon. NEANDER, ALFORD, and others, think the Greek "kyria" not to mean "lady," but to be her proper name; and that she had a "sister, a Christian matron," then with John.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING.--EUSEBIUS [[Ecclesiastical History](#), 3.25] relates that John, after the death of Domitian, returned from his exile in Patmos to Ephesus, and went on missionary tours into the heathen regions around, and also made visitations of the churches around, and ordained bishops and clergy. Such journeys are mentioned, [2Jo 1:12](#) [3Jo 1:10, 14](#). If EUSEBIUS be right, both Epistles must have been written after the Apocalypse, in his old age, which harmonizes with the tone of the Epistles, and in or near Ephesus. It was on one of his visitation tours that he designed to rebuke Diotrephes ([3Jo 1:9, 10](#)).

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