

THE SECOND LETTER OF JOHN

Continue to live in truth and love

By Mark Paynter Th.D

Introduction (2 John 1)

The subject matter and style of this letter indicates that the author, who refers to himself simply as the elder, is John the apostle.

In both his first and second letters John addresses the rise of false teaching within the church, both letters were probably written somewhere between 85 and 95 A.D.

John writes to the elect lady and her children, this is a metaphor for the church and her members.

John writes on the behalf of others who share in his knowledge of the truth and his love.

The truth finds expression in love.

John truly loves those he writes to, he writes to encourage his readers to continue in love and truth in even though false teaching had begun to emerge in the churches.

The Truth of God (2 John 2-3).

John also writes on behalf of the truth.

The truth abides in us and always will be with us, the truth has taken up permanent residence in us and will always love us.

The truth 's love living in us is the basis for us being able to love.

God is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, the son of God.

God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are both the source of grace, mercy and peace. John prays that his audience will experience the grace, mercy and peace of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ,

John earnestly desires his readers to live strengthened and surrounded by an atmosphere of truth and love as expressed in grace, mercy and peace.

Truth is the person of Jesus Christ, and “combination of factual knowledge regarding the Word of God and personal knowledge of Jesus Christ.”¹ “Truth finding expression in “authentic Christian love involves more than emotional sentimentality”.²

¹ *King James Version study Bible*. (1997). (electronic ed., 2 Jn 1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

² Criswell, W. A., Patterson, P., Clendenen, E. R., Akin, D. L., Chamberlin, M., Patterson, D. K., & Pogue, J. (Eds.). (1991). *Believer's Study Bible* (electronic ed., 2 Jn 1). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Love is the unselfish giving of oneself to someone else. “Love for God stimulates obedience. Obedience indicates love. Love for others is both an overflow of our love for God and an obedient response to His command to love one another.”³

Grace is the absolute free expression of the undeserved unmerited favour, loving kindness, and empowerment of God “to men finding its only motive in the bounty and benevolence of the Giver”.⁴

Mercy is the activity and compassion of God in which he seeks to remedy the misery caused by sin in forgiveness.

Peace is restored harmonious relationship with God and others who love the Lord. Those who live in this restoration state enjoy benefits such as healing, inner harmony, and having one’s needs met in such a way that they have ability to give to others.

To Walk in Truth is To Obey The Commands of Christ (2 John 4-6)

John is so thrilled to learn that the church’s members are walking in truth that he rejoices greatly.

By walking in truth, they were obeying a command of the Father. “To “walk in truth” includes accepting the veracity of the Christian message and endeavoring to obey it”⁵ (2 John 4).

John asks them to continue to love one another. This was not a new commandment to them but a reminder of something that they heard and followed from the beginning (2 John 5).

Love is the full expression of the commandments, the same commandment that they had always known, to obey the commandments is to walk in love (2 John 6).

The Deceivers (2 John 7-8)

Be aware there are many deceivers who have come into the world.

“The word deceiver implies much more than teaching false doctrine. It also includes leading people into wrong living. John has already made it clear that truth and life go together. What we believe determines how we behave. Wrong doctrine and wrong living always go together.”⁶

The world has been corrupted, filled with the tellers of lies and commissioners of fraud who refuse to believe and teach that the divine son of God, Jesus Christ who is God has become human.

³ Richards, L. O. (1991). *The Bible reader’s companion* (electronic ed., p. 897). Wheaton: Victor Books.

⁴ Zodhiates, S. (2000). *The complete word study dictionary: New Testament* (electronic ed.). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

⁵ Criswell, W. A., Patterson, P., Clendenen, E. R., Akin, D. L., Chamberlin, M., Patterson, D. K., & Pogue, J. (Eds.). (1991). *Believer’s Study Bible* (electronic ed., 2Jn 4). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

⁶ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *The Bible exposition commentary* (Vol. 2, p. 537). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Those who proclaim this message and the message they proclaim are deceivers.

Therefore, true believers must pay and take careful attention to themselves, presumably by not being deceived themselves, not to believe this false message lest they lose their full reward, the very thing that they had been faithfully working towards (2 John 8).

Jesus the God man (2 John 9)

The true doctrine of Christ is that he himself is the God man, God incarnate in human flesh.

To drift and fall away from this teaching is to transgress by not living in this truth. To not live in this truth is not to have God, it is to abandon God.

However, people who continue to hold this doctrine, prove that they have a genuine relationship with God the Father and with the Son (2 John 9).

Do Not Receive Those Who Deny the Doctrine of Christ (2 John 10-11)

If you meet a person who does not teach that Christ in himself is the God man, God incarnate in human flesh, do not receive that person into your home, just simply bid them farewell and refuse to have anything to do with them.

If a person does welcome the teacher of this false doctrine, they have become a participant in this evil work.

John's intentions (2 John 12)

John has many other things he would like to write about, but has chosen not to include them in this letter. John hopes to come to them and speak to them face to face, this is something he looks forward to because at that time he will experience great delight and joy.

Final Greetings (2 John 13)

The members of the church, from which John writes sends those who will receive the letter their greetings.

Summary

Those who know the truth that Jesus Christ, the god man, was sent by God the Father to be God on earth in human form know the love of God and walk in love, they experience fellowship with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Such people enter a personal intimate relationship with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ and become recipients of truth, love, grace, mercy and peace. They extend love to others, by being open and hospitable to one another and fulfilling the commandments of the Lord which Jesus himself summarised as "to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and with all thy strength" and "to love thy neighbour as thyself".

This truth is so important that we are not to have anything to do with anyone who claims to be a teacher and does not teach this truth. This is because by not teaching true doctrine they have denied the very nature of the Lord Jesus Christ.

