

2 JOHN

INTRODUCTION

This brief letter was written by John to a godly mother and her children, who shows great hospitality to those of the Christian church. Some have even suggested that this “elect lady” is not an individual at all, but is the personification of the local church. Her children are the members of that church; and the children of her “elect sister” are the members of the local church in the place from which John is writing. Regardless of which way it is, this is the only book in the Bible addressed to a woman.

The word “truth” is found five times in this short letter of fourteen verses, and also is the key word. The word “love” occurs four times; truth and love are inseparable.

It is taught here that we must test all the teachings in the world by the Scriptures, *for the truth’s sake* (v. 2). The truth that John speaks of is from above—the Truth as it is in the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides learning the truth, we are to walk by it—then we will love one another (v. 5). This love is genuine, pure and not subject to change. *The love of Christ constrains us* (2 Cor. 5:14). And the proof of our love is in our walk *This is love; that we walk after His commandments* (v. 6).

2 John 1-4

John addresses this sister in terms of the tenderest regard, and yet as a regard sacredly guarded. "Whom I love in the truth . . . because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever" (1-2). This is a love that is founded on spiritual bonds, and will be as lasting as the truth itself, which is eternal.

We have an example of a Christian family, for this sister had children and John especially refers to them that they were walking in the truth. And so it is the privilege of the child of God to claim the same salvation for his family as for himself. "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household" (Acts 16:31). And yet not all her children were saved, for the expression here is, "It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth" (2 John 4); that is, I found many of your children; but there were still some lost lambs even in this fold, that no doubt, a mother's faith and an apostle's faith were gently and patiently bringing in.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

How do you deal with members of your family that do not know the Lord?

2 John 5-8

Next there is an example of a true Christian life. Two things especially enter into it, practical obedience and holy aspiration. Christian life is first of all obedience to God. For "this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love" (6). But it is not all plod. There is a lofty plane of noble ambition and a great reward to win. And so he adds: "Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully" (8). There is a prize to be obtained and a constant vigilance and courage are essential to the victory, and the final recompense.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

The Holy Spirit enables us to know truth. The more truth we know the more we can love one another and love Jesus who is truth. **Is there something we should be doing to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18)**

John 7:17 John 13:34 Gal. 5:22 Eph. 4:15 1 John 2:7-11

2 John 9-13

We are specially taught here our attitude toward error and evil. The Antichrist is described in almost the same terms as we noted in the first epistle, and all who bring false doctrine are to be avoided and renounced so distinctly that we can have no complicity with their errors nor responsibility for their evil courses. This is a most emphatic and needed prohibition. "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work" (10-11). We cannot be partners in error. We cannot cooperate with those with whom we are not of one accord. It is not enough merely to love the Lord, but we must hate evil. We cannot say God bless you to every person with whom we talk or pray. We are to lay hold suddenly on no man nor are we to be partakers of other men's sins. But we must always take such a stand in gentleness and love.

(The Christ in the Bible Commentary, A. B. Simpson)

Peter, Jude and also John have strongly warned us about "fellowshipping" with deceivers who have changed the pure truth of the Gospel message into falsehood by either adding to it or subtracting from it. **Can you find a verse where God Himself has warned us about this? Also, tell us what is the final outcome for those deceivers.**