



The Epistle of Love ***“Love and Truth”*** **The Epistle of Second John**

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The cry of the contemporary church is for “Christian unity,” even at the expense of “Biblical truth!”

- But when Christians compromise truth for the sake of unity, both truth and unity are destroyed, and we are living in the result of that error today.
- In his second epistle, John warns a specific lady to guard against helping false teachers spread their heresy by not offering them hospitality in her home.
- His main goal, however, is to exalt the truth of the Word of God, for the test of true fellowship is “sound doctrine” – not human love!

“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.”

2 John 6

There are seven references to this concept of “love and truth” in these 13 verses:

1. Loving the Truth – Verse 1 – *“To the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth!”*

- “Elect” – because God had chosen her to receive His gift of salvation and eternal life.
- “Lady” – because she was known to exercise gracious hospitality to all who came to her door.
- “Children” – because they had also confessed their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord.
- “Love in truth” – John probably led this woman to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, therefore he loved her because of their common faith in Jesus Christ.
- John makes it clear that the unquestionable evidence of our own relationship with God is manifested in our love to one another.
- But he also makes it clear that our “love” for others must flow from the “truth” of God’s word, otherwise, it is nothing but human emotion.

2. Knowing the Truth – Verse 1 – *“And not I only, but also all they that have known the truth!”*

- Many evangelists, pastors, and preachers had sat at this “lady’s” table and enjoyed her hospitality.
- Her house had become their home, and her family their family, because of their common faith in Christ.

3. Abiding in Truth – Verse 2 – *“For the truth’s sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever!”*

- In the first two points, John says Christians are **united with each other** in the same truth about Jesus Christ.
- In this third point, John says Christians are **indwelt with the truth** about Jesus Christ, motivating us to do what we know to be true according to God’s Word.
- We obey God for the sake of the truth!

“But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth!”

1st Timothy 3:15

4. Blessed by the Truth – Verse 3 – *“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!”*

- “Grace, Mercy, and Peace” was the most common benediction in the New Testament Church.
 - “Grace” – God’s forgiveness for our sin.
 - “Mercy” – God’s deliverance from our misery.
 - “Peace” – God’s gift of reconciliation through Jesus Christ.
- John made it clear that those three blessings are given to the believer when the truth of the gospel is received, and not until.

5. Walking in Truth – Verse 4 – “*I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth!*”

- John said God’s truth not only unites us and indwells us, it also controls us.
- John said he had witnessed this lady’s children “walking” in the truth they had heard from their mother’s lips, and modeled by their mother’s life.
- In essence, she had given them a “biblical world view”: a grid or pattern through which they could make their decisions and obey God’s commandments.
- God’s word is settled forever – **“His truth endureth to all generations!”** (Psalm 100:5)
- When the Church relaxes the standards of that truth in order to make it more acceptable to the people, it has not changed the truth, it has denied it and disobeyed it, and not without serious consequences.

6. Guarding the Truth – Verse 7-8 – “*For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward!*”

- If we love the truth and want to live by the truth, we must be careful not to, in any way, embrace those who, in any way, deny the truth, or else we run the risk of losing sight of the truth.
- In John’s day, the false teachers would ask to stay in the homes of the people just as the true evangelists would. Once settled, they would begin their work of subversion against the gospel.
- John warned the “lady” to let “sound doctrine” be the test of fellowship, for they should have no fellowship with deceivers.

7. Guided by the Truth – Verse 10-11 – “*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed, for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds!*”

- In John’s day, “hospitality” was not only expected but required of those who served as leaders in the church.
- John exhorted this “lady” to welcome the true pastors openly and “send them on their way in a worthy manner” so she could be a part of God’s work in them.
- John also warned her not to greet a false teacher at the door, lest she become a part of his evil deception.
- The Bible warns us not to receive those people into our homes who have a different concept of the Christian Faith into our homes.

“We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition he received of us!”

2 Thessalonians 3:6