

# 2 JOHN

**Author :**

John one of the original apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Date :**

Probably sometimes between 85 and 95 AD.

**Theme :**

Some scholars think that John is writing to a church which he speaks of figuratively as "the elect lady." Others think he is writing to a Christian woman and her children (this seems a more likely view). In either case what he writes has the same value for us. Two key words are "truth" and "love." There is a very severe warning about false teachers in verses 7-11, and we would all do well to pay close attention to it.

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1 The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all those who have known the truth; 2 for the truth's sake, which dwells in us, and will be with us forever. 3 Grace be with you, *and* mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 I greatly rejoiced because I found some of your children walking in truth, *just* as we have received a command from the Father.

5 And now I urge you, lady (not as though I wrote a new command to you, but that which we had from the beginning), that we love one another.

6 And this is love: that we walk according to his commands. This is the command: just as you have

heard from the beginning you should walk in *love*.

7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Watch yourselves so that we do not lose those things which we have worked for, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresses, and does not remain in the teachings of Christ, does not have God. He who remains in the teachings of Christ has both the Father and the Son.

10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not greet him. 11 For he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.

**1** "Elder" – John does not call himself an apostle (though of course he was one). The apostles were called elders by others and sometimes referred to themselves as elders (1 Pet 5:1). The word indicates both mature years and leadership in the Church.

"Elect" – the Greek word may also be translated "chosen" (Matt 24:22,24,31; Rom 8:33; Eph 1:4; Col 3:12; 1 Pet 1:1; 2:9; etc).

"Lady" – the Greek here is Kyria and was a common personal name. John was writing to a well-known believer and her children.

"I love in the truth" – his love was not human emotion or mere natural affection but divine love (agape – note at 1 Cor 13:1). And this love is always based on the truth. "Truth" here is the same as the message of Christ (John 1:17). Believers love each other because of their mutual devotion to the truth God has revealed.

**2** "Dwells in us" – believers in Christ do more than acknowledge the truth with their minds. They welcome the truth into their hearts, and the truth remains there to influence all their behavior. Compare Ps 51:6. And Christ, who is the truth (John 14:6) is in them.

"Forever" – John was confident that truth once fully implanted in the believer's heart would remain to eternity.

**3** 1 Tim 1:2.

"The Son of the Father" – observe how John distinguishes between the Father and Christ. Christ is not the Father. The Father is not Christ. They exist in eternity as two distinct persons in the one Godhead. See v 9 also. See notes on Father, Son, and Trinity at Matt 3:16,17; 5:16; 28:19; John 3:16; 17:1; etc.

"Grace", "mercy", and "peace" are what make Christian life and service possible. Grace is the fountain in God's heart; mercy is grace poured out; peace is the result.

**4** "Very glad" – we can learn much about the character of a person by what gives him joy.

"Walking in truth" – believing God's truth and putting it into practice. Compare John 8:31,32.

"Command from the Father" – compare

Deut 5:33; 10:12; 1 Kings 2:3; Isa 30:21; Jer 6:16. God's command to repent (Acts 17:30) is a command to forsake all evil and all lies and deception and to walk in the truth.

**5** John 13:34.

**6** John 14:15,21,23. It is useless and deceptive to think or say we love God if we do not do what He tells us to do.

**7** "Deceivers" – compare Matt 24:4,24; Rom 16:18; 2 Cor 11:13-15. They come from the chief of all deceivers (Rev 12:9).

"In the flesh" – John 1:14. Christ became a man with real human nature (Heb 2:14,17). In fact, He still has it, now risen from the dead and glorified, and He will come again with it.

"Antichrist" – 1 John 2:18,22; 4:3 – an opponent of Christ who tries to take Christ's place.

**8** By listening to false teachers and falling under their influence true believers will not lose their salvation, but they may lose everything else. Compare Rev 3:11; 2 Tim 2:5; 1 Cor 9:27.

"Full reward" – Rev 22:12.

**9** Some people believe they are advanced thinkers and can leave the truth of Christ behind. Such people only reveal that they are without God. Compare 1 John 2:19.

"Remains" – John 8:32; 2 Tim 3:14. Those who continue in the truth reveal that God is in them.

"Both" – v 3 – evidently refers to more than one person.

**10** "If anyone comes" – he is speaking of those who teach something other than what Christ taught. We must not welcome false teachers into our homes or have any fellowship with them anywhere. We should not even greet them (compare 2 Cor 6:15; Rom 16:17). If we do, we place ourselves in danger, and give the impression to others that their teaching may not be so bad after all.

**11** "Evil deeds" – this is what teaching contrary to Christ's teaching really is. In fact, it is some of the most evil work possible to men. Believers must have no share in it, or seem to have a share in it, or help it in any way.

12 Having many things to write to you, I would not *write* with paper and ink, but I trust to come to you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

13 The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.

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**12** "Joy" – this is the joy of true Christian fellowship in the truth. Compare 1 John 1:4.

**13** Evidently her sister was a believer and this sister's children were living in the same city where John was at the time.