

## **Study of 2 John (November 27, 2016)**

Reference: Willmington's Guide to the Bible, 1981, Dr H L Willmington  
The Transformation Study Bible, 2009, Dr Warren W Wiersbe

Theme Verse: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." (vs. 4)

### Introduction

1. This is the only book in the Bible addressed to a woman.
2. It holds the same place in John's writings that Philemon holds in Paul's epistles.
3. It is the shortest book in the entire Bible.
4. John does not mention his own name or the name of this woman. This may have been done to prevent persecution from the Roman authorities of the time, who viewed Christianity as an unlawful religion.

### Overview

The rapid spread of the church in the first century often created local situations in which those with wrong spiritual agendas moved in and tried to take over. The apostate teachers not only invaded the churches but they also tried to influence Christian homes. Titus faced this problem in Crete (Titus 1:10-11) and Timothy faced it in Ephesus (2 Timothy 3:6). As goes the home, so goes the church and the nation; thus, the family is an important target in Satan's war against the truth.

John's brief second letter was written to a godly mother and her children. Some Bible students have concluded that "the elect lady" in verse 1 refers to a local church and that "her children" are the believers fellowshipping in the church. "Thy elect sister" in verse 13 would then refer to a sister church that was sending Christian greetings.

While John does address a group in this letter (note the plural in verses 1, 5, 6), he also addresses an individual (verses 1, 4, 10). Perhaps the solution is that a Christian assembly was meeting in this home, along with the family of the "elect lady", so that John had both the family and congregation in mind (see Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philemon 2). He was concerned that this godly woman does not permit anything false to come into her house (verse 10) or into the assembly.

The dominant feelings in this little epistle are those of friendship and joy, even though these are mixed with concern and warning.

### "Be Transformed"

If our homes and churches are to be true to Christ and oppose the false teachers, we must know the truth. How do we learn the truth? By carefully studying God's Word and allowing the Spirit of God to teach us; by listening to others who are true to the faith; and then by practicing what we learn. We must not only learn the truth with our minds, but we must also love the truth in our hearts and live the truth by our wills. Our total persons must be yielded to the truth. Jesus saith unto him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye have known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." (Jn. 14:6-7) Do you know the Truth? Have you received the Truth into your heart?

Parents must teach their children to love the truth! While we thank God for our Sunday School teachers who teach our children God's Word, the home must instil in the children a love for truth and the knowledge of God's truth. Our children ought to grow up experiencing the truth found in Psalm 119:9, "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." The longing to be clean and pure is planted by God deep in the heart. In many ways, it is what we call the God-shaped vacuum that exists in us alongside the awareness of our sinfulness. In God's Word our children discover the grace that transforms them and the instructions that will guide them into holy living. The environment designed by God to accomplish this great task is Christ-centred home!

I. This Lady is Commended by the Apostle (vs. 1-4).

"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth." Here it perhaps should be noted that some Bible students believe the "elect lady" of this epistle was actually a local church. If this be the case, then the children here are church members. However, it is the view of Willmington that it is written to an actual woman and these are her children.

II. This Lady is Commanded by the Apostle (vs. 5-6).

The commandment is actually twofold:

- A. That she walks in truth.
- B. That she walks in love. See also verse 3. How important it is not to separate these two. To practice truth without love leads to legalism. To employ love without truth leads to liberalism. Paul likewise combines these two: "But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, who is the Head, even Christ" (Eph. 4:15).

III. This Lady is Cautioned by the Apostle (vs. 7-13).

A. Look out for Satan (vs. 7, 9, 10, 11)

"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 ... Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any of you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed. For he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds."

B. Look out for Self (vs. 8)

"Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." John wanted this beloved lady to receive a full reward for faithful service at the judgment seat of Christ (See 1 Cor. 3:5-17)

Conclusion

Faith is the currency of Heaven! Faith is Obedience. FAITH is Forsaking All I Take Him (Christ)! Without faith, it is impossible to please God. 2 John teaches disciples to be faithful in Christ by abiding in the truth of God; and thereby expect to receive the full reward at the Bema (Judgment Seat of Christ) on the day of reckoning! Be careful not receive Deceivers and Antichrist into our life or fellowship. Be forewarned of such evil characters that may destroy faith and truthful believers. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ says, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jn. 8:32) There is only one way, one truth and one life, that is, Jesus Christ. Know the Truth, and receive the Truth, and be set free from sins! There is no other truth except that which is in our Lord Jesus Christ. Only Jesus saves. May the Lord help us! Amen.