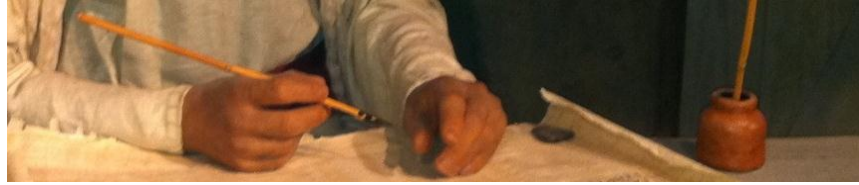


The 2nd Letter of

John



Lesson 1-Living by Divine Love and Escaping False Teachers *Focus: 2 John 1:1-13*

- **Introduction:** This second letter of John is believed to have been **written from Ephesus** (as it is believed that all three of his letters were likely written from there) **around the year A.D. 90**. This letter bears many resemblances to the 1st letter of John, talking about the necessity of walking in the love of God and loving our brothers and sisters. It also carries the same warnings as 1st John does about false teachers or “anti-Christ” characters.

The letter is addressed **from “the elder”** (as also 3rd John starts out). It is common in the letters of John and also his gospel that he would not include his name there. However, the authorship of the letter is very certain to have come from John. There are many similarities with his Gospel, which he wrote earlier, and second century Christian writers who lived very close to his time, such as Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria all spoke with great certainty of his authorship of this letter. Because the letter is so short and the audience was very limited, it was not widely circulated at an early time though. Some even questioned if it should go into the New Testament Canon [or list of accepted, authoritative Scriptures] because its material was not that new or different from what John had said in his first letter. Also, not too many people had received a copy of this letter at an early time. But acceptance began to grow among the churches and it was finally accepted by all as an official part of the Bible Scriptures. The letter is addressed **to “the elect lady and her children”** (v.1). No specific name is given. Some believe that this phrase is addressing a specific woman in the church who John would have known, but he did not give the name. Others believe that this was a figurative expression that was being used for addressing the church and those who were a part of her. Certainly, it was a common thing for God’s people to compare the church to a woman—that symbol is commonly used by Bible writers to describe God’s church or His chosen people (See for example, Ephesians 5:25-32; 2 Corinthians 11:2). Either way, it was an important message for God’s people! Understand and live by God’s love, and beware of false teachers.

- **John’s address and Thankfulness to the “Elect Lady” and for her faithful children (v.1-4)**
 - It was a joy to write to a fellow believer in the truth! The true Christians had great love for each other. They had love for all, but especially had a joyful heart to find their faithful brothers and sisters in God’s family of faith! John wrote with this great love and enthusiasm for the faithful! It is a joyful thing to be walking in the truth of God’s word and to know and find others who are doing the same! This is when we have fellowship, “when we walk in the light as He is in the light” (1 John 1:7).
- **The Apostle’s appeal for True heavenly love and continued faithfulness to God (v.5-6)**

- Although John knew that he was writing to the faithful in Christ, he did not hesitate to remind them of the truth of heaven and that we must follow and live by it! Christians should not take each other or our current faithfulness to God for granted. We must exhort one another “and so much the more as we see the day approaching!” (**See Hebrews 10:25, 26**). We must continually remind each other of God’s lessons to keep them fresh in our minds and to guide us all in Character development! God calls for such things and His holy Spirit will surely bless such activities (See Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Joshua 1:8; **Psalm 119:97-104**; Matthew 18:20). John reminded of this. We should always remind each other of the lessons of Heaven’s word so that we may be faithful to God, even to the very end!
- **Recognizing and Dealing with False Teachers (v.7-11)**
 - As mentioned before in John’s letters. There were many false teachers who Satan had sent out into the world. Christians were to always be on the lookout for such! All the Bible writers, even Jesus Christ Himself, remind of us the necessity of looking out for such (for example see Acts 20:28-30; Matthew 24:24).
 - (v.10,11) We should not pay for, support, or ever encourage any such false teachings or false teachers, lest we also be guilty of their sin! We must combat against or oppose false teachings and teachers (See Jude 1:3,4).
- **Concluding Remarks (v.12-13)**
 - The Apostle John here finished his letter with these remarks. John had many things that he wanted to say to the one or church who he had addressed. However, he decided not to say it by letter. He was seeking for a more rich and joyful experience of coming to meet “the elect lady” face to face and to communicate the truths that were a burden on his heart! Certainly, face to face meetings are more wonderful and meaningful transactions. Also, we can usually understand one another’s meaning more clearly! There is less room for error in understanding someone’s tone of voice, etc. John preferred to do that! It was better for their situation. However, I suppose it was not as good for us since now we do not have a very long letter with many of those same truths to look at and consider. On the other hand though, we do have these few lines that John penned. We also have the 1st letter that he wrote which contains quite a bit more teaching and probably covers a number of the same truths that he wanted to share with “the elect lady” in his face to face meeting. We can see that John was a very practical guy and often wrote only as much as was needed for giving us the most important of facts (See John 20:30,31; 21:24,25).

Question (s) for the Heart:

Is it your desire to live by the true love of God and to avoid being trapped in false teachings by searching the Scriptures diligently?_____