

2 John verses 1-6 (Teaching)

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[0:00] Good morning. Good morning. Well, we wrapped up first John last week. And I think we're just going to move on through the other little histones of John.

So we'll be at second John this week. Second and third John's a little bit different than first John. In a couple of different ways. One person, or second and third John, are only a chapter or piece and very short chapters of that.

In fact, these are the two shortest chapters that you'll find in the scriptures. In the original Greek, second John has 245 words.

And also in the original Greek, third John has 219 words. And therefore they're the shortest chapters in all scripture.

That doesn't make them any less important though. Which is unfortunately how much of the church world sees second and third John. A lot of people know a lot of quotes from first John.

[1:10] It's five chapters long. I said we just finished that up last week. But second and third John is just as important. Just like I said before, you got lost in saying people all over the world can quote John 316.

And I praise God for that verse. John 315 and John 317 were spoken by Jesus Christ as well. And they're just as important as John 316 is.

But anyway, we'll be in second John this morning. Second and third John, as I've already said, the shortest chapter was in scripture.

It is thought and I agree that these two letters were written after John was exiled to Patmos. After he was released from that exile.

Now, first John, which we just finished up, is thought to have been written beforehand. Now, I wasn't there, I don't know any of these things for a fact.

[2:16] But I tend to agree with those summations of that or assumptions I should say of that. John was writing these letters second and third John.

He was writing, he was an old man at this point. I mean, he was owned up in his 90s at this point. Now, as compared to Adam, he was a young whippersnapper. We don't know Adam lived, what, 900 years.

But John was creeping up on a century of age at this point. And that's one reason that it's thought that this was after his exiled to Patmos.

Because that would have wore him down quite a bit. Now, I understand it's all inscribed by the Holy Ghost. I understand all scriptures, God breathed, and I get that. But God understands our frames too.

God understands our makeup, and God understands that we get old, we get feeble, we get tired, and so on. The second and third, or books of second and third John are kind of reflective of that, I think.

[3:31] But John still gets his point across very well. So we'll start in the first verse of second John. He says, the elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth.

Now, there's much debate in the theological world over who this elect lady is, whether it's an actual physical lady of the church that's held in high regard, or whether it's the church itself.

I'm of the camp that believes that he's referring to the church itself. Now, you can agree, you can disagree, and we can still call each other brothers and sisters in Christ.

You know, there's very persuasive arguments on either side of that fence as to who John is referring to. I said, I personally think that he's referring to the church as a whole.

He is certainly writing to believers in Jesus Christ, and we gather that through these few verses of second John. So just to get that out of the way, me personally, I believe that the elect lady is the church.

[4 : 47] Verse two, he says, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever. So John, in these first two verses, he's addressed whom he's writing to, the elect lady and her children, and he says, whom I love in the truth, and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth.

So we kind of covered this a lot going through first John, over the past several weeks, couple of months maybe, going through first John, how that, in John's writings, he's writing specifically to believers.

Many times he will write about unbelievers, but never to the unbelievers. It's always to the believers. And here is no different, but he says he's writing to the elect lady and her children in love and in truth.

So he's writing to her, the elect lady, whether you believe it's an actual lady, whether you believe it's the church. He's writing to her in love and in truth.

And he says, and also, not I only, but also all they that have known the truth. Now this have known the truth, this would include the rest of the church.

[6 : 01] Now, once again, and I'm going to try not to bring it up so often, whether you believe it's a lady of the church, or whether you believe it's the church itself, he says, all they that have known the truth.

If it is a specific lady that he's writing to, he would be talking about the congregation that she is associated with, the local body of believers that she congregates with.

If he is talking about a church or a church, then he would be talking about the rest of the church, the rest of the body of Christ.

They would love them as well. And this is what we talked about a lot in 1 John about how we are to love one another. Yes, I understand the commandments that we're to love God, we're to love our neighbor.

Love our neighbor makes no distinction whether that neighbor is saved or lost. It's love your neighbor, or love thy neighbor. However, John says here that not I only, but also all they that have known the truth, and this known, or that have known the truth, this is perfect tense.

[7 : 12] And we've talked a lot about tenses while I've taught here, because it's very important that we understand that, have known the truth, that's perfect tense.

They continually know the truth, they perpetually know the truth. There is no ending to know in that truth. Now, that being said, we as believers in Jesus Christ, we know the truth.

The truth is what set us free, is it not? The truth is why we're sitting here in Sunday school this morning, because we've been saved. We heard that truth, and we believe the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and the belief in that truth, and coupled with repentance, is why we're sitting here with salvation, while we sit here with the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, and we will continually know that truth.

We will forever know that truth. So, this is one of the reasons that I fall on the camp of He is writing to a church, instead of a woman.

But verse 2 again, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us forever. So He's given us whom He is writing to. He's given whom He is, the elder, which is a Greek word, presbyteros, which carries two different meanings.

[8 : 37] It means elder as far as age goes, and like I've already said, John was pushing 100 years old at this point. And it also means an office in the church as far as elder goes.

Well, John, he was both of those things. He was an elder within the body of Christ, and he was an elder as far as his age is concerned. However, I do want you to notice, he doesn't address himself as John, so that kind of intimates to me that these people would have been well-familiar with whom he was.

Not only does he not refer to himself as John, like Paul did in a lot of his letters. He would say, Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, or Paul this or Paul that, and James done the same thing, Jude done this. But not only does he not say his name, he also doesn't refer to himself as an apostle. He refers to himself as an elder. So the people he was writing to would have understood that he was one of the original apostles of Jesus Christ.

He doesn't refer to himself as either of those, but he gives us whom he's writing to, whom he is, the elder. And then in verse two, he gives us why he's writing to them, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us and shall be with us forevermore.

[9 : 58] This is why he's writing for the truth's sake. In other words, in defense of the truth. And if you read this in the original Greek writing that it was given in, that's exactly what is intimated here is in defense of the truth.

This is why he's writing. So really this letter has not gone forth for any different reason than what first John went forth for because there were false teachers that were coming in and John addresses those on throughout the verses of 2 John.

There were false teachers that were coming in that were spreading heresy, they were spreading false things, false teachings. And John was writing this letter to address that he says, for the truth's sake which dwelleth in us and shall be with us forever.

So once again we have something else that's perpetual here. What's he referring to that's going to be in us forever? That's the truth. He said it dwelleth in us and that's another perfect tense.

It forever dwells in us. Once that truth has been settled inside of us, once God has imparted the truth, His truth, what is the truth?

[11 : 11] The truth, we could refer to it in several things, but Jesus Christ said it best in John 14, I'm the way, the truth and the life. Jesus Christ is the truth.

However, the word of God is also the truth. Jesus Christ said in John 17, 17, sanctify them by the truth. The word is truth.

This book that I hold in my hand, it is the truth of God. The book that you're holding in your lap or in your hand, it is the truth of God. This is what we will find false teachers and heretics trying to dissuade the rest of the world and even dissuade the church from.

They're trying to get them away from the truth of God. That's why I've emphasized over and over, if anybody comes to you with any type of doctrine and anything to do with religion, with what you know and especially what you believe from the very beginning, that Jesus Christ is God, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and He was sitting here as God, manifesting the flesh, and He died for your sins, and He resurrected and He ascended to the Father, and He forever sent to the right hand of glory, making intercession for the saints, and that He is coming again one day, not only to collect His bride, not only to bring His bride home with Him, but to put Satan in His rightful place and hell, and to cast death and hell in with Him.

If we believe all of these things of Jesus Christ, we should believe this forever, and these are the very things that people that teach a false gospel will try to get you away from.

[12 : 57] They'll try and persuade you otherwise. They are Antichrist, and John addresses the Spirit of Antichrist in this letter, just like he did three other times in 1 John. I told you all when we were going through 1 John, the word Antichrist is only brought up four times in Scripture.

It's brought up three times in 1 John, it's brought up twice in the 2nd chapter of 1 John, once in the 4th chapter of 1 John, and once here in the Book of 2 John. That's the only times the word Antichrist is brought up, but these people with the Spirit of Antichrist, they're the very ones that will try to persuade you otherwise.

They'll try to persuade you away from the truth of the Scripture. This is why we must be on guard. This is why John is writing this letter. He says, for the truth's sake, for the defense of the truth.

It's not that God needs us to defend the truth. I believe it was Charles Spurgeon that said that, defend the word of God, he would rather defend a line.

The word of God will defend itself, and it can, and it does. Yes, but folks, when people come to us with a falsehood, when they come to us with a false doctrine, when they come to us with a cross that is not the cross of the Scriptures, that is not the cross of the Gospels, when they come to us with that, and we retaliate to that with the truth of the Scriptures.

[14 : 25] We, in essence, are defending the Gospel when we do that. We are defending the truth of God's Word, and it's a tough thing to do in this world in which we live right now.

You've got so many different worldviews out there, and you've got as many different cross as you have worldviews that are out there. You can narrow it down to just three or four worldviews, but each one of those have a sub-view, and there's dozens of them out there.

It's just like denominations in churches. You know, we've got the prevalent denominations, we've got Baptists, we've got Methodists, we've got Presbyterian and Lutheran and Pentecostal, but each

one of those have got sub-denominations.

Last count I had there were over 56,000, over 56,000 denominations and sub-denominations around the world of Christianity, of Protestantism.

Folks, that's ridiculous. You know why that is? Because we can't agree. We can't agree on this. That's why that is, but I ain't going to teach all of that. I'm about to, but I ain't going to.

[15 : 29] For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, the truth of God dwells in us. The Word of God dwells in us. How so? The Word became flesh and he dwelt among us according to the Gospel of John chapter 1.

The Word of God, that Word of God has since gone home. He has since ascended to the Father.

But the written Word of God, Jesus Christ is a living Word of God, the written Word of God.

If we have the written Word of God in our hearts, what did David say? He said, how did that word in my heart that I might not sin against me? Folks, only God can put His Word in your heart.

We can't do it ourselves. We can put it in our heads all day long. When I was lost, I knew more Scripture than most professing Christians that I knew. I knew more Scripture than they did.

And that's shameful to them. That's shameful for the church that I lost person that would readily confess that they were lost. That would readily confess that they didn't believe in the God that these people worshiped.

[16 : 33] I knew more Scripture than they did, but it was in my head. But when I got saved, God started taking what was in my head and putting it in my heart. And the meaning of it completely changed for me.

But it took God to do that. I can't do it myself. And you can't do it yourself either. We memorize Scripture all day long, but if it's in here, it's because God put it there.

Not because I put it there. It's because God put it there. But this truth, it dwelleth in us forever. It's a perfect tense, dwelleth.

It dwelleth in us and shall be with us forever. Not just in this life, but praise God. It's going to be with us in the life to come. Forever is forever.

Forever is always. Forever is eternal. And it shall be with us forever. Grace be with you, mercy and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, and truth and in love.

[17 : 35] Grace be with you, mercy and peace. These are things that I thank God that were not only when salvation imparted to me at the point in the moment of my salvation, but also when God saved my soul.

But he saved me by grace, did he not? Folks, he didn't save me by love. We read about love in the first couple of verses here about John's love for the church.

But here we have grace be with you, mercy and peace from God the Father. Grace, mercy and peace can only come from God the Father. We can show grace to people.

We can show mercy to people. And we can be peaceful with people. Even in a lost state, we can show these things to people. But the actual thing is grace. The way that God saved me by his grace.

He didn't save me by love. He didn't save me by mercy. He saved me by grace. Love is what directed God to his love. God is love.

[18 : 43] And that love has been there from the beginning. It wasn't just an afterthought. God sitting out there in the universe billions of years ago, or however long you want to say and say, you know, I think I'd like to love something.

God is eternal. God is the ancient of days. He is the beginning. He is the end. He's the first and the last. He has always been. And everything about God has always been.

So his love has always been. And his mercy has always been. All of these things, his peace has always been. Everything that we're reading about here is eternal because they are attributes of God.

But you keep in mind, he saved you by grace. He didn't save you by mercy. His love directed him to show mercy through Jesus Christ that you could have a way to be saved.

The Bible says, for God so loved the world that he gave, his only begotten son. He gave his son because of his love, toward humanity, toward his creation.

[19 : 44] He gave that, but God did not save you because he loves you. God saved you because God's love and God's mercy directed him in that way. And the Bible says in the book of Ephesians

that it's for Christ's sake that we are saved.

It's for Christ's sake that we are saved. Not for our own. God didn't save us for ourselves. He saved us from him and he saved us for him, for his glory and for his honor to bring glory unto himself. He didn't save me because I was a good guy. You meet some of the people that I used to know and even some people that know me now, they'll contradict that with whether Spencer's a good guy or not.

He didn't save me because I was good, because I deserved it, because I was righteous, because I was holy. He saved me because he's those things. He saved me because he is good and he is holy and right. He is holy and righteous.

That's why God saved me. But John here is addressing this letter and he says, Grace be with you, mercy and peace from God the Father.

[20 : 47] And something I want you all to notice here, just kind of on a side note, from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. We have a distinction here that John has made that God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ, are two separate people.

And this is something that a certain sex of people out there don't like. And we not only have it because he names them differently from God the Father and God the Son, but he says from one and from the other.

There's a distinction there of two separate persons of the Godhead. So, you know, when folks come to you with this doctrine that it's Jesus and Jesus only, no Father, no Son, no Holy Spirit, it's Christ and Christ alone, you can retaliate with this right here.

As well as many, many other scriptures that we have. Folks, I appreciate Jesus, I appreciate that he is God. Jesus is God. I'm not denying that in the least.

God the Father is God. God the Son is God. God the Holy Spirit is God. And each one of them dwelleth in me forever according to the previous verse to here.

[22 : 03] Dwelleth in me forever by way of the Holy Spirit of God. But he says, this grace and mercy and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and in love.

And we've already talked a little bit about truth and love. What is truth? Jesus Christ is truth. The word of God is truth. And this truth only, this particular truth, only abides within those that believe in Jesus Christ.

Those that have trusted in Jesus Christ. This only abides within us. The truth is out there. The truth is out there for the entire world to accept and believe.

The truth that they are sinners and that God is a Savior through Jesus Christ. That is the truth of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. That man is a sinner and God is a Savior.

That truth is out there for any and everyone to accept. But he says here that he is writing this letter and he's wishing them, or we could say wishing them grace, mercy and peace from the Father and the Son, but he's doing it in truth and in love.

[23 : 16] So he's doing these things exactly as he should per the Scripture. Verse 4, I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth as we have received a commandment from the Father.

This verse, for one, this kind of shows that it was more than likely after the exile of John to Patmos where he wrote the book of Revelation.

He said, because this is past tense, I rejoiced. That's past tense. That's greatly that I found, that's past tense, that I found of thy children walking in truth as we have received a commandment from the Father.

So this tells me that given John's age and given the shortness of the letter, given this particular line here as well as a couple of other things throughout this, this would have been after he was released from that exile on the island of Patmos.

I believe that John would have come back, he would have visited as many people as he could with whatever means that he had, and this would have been one of the local congregations that would have been familiar with John that he would have went to.

[24 : 27] And he says here, I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth. So they're walking in truth. What is truth? Again, we've talked about it three or four times.

It's the Word of God. The truth is God. The truth is Jesus Christ, and they're walking in these things. And John says that he rejoiced in that as we have received a commandment from the Father.

Verse five, and now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment under thee, but that which we had from the beginning that we love one another.

My goodness, we're going all the way back to the second chapter of 1 John now. He wrote basically the same thing. This isn't a new thing that I'm telling you. He says, but this is the commandment that I'm giving you.

You know, this is why I told the people in 1 John, I write you no new commandment, but we are to love one another. And this was a teaching of Jesus Christ. John emphasizes on that teaching throughout, really throughout the Gospel of John, but particularly in a couple of chapters of the Gospel of John.

[25 : 37] He says we're to love one another, but he says I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment under thee, but that which we had from the beginning.

He's encouraging her. Remember what he said in verse two, for the truth's sake, I'm writing this letter. For the truth's sake, I'm sending these words with ink and with paper.

I'm sending them to you. Here in verse five, he says, he says, or he's encouraging her to love one another. It's not a new commandment.

It's not a new thing. It's not a new idea. We're to love one another. What did Jesus Christ say? I believe it's John, the Gospel of John chapter 13. He said, he said that people would know that you're my disciples, not because of your traditions, certainly not because of your denomination, not because of this, not because of that, but because you have love toward one another.

That's the word that Jesus Christ himself, that you love one another. Remember, it's one Christian. It's one saved man writing to other saved people here.

[26 : 42] And this is designed to the rest of the world, not in one denomination we belong to, not how spiritual we are, not how many Bible verses we can quote, but that we love one another.

That's the word that Jesus Christ and the Gospel of John, and that's the words of John here in 2 John says, but that which we had from the beginning that we love one another. And I know in 1 John I address this, and I'll address it briefly again, this beginning that he's talking about here. We could go all the way back to the book of Genesis if you wanted to. We could certainly go into Exodus and all throughout the Old Testament. But what John would be referring to in the immediate context would be the beginning of our salvation, the beginning of our conversion into Christianity.

The word from the beginning, it's always been love. And we can look at that, we can look at the Old Testament, we can look at the law and say, my goodness, there wasn't much love in that law.

Folks, there wasn't nothing but love in the law that God gave to humanity and the moral laws that God gave to Moses to bring down up Mount Sinai and present to his chosen people that he redeemed, that he brought out of Egypt, that he saved, that he brought out of bondage.

[28 : 03] There was nothing but love in those laws. But he says that which we have from the beginning that we love one another. And this is love that we walk after his commandments.

That's a very simple, black and white, no lines to read between, line of scripture that we have here. This is love that we walk after his commandments.

If we are walking after the commandments of God, will we not love one another? If we're truly walking after the commandments of God, we have no choice but to love one another.

And I know I address this again in 1 John, but I know from personal experience there's some Christians that's easier to love than others. There's some Christians that's harder to love than others, but nevertheless I love them.

If they're a brother or sister in Christ, I love them. May not agree with them, may not even really associate a whole lot with them. But I love them. Regardless of any of that, regardless of what differences we have, if they are a true blue brother or sister in Christ, I love them, regardless of how they might rub me wrong sometimes, how they might pet me in the wrong way, or however you want to phrase that.

[29 : 22] Regardless of any of that, I love them. And this is love that we walk after his commandments. So he's not only talking about love, but he's telling whoever he's writing to here what love is.

Love is walking after the commandments of God. And if we're walking after the commandments of God, we're doing that because we love God. And if we're walking after the commandments of God because we love God, we will in turn and naturally love our brothers and sisters in Christ.

This is the commandment that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. The commandment from the very beginning, love one another. The commandment from the very get-go is to love one another.

And if this is the commandment, and it is, that we've heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. We should walk in the commandment of love. Not only the commandment of love, but every commandment that we find throughout the Scripture, every commandment that we find throughout not only the New Testament, but the Old Testament.

Now listen, folks, there's some Old Testament laws that we can't say, well, we've got to walk after those, because some of those Old Testament laws require the believers, require God's people to get other people and stomach them to death.

[30 : 43] That's not a law that we need to walk after. But the moral codes that God gave to mankind, we need to walk after those, whether they be Old Testament, whether they be New Testament.

You know, there's a lot of things in the Old Testament that was punishable by physical death. Anything that was heretical, any kind of false teaching, witchcraft, any of these things, and so many others, they were punishable by death in the Old Testament, by physical death.

Folks, we leave that up to God. We leave that up to God. When these people, in 2023, and we know that there's heretics out there, we know that there's false teachers, we know that there's people that put forth a gospel that is not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It is not our job to go and round up these people and throw stones at them until they're dead. That's not what God wants us to do.

But as far as the moral codes that God gave us, yes, we're to walk in those. And if we live in the Spirit as Paul wrote, we must also walk in the Spirit. And if we're walking in the Spirit, you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.

[32 : 04] If we're walking in the Spirit, folks, we're not going to go after these other things. We're not going to go after the worldly things. We're not going to go back to what God saved us from to begin with. We walk in the Spirit. We will not.

There's a promise there in Scripture. We shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh if we're walking in the Spirit. As you heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

And every one of us are given this charge. It's not just for the preachers. It's not just for deacons. It's not just for elders. Everybody in the church is given this charge.

You've got to think of the days that John was in here. I mean, folks, this was the days when the Roman Empire was still good and strong. I mean, John had seen a few different Roman emperors in his time.

He had lived through Nero. Nero is the very one that had Paul's head chopped off. That John had lived through that. He lived through that Domitian. He lived through that, although Domitian is the very one that had John dipped in bowling oil.

[33 : 13] And the very one that had him exiled to Patmos when dipping him in bowling oil didn't kill him. He lived through all these things. So he knew how the Romans were.

It was a pagan culture. They were heathenistic. They hated God. They worshiped, they were polytheistic, worshiping many, many, many gods. And here was John and a very few others walking down these Roman roads, walking down these sidewalks in these Roman cities and proclaiming the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And folks, we're in the same boat. It's a heathenistic, paganistic culture that we live in that hates God. We have the same charge to walk in the spirit of truth, to walk with the Holy Spirit and not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

But not only to walk in all that, but to proclaim the truth of the Word of God. You don't have to be a preacher to proclaim the truth of the gospel. You don't have to be a preacher to tell people about Jesus Christ.

It's a charge that is laid to everyone else. And we should walk in this commandment of love. And we should walk around in this culture in which we live and proclaim the truth of this Word.

[34 : 38] And that's where we're going to end today. Anybody have any questions or comments on any of that? Alright, God bless y'all.