

FRAUD ALERT / Sunday, April 26, 2015

Unifying Topic: WATCH OUT FOR DECEIVERS

Lesson Text

I. Greetings From John (2 John 1-3)

II. Walking In The Truth (2 John 4-6)

III. Do Not Receive Them (2 John 7-13)

The Main Thought: Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. (2 John 8, KJV).

Unifying Principle: People who do not participate in their community's life-sustaining beliefs are a threat to the community. How does the community deal with this threat? The writer of First John suggests that those who remain faithful in their belief in Christ will have eternal life; the writer of Second John warns them to beware of deceivers lest they corrupt the community of believers.

Lesson Aim: To understand the circumstances under which this letter was written and what it has to say about the person of Jesus Christ.

Life Aim: To help believers distinguish true teaching from false teaching regarding Christ and His nature.

HISTORY:

The authorship of the letter of Second John is Apostle John written shortly after the first Epistle to warn the believers not to give hospitality to strangers or traveling evangelist-teachers; those who did not meet the sure test of sound doctrine were to be refused hastily. ¹Ephesus is usually suggested as the location from which John wrote this Epistle. Showing such hospitality would support the spread of false teachings and their doctrines making it easy for false teachers to take advantage of the Christians. Thus it was necessary to counsel Christians to use proper discernment.

LESSON:

2 John 1-3 Greetings From John

V1 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;— John, as the one addressing this letter calls himself "*the elder*." The word is synonymous to pastor and bishop in the New Testament. He addresses it to "*the elect lady*" which some refer to a particular lady in the local church and by others to refer to the church. Either way, he is referring to believers in Christ. Remember, the "*church*" is also a "*lady*" in much the same way as we refer to a ship as "*she*"; the Bride of Christ, also is referred to the church as "*she*." To conclude, "*She*" was "*the elect*." "*Elect*" means to be chosen by God; to be one of God's holy and beloved followers. "*She*" was elected to follow God with all her heart, and life. "*And her children*", would mean literally her children or the members of the church; the people who make up the body (*not a building*). And as an elect, God had called her away from the old life...

- that had been disobedient to God.
- that had ignored and neglected God.
- that had disbelieved God.
- that had rebelled against and rejected God.
- that had cursed God.

Therefore, if John is addressing an individual lady, he exhorts the "*elect lady*" to love all believers no matter what they did. She had taken a stand for Christ against false teachers, and some in the church were criticizing, backbiting, and turning against her. She needed to love them despite their rotten and ungodly behavior. In the verse John says he loves them in the truth, and not only him, but all that have known the truth feel the same love.

¹ http://executableoutlines.com/2jn_sg/2jn_sg_00.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

1. This tells us **how** we should love one another:
 - a. It is always in Jesus, for Jesus Christ is the Truth; and in the Word, for Jesus is also the Word! This love is entirely different from the world. This kind of love gives sacrificially: helping people even if they are unlovely and unattractive; reaching out to people even when they don't deserve it.
 - b. There were others, a multitude of people who know this truth (how to love). That's why God's dear people get out into the community to reach the lonely and empty. We can love one another because of Christ.

V2 For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

2. This tells us **why** we should love one another: for the truth's sake, that is, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ and of the Word of God. John and the others loved the church for the sake of Christ because those he was writing to loved God and wanted to please Him. Now, if we wish to please Christ, we must love one another just like the Word of God says to love. The Truth dwells in us and shall be with us forever.

V3 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. John is still greeting them in his letter. He has established who he was (an elder); tells them why he's writing the letter (in love and for truth's sake), and now, he places a powerful blessing upon them. He says that grace, mercy, and peace come from God the Father and Jesus Christ the Son in truth and love. He has the Father and Son backing him to express truth and love in this greeting, showing them that he is not alone, and neither are they. They needed to hear that.

1. Grace means the undeserved and unmerited favor and blessings of God, the depth and richness of the heart and mind of God; the kindness and love that dwells within the very nature of God.
 - a. God's grace is not earned. It is something completely undeserved and unmerited.
 - b. God's grace is the free gift of God. God extends His grace out toward man.
 - c. God's grace is the only way man can be saved.
2. Mercy means feelings of pity, compassion, affection, and kindness. It is a desire to help; to tenderly draw unto oneself and to care for. Two things are important: (1) you see a need; (2) you're able to meet that need. God sees our need and feels for us. Therefore, He acts; He has mercy upon us. Mercy arises from His heart of love.
 - God withholds His judgment.
 - God provides a way for us to be saved.
3. Peace means to be bound, joined, and weaved together; to be assured, confident, and secure in the love and care of God; to have a sense, a consciousness, a knowledge that God will comfort the soul.

²God the Father and His Son will bless us. There is only one God. This shows the unity that there is between them. The Father and the Son have different roles but one God in truth and love. The false teachers taught that Jesus was less than God. But John shows that Jesus is the Christ. He is God the Son.

2 John 4-6 Walking In The Truth

V4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. John rejoices because he found out that her children were walking in truth or the church was walking in truth, just as was commanded by the Father; as the Word of God says to. That's a dynamic witness for a mother's children to walk in truth, or a church to walk in truth. They see our character, rather it be on our job, or in a store, or traveling somewhere. Christ is seen in us, and others will rejoice over it and take pleasure in it. Christ walked in truth, and we are to follow Him and walk in truth.

² <http://www.easyenglish.info/bible-commentary/2john-lbw.htm>
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sundayschool.html>

V5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another. The word "*beseech*" means to urge, beg, and entreat. It has the idea of urgency, and necessity. Evidently there was some discord among others. What John is now saying is urgent; it is an absolute necessity. What is it? Love! We must love one another. John explains that this is not a new commandment to them, but it was from the beginning to love one another. Even in Moses' time (Leviticus 19:18), they were to love their neighbor. Love and walk in truth according to God's commandment is the same message as was given all along.

V6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. John reiterates again. Walking after God's commandment is all about love. This was the behavior; a way of life to walk in.

2 John 7-13 Do Not Receive Them

V7 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. The reason they were to walk in love, but be aware that many deceivers had entered into the world confessing that Jesus Christ didn't come in the flesh. This was a deceiver and an antichrist. One of the greatest problems faced by believers is the coming of false teachers—deceivers and imposters going by the name of Christians, yet they are anything but followers of Christ. In this instance, a deceiver is the person who denies that Jesus Christ came in the flesh; denies that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. In John's day, many false teachers taught that spirit was good, and matter was evil, therefore, they reasoned that Jesus could not have been both God and man. They are dangerous because they twist the truth and undermine the foundations of Christian faith. They may use the right words but change the meaning. Teachers are not to be led astray, but show forth the true belief of Christ.

V8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Keep watch over yourself; be on your guard so that you will receive the full reward, and not lose the things you've worked so hard for; or throw away the labor that was produced in you. The reason why is in the next verse.

V9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If you transgress and abide not in the doctrine (the teaching) of Christ, you do not have God; you do not have hold of God. "*Transgress*" means to wander beyond the teachings; go against God by going too far; trying to move out ahead of Christ. But, on the other hand, if you abide in the doctrine (the teaching) of Christ; be loyal to His teachings, you have the Father and the Son; you keep hold Him. There are many teachers, ministers and laymen alike, who would like to be progressive and creative, have novel ideas, make some advancement in their assumptions; they want people to recognize and approve them. Therefore, they try to impress people. In doing so, they do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, but transgress and change the truth; showing that they are not truly born of God; not even saved. What is the doctrine of Christ?

In Hebrews 6:1-2, six doctrines are mentioned involving the person and work of Christ. In 2 John (v.9), it is about Jesus Christ coming in the flesh (v.7)—the true physical presence of Christ on earth, which the deceivers were against. They denied the Incarnation, the virgin birth, and other cardinal doctrines about Jesus Christ. In 2 Corinthians 11:4, Paul warned those who preached another Jesus: "*For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.*"

The person who is born of God is the person who stays in the teachings of Christ.

V10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither

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bid him God speed:— This is saying, do not receive a deceiver or false teacher, nor wish him well. Remember, most churches of that day and time met in the homes of prominent members. It is likely that the church was meeting in the home of this "*elect lady and her children.*" "*She*", "the church", apparently refused to provide room and board or welcome some false teachers into her home. You can love, but God doesn't want the Christian to be deceived! John's charge is strong and its meaning is perfectly clear: "*If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine don't receive him into your house or bid him God speed*" (greet or welcome him), for false teachers doom the souls of people; shut them off from Christ. And any person who is shut off from Christ is not acceptable to God. This means...

- We do not support deceivers and false teachers.
- We do not allow them to be around our children or young people.
- We do not allow them to be around believers where they can share their ideas.
- We do not allow them to teach in our churches or in our homes.
- We do not support them financially.
- We do not show any encouragement whatsoever to them.

They were not to show hospitality to false teachers, for they do not bring the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

V11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. We are not to encourage the false teacher at all; not to welcome him nor bid him God speed. This would aid the spread of their heresy; extend approval; assistance, and full fellowship, inevitably leaving the impression of sanctioning the teachings of these antichrists. To support someone who is working against the true Christian message is to incur that person's guilt.

V12 Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. John's closing remarks stressed that he had more that needed to be said, but didn't want to write it on paper, but rather it would be better if he could speak to them face to face. Why? - "... *that our joy may be full; may be complete.*" Seeing them would be such a joy.

V13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen. The greeting from the elect sister is, of course, another elect congregation, perhaps a larger one where John lived. This is significant, for it shows how the gospel had spread throughout the whole family. When we surrender our lives to Jesus Christ, our duty is to do all we can to reach our families for Christ, all our brothers and sisters and their families.

SUMMARY:

Elder John writes this epistle to the "*elect lady*" and her children—believers in Christ, with love and for truth's sake. Grace, mercy, and peace are extended to them from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father (**vv.1-3**).

John rejoices because he found out that her children were walking in truth or the church was walking in truth as commanded by the Father. Now, he challenges her to continue to walk in that love and obey the commandment, for love is not a new commandment. It was from the beginning (**vv.4-6**).

They were to watch out for there were many deceivers who entered the world confessing that Christ did not come in the flesh. They are also known as antichrists. They were to keep watch and be on guard over themselves that they don't throw; forfeit their reward. They were not to transgress, but abide in the doctrine of Christ. If there was anyone that brought another doctrine to them, they were not to allow them in their house or welcome them, for you would be partaking of their evil deeds. There was more John wanted to write, but he rather see them face to face that their joy would be full. The letter ends with greetings from another elect child of God or sister church (**vv.7-13**).