



2 John

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Tape # 8237
By Chuck Smith

Let's turn in our Bibles to 2 John. Again, when we began our journey through the Bible, it seems like it was, you know, so far to the completion day going at the snail's pace of one chapter a week. But here we are coming down towards the end as we will cover tonight 2 John, next Sunday night 3 John. The following Sunday night we look at Jude, and then we get into the exciting book of Revelation as we deal with the events of the future.

The elder, John refers to himself as the elder. He's in his nineties, and so he surely deserves the title at that point.

The elder unto the elect lady and her children (1:1a).

There is a lot of speculation as to who the elect lady was. It's all worthless. What difference does it make? That's not the message. The message, of course, is incorporated in the things that he said to her. But like so many of the theological issues, they get so entangled with who was the real author, and was the elect lady her name. *Eklékti kúria*, which, of course, are names in that time. *Eklékti* is elect, and, of course, the *kúria* is the feminine form of *kúrios* which is a title of respect; and the male *kúrios* would be sir or lord. And so some believe that it is to the elect *kúria*; that her name was *kúria*. We don't know. It doesn't matter.

And to her children whom I love in the truth;[or whom I truly love] and not I only, but also all of they that have known the truth (1:1b).

And so John is going to be talking here about truth. He's going to be using this word truth several times in the first four verses. He loves her in the truth or truly loves. And not only John but all of those that have known the truth love her. Her reputation is known, and people love her.

For the truth's sake [verse 2] which dwells in us and shall be with us forever. Grace be with you. Mercy and peace from God the Father, (1:2-3a).

Now the typical salutation, like we write Dear John or Suzy or whatever. The typical greeting in those days, the heading of the letter was grace and peace be unto you. You'll find this through all of Paul's letters. It is just a very typical greeting in a letter, a salutation in those days. Grace coming from the Greek typical greeting. Whenever you would greet a person who was a Greek, you would greet him with the word *charis*, or the grace. The typical Jewish greeting is *shalom*. And so the combining of the two, the Greek and the Hebrew greeting grace and peace. But here John adds mercy. Now in Paul's pastoral epistles, Timothy and Titus, he also adds mercy. So 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 in love. *I rejoice greatly that I found of your children walking in truth as we have received a commandment from the Father. In the next letter to Gaius, he'll say "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in truth." (3 John 1:4)*

One of the sad things, not only of the early church but of the church history is that there are so many who do not continue in the truth, do not walk in the truth. The bane of the early church were the false profits. Paul the apostle was constantly being hassled by people who were turning from the truth and turning people from the truth. Paul writing to the Galatians said, "I marvel that you are so soon turned from the truth." (Galatians 1:6) False teachers would follow Paul around. Now, it is so typical of the cults in that they really concentrate on bringing people, nominal Christians, into their persuasion. Rather than going out and seeking to reach the lost, they make the church body they're target for proselytizing into they're system of belief.

It's interesting that people hold these particular positions on the scripture and they are so dogmatic and so strong in it that they feel you've got to agree with them. And so their whole thrust is, rather than going

out and winning the lost to Jesus Christ, it's winning the believers to their persuasion. And it's easy to mark those that are really winning the lost to the Lord. A real love for Jesus will send you out to the lost world to win them and persuade them to receive Jesus Christ. But there are always those who are only seeking to persuade people to their particular oddity of doctrine or belief. And so he is encouraged that they are walking in the truth, they haven't swayed from the truth. And the truth that they received from commandment of the Father.

And now he said,

I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which you had from the beginning, that you love one another (1:5).

In John 14:15, Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." In verse 21 He said, "and he that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father and I will love him and manifest myself to him." In John 15:10, Jesus said "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." In verse 14, "you are my friends if you do whatever I command you." Then in John's first epistle, 2:24, he said "let that therefore abide in you which you've heard from the beginning. If that which you have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye shall also continue in the Son and in the Father." And in 5:3, "for this is the love of God that we keep His commandments. His commandments are not grievous."

So the essence, is of course, loving God and loving one another. That's keeping His commandments, to love one another. But then also the commandment of believing in Jesus Christ as the Son of God as he said in the first epistle, "Let that therefore abide in you that which you've heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye shall also continue in the Son and in the Father." (1 John 2:24) So here he is going to talk about the love, but he's also going to talk about the truth that Jesus Christ is God the Son. Jesus Christ is God manifested in the flesh. Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah who is the Son of God. So he is encouraged that they are walking in the truth, and now he is encouraging them to continue in these basic foundational truths.

And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. Because they are many deceivers who have entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh. [or Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh] (1:6-7)

This is an interesting statement in the previous letter that John wrote. He said to "try the spirits to see if thee are God because there are false profits gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1) and the way we test them is, "Hereby we know the Spirit of God: Every Spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." (1 John 4:2) And that's the correct translation. The word there is in that past tense is "come in the flesh." But this is in the present tense and so "is coming in the flesh." There were those early teachers who thought that Jesus was a phantom. That there was no real substance, He had no real body. That he was a spirit being. He had the appearance of a body but no real body because they believe that everything material is evil. And because a body is material, it is evil and, thus, Jesus could not have had a body, and that's they're line of reasoning. But here John says that that is a denial of the truth. And that is really false teachers and deceivers that are teaching this. This is interesting, of course, here in verse seven, "the deceivers who confess not that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh." This could be a denial that "Jesus is coming [future] in the flesh." That when we comes again, that he again will have a fleshly body.

Now, we do know that after his resurrection, Jesus sought to more or less prove to his disciples that he still had a fleshly body. He asked them to give him some fish to eat, and he ate it in order to show that he had a fleshly body. And he said, "touch me and see." And thus, there was that body of flesh, resurrected body. And when he comes again, it will be in like manner as they saw him go, in a bodily form. Now, there are those deceivers, even today, that deny that Jesus is coming in the flesh. John says that this is a deceiver and antichrist, or the Spirit of Antichrist. So look to yourselves that you lose not those things which you have brought but that you receive a full reward. In other words, hold on to the truth that you received. Don't be dissuaded by the deceivers and the false profits that will go out into the world and will preach

another gospel and really the false teachings center around the identity of Jesus Christ. Who is he? Is he truly God the Son? Is he truly one with the Father? This is one of the areas where, of course, you can mark the cults, their teaching in regards to the person of Jesus Christ, who he is. So be careful.

Look to yourself, or be an watch, that you don't lose the things which we have brought, the teachings that we gave to you. But that you receive the full reward. For whosoever transgresses and abides not in the doctrine of Christ has not God. He that abides in the doctrine of Christ, he has both the Father and the Son(1:8-9).

In Matthew's Gospel, chapter 10:40, Jesus said, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me. And he that receiveth me receiveth Him that sent me." Matthew 11:27, he said, "All things are delivered to me of my Father. No man knows the Son but the Father, neither knows any man the Father save the Son and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." That relationship of the Father and is Son. Nobody really knows the Father expect those whom the Son revealed to them.

In John 5:19-23, Jesus answered and said unto them, "Verily, verily I say unto you the Son can do nothing of Himself but what he sees the Father do for what thing so ever he doeth, these also doeth the Son like wise. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that Himself doeth and he will show him greater works than these that ye may marvel. For as the Father raises up the dead and makes alive those, even so the Son will make alive whom He will, for the Father judgeth no man but has committed all judgment unto the Son that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. And he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which has sent him." So Jesus is making these declarations of this relationship that He has with the Father, that oneness that He has with the Father.

And in John's first epistle, chapter two, he said, "Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Messiah. He is the antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whosoever denies the Son the same has not the Father. But he that acknowledges the Son has the Father also. Let that therefore abide in you which you have heard from the beginning if that which you have heard from the beginning shall remain in you ye also shall continue in the Son and in the Father."

So the necessary of believing that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, and you could not say these things of an angel. You could not say these things of a man who has been elevated to a high position. It can only be said of the Son of God, the only begotten Son of God. And the it is important to hold on to and to maintain the deity of Jesus Christ. For if you don't have the Son, you really don't have the Father either. And there are those that are seeking to make a separation between them. They would make Jesus something less than God. They would make Jesus in an angel category, as a created being, not one who has existed from the beginning with God. "That which was from the beginning, which we have seen, which we have heard, which we have touched," John says. (1John 1:1) So in the cults there is that tendency to demean the person of Jesus Christ, to put him on a lower level. Such as the Jehovah Witnesses who declare that He is Michael the Archangel. Or such as the Mormons who say that He is the brother of Lucifer, putting him in a category of a created being. But John is very careful here to point out when you deny the Son, in reality you deny the Father also. So whosoever transgresses and abides not in the doctrine of Christ has not God. And he that abides in the doctrine of Christ, he has both the Father and the Son.

Back in John 5:18, we read that the Jews sought to kill Him, that is Jesus. Because He had not only broken their Sabbath, but He said also that God was his Father making Himself equal with God. Now, they understand the things that Jesus was saying, and they were ready to stone Him because He was making himself equal with God.

In John 5:23, Jesus said that, "All men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father and he that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which has sent him." Then in John 10:30, Jesus said very plainly, "I and the Father are one." No angel could say that. No man could say that. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him, and Jesus answered them, "Many good works have I shown you from my Father. For which of these works are you going to stone me?" And the Jews answered saying, "For a good work we don't stone you, but for blasphemy because you being a man make yourself God." They understood Jesus very clearly that he was declaring to be God. They understood that.

You remember when Satan took Jesus to what they call the Mount of Temptation, a high mountain,

showed him the kingdoms of the world, and offered them to Jesus if Jesus would just bow down and worship him. Do you remember the answer of Jesus to Satan? "It is written thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve." (Matthew 5:10) Only one is to be worshipped, and that is God, Him only. But yet we see Jesus receiving worship. Matthew 8:2, "There came a leper and worshipped Him." Matthew 9:18, "While he spake these things unto them, behold there came a certain ruler and worshipped Him." Matthew 14:33, "Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped Him saying of a truth you are the Son of God." Matthew 15:25, "Then came she and worshipped Him saying Lord help me." Matthew 28:9, "And as they went to tell the disciples behold Jesus met them and said all hale and they came and held Him by the feet and worshipped Him." And then when Jesus appeared to the disciples, Matthew tells us when they saw Him they worshipped Him. So he received worship and only God is to be worshipped. But to put the seal on that, in Hebrews 1:6, he tells that when God brought Jesus into the world, he said, "And let all of the angels of God worship Him," which again puts Him above the category of an angel.

This is important. This is essential doctrine. There are those who, in John's day, who were going around denying this truth. John said they were false prophets. They were deceivers. There are people going around today denying this basic truth, this foundational truth, that Jesus is indeed God. We read that God was, in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself as Jesus died on the cross for us. God was paying the price for our sins. Way back in Genesis when we had that interesting "type" of God saying to Abraham, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac whom thou loveth, and offer him unto Me as a sacrifice on a mountain that I will show you." (Genesis 22:2) That verse is so similar to "for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." (John 3:16) "Take now thy son, thine only son whom thou loveth, and offer him as a sacrifice."

We remember the story how that as they left the servants at the bottom of Mount Moriah, and Abraham and Isaac were walking together up the mountain. Isaac said to his dad, "Hey dad we've got the wood and we've got the fire but we're missing the sacrifice." (Genesis 22:7) And Abraham then declared, and it is a prophesy, "God will provide Himself a sacrifice. In the Mount of the Lord it shall be seen." (Genesis 22:8) And so he is prophesying that God will provide Himself a sacrifice. And when, of course, the Lord directed Abraham to take the ram that was caught by its horns in the thicket and to offer it as the sacrifice, Abraham called the name of the place Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will provide. In the Mount of the Lord he said, "it shall be seen." No accident that two thousand years later on Mount Moriah, God provided Himself a sacrifice, the same mount where Abraham offered Isaac was the same mount where God offered his only begotten Son as the sacrifice for our sins.

So the importance of holding to the doctrine of Christ because when you do, you have both the Father and the Son.

and if there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house,(1:10)

If they come denying this doctrine of Christ that he is God, that Jesus is God manifested in the flesh, John says don't invite them into your house. Now they usually come around on Saturday, and John said, "don't invite them into your house." And on other days they are riding bicycles and wearing white shirts with ties, but they deny the real doctrine of Jesus Christ because they would make Him something less than God. They would make him a created being. They would put him in the angel classification. John said,

Neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds(1:10b-11).

Don't receive them into your house nor should you even bid them good-bye:

Because in so doing, good-bye is sort of a contraction, the old English was God be with ye. And so it's been contracted to good-bye. But he said don't bid them farewell because if you do bid them God speed, you actually become a partaker of their evil deeds. Now, John said,

Having many things to write unto you, [I have a lot of things to write to you about], but I would not write with paper and ink but I trust to come unto you that I might speak to you face to face that our joy may be full (1:12).

Now it is interesting that this term "joy may be full" is used by John in the gospel and in his first and second letters. The fullness of joy that belongs to the believer, and so he is wants to fellowship with them

that they might experience the fullness of joy of being with each other face to face. More things that he'd like to write, but of course, John is getting old and I imagine the pen is sort of shaky and so he's not wanting to write them with pen and ink. "I want to come and see you face to face that the joy might be full." The joy of Christian fellowship. Jesus talked about fullness of joy in our prayer life in John 15, as he talks about this relationship that we have with Him, the vine and the branches, His abiding in us and our abiding in Him. That we can ask whatever we will that our joy might be full. The fullness of joy in abiding with Christ, and then in the sixteenth chapter, the fullness of joy in our prayer life, "please ask that you might receive that your joy may be full."

In his first letter John talks about the fullness of joy, and relates it to our fellowship with God. "That which we have seen and heard we declare unto you that you might have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son Jesus Christ, and these things right we unto you that your joy maybe full [relating it to our fellowship with God and here our fellowship with each other.] (1 John 1:1) But in all things God does desire that you experience the fullness of joy that comes by knowing Jesus Christ, abiding in Him, talking with Him in prayer, receiving from Him, and of course fellowshiping with Him and fellowshiping with each other.

The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.(1:13)

So it's just a very short little epistle of John. The main issues are a abiding in the commandment to love one another and to abide in the teaching that they've received concerning Jesus that He is one with the Father, that He is God manifested in the flesh.

Father, we thank You for the instruction that we receive from Your Word. And Lord, we realize that even as in John's day there were many deceivers that were denying these basic foundational truths drawing men after themselves, but in reality having the spirit of Antichrist because they would demean our Lord. And Father, we pray that even as John saw fit to warn those believers in those days that we will realize the danger of the false profits and of the deceivers who would go around today demeaning our wonderful Lord. And so Jesus, we exalt You and we praise Your name and we receive You as our Lord and as our Savior and recognize that You and the Father are One, and by seeing You we see the Father. Lord, thank You for revealing the Father to us and bringing us unto the Father. We rejoice Lord in our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

With each new week there comes uncertainties, and there are often certainties that are troubling to us. Things that we know that we are going to be facing this week that we would rather not face if we could escape them, problems, difficulties that have arisen that have to be dealt with. How important it is to come to the Lord and seek His guidance and His council, His wisdom in these things. The Bible tells us, "If any man lacks in wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all men freely and upbraids not and it shall be given unto him. (James 1: 5) The Bible tells us to confess our faults one to another and to pray one for another that ye might be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)

May the Lord watch over you and keep you in His love. Fill you with His Spirit. And may you abide in the doctrine of Jesus Christ, holding fast the truth. In Jesus' name. Amen.