

Introduction

One of the things that we began doing during the COVID pandemic was to have a Q & A session after our message. People can ask questions to get clarification about something said, or simply get more information. I also have the opportunity to ask questions to see if people understood some of the key points, and for personal examples in their own lives. Jesus spoke to the crowds, but afterwards, when He was alone with His disciples, they would ask Him to explain the parables to them. Small groups are really important so that people can ask questions and get more understanding.

(Mt 13:36) “Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.”

In one of our recent Q & A sessions, I was asked about loving the world and loving our enemies. Jesus taught that we were not only to love our neighbors, but we were also to love our enemies and those that persecute us. This person wanted to know if there was a difference between how we love our brothers and how we love our enemies, which is a great question. In the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew recorded Jesus saying that we need to love our enemies, pray for those who persecute us. Jesus said we were not just to greet our brothers, but also our enemies. He said that God causes the sun to shine on the evil and the good, and He sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. He concluded that we are to be perfect, as our heavenly Father is perfect.

(Mt 5:43–48) “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ {44} But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, {45} so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous. {46} For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? {47} If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? {48} Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

We are in 2 John, and our passage today gives some boundaries to how we love others, particularly to false teachers and those who are trying to deceive and lead others astray. In the first part, John gives his greeting, and a word of encouragement. Second, he gives three exhortations. The first exhortation is to walk according to God's commandments, which means loving one another. His second exhortation is to watch out, because there are deceivers who do not abide in the teaching of Christ. Third, he instructs the lady not to receive these deceivers into her house or give them a greeting. After these exhortations, John concludes, saying he had many more things to write to her about, but he did not want to do it with paper and ink. Instead, he was hoping to come see her and speak face to face, so that her joy would be made full.

John's Three Exhortations to the Chosen Lady

1. John's Salutation
2. John's Three Exhortations
3. John's Conclusion

(2 Jn 1–4) “The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth, {2} for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: {3} Grace, mercy *and* peace will be with us, from God the Father and from

Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. {4} I was very glad to find *some* of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment *to do* from the Father."

(2 Jn 5-11) "Now I ask you, lady, not as though *I were* writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. {6} And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it. {7} For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. {8} Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. {9} Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. {10} If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not give him a greeting; {11} for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds."

(2 Jn 12-13) "Though I have many things to write to you, I do not want to *do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that your joy may be made full. {13} The children of your chosen sister greet you."

1. John's Salutation (2 Jn 1-4)

John does not identify himself as the author of this personal letter. However, there is both external and internal evidence that he was the author. The style and choice of words are evidence. For example, he talks about walking in truth, loving one another, and living in truth, and those are all what scholars call "Johannine expressions."

There are numerous external evidences that John wrote this letter. Irenaeus wrote that John was the author. Irenaeus was discipled by Polycarp, and John had discipled Polycarp, so this is a very credible witness. In his book, "Against Heresies", he quotes directly from 2 John 7, "*John, the disciple of the Lord, therefore, condemns them when he says: 'For many deceivers have entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.'"*"¹ Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, Eusebius, and Jerome are some of the other early church fathers that credited John with this letter.

When was the letter written? Here is a quick glance at John's timeline. After the resurrection of Jesus, he stayed in Jerusalem and the surrounding areas. Church tradition is that he moved to Ephesus in the late 60's or early 70's. He wrote the Gospel of John between 85-90 A.D., while in Ephesus. The letters of 1, 2, 3 John were written between 90-95 A.D. John was exiled to the Island of Patmos by Domitian in 95-96 A.D. Domitian died in 96 A.D., and Emperor Nerva allowed John and other exiles to return. The book of Revelations was written while on Patmos. When released, John went back to Ephesus, where he remained until his death.

Dates of John's Writings	
Gospel of John	AD 85-90
1 John	AD 90-95
2 John	AD 90-95
3 John	AD 90-95
Revelation	AD 95-96

Since John was born between 6-10 A.D., he was a very elderly man when he wrote this letter. He mentions at the end that he wanted to go visit this chosen lady, so he was not too old to travel when he wrote this. After his return from Patmos, and before his death, Jerome wrote "The

¹ Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book 3, Chapter 16, Section 8

blessed John the Evangelist lived at Ephesus to extreme old age. When he could scarcely be carried to the meetings of the brethren, and was unable to speak many words, he would say no more than, 'Little children, love one another.' This strongly suggests that John wrote these letters prior to being exiled, and probably toward the early side of the date range given.

In the gospel of John, he did not introduce himself, and referred to himself as the "disciple that Jesus loved." Here, he refers to himself as the elder. The Greek word is *presbuteros*, which is the word for an elder in the church. It comes from *presbus*, which means an older man. John was an older man when he wrote it, but this is referring to his office of pastor in Ephesus. After John was released from the Island of Patmos, he returned to Ephesus, where he was the leader of that church. They had a plurality of elders, so it was not a one-man show, but John led the presbytery.

(2 Jn 1) "The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth,"

There are two offices in the church, an elder or overseer who shepherds the flock. The second office is deacon, and this is one who is a servant in the church. Both offices have qualifications, with character above reproach and ability to manage being essential requirements.

John wrote this letter to the chosen lady and her children. When I was a young believer, I had read or was taught that this was a church and her members. However, now that I have studied it, I find that scholars are split on whether this letter was to a woman or to a church. The Greek word for lady is *kyria* (Strong's G2959), which is the feminine of *kurios* (Strong's G2962), which means lord, master, might, or power. *Cyria* or *Kyria* was also a woman's name. John gives a greeting to this woman and her children. He also said that he was glad to find some of her children walking in truth. He ends by saying that he hopes to come to her and speak to her, face to face. These all indicate that this is a personal letter to a woman named *Kyria*.

Kyria is not just any woman, she is a woman that John took the time to write a personal letter to. This is a woman that John describes as an elect or chosen woman; she is a believer. The Greek word for elect or chosen is *electos* (Strong's G1588), and it means the elect or chosen. Jesus used the term quite frequently. In the parable about the wedding, someone had come without wedding clothes, and the king told the servants to "bind him hand and foot, and throw him into outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called but few are chosen (*electos*).

When Jesus spoke about the great tribulation in Matthew 24, he said that "for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. A few verses later he said that "false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect."

(Mt 24:22–24) "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short. {23} Then if anyone says to you, 'Behold, here is the Christ,' or 'There *He is*,' do not believe *him*. {24} For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect."

Then, Jesus spoke about His return. He said they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

(Mt 24:30–31) “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. {31} And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.”

In Romans 8, when Paul wrote about how God is for us, he asked, “Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies.”

(Ro 8:33) “Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies;”

In Colossians 3, Paul wrote, “So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience...” The elect is always speaking of believers. Believers have been chosen by God and are referred to as the elect. This woman was a believer, a chosen or elect woman.

(Col 3:12) “So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;”

It was written to this chosen lady and her children. She had children, but there is no mention of her husband. Scholars believe that she was probably a widow. John mentions her children several times. John said that he found some of her children walking in truth, just as we had received commandment to do from the Father. There are different takes on that statement. She may have had some children who were not believers and not walking in the truth, and others that were walking in the truth. Or, it could be that John found some of her children and they were walking in truth. I believe it was a word of encouragement to Kyria. In 3 John, he wrote that there is no greater joy than to hear of your children walking in the truth, so I believe his statement was meant to bring her joy.

(2 Jn 1) “The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth,”

(3 Jn 4) “I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.”

In John’s opening sentence he said that he loves this woman and her children in truth, and not only him, but all who know the truth. This woman was known and loved by other believers. She had a good reputation.

In the first four verses, John used the word truth five times. There is a reason for that; in verse two he wrote, “for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever.” John wrote this letter for the sake of the truth. That is his purpose statement. He is defending the truth.

(2 Jn 1–4) “The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in **truth**; and not only I, but also all who know the **truth**, {2} for the sake of the **truth** which abides in us and will be with us forever: {3} Grace, mercy *and* peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in **truth** and love. {4} I was very glad to find *some* of your children walking in **truth**, just as we have received commandment *to do* from the Father.”

What is truth? That is what Pilate asked Jesus in John 18:38. Jesus had answered Pilate’s question about whether He was a king, saying that His kingdom is not of this realm. Then, Jesus

said, "You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."

(Jn 18:37–38) "Therefore Pilate said to Him, "So You are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say *correctly* that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice." {38} Pilate said to Him, "What is truth?" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews and said to them, "I find no guilt in Him."

Jesus spoke often about truth. In John 14:6, He said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." Jesus is the truth. When Jesus said, "everyone who is of the truth hears My voice," He was saying that anyone that believes in Him will hear His voice; and Jesus spoke truth.

(Jn 14:6) "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me."

In John 17:17, in the High Priestly Prayer, Jesus prayed that His disciples would be sanctified in the truth. Then, He said, "Your word is truth." You are I are sanctified, or made holy, through truth. We are sanctified by receiving Christ into our lives; we call that positional sanctification. Then, as we renew our minds with the word of God, our lives are transformed and sanctified, which we call progressive sanctification. Jesus is the Word. Jesus is the truth. When we believe Jesus, he comes into our lives and abides in us, and He will be in us forever.

(Jn 17:17) "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth."

(2 Jn 2) "for the sake of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever:"

John wrote this for the sake of truth, and he also wrote it in truth. Notice that at the end of his greeting, he said, "in truth and love." That is a wonderful balance. We need to speak truth to people. Equally important, we need to speak truth in love. If we just share truth, and do not share it out of love, it can sometimes be mistaken as harsh, but if we share truth in love, people are more apt to receive it because they know we love them and have their best interest at heart.

(2 Jn 3) "Grace, mercy *and* peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."

John's greeting was a very common greeting of grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, in truth and love. God gives grace, which is unmerited favor. He did not have to forgive us, but He sent Jesus to pay for the debt of our sins, so that He could give us grace. Some say that Grace is God's Riches at Christ's Expense.

Mercy is God's compassion towards us. God saw the plight that we were in and had mercy and compassion towards us. He was moved with mercy. We have peace with God because of God's grace. Jesus paid for our sins and justified us so that we could have peace and fellowship with God. In Romans 5, Paul wrote, "having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. We have peace with God because we were justified by Jesus, and this is by placing our faith in Christ.

(Ro 5:1–2) “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, {2} through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.”

2. John's Three Exhortations (2 Jn 5-11)

a. Walk according to His commandments

In verse four, John transitions from giving Kyria a word of encouragement about her children walking in truth to his first exhortation, which is to walk according to God's commandments. He said that her children were walking in truth, just as we have received commandment to do from the Father. God commands us to walk in His commandments, and that is what some of her children were doing.

(2 Jn 4) “I was very glad to find *some* of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment *to do* from the Father.”

Specifically, John reminds Kyria of the commandment to love one another. He wrote, “Now I ask you, lady (Kyria), not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another.” John uses the phrase “from the beginning” ten times in his three letters and four times in the Gospel of John. It is one of the Johannine phrases. The Greek word for beginning is *arch* (Strong's G746), which means beginning, first, chief in order, time, or rank; principle, or rule. What he is saying here is that love is a foundational truth. It is not just something that they heard at the beginning, but it was a foundational commandment that was established from the outset.

(2 Jn 5) “Now I ask you, lady, not as though *I were* writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another.”

In John's first letter, he wrote, “For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” When they received the gospel message, they had been taught from the very beginning that we need to love God, and we need to love one another. Jesus taught His disciples what is known as the Royal Law, that we should love one another.

(1 Jn 3:11–12) “For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;”

In John 13:34-35, Jesus said, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” He impressed that message upon His disciples, and they taught this everywhere that they went. This was a foundational truth.

(Jn 13:34–35) “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. {35} By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

What does it mean to walk according to His commandments? John answered that, writing, “And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.” The way that we walk in His commandments is by walking in love.

When we go back to the ten commandments, the first four commandments pertained to loving God. We are to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. We are not to have any idols or put anything before God. We are not to take His name in vain. The last six commandments have to do with loving our neighbor.

(2 Jn 6) “And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.”

In Romans 13, Paul wrote about how loving one another fulfills the Law. He wrote, “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law. For this, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of *the* law.” Notice that he mentions three times that love is the fulfillment of the Law. He concluded, saying, “Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.”

(Ro 13:8–10) “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled *the* law. {9} For this, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” {10} Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of *the* law.”

b. Watch yourselves

John's first exhortation is for Kyria and her children to walk according to God's commandments, which is to walk in love. His second exhortation is for her to watch out for themselves. In verse eight he wrote, “Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.” Why does he exhort them to watch out for themselves? He prefaces that exhortation by telling why they needed to be on guard. There are many deceivers that have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.” That danger and problem has not gone away in the past two thousand years; if anything, it has grown worse.

(2 Jn 7-8) “For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. {8} Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward.”

John wrote extensively in his first letter about how to identify these antichrists and deceivers, so this is not a new thought. The specific deceivers that threatened the church at that time were the Gnostics, Docists, and the Cerinthians. There were others, but those three were the most prominent, and they all denied the trinity, and that Jesus had come in the flesh. They denied that He was the Son of God and had atoned for the sins of the world. Many commentators regard Cerinthus as the primary deceiver that John was addressing in his first letter.

Next, John says that anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.” The ESV reads, “Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God.” These false teachers and deceivers went beyond what the Scriptures teach. They had their

own revelation and knowledge and it was outside of what the Scriptures teach. The KJV says, "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God." These deceivers transgressed or violated what the Scriptures teach. The Scriptures are our plumbline. They are our foundation that we build our doctrine and our lives upon. When we hear something taught, we have to be like the Bereans and look into the Scriptures to make sure that what is being taught lines up with the Word of God. If it goes beyond or against the Scriptures, we are to reject it. We do not want to lose what we have accomplished. We do not want to go backwards in our faith, and if we embrace these false doctrines, we can lose what we have accomplished.

(2 Jn 9) "Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son."

c. Do not receive these deceivers into your house

John's third exhortation is for Kyria not to receive any of these deceivers and false teachers into her house. He wrote, "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds."

(2 Jn 10-11) "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not give him a greeting; {11} for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds."

Let me give some background to this third exhortation. Today, when a person travels, they usually find a Hilton, Marriott, Holiday Inn, or other hotel and stay there. In their culture at that time, there were not hotels, or a VRBO or Airbnb to book a room or house. People stayed with the local people in that area. They housed strangers. We have numerous examples of that throughout the Old and New Testament. The Greek word for hospitality is *philoxenia* (Strong's G5381). *Philo* is to love, as a friend. *Xenos* means a stranger, foreigner, or one not part of your family. Hospitality in its very definition is to show hospitality to strangers. In Hebrews 13:1-2, God tells us to "let love of the brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

(Heb 13:1-2) "Let love of the brethren continue. {2} Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

Hospitality was a requirement for elders; an overseer had to be hospitable. Hospitality was also a requirement for a widow that was going to be eligible for support by the church. A widow had to be sixty or older, the wife of one man, have a reputation for good works, brought up children, and shown hospitality to strangers." Showing hospitality was not just for elders and widows; it was something that all believers were to do. We are exhorted to practice hospitality, but there is a higher principle here; for the sake of the truth we must not participate in the evil deeds of false teachers by greeting them or by receiving them into our homes.

(1 Ti 3:2) "An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,"

(1 Ti 5:9-10) "A widow is to be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, *having been* the wife of one man, {10} having a reputation for good works; *and* if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers..."

In the introduction I mentioned that I was asked about loving the world and loving our enemies. While we are to greet everyone, love all people, and show hospitality to strangers, there are some constraints that God gives us. John wrote this letter to Kyria and her children to exhort them not to receive these deceivers into her house. If we know that a person is a false teacher, we are not to give them a greeting or receive them into our house. John said that when we do this, we are participating in his evil deeds. We do not want to help these false teachers in their work of deceiving people.

Over the years I have met many deceivers. My approach has been to warn them. I believe that God wants all men to repent, and for none to perish. The gospel is for everyone. So, I will allow them to come to listen to the message. However, I have specifically forbidden them to pray for people or teach their false doctrines. When I see that they are not abiding by those instructions, I forbid them to come to our church services and small group meetings.

There are still many deceivers. They can be found in the seminaries, where they teach liberal theology that goes too far. They deny the authority of the Scriptures. They deny the virgin birth. They deny the trinity. This does not mean that everyone that teaches in a seminary or attends a seminary is a false teacher. I am just saying that some of these deceivers can be found in seminaries.

These deceivers can be found in our churches. I was interviewing a man who was a Sunday School teacher in his church. I found out that he was for abortion, gay marriage, and other abominable things.

One of the big problems today is that according to Barna's recent survey, only 6% of church attenders have a Biblical worldview. That means that they do not know what the Scriptures teach and what is beyond the Scriptures. They cannot watch out for these deceivers because they do not know truth. Barna's survey showed that only 12% of youth pastors and children's pastors had a Biblical Worldview. They cannot watch out for our children and youth. Only 37% of pastors had a Biblical worldview. The shepherds that God has placed in the churches to watch over and protect the sheep cannot effectively watch out because they do not know truth. For the past few years, I have had a burden to encourage people to read and study God's word.

Another problem today is our concept of love. While God loves people and He sends rain and sunshine on both the righteous and the sinner, He specifically tells us not to greet or exercise hospitality to these deceivers. The Lord is our Shepherd. Jesus is referred to as the Chief Shepherd, and He is watching out for His flock, which is us. He does not want any of His sheep to be deceived, mislead, and to suffer loss because of these false teachers.

(1 Pe 5:4) "And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."

In our soft view of love today, we do not understand there are some God-given boundaries in love. There are some tough things about love. Tough love confronts a brother in sin; it does not sweep it under the carpet and pretend it is not there. God tells us when our brother sins, we are to go in private and confront him, because love covers a multitude of sins. (See James 5:19-20 and 1 Peter 4:8.) In Matthew 18:15-18 and Gal 6:1-5, God gives us the steps to follow and the attitude to have when we confront a brother. Those actions of love may not register with those who think that love is a feeling, and that we have to accept all people and all behavior. God has a higher view of what real love is.

Paul confronted the Corinthians for the sexual immorality, divisions, abuse of the gifts, and many other sins. Tough love disciplines. God disciplines His children. Today, parents don't dare use corporal punishment. In many countries you can go to prison or have your children taken away if you spank them. But God tells us that He loves those that He disciplines. He said if we are without discipline, then we are illegitimate children and not sons. But the love in our culture says that we do not dare discipline our children, and especially by corporal punishment.

(Heb 12:5–8) “and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; {6} For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives.” {7} It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline? {8} But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.”

3. John's Conclusion (2 Jn 12-13)

John had many more things to say to Kyria, but he did not want to write them; he wanted to share them face to face with her. He said he wanted to come to her and share them so that her joy would be made full. I believe he had some additional words of encouragement for her, and these would fill her with joy. We do not know if John ever made it to Kyria's home. At some point after writing this letter, he was exiled to Patmos.

(2 Jn 12) “Though I have many things to write to you, I do not want to *do so* with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that your joy may be made full.”

John closes by saying, “The children of your chosen sister greet you.” It is possible that Kyria's sister had children living in Ephesus, where John was, and they sent their greetings to her. It is likely that Kyria's children had visited their cousins, and that was how John found some of her children walking in truth.

(2 Jn 13) “The children of your chosen sister greet you.”

I have taught this message today with the view that Kyria was a chosen lady, a believer, rather than a church and its members. In the closing statement, if we view it as a church, the church in Ephesus, and the members of that church would probably be who John is referring to. This is a perfectly legitimate view, and one that many great scholars hold. The churches at that time were very much connected to one another, and one reason that they were connected is that the apostles were well connected with one another. When they planted churches, they regarded the other churches as sister churches. They greeted one another, and even sent offerings to one another to help those in need.

Conclusion and Applications

John wrote this letter for the sake of the truth. He loved Kyria and her children in truth. He encouraged her by stating that he had found some of her children walking in truth.

John gave three exhortations. The first exhortation was to walk according to God's commandments. When we keep God's commandments, we are walking in love, which is what God commanded us to do.

His second exhortation was to watch out for herself. In order to defend the truth John exhorted Kyria to watch out because there were many deceivers and false teachers that had gone beyond the teachings of Christ. They were denying that Jesus had come in the flesh, and that He was the Son of God. John wanted Kyria to recognize these deceivers by what they believed, to be on guard.

John's third exhortation was not to bring them into her home, which would effectively be participating in their evil deeds. He did not want Kyria to even greet them. For the sake of the truth, she was to constrain her love and hospitality.

The first application is to know truth. John used the word truth five times, and in verse two he said, "all who know the truth." God wants us to know the truth. For us to know the truth, we must read, meditate, and study the truth. Jesus said, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." We know the truth by abiding, dwelling, remaining, and continuing in God's word. I encourage everyone to spend time in God's word every day. If you are not on a daily reading plan, find one and begin reading the Bible every day. True believers will know the truth because they abide in God's Word.

(Jn 8:31–32) "So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, *then* you are truly disciples of Mine; {32} and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Our second application is that we apply the Word of God in our lives. God wants us to walk in truth, not just know the truth. God wants us to walk according to His commandments. As you read the Word of God, ask the Holy Spirit about applications for your life. Look at the Word of God as a mirror, and see yourself through the mirror of the Word. Look intently at it, and become a doer of the word. You will be blessed when you do that. Listen to what James wrote.

(Jas 1:22–25) "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. {23} For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; {24} for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. {25} But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does."

The third application is to practice hospitality. Welcome strangers into your home. God wants us to be hospitable, not just to our brothers and sisters in Christ, but to everyone. However, in your hospitality, use discernment and wisdom. Do not bring into your home those who you know are false teachers, and are leading people astray, so that you do not participate in their evil deeds. We are to love our brothers and sisters by protecting them from false teachers and deceivers.

(Heb 13:1–2) "Let love of the brethren continue. {2} Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for giving us this personal letter to Kyria. Even though it is the shortest book of the Bible, it is rich in content. Thank You for the balance of love and truth. Help us to know the truth and to defend the truth. Help us to walk in truth, and to keep Your commandments.

Help us to walk in love, and may our love for You and for others increase and abound. At the same time, give us discernment and wisdom. Help us to be on guard for false teachers and deceivers who deny that Jesus is the Son of God. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Discussion Questions

- Does it really matter if this letter was written to a woman name Kyria, or to a church? Would the applications for our lives today be any different?
- If you were telling a new believer to walk according to God's commandments, what three or four steps would you give him?
- John exhorts Kyria and her children to walk in love, and at the same time he wrote for the sake of the truth. What does this say about the balance of love and truth?
- In the opening I mentioned a question about loving the world or loving our enemy. How does this passage address that question?
- How do we watch out for ourselves? What does that entail?
- How do we know if someone goes beyond the teaching of Christ?
- If we do not agree on something that someone teaches, does that make him an antichrist or false teacher? What are the things that qualify someone as a false teacher?
- What are some things that are better said face to face rather than on paper?
- What are examples of things that we can say to someone to give them fullness of joy?

Three Exhortations to the Chosen Lady

Introduction (Mt 13:36, Mt 5:43–48, 2 Jn 1–13)

1. **John's Salutation** (2 Jn 1-4, Mt 24:22–24, 30-31, Ro 8:33, Col 3:12, 3 Jn 4, Jn 18:37-38, Jn 14:6, 17:17, Ro 5:1–2)

2. **John's Three Exhortations** (2 Jn 4-11)
 - a. Walk according to His commandments (1 Jn 3:11–12, Jn 13:34-35, Ro 13:8–10)

 - b. Watch yourselves (2 Jn 7-11)

 - c. Do not receive these deceivers into your house (2 Jn 10-11, He 13:1-2, 1 Ti 3:2, 5:9-10, 1 Pe 5:4, Jas 5:19-20, 1 Pe 4:8, Mt 18:15-18, Ga 6:1-5, Heb 12:5-8)

3. **John's Conclusion** (2 Jn 12-13)

Conclusion and Applications (Jn 8:31-32, Jas 1:22-25)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.