

2 John

Dr. Charles “Buddy” Parrish
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2 John 1:2-3

Introduction

- As we saw in vs. 1, here in his second letter John wants to make it clear that Truth and Love are permanently fused together. In God’s economy there cannot be one without the other. The elder writes to the chosen lady whom he *loves in Truth* and it is *because* of Truth that he loves the church and indeed all *who know the truth* love her too.

Vs. 2

- John writes for the *sake of the Truth*. Truth had been under attack. At the beginning of 1 John we see that false prophets, false teachers had slipped into the church. They evidently had begun teaching a Gnostic form of Christianity where every kind of bodily excess was permissible, because in their teachings it was only the soul that was saved. John is writing also at a time of outside persecution, hence the need to the coded language, but the greatest threat may come from within the church itself as such heresies take root.
- Almost certainly John is writing from Ephesus, so as we look at the 7 Letters to the 7 Churches in The Revelation, we see how vitally important is solid theology and belief, starting with the very first letter, which was to the church in Ephesus itself.
- In one of the many ways John ties Truth to Love is here where he says, “for the sake of the Truth *which abides in us*”. In his gospel, John first shares how Jesus told Thomas and the disciples in the Upper Room, “I am the Way, *and the Truth*, and the Life...” (John 14:6) and secondly how the Lord prayed in that night’s benediction, “The glory which You have given Me, I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one: *I in them* and You in Me...” (John 17:22-23a). Throughout the epistles of the New Testament is the idea of Christ being *in us*. So given that beginning with his gospel, John shows us Jesus’ message of Himself is being the embodiment of the only real Truth. He is Truth. So if we can say that He is in us, and that He is Truth, then we can also rightly say that Truth is in us.

- John is surely also remembering the words of Christ found in Matthew's telling of the Great Commission, "...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). So as Christ will be with us always, so too will Truth be with us forever! There is nothing relative about this Truth. This is absolute Truth for today, tomorrow, and always. This is absolute Truth in the USA, or the UK, or Iran, Russia, China, or Bolivia. This is absolute Truth for the whole world.
- Further, in that same conversation with the disciples in the Upper Room, Philip then asks for Jesus to "show us the Father", to which Jesus replied, "He who has seen Me *has* seen the Father" (John 14:8-9). As you read it there is a tinge of frustration in Jesus's voice, for in John 10:30 He had already said, "The Father and I are One." So if we say that "God is love" (1 John 4:8,16), then it **MUST** be true to say that Jesus Christ is love. So Jesus is Truth and Jesus is Love and as He has said, all of who He is, including Truth and Love, are in us and will be with us forever and ever.

Vs. 3

- This is the concluding line of the opening greeting of the letter, but it is a very unusual closing. John says, "Grace, mercy and peace *WILL* be with us...". In every other New Testament letter the greeting concludes with a prayer or a wish, such as 1 Peter 1:2, where Peter says, "May grace and peace be yours in the fullest measure." See Jude vs. 2: "May mercy and peace and love be multiplied to you." Paul commonly says, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." But here John offers neither wish nor prayer, but says with certainty that grace, mercy and peace *WILL* be with us! Here is that certainty that he speaks of in 1 John 4:16 where "we have come to *KNOW* and believe...". So confident is John in the provisions of God for His people that John neither prays nor wishes for the church to receive God's blessings, he **KNOWS** that they will receive them.
- What John wants for his church and every church, every Christian is to move beyond believing to *KNOWING*. There is a certainty in knowing that is missing in belief and John is certain. He doesn't just hope in the promises of God, he is banking on those promises. John is so certain of the Truth of Christ that imprisonment on Patmos holds no fear for him. He can face the enemies of Jesus, the enemies of Truth and Love with absolute confidence, with no fear, and with supreme certainty in their ultimate defeat and our ultimate victory. Grace, mercy and peace *WILL* be with us and so will so much more.