

Refuge City Church — July 16, 2023 “Truth & Love” (2 John)

Introduction [Verses 1-3]

“The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever: Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father’s Son, in truth and love.”

- Who is this lady? Specific person and her children? The Church? A specific home church in an unnamed city?
 - Irregardless, the message of 2 John bears weight that we much pay attention to.
 - Truth & Love, and their inseparable connection.
- **QUOTE:** “When divorced from truth, love is little more than sentimentality or humanism.” [Zane Hodges]
- **QUOTE:** “Truth without love is brutality.” [Warren Wiersbe]
- **QUOTE:** “God’s saving love in Christ, however, is marked by both radical truthfulness about who we are and yet also radical, unconditional commitment to us. The merciful commitment strengthens us to see the truth about ourselves and repent. The conviction and repentance moves us to cling to and rest in God’s mercy and grace.” [Timothy Keller]

“Reminder of the truth” [Verses 4-6]

“I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.”

- Abide in love. Walk in love.
 - **1 John 1:7**, “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.”
- Summation of 1 John [“Light & Love”]
 - Relationship with Jesus is experiential; to be had here and now.
 - Abide in Him . Walk in Him. Love Him. And let those claims be followed by expressive conditions.
 - Practice righteousness. It’s who we are, and how we are to live.
 - Loving God biblically will lead to loving others authentically.
 - Rest assured in who you are, and stand confident as a child of God.
 - Test the spirits in order to determine that you are not being deceived from the truth of the gospel.
 - God is love. Abide in His love.
 - You can overcome this world because Christ already achieved the victory.

- As the church, help each other and keep one another accountable to the obedience of God's commands.
- Should we study God's Word to know His commandments? [yes]. Is that all we need to do in order to love Him & others? [no].
- **QUOTE:** "It is much easier to study the truth, or even argue about the truth, than it is to practice it!" [Warren Wiersbe]
- Let's remember this solid reminder/exhortation.
 - **1 John 3:18, 23**, "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth... And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us."
 - **1 John 4:7, 11, 21**, "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God... Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another... And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother."
- We can't do one *or* the other. The command is to do both!
 - In order to do this properly, we have to know and be known. Which means we must be intentional about being in community!

"Application of this truth" [Verses 7-11]

"For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works."

- **1 John 2:18, 22-23**, "Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour... Who is the liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, he who denies the Father and the Son. No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also."
- **1 John 4:1-3**, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already."
- The key component of these deceivers: they do not confess the coming of Christ in the flesh.
 - **Key:** the term "Christ" = anointed; Messiah.
 - **Philippians 2:5-8**, "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

- **1 John 5:1**, “Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.”
- What is the implication if Jesus is not the Christ?!
 - “What is the most important thing to come out of a mine? Asked a French engineer of his students about a century ago. After the pupils named various minerals, he corrected them: “The most important thing to come out of the mine was the miner.”
 - When the gospel of Jesus is embraced to the core, this is the result.
 - Without Christ, life is a hopeless lie of humanistic philosophy that ends in death, both in body and spirit.
 - Here is how others view Jesus:
 - **Judaism:** Jesus was a respected teacher, miracle worker, but not God in the flesh. The very reason they wanted to kill Him.
 - **Islam:** a revered prophet and teacher, but deny His deity.
 - **Hinduism:** Jesus was holy and wise, and is to be considered as “a god”.
 - **Buddhism:** Jesus was enlightened, wise, and holy, but not divine.
 - **New Age:** Jesus was wise and moral.
 - **Jehovah’s Witness:** Do not worship Jesus. Do not believe He is Almighty God [[reject the doctrine of the trinity](#)]; He was created by God. He is a ‘lesser god’ on the level of an angel.
 - **Mormon:** Do not believe in the eternal divinity of Jesus. God is an exalted man, Jesus, angels, and humans are the literal offspring of our Heavenly Father and mother.
- Thus, it is imperative to know the truth of Jesus!
 - Bank tellers: knowing real money from counterfeit.
 - Spend enough time handling the real thing, and you’ll immediately know when a fake presents itself.
 - [[John 14:6—Jesus’ truth claim](#)] **John 8:31-32**, “So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”
 - Know what you believe, as that in part is what you are pursuing.
 - **Philippians 2:12**, “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,” [[NLT: “work hard to show the results of your salvation.”](#)]
 - Rest assured. Stand confident. Know what you believe so you are not fooled and deceived.
 - **Ephesians 4:14**, “so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”
- **[vs. 8]** “Do not lose what we have worked for.”
 - **1 John 1:3**, “that which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.”

- This isn't a selfish appeal by John. But a declaration of the importance of intimate fellowship with God, through the teaching of Jesus, in His established church.
 - **Matthew 16:18**, "...on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
- Be wary of falling under false teaching, but also be wary of stepping out in front of Jesus.
 - *Example:* walking with my kids and purposefully stopping to see how far they will go because they weren't paying attention.
 - We are perpetual followers of Jesus.
 - Even if He places us in a position of leadership, we still follow & submit to His lordship.
 - **Matthew 16:21-23**, "From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This shall never happen to you." But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." [Mark 8:33, "But turning and seeing his disciples... your leadership has implications]
 - **John 15:4-5**, "Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."

Conclusion

"If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works."

- Is there a difference between hospitality and 'evangelistic friendship'?
 - The charge here is not about sharing our faith.
 - But rather, giving the implication that we are neutral to the false teaching of others.
 - What company are you keeping? What are you allowing into your home, and mind, that seeks to influence you away from the truth of God's Word?
 - **2 Corinthians 10:5**, "We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,"