

Commentary on 2 John and 3 John by Chuck Smith 3.16.25

**Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471**

**Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399**

**Web site [todbc.org](http://todbc.org) email us at [opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org](mailto:opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org)**

**January 2025 memory verse (NKJV)**

Luke 24:45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

**February 2025 memory verse**

Luke 24:46 (NKJV) Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day,

**March 2025 memory verse**

Luke 24:47 (NKJV) and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

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**2 John**

The elder unto the elect lady and her children ([2Jo 1:1](#)), John calls himself the aged,

Now there is, you know, question as to who the elect lady was, if it were actually a person, an individual, or if he was writing to a church. "The elect lady and her children." We don't know. But he said,

whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth ([2Jo 1:1](#));

As I said, the truth is the theme of the epistle.

For the truth's sake, which dwells in us, and shall be with us for ever ([2Jo 1:2](#)).

Jesus said my words are truth. He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, my words shall not pass away" ([Matthew 24:35](#)). The truth exists forever. And so I love in the truth. I love in truth. And all they that have known the truth, for the truth's sake.

Grace be with you, and mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love ([2Jo 1:3](#)).

Grace, mercy and peace: these are common greetings in the New Testament epistles. Usually just grace and peace, some of them is added mercy. To Timothy and Titus was added grace, mercy and peace. The grace of God is God's unmerited favor to you. It's getting what you don't deserve, the goodness of God, the blessings of God which we don't deserve, yet God bestows upon them. That's grace. Mercy is not getting what you do deserve.

I rejoiced greatly that I found thy children walking in truth ([2Jo 1:4](#)),

Boy, if you don't know that truth is the theme of the epistle, you ought to know it by now. He in each of the verses so far has mentioned it at least once, sometimes more than once. "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth,"

as we have received a commandment from the Father. 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 ([2Jo 1:4-5](#)).

This is really the essence of the New Testament and the commandments of Jesus. Jesus said, "A new commandment give I unto thee, That you love one another." Jesus said, "By this sign shall men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another" ([John 13:34-35](#)). This is a sign to the world.

Now unfortunately, the church's witness to the world hasn't been that good. When churches get in squabbles with each other, when there is fighting and division in the body, it's a very poor witness to the world. It's no sign that we're His disciples. "We know," John said, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" ([1 John 3:14](#)). How do I know that I've really passed from death unto life? God's love planted in my heart for the brethren. So the commandment that we have from the beginning is that we should love one another.

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 ([2Jo 1:6](#)).

So we should walk in love. Love one towards another. This is the agape love that's sacrificing, self-effacing, giving love.

Now he deals with, 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 ([2Jo 1:7](#)).

Remember in his first epistle, he said, "Believe not every spirit but try the spirits to see if they be of God. And every spirit that testifieth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: But every spirit that testifies not that Jesus is come in the flesh is not of God: the spirit of antichrist, which is already at work in the world" ([1 John 4:1-3](#)). So now again he talks about "deceivers entered into the world, who confess that Jesus Christ, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh" ([2 John 1:7](#)).

Interestingly enough, though it looks identical to his first epistle, there is a very interesting difference in the Greek. That difference lies in the tense. And in the second epistle here that we are considering tonight, the word literally is "coming in the flesh." Now in the first epistle, it was that He had come in the flesh; that is, His first coming was in the flesh.

You see, there were the Gnostics who declared that Jesus was a phantom, an apparition. There appears to be a person but it wasn't really there. It's just an apparition. That everything of the material is evil, everything that is of material substance is inherently evil. Thus, had Jesus had a material body it would have been evil and He could not have been God; therefore, He did not have a material body because that's evil. All material is evil. And the Gnostics taught that Jesus was just a phantom and they had stories about when He would walk on the sand, you wouldn't see any footprints, you know, and they developed all kinds of things like this. Jesus was an apparition. He didn't really come in the flesh.

John said in the first epistle that whoever declares that was, you know, that's the way you test the spirits to see if they're really of God. Here the test is: Is He coming in the flesh? Now there is a very interesting point to be made here and that is, the Jehovah Witnesses deny that Jesus is coming in the flesh. His coming is a spiritual coming. He came in 1914, established the kingdom of God in the secret chambers. He's not really coming in the flesh. Now what does this then say of those who hold that doctrine? "Many deceivers are entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

Now look to yourselves [or be careful], that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God ([2Jo 1:8-9](#)).

Though they claim to have the Father, Jehovah Witnesses, yet their denial of Christ is also denial of the Father.

He that abides in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you ([2Jo 1:9-10](#)),

On Saturday morning, when Jehovah Witnesses knock on your front door,

and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him goodbye, God speed: for he that bids him God speed is a partaker of his evil deeds ([2Jo 1:10-11](#)).

So when the Jehovah Witnesses leave, don't say, Well, God bless you, brother. Or God bless, you don't want God to bless their pernicious ways. They are denying the truth of God that Jesus Christ is God manifested in the flesh and that Jesus is coming in the flesh. They deny that. So don't bid them God bless you. You might say, God bring you to the truth. God bring you out of darkness into the glorious light of His Son, but not God bless you.

Having many things to write unto you, I would not write them with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full ([2Jo 1:12](#)).

Fullness of joy, that's what the Lord wants for every child of God. The fullness of joy is mentioned by Jesus in John, the fifteenth chapter.

The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen ([2Jo 1:13](#)).

### 3 John

So the third epistle of John is now again, John addresses himself as

The elder [the presbytueros] unto the wellbeloved Gaius ([3Jo 1:1](#)),

Probably not the Gaius mentioned in Paul's epistle to the Corinthians where he was in Corinth, and it would appear that these letters were written to those in the area of Ephesus.

whom I love in the truth. Beloved ([3Jo 1:1-2](#)), And he's talking to Gaius.

I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth ([3Jo 1:2](#)).

Now there are many people who quote this scripture as a sort of promise for healing. And they twist the scriptures slightly making it really sort of God's declaration, God saying I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in good health, even as your soul prospers. But this is a personal letter from John to Gaius. And he is greeting Gaius who is well-loved with this beautiful wish that you may prosper and be in good health. As we so often in our letters writing to someone we haven't seen for a long time, I hope that this letter finds you in good health. So to use this as a promise for healing is really not scriptural, as God's promise for healing. It is the wish of John for Gaius. Beautiful wish indeed. "I wish that you might prosper and be in good health, even as your soul prospers."

For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as you walk in truth. And I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth ([3Jo 1:3-4](#)).

I can concur with what John is saying here. The greatest joy, I think, of a teacher is to hear that their children are walking in truth. You know, to come across someone that you ministered to fifteen, twenty years ago and find them walking in the truth is just a thrill, no greater joy.

In the same way, there's probably no greater sorrow than to hear that your children have turned from the truth, got caught up in some weird doctrine, some heresy. That's painful, that hurts. But "no greater joy than to hear that they are walking in the truth."

Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do to the brethren, to the strangers; Which have borne witness of your love before the church: whom if you bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, you will do well ([3Jo 1:5-6](#)):

Now he's talking about Gaius's treatment of these itinerary evangelists and prophets. You've been hospitable to them. You've helped them along their way. And in this you did well. It was, and they've come, and they've told of your love. They've told of your hospitality.

Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing from the heathens ([3Jo 1:7](#)).

So these itinerant prophets have gone forth in the name of the Lord and for his name's sake, but they wouldn't take anything from the Gentiles, which is in the New Testament Greek the heathen or the pagans, because in Christ, you know, they were all brothers. "There is no Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian" ([Colossians 3:11](#)). So the Gentiles referred to those outside of Christ.

It had been reported and he said,

We ought to receive such, that we might be fellow helpers of the truth. Now I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, did not receive us ([3Jo 1:8-9](#)).

Diotrephes, an interesting character. We look how his sin has been exposed throughout the years. A man who loved the preeminence in the church. He didn't want to give, you know, any place to anybody else. He wanted the preeminence. So when these prophets would come in, he wouldn't receive them. In fact, he even refused John the beloved, apostle of the Lord. There are Diotrephes still in the church today, those who are looking for a position for themselves, those that are looking for a place of power and authority, who want preeminence.

So John said,

Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and he forbids them that would, and casts them out of the church ([3Jo 1:10](#)).

I mean, this guy was a real tyrant. He wouldn't receive these itinerant ministers and if someone in the church would receive them, he'd throw them out of the church.

John's exhortation is

Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. And he that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God ([3Jo 1:11](#)).

Again here, John puts the emphasis upon what a person is doing. "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourself" ([James 1:22](#)). "Not he who has the law is justified by the law, but he who does the law is justified by the law" ([Galatians 3:11-12](#)).

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Having the knowledge of Jesus Christ doesn't save you. It's following Him as your Lord that brings salvation. It isn't mouthing the Apostle's Creed that will save you. It's what are you doing. You're doing good, then you're of God, but if you're doing evil, you really don't know God.

Demetrius has a good report of all men ([3Jo 1:12](#)),

And probably this letter was given to Demetrius who was headed that way as a letter of reference from John and he told him to give it to Gaius, and so he is encouraging now, when Demetrius gets there to receive him. "Demetrius has good report of all men,"

and of the truth itself: yes, and we also bear record; and you know that our record is true. Now I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face ([3Jo 1:12-14](#)).

So as he closed the second epistle, so he closes the third with the anticipation of seeing him, not having to write to him the things that are on his heart.

Peace be to thee. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends [my friends] by name ([3Jo 1:14](#)).