

Reject the Heretics

July 15, 2018 ~ 2 John

The Elect Lady

- ❖ Commentaries vary on whether lady addressed is a woman or church
 - ✧ All early commentaries regarded recipient as a woman
 - ✧ Many recent commentaries regard recipient as a church
- ❖ III: Animal or people images / Young or old woman
 - ✧ Initially see it one way / Training lets you see it both ways
 - ✧ But John meant it in only one way / Woman and her children or church
- ❖ Perhaps lady does mean church / But I seriously doubt it
 - ✧ Metaphor is a force fit at times / **v5** ~ "I plead with you lady"
 - ✧ Why didn't John use it in **1 John** or **Revelation**?
 - ✧ Parallelism with **3 John** must prevail

Similarities of 2 John and 3 John

- ❖ **vss 1-4** ~ Greetings
 1. Each letter starts with "The Elder"
 2. Word "truth" used 5 and 4 times / "love in truth", "walk in truth"
 3. Both greetings include "rejoice greatly"
- ❖ Last **2 vss** ~ Farewells
 1. Practically identical / "many things to write" but not "with paper/pen and ink"
 2. He wants to "speak face to face" with them
 3. Greetings from family & friends
- ❖ Content also similar in structure
 1. First part defines standard to judge people and actions (**vss 5-6** and **vss 5-8**)
 2. Second part introduces a villain (**vss 7** "antichrist" and **vss 9** "Diotrephes")
 3. Third part instructs reader how to oppose villainy (**vss 10-11** and **vss 11-12**)

Differences of 2 John and 3 John

- ❖ I'll cover more next week / But think "put off" | "put on" or "don't" | "do"
- ❖ Both letters have some of each / But overall emphasis is different
- ❖ **2 John** emphasizes behavior of "putting off"
- ❖ **3 John** emphasizes behavior of "putting on"

Xition: Let's look at the greeting in 2 John . . .

John Never Called Himself an Apostle

- ❖ John introduces himself as "the Elder"
 - ✧ John wrote 5 books of Bible, yet never referred to himself as an apostle
 - ◇ **John** (*disciple*), **1 John** (*none*), **2,3 John** (*elder*), **Rev** (*servant*)
 - ✧ He began his **Gospel** and **1st John** very dramatically
 - ◇ **John 1.1** ~ "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God" (names himself as disciple at near end)
 - ◇ **1 John 1.1** ~ "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life"
 - ◇ John so focused on Jesus that he faded into background
- ❖ Here he uses the title befitting his role – shepherding people through letters

When Studying Ask: Who | What | Why | When | Where

- ❖ "Who is writing to whom?" / Apostle John to a lady and her children
 - ✧ Is there a husband? Was there a husband? Did he run off? Did he die?
- ❖ "Why is John writing?" / "What are his concerns?"
 - ✧ Is he openly concerned? Is he hinting at problems gently?

Greetings to the "elect lady"

- ❖ John affirms this woman strongly – emphasizing love and acceptance
 - ✧ "elect", "whom I love", "not only I but also all"
 - ✧ This may indicate that she doubts (*doesn't experience*) the love of others
- ❖ **v2** "because" ~ Note he also gives the reason for love / This is important
 - ✧ This emphasis makes more sense later (**v10**)
- ❖ **v3** "grace, mercy, and peace will be" ~ John emphasizes a future fulfillment
 - ✧ These are conditional gifts from God (*not saving grace*)
 - ◇ If we "love and walk in truth" then these gifts are ours
 - ◇ Presented more clearly later / But correlation presented here
 - ◇ A similar conditional blessing is given to Gaius in **3 John** (*one of Phil's favs*)

What Means the "Some" of v4

- ❖ **Read v4** ~ "I rejoiced greatly .. some .. commandment from the Father"
 - ✧ "Does this mean John saw other of her children not walking in truth?"
 - ◇ If so, how could he "rejoice greatly" in what he saw?
 - ◇ Well, what if some months|years earlier none walked in truth

- ❖ Also, we must realize we've inferred something c/other children (*not stated*)
 - ✧ This could be implied by the statement – just not logically deduced
 - ✧ **III**: Tyler children – "**I saw some of your children at the Miles for Myanmar**"
 - ◇ Perhaps they all were - Unless I'm counting noses I couldn't be sure
 - ◇ Perhaps this woman has many children and John wasn't counting noses

Lady Likely Violating Standard

- ❖ Heart of both letters introduces 3 things:
 - ✧ 1) a goal or standard of conduct, 2) a villain, and 3) advice to fight villainy
- ❖ Also think of "**put off**" in **2 John** and "**put on**" in **3 John**
 - ✧ Gaius in **3 John** seems to have opposed a villain
 - ✧ But the woman of **2 John** seems to have supported a villain (*unwittingly?*)
 - ◇ **2 Tim 3.6-7** ~ Paul warns Timothy of deceivers (*unthankful, unholy, unloving*):
 ".. from such people turn away! ⁶ For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts, ⁷ always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."
- ❖ **Read vs 5-6** ~ "**I plead with you, lady .. love one another .. This is love**"
 - ✧ This plea comes with an air of authority – not powerlessness
- ❖ **Def: love** – "**Love is the Christian's moral disposition of mind, which embraces all other virtues and graces. It implies faith, because it is founded on Christian principle, and can only be tested by a right belief. It implies purity, because it is modeled on the love of God, and has abjured the old man. It implies unselfishness, because it desires the good of the other for his own sake and God's. It implies humility, because it distrusts itself, relies on God, and thinks more of the other than of itself.**" ~ Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers (Biblehub.com)
- ❖ John is admonishing this woman to use her brain in addition to her heart

Antichrists Abound / They Steal Treasure

- ❖ **v7** ~ "**For many deceivers .. and an antichrist**"
 - ✧ "**What is their error?**" "**.. do not confess Christ as coming in the flesh**"
 - ◇ Gnostics – regarded matter as evil, therefore beneath God's dignity
 - ◇ Docetists – regarded Jesus as a phantasm / He lacked a human body
 - ◇ Marcionites – denied Christ was a Jewish Messiah / He was only spirit
- ❖ **v8** ~ "**Look to yourselves .. receive a full reward**"
 - ✧ John appears to warn of lost treasure / not a loss of salvation
 - ◇ "**we do not lose .. we may receive a full reward**"

Xition: John clarifies importance of adhering to doctrine of Christ in v9 . . .

Those that Deny Christ Don't Know God

- ❖ **Read v9** ~ "Whoever transgresses .. Father and the Son"
- ❖ There is no salvation apart from Christ
 - ✧ **1 Tim 2.5** ~ "There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."
 - ✧ **Acts 4.12** ~ "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."
- ❖ **Syllogism**: Satan hates Jesus / Unbelievers serve Satan / Unbelievers hate Jesus
- ❖ Billions of people gladly / willingly speak of loving God
 - ✧ Yet most deny Christ – admitting therefore that they don't really know God

A Call for Inhospitable Behavior

- ❖ **Read v10-11** ~ "If anyone comes to you .. in his evil deeds"
- ❖ We've finally come to the reason for the entire letter
- ❖ John is writing to a woman given to hospitality
 - ✧ No hotels or motels existed in this time / People stayed with families
 - ✧ Friendships could develop leading to ongoing visits and support
- ❖ "To whom are we to be inhospitable?"
 - ✧ After all, we're to reach out to the lost – to minister to them
 - ✧ **Read 1 Cor 5.9-13** ~ "I wrote to you .. the evil person"
 - ◆ But we're to reject them when claim to be brethren
 - ◆ "Opponents of Christ that yet claim to be Christians"

Farewell

- ❖ **Read v12-13** ~ "Having many things .. greet you. Amen."
- ❖ John clearly warned this "elect lady" as to what was right and wrong c/visitors
 - ✧ People can be very resistant to this type of instruction
 - ✧ People just tend to resist having others tell them what's right / wrong
- ❖ He says he has "many things to write" but will not do so
 - ✧ He expects to see her and her children "face to face"
 - ✧ Letters are helpful but they're not the same
- ❖ He closes with family greetings ("children of your elect sister")

Xition: Does this apply to our day?

Application to Today

- ❖ We still have to be careful about who we allow in our homes
 - ✧ I don't invite Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons into my home
 - ◇ Some regard their visits as opportunities to evangelize
 - ◇ But John commands us to not invite them in or even greet them
 - "Are you too Christian to obey God's Word in this?"
 - ✧ Good may come from such visits you may say . . . True . . .
 - ✧ Good does sometimes arise from acts of disobedience
- ❖ III: Years ago we hosted a family for PHF – Christian theologian / writer
 - ✧ He may write well but his personal character was poor
 - ◇ He was proud and ridiculed his adult son sarcastically
 - ✧ I purposed to not have him back in my home if he returned to PHF in future

- "Truth abides in us and will be with us forever"
- The Holy Spirit makes His home in us / Let's make our home hospitable for Him
- Let's love one another as God commands / Doing and not doing what God says
- Let's not think we can be better Christians than God's Word describes
- After all, God gets to define the religion that bears the name of His Christ

Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,

And to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy,

To God our Savior, who alone is wise,

Be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever.

Amen *pause* Go in peace . . .

Reject the Heretics

July 15, 2018 ~ 2 John ~ Handout

1. Commentators believe the "elect lady" to be either a woman or a _____.
2. What are 3 reasons to believe it is truly a woman? i) _____, ii) _____, and iii) _____.
3. 2 John and 3 John have the same structure of Greeting, Main Body, and Farewell.
 - a. What are 3 common features of greeting? i) _____, ii) _____, and iii) _____.
 - b. What are 3 common features of farewell? i) _____, ii) _____, and iii) _____.
 - c. What 3 components make up the main body of letter? i) _____, ii) _____, and iii) _____.
4. What popular phrases of Paul's are we to associate with 2 John and 3 John? _____ and _____.
5. In what book John wrote did he refer to himself as an apostle? _____
6. What are other Who / What / Why / When / Where questions come to your mind in this message?

7. The greetings of 2 John and 3 John were said to contain conditional blessings. What were the blessings conditioned upon? _____
8. Did John find some of the lady's children not walking in truth? _____
9. What cannot be logically deduced from the statement "I have found some of your children walking in the truth" _____
10. Is it reasonable to infer that the lady fell victim to a villain while Gaius of 3 John did not? _____
Why or why not? _____
11. It was stated that the woman was to use her _____ as well as her heart when serving.
12. According to John (*and Paul in 1 Cor*), to whom are we to be inhospitable? _____
