

Love Predicated on Truth

2 John 1:1-3

Series: Christian Hospitality

1. Introduction –

- a. The author is the Apostle John. He describes himself in 2 John 1 as “The Elder” which conveys the advanced age of the apostle, his authority, and status during the foundational period of Christianity when he was involved with Jesus’ ministry.
 - b. Second John deals with the same problem as 1 John. False teachers influenced by the beginnings of Gnostic thought were threatening the church.
 - c. The overall theme of 2 John closely parallels 1 John’s theme of a “recall to the fundamentals of the faith” or “back to the basics of Christianity” (vv. 4–6). For John, the basics of Christianity are summarized by adherence to the truth (v. 4), love (v. 5), and obedience (v.6).
 - d. Second John stands in direct antithesis to the frequent cry for ecumenism and Christian unity among believers. Love and truth are inseparable in Christianity. Truth must always guide the exercise of love (cf. Eph. 4:15). Love must stand the test of truth. The main lesson of this book is that truth determines the bounds of love, and as a consequence, of unity. Therefore, truth must exist before love can unite, for truth generates love (1 Pet. 1:22). When someone compromises the truth, true Christian love and unity are destroyed. Only a shallow sentimentalism exists where the truth is not the foundation of unity.
 - e. Outline
 - i. The Basis of Christian Hospitality (1–3)
 - ii. The Behavior of Christian Hospitality (4–6)
 - iii. The Bounds of Christian Hospitality (7–11)
 - iv. The Blessings of Christian Hospitality (12,13)
2. Verse 1 – Basis for Love – 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,
- a. John writes here in an overtly pastoral role, “elder” being an early church term for local congregational overseer.
 - i. Elder – Greek is *presbuteros* (pres-boo'-ter-os) – among the Christians, those who presided over the assemblies (or

- churches) The NT uses the term bishop, elders, and presbyters interchangeably—Pastor
- ii. Here the heart of John for the flock of God is evident—he loves and cares for them
 - b. Elect – Greek is eklektos (ek-lek-tos') – picked out, chosen; chosen by God
 - c. Lady – Church – discourse changes to 2nd personal plural – a group not an individual (the church is often referred to as a woman or a bride; so is Israel).
 - d. Her children – members of that particular local church – a sister church
 - e. Whom I love in truth –
 - i. As an elder, he loves the church and its children; this is the reason that he does what he does
 - 1. Every pastor should have this very thought guarding their souls
 - ii. Notice that love is predicated upon truth –
 - 1. This truth is the word of God and obedience to that same word.
 - 2. Remember that according to 1 John, love for God and His people summarizes Christianity.
 - iii. To John, truth was the foundation on which love is built and sustained.
 - 1. 2 John 1:7 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.
 - f. and not only I, but also all who know the truth,
 - i. Ecumenical love must be based on truth.
 - 1. Truth should matter to the church of God.
3. Verse 2 –Truth as the Unifier – because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever:
- a. Truth causes us to love those that are of the truth
 - b. Truth that abides in us – we live in the truth of God
 - c. In the first epistle we considered what truth is:
 - i. Possessed and imparted by the Holy Spirit (2:20)
 - 1. The Holy Spirit being truth Himself (4:6)
 - ii. Truth refers to the ethical standards that God has established for his people as expressed in His commandments (1:6)

- iii. Truth is God's revealed and personal sanctifying presence that gives the believer the capacity to reflect God's character (1:8)
 - iv. Truth refers to the quality of conformity to the way things are in God's omniscient wisdom (2:8)
 - v. Truth refers to the gospel of Jesus Christ, its implications, and the sphere of eternal life into which the gospel ushers those who embrace it (3:19)
 - d. God's truth never leaves us but will be with us forever
- 4. Verse 3 – Covenant as the Basis for Ecumenism – Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love.
 - a. Grace – God's unmerited favor to his people
 - b. Mercy – God's willingness to pardon their sin
 - c. Peace – God's abiding hand of blessing
 - d. Each of these is an aspect of God's covenant love
 - e. Notice that Grace precedes both mercy and love
 - f. These are presented and applied through the gospel as man comes to faith and these are the basis for love in truth.
- 5. Benediction –
 - a. Isaiah 26:3 You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.