

Believers are Exhorted to Love One Another 2 John

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should walk in truth and love.
2. Believers should not show hospitality to false teachers.

Practical Application

1. Let's maintain the truth and receive a full reward.

Questions

1. John wrote 5 books in the New Testament. Name these books and the approximate dates written.
2. How does John refer to himself in this epistle? What does it mean?
3. To whom is the epistle of 2 John addressed?
4. How does this support the idea that the epistle was not written to some first century church?
5. Describe the type of paper and ink with which John was writing (2 John 12).
6. What is the theme of 2 John?

Answers

1. The gospel of John was written between 85-90 A.D., the three epistles of John were written between 90-95 A.D., and the book of Revelation was written between 95-100 A.D.
2. He refers to himself as the elder (2 John 1). The term may refer to the apostle's age or to his position, or both. John would be an old man at this time, and he certainly was in a leadership position in the early church.
3. To the elect lady and her children. Likely this is a personal letter to an unnamed Christian woman.
4. It is a personal letter, written to a lady and her children.
5. The paper would be rough sheets made from the papyrus plant, and the ink would be a mixture of charcoal and water with some binder added.
6. Walking in Christ's commandments.

Discuss / Consider

1. The theme of 2 John is walking in Christ's commandments. And walking in truth and love is essential to following Christ's commandments. Notice the emphasis on truth and love in 2 John 1-6. Truth and love are both very important for right Christian living. If we have truth without love, we may be orthodox in our belief, but we are cold and without compassion. On the other hand, if we have love without truth, we are involved in mere sentimentalism or humanistic compassion. So, both truth and love are important. Walking in truth means to run your life by the word of God, both in what you believe and in how you live. Why, then, do we spend and invest so much of our time and interest and money in this passing world system? (1 John 2:17). We also have the command to walk in love, which means to obey the Lord and obey His commandments. Check out your investments and your obedience to the word.

2. The context of 2 John 9-10 has to do with the false teachers of the first century. These false teachers denied the full deity of Jesus Christ, leading to the heresy of Gnosticism in the second century. The early Christians were not to show hospitality to these false teachers, agents of false doctrine. This Scripture is appropriate to use today in reference to cults. To show hospitality to these false teachers is to share in their evil deeds (2 John 11).

Challenge

1. There is reward for maintaining the truth concerning the person and work of Jesus Christ. Beware of losing your reward (2 John 8). Are you maintaining this truth in your personal witness, in your family and in your church?