

Gleanings of Grace

2 John

Lesson 24

The epistle or letter that has come to be known as 2 John begins by identifying the author simply as “The Elder”. As you read through the letter, you will find many similarities in vocabulary and style to the gospel of John. It is also believed that although many of the disciples and church leaders were called elders, John being the oldest remaining disciple was called “The Elder”. John was often referred to in his early years as a “Son of Thunder”, but he loved to refer to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”. Truly, the emphasis of John’s gospel and his three letters was love. Tradition holds that John spent most of his later years in Ephesus, where it is believed he wrote this second epistle around 90 A.D. How it must have saddened John to write the words of Christ in Revelation 2:1-4 to his old church, declaring that they had lost their first love.

OBSERVATION: Read 2 John

1. Read through this week’s verses using both your Observation Worksheet (the last page of this homework) and another Bible translation or paraphrase. After reading through these verses, what would you say to someone if they asked you what they are about?
2. Key words help us to better understand the verses. We have listed below key words. Mark each one in a distinctive way (either with a symbol, highlighting, or some form of boxing, circling, or underlining). Mark each of the key words each time they are used in the text. Remember to mark any personal pronouns that refer to *God the Father* and *Jesus*.
Key Words: *God, Jesus, love, truth, commandment(s)/doctrine, walk(ing), abide(s), and deceiver(s)*
3. The contrasting word *but* is used four times in 2 John. Mark the word. Choose one instance of its use and record what is being contrasted.

4. The words *commandment(s)* and *doctrine* occur seven times in 2 John. Make a list of what the verses containing these words reveal.

- a. What do you think John wants us to understand about God's *commandments/doctrine*?

Background:

1. Read through 2 John and record what you learned about:

the recipients of this letter

the conditions of the church

John's purpose(s) for writing

2. What are your initial impressions of this letter?

3. What are some of the topics covered?

The Author:

1. Describe John's heart for the recipients of this letter using verses 1, 12, and 13.

- a. How does his expression of love and concern reflect a life that *walks* what he has written?

- b. How would understanding the heart of the author cause you to receive and want to apply its instructions?

Truth:

1. The key word *truth* is used five times in verses 1-4. Record what John wrote about *truth* in verses 1-4.

2. Define the word *truth* using synonyms.

- a. What are some antonyms for *truth*?

3. Look up the following verses and record the insights you gained about Biblical *truth*:

John 1:17

John 8:32

John 14:6

Galatians 2:14

Ephesians 1:13

1 Thessalonians 2:13

3. *because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever* (2 John 1:2). List some of the benefits of *truth which abides*:

John 15:7

1 John 2:14

1 Peter 1:23

- a. Answer one of the following:

How has *the truth abiding* in you caused you to love *truth*? OR How has the *Truth* (Jesus) *abiding* in you caused you to love the *Truth*?

4. John wrote in verse 4 that he *rejoiced greatly* that *some were walking in truth*. What did he write in 3 John 1:4?

a. Describe the *joy* of watching someone *walk in truth*.

*The Cross is God's truth about us,
and therefore it is the only power which can make us truthful.
When we know the Cross, we are no longer afraid of the truth.
- D. Bonhoeffer*

Love:

1. The keyword *love* is used four times in verses 1-6. What is written about *love*?

2. Verses 4-6 reiterate John's statements in 1 John regarding love. What further truths does 1 John reveal about walking in the *commandment* to love?

1 John 2:5

1 John 2:10

1 John 2:15

1 John 3:14

1 John 3:16

1 John 4:7

1 John 4:19

a. How would *walking in love* be a deterrent to falling prey to *deceivers*?

Deceivers:

1. The keyword *deceiver(s)* occurs twice in 2 John 1:7. Record what John wrote about *deceivers*.
2. According to verse 9, what makes the difference between a *deceiver* and one who *has both the Father and the Son*?
 - a. Describe *abiding in the doctrine of Christ*.
3. *Abides in the doctrine of Christ* (verse 9) suggests there are boundaries set for us to live within. Does this seem confining to you or liberating? Why?
4. The philosophy of the world today is tolerance. Christians are accused of being narrow minded and judgmental. Read John's instructions regarding deceivers in verses 10 and 11. Why do you think John taking such a strong stance is necessary?
 - a. What does it mean, in practical terms, to *not receive* someone *into your house nor greet them*?
 - b. Much of this letter is about the importance of *love*. How do you reconcile *love* and *not receiving* someone?

Abide:

1. Scan the epistle of 2 John. Using the key word *abide*, summarize 2 John as it could be divided into two sections.

Verses 1-6 Abide in

Verses 7-11 Do not abide with

2. Look up the definition of the word *abide* and describe what it means to you personally to *abide in truth and love*.

3. How has the study of this book impressed you with the importance of who you *abide* with?

REVIEW: Read 2 John

1. From your study of 2 John, what did you glean about:

truth

love

walking/abiding

God's commandments/doctrine

*The fear of the LORD leads to life,
And he who has it will abide in satisfaction.
- Proverbs 19:23*

Observation Worksheet

2 John

The Elder, to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, ² because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever: ³ Grace, mercy, and peace will be with you from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. ⁴ I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children walking in truth, as we received commandment from the Father. ⁵ And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. ⁶ This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it. ⁷ For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. ⁸ Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward. ⁹ Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; ¹¹ for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds. ¹² Having many things to write to you, I did not wish to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. ¹³ The children of your elect sister greet you. Amen.