

2 John

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Translation

2 John 1:1 The commander [John as non-resident pastor-teacher] to the elect lady [the widow Nympha] and her children, whom I [agape] love in the sphere of doctrine, and not only me, but also all those [positive believers] who have come to know in the past and are continuing to know doctrine [the intake, metabolization and application of doctrine],

2 John 1:2 Because the doctrine which resides in us [providing spiritual momentum in time] shall indeed be with us forever [basis for rewards in eternity].

2 John 1:3 May grace, mercy, prosperity, from the source of God the Father and from the source of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, be [as a package of spiritual blessings] with us always [as it is at this moment] in the sphere of doctrine and virtue.

2 John 1:4 I was very pleased because I discovered some out of your children that are continuing to walk by means of doctrine, just as we received a mandate from the Father.

2 John 1:5 And now, Lady [Nympha], I make a request of you, not as though writing to you a new mandate, but one which we had from the beginning: that we keep on exercising virtue love towards one another of the same kind [fellow believers].

2 John 1:6 Moreover, the love complex was brought into existence for this [purpose]: that we should keep on walking [gaining forward momentum] according to His mandates [grieve not, quench not, be filled with, walk in the Spirit]. The mandate [accompanying the gift of the love complex] is this, just as you have heard from the beginning: that you keep on walking [gaining forward momentum] in it [the love complex],

2 John 1:7 Because many deceivers [pseudo-intellectual Gnostics] have gone out [exited the Johannine community which lives in the love complex and follows divine mandates] into the cosmic system [embracing cosmic panaceas and anthropocentric academic speculation], who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh [denying the 1st Advent]. This category of person [reversionistic Gnostic believer] is a deceiver and an antichrist.

2 John 1:8 Look out for yourselves, so that you do not lose the spiritual momentum which we have accomplished, but instead receive in return a full reward [supergrace blessings in time & eternity].

2 John 1:9 Everyone who goes beyond the limits [of true doctrine] and does not remain [within the limits] through the doctrine of Christ, does not have [fellowship with] God. The one who remains [within the limits] through doctrine, this same one keeps on having [fellowship with] both the Father and the Son.

2 John 1:10 If anyone [Gnostic-leaning believer] comes face-to-face to you and does not bring this [accurate] doctrine, do not receive him [the Gnostic infiltrator] into your home [assembly] and never address him with a pleasant greeting.

2 John 1:11 For the one who addresses him [the Gnostic infiltrator] with a pleasant greeting participates in his evil activities [cursing by association].

2 John 1:12 Although I have many things to write to you [Nymphas and her family], I do not wish to do so with paper and ink [comments or topics John doesn't want in the canon of Scripture], but instead I hope to come to you [to conduct a Bible conference in Laodicea] and teach face-to-face, so that our inner happiness might be filled to the point of overflowing [final floor of the edification complex of the soul is completed].

2 John 1:13 The children [in Laodicea] of your elect sister [first cousins to Nympha] salute you [respect for family members who reside & function in the divine system].

Introduction

The Scriptures repeatedly mandate the intake and use of doctrine, as expressed by John in relation to several young people in his congregation in Ephesus. They were children of Lady Nympha, a noblewoman who opened her home in Laodicea to one of John's six non-resident congregations. John recognized Nympha's magnificent work in rearing her children. Evidently she accomplished this alone, as a widow, inculcating into them the respect of enforced humility. Several of her children had developed genuine humility and were positive toward Bible doctrine. They had moved from Laodicea to Ephesus in order to learn

doctrine from John face to face, while their mother continued to hear his written sermons, or epistles, which were read to the congregation in her home. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) The absence of the lady's name has been suggested as a deliberate way to conceal her identity from public officials who opposed Christians. (LWB) I find it hard to agree with the *church* theory. It makes better sense in my view to interpret this letter in its most obvious sense, as a letter written by John to an esteemed friend and her family. The fact that no city designation is made also supports this view. (E. Palmer) It is difficult to see how, in each instance, both the lady and her children could represent the church. The two designations more naturally suggest separate and different individuals. (D. Burdick)

The 2nd epistle is, in our judgment, a letter to an individual. Certainly we are unable to find in its whole contents any probable allusion to a *church* personified as a lady. (W. Alexander) The prima facie picture is of a Christian *materfamilias* some at least of whose children follow the truth in which they were brought up and to whom greetings are sent from her nephews and nieces in the place from which "the elder" is writing. (F. Bruce) No mention is made of the husband and father. The probability is that he was no longer on earth ... Her children were not all at home. The apostle, in his wanderings among the churches, appears to have met some of them, and "found of them," to his great joy, "walking in the truth." (A. Plummer) Christianity has done more for woman than all other systems whether social or religious. It represents her neither as the serf nor as the toy of man, but as his companion. (W. Jones) There is a delicate balance in this letter between openness and hospitality on the one hand and on the other the wisdom to protect a family or a church from the kind of sophisticated cunning which intends to exploit the very kindness that grows out of the Gospel ... The con man or con woman is not helped in his or her own spiritual journey if he or she is enabled to exploit us. (E. Palmer)

In 2nd John a Christian lady is warned regarding false teachers, and thus we learn what our individual attitude toward all anti-Christian propagandists should be so long as the Church is in the place of testimony ... The elect lady was evidently a Christian matron who, with her children, adorned the doctrine of Christ. In all probability she was one who had been blessed and helped through John's ministry. (H. Ironside) She found a sphere of usefulness in receiving into her house the Christian teachers; her temptation was to be indiscriminate in her receiving. (R. Finlayson) The inns in most Roman cities were dangerous places. They were little removed from houses of ill fame. The profession of inn-keeper was dishonorable, and their infamous character is often noted in Roman laws. The Christian tradition of hospitality was therefore a beautiful and important ministry within the first-century church community. (E. Palmer) Strangers had no standing in law or custom, and therefore they needed a patron in the community they were visiting. There was no universal brotherhood in the ancient Mediterranean world. (C. Kruse) In three things the Romans excelled all other peoples – in military discipline, in civil law, and in road-making ... The career of Paul would have been impossible without the facilities for journeying which the imperial system and the *pax Romana* afforded. (G. Findlay)

And for John and other missionaries, Nympha's home was a welcome oasis on the roads in Asia Minor. Unfortunately, she was not very discriminating in who she allowed to stay overnight and

teach. John commends her and her family for their ministry of hospitality, but then ‘pulls back on the reins’ when being kind to heretics entered the picture. (LWB) The “elect lady” is thought by many commentators to refer to a church, and “her children” to its members, but when we consider the letter as a whole this appears doubtful. The personal nature of the language in verses 4 and 5 is against this theory. Verse 10 most naturally applies to the hospitality of a specific home. (H. Dana) Second John was written to urge a certain Christian lady of Asia Minor to exercise discernment in the manifestation of Christian love. The practice of doctrinal discrimination was a way to determine whether or not one should assist religious teachers financially by providing food and lodging for them, for to do so was to participate in the spread of their message ... The Christian family to whom this letter is addressed may well have been showing hospitality to traveling Gnostic teachers, thus giving the reason for John to pen the epistle. (D. Burdick) The close alliance between 2 John and 1 John has led some scholars to regard the former as a summary of the latter, (S. Smalley) a Reader’s Digest version, if you will. It’s also possible that the phrase “I have many things to write to you” means 2 John was a mere outline that was written *before* the longer treatise of 1 John. (LWB)

Notes on Gnosticism

Gnosticism is a system of intellectual arrogance which often comes to the believer who has not achieved in academic, theological life. He becomes a sucker for any new idea that happens to come his way which appeals to his arrogance. The early function of the *grace apparatus for perception* (GAP) under the ministry of the Holy Spirit provides a spiritual IQ for learning doctrine. This spiritual IQ can be distorted into learning things which are false and accepting them as true simply because you now have the ability to learn them, whereas before you had the ability to function in GAP, you had no academic theological ability at all.

The believer who embraces Gnosticism needs to prove his intellectuality. He must become an expert in the current culture: a philosopher, a psychologist, an expert in oriental religion, and then he must seek to reconcile these things with Christian doctrine. Gnosticism uses the vocabulary of Christianity, but it is actually a system, a conglomerate of philosophical speculation, of psychological principles, of the dualism of the oriental religions, as well as the mysticism of the oriental religions. The result is chaos. The inconsistencies and confused thinking from the interlocking systems of arrogance divorce this believer from reality.

Gnosticism claimed to be a superior system of academics, a superior system of knowledge. The *pisticks* (believers who rejected Gnosticism) were ridiculed. Those who stayed with Bible doctrine were labeled stupid, unrealistic, narrowminded, black-and-white, wasting their time, not changing the world, etc. Therefore, John had to write to Laodicea to explain this. Gnosticism eventually led to the denial of divine essence, the rejection of the humanity of Christ, the rejection of the incarnation, the hypostatic union, impeccability, and the Cross. These believers became totally preoccupied with self, distracted from doctrine, and destroyed their momentum in the spiritual life.

Thinking in Gnosticism starts out as pseudo-intellectualism at best (philosophy, psychology, self improvement, mysticism) but develops into psychosis at worst. Those who aren't disposed toward thinking, end up in drugs or mysticism; those who concentrate, end up in academic speculation or self-help philosophies. The result, either way, is either pseudo-intellectual arrogance or psychopathic arrogance. Capacity for life, capacity for love, and capacity for spiritual growth is destroyed. Gnosticism is one of Satan's ace trumps in the distraction of believers from the Christian life. Its last manifestation was the satanic attack on the 60's generation, with its drugs and mysticism. In the 80's it cleaned itself up on the outside and became pop psychology and self-help programs with Christian terminology.

Gnosticism says: "We don't care what you believe, just bring it along and fellowship with us." It is the opposite of orthodoxy. "Philosophy, psychology, mysticism – we don't care; bring it along." It is not a homogeneous system, therefore it has something that will appeal to everyone: mysticism and psychology for the nitwits, philosophy for the intellectuals, syncretism and Judaism for the legalists and moralists, and oriental dualism for the simple-minded. Gnostics always allegorize and spiritualize in order to explain away large portions of Scripture, destroying the faith of some in the canon. Gnosticism says you can't be doctrinal, you can't hold to any specific truths, and you can't disagree with the brethren. When they listen to what is being taught, they pretend to agree with it, but then they end up adding something "better" to it. John calls the person (deceiver) in Gnosticism an antichrist in 2 John 7. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

Chapter 1

LWB 2 John 1:1 The commander [John as non-resident pastor-teacher] to the elect lady [the widow Nympha] and her children, whom I [*agape*] love in the sphere of doctrine, and not only me, but also all those [positive believers] who have come to know in the past and are continuing to know doctrine [the intake, metabolization and application of doctrine],

KW 2 John 1:1 The elder, to the selected-out lady, [selected out by sovereign grace for salvation], and to her born-ones, whom, as for myself, I love in the sphere of the truth [with a love in Christ ministered by the Holy Spirit], and not only I, but also all who have come to know experientially the truth and at present possess a knowledge of it,

KJV 2 John 1:1 The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John begins his letter to the widow Nympha by emphasizing his office of pastor-teacher, i.e., *presbuteros* (Latin: senior). This is a Greek military term which means commander of the

garrison or admiral of the navy; it is also used for an authoritative teacher and leader. John is emphasizing his non-resident authority over Nympha, her children, and those who met in her house to learn the Word of God. He also emphasizes the sovereign grace of God in His selection of her and her family as members of the royal family. John exercises continued *agape* love (Durative Present tense) in the sphere of doctrine toward her and her family. Those who love the Word of God are bound together in a special *agape* fellowship. They are united by their desire to learn God's truth (Latin: cognition). John sends greetings to her not only from himself, but also from all those in his resident congregation who have also come to know and are continuing to learn (Ingressive Perfect tense) Bible doctrine. Positive believers share the highest form of love (*agape*) for the truth and each other when they reside in the love complex and enjoy the intake, metabolization and application of doctrine to daily life.

Where does my identification of Nympha come from? I heard it from Thieme. I have found no references to her in commentaries on 2 John. Other translators have either tortured the Greek words to get a common name (Kuria) or have spiritualized the entire phrase. In Colossians 4:15-16, however, Nympha is greeted by Paul as a lady who hosts an assembly of believers in her home in Laodicea. A public reading of Paul's letter to the Colossians is to be held in her house. She was not a pastor; there is no such thing as a woman pastor. She was a wealthy benefactor. If your house was big enough to hold public meetings and to entertain traveling apostles and missionaries, and you paid attention to this flow of dignitaries and their teaching, you would hopefully pick up enough doctrine to teach your children the Christian way of life. I believe this happened, and some of her children grew up and moved to the big city to continue their education or apply themselves to some business. Either John bumps into them while engaging in commercial affairs, or they were learning doctrine from him face-to-face.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In the Hellenistic sphere "elder" was a title used for magistrates with a religious function ... Before A.D. 70 "elders" had become a title for officials of the Jewish synagogue ... However, "elder" had a usage that goes beyond an age bracket, for it was recognized among both Jews and Greeks that older, experienced men made good leaders and officials. (R. Brown) "Presbuteros" is a term of rank or office ... such as those who presided over the Christian assemblies or churches. (M. Vincent) There is no spiritual bond more sacred than that of the Christian pastor, provided he does not mar the holy influence he is bound to exert, by pretending to an authority with which God's Word does not invest him. (A. Plummer) In the Christian church, the men who had attained to a well-proven, mature Christian experience were designated as elders. (K. Wuest) The simple and solitary dignity of the last surviving apostle of Christ. (W. Orr) A special use of the word in the early church was to designate a church officer who had been a personal follower of one of the apostles. (F. Gaebelin) The influence he seems to have exercised implies that his position was similar to that of a modern "bishop" or "superintendent." (S. Smalley)

The truth here is the Word of God and also the one who is revealed in the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ. (J. McGee) The reference is to the fact that this lady was one of the elect of God, one of the chosen-out ones of God, chosen out from among mankind by the sovereign grace of God for salvation ... The particular word he chooses is *agapao*, not *phileo*. Had he used the latter word,

he would have been expressing a human fondness for her, which would have been a grave mistake in a man of John's position in the Church ... He also adds the qualifying phrase "in the truth." It is locative of sphere. It was in connection with the Word of God that he loved her. (K. Wuest) All of this "love, love, love" stuff today actually is not biblical at all. We are told to love everybody, but there are some whom the Scriptures tell us not to love but to be very careful of ... Our love is to take the gospel to them, to give them the Word of God. (J. McGee) The lady and her children had given facilities for spreading the truth; therefore it was that they they were loved. (R. Finlayson) The elder's loving yet commanding tone reveals him as the ruling teacher of a region which included many congregations or house churches. (T. Johnson)

2 John 1:1 The commander (Subj. Nom.; John as non-resident pastor-teacher) to the elect (Dat. Spec.) lady (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the widow Nympha) and (connective) her (Poss. Gen.) children (Dat. Ind. Obj.), whom (Acc. Gen. Ref.) I (Subj. Nom.) love (ἀγαπάω, PAI1S, Durative) in the sphere of doctrine (Loc. Sph.; truth), and (continuative) not (neg. adv.) only (adj.) me (Nom. Appos.), but (adversative) also (adjunctive) all (Nom. Measure) those (Subj. Nom.) who have come to know in the past and are continuing to know (γινώσκω, Perf.APtC.NMP, Ingressive, Substantival, Articular) doctrine (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the truth),

^{BGT} **2 John 1:1** Ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐκλεκτῆ κυρία καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς, οὓς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν,

^{VUL} **2 John 1:1** senior electae dominae et natis eius quos ego diligo in veritate et non ego solus sed et omnes qui cognoverunt veritatem

LWB 2 John 1:2 Because the doctrine which resides in us [providing spiritual momentum in time] shall indeed be with us forever [basis for rewards in eternity].

^{KW} **2 John 1:2** [whom I love] because of the truth which is continuously dwelling in us, and with us shall be forever.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:2** For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The Bible doctrine which we learn, metabolize and apply to daily life on earth (Durative Present tense) will be with us (Predictive Future tense) throughout eternity (Latin: permanent). The doctrine resident in your soul is what determines your rewards at the Evaluation (Judgment) Seat of Christ. One of the common misconceptions in Christian circles today is that what you *do* as opposed to what you *think* determines the state of your spiritual life on earth and future rewards when you get to heaven. That is a lie of the devil; it is exactly the opposite! You can work in and out of the local church your entire life and draw a complete blank at the Judgment Seat of Christ. If you were out of fellowship and never learned about Him or came to know Him during all this "external service," all these works will be burned as wood, hay and stubble. But if you live on a

mountain top, study the Word and come to know Him – Bible doctrine is the Mind of Christ – you can obtain supergrace status and have tremendous rewards in time and eternity.

The most evil thing I have ever heard preached out of a pulpit is the heresy that you can “spend too much time in the Bible” and not enough time “ministering to others” or “evangelizing for the Lord.” This is a vicious lie straight from the pit of hell. Every believer should come to know the Lord through His Word *before anything else*. Sit down, shut up, and learn the Word of God. Then in the filling of the Spirit you can apply yourself to ministering in your local church. Churches today are full of people who have been coerced or guilt-tripped by ignorant believers and opportunistic pastors to “do things” in the church to prove their “spirituality.” In every church I have ever attended, without exception, 95% of these misguided believers were in reversionism and will come up empty-handed at the Judgment Seat because they “worked their buns off” in the church but never came to know Him. Doctrine was not their #1 priority in life. Preachers who spread this “works” lie are antichrists and will be cursed in that day for harming the spiritual growth of so many.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Christian love is by no means mere sentimentalism or humanistic compassion, but is motivated by a knowledge of the truth which has been revealed in Christ. Truth is the basis of love. It is precisely this truth, on account of which the church is loved, that the church must be careful to guard. (Z. Hodges) “For the truth’s sake” means a defense of the truth. We need to recognize that the truth needs to be defended. We need to stand for the truth of God and for the Word of God ... In this day when you can’t believe politicians, you can’t believe college professors, you can’t believe the scientists, and you can’t believe the military leadership, it’s nice to have someone in whom you can believe – the Lord Jesus Christ. (J. McGee) The indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the possession of the truth are both “eternal,” i.e., endless in duration. (R. Morey) They love one another because they possess a common bond in the truth they share. It is natural to love someone who holds the same convictions one holds dear. (D. Burdick)

2 John 1:2 Because (causal) the doctrine (Subj. Acc.; truth) which resides (μένω, PAPTc.AFS, Durative, Attributive) in us (Loc. Sph.; momentum in the spiritual life) shall indeed (emphatic) be (είμι, FMI3S, Predictive) with us (Gen. Accompaniment) forever (Acc. Extent of Time).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:2** διὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν τὴν μένουσαν ἐν ἡμῖν καὶ μεθ’ ἡμῶν ἔσται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:2** propter veritatem quae permanet in nobis et nobiscum erit in aeternum

LWB 2 John 1:3 May grace, mercy, prosperity, from the source of God the Father and from the source of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, be [as a package of spiritual blessings] with us always [as it is at this moment] in the sphere of doctrine and virtue.

^{KW} **2 John 1:3** There shall be with us grace, mercy, peace, from the presence of God the Father, and from the presence of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in the sphere of truth and love.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:3** Grace be with you, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John uses the potential indicative mood to encourage Nympha and her family in the Christian way of life. There is a package deal available to every believer consisting of grace, mercy and spiritual prosperity. It is given to every believer at the new birth, but it is a gift that requires fellowship with Him. It is John's desire that Nympha and her family share in these spiritual blessings with him and other supergrace believers. What do I mean by fellowship with Him? John adds the sphere of doctrine and virtue love as a requirement for obtaining this gift; this package of blessings cannot be received outside of this sphere. Residence and function in the divine system is essential for the *continuing* experience of grace, mercy and spiritual prosperity. You can't live in Satan's cosmic system and expect to receive God's blessings. That is arrogant presumption of the highest order.

Our purpose for being here on earth is to have communion with God, not to have fellowship with Satan. God the Father and Jesus Christ, His Son, provide us with basic logistical support every day we are alive. This continued support exists in spite of our affiliation with the cosmic system. But grace, mercy and spiritual blessings are beyond this logistical support and the only way we obtain and keep them on a *continual* basis (Gnomic Future tense: always) is by residing in the divine system in doctrine and *agape* love. If you have no interest in Bible doctrine and you don't consistently reside in the love complex, you forfeit these blessings. As we will see in this short, personal letter, John already knows that some of her children are making great strides in the spiritual life, and he wants to congratulate her on a job well done – by training them so well.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Truth makes love discriminating. Love must not cause us to betray or undermine truth or even to neglect it. Neither of these essentials must be pursued at the expense of the other. (R. Lightner) Truth and light are the same; they are the Word of God. As we have already seen, love and truth are inseparable ... Our contemporary idea of "love, love, love," that we are to love everyone who comes along, I do not find in the Word of God. When John is speaking of love here, he makes it clear that it is love within the family of God. (J. McGee) Grace is divine favour and goodwill, the spring of all good things. Mercy is free pardon and forgiveness; those who are already rich in grace have need of continual forgiveness. Peace is tranquility of spirit and serenity of conscience, together with all safe and sanctified outward prosperity. (M. Henry)

When truth and love are in contrast and conflict, which one should prevail? The so-called apostle of love is going to shock you and me out of our sentimental complacency and our sloppy notion of love. Which one should prevail – truth or love? His startling reply is that *truth* comes first. Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He didn't say, "I am love." It was John who wrote later on that "God is love." After the Lord Jesus was here and had said that he was the Truth, then John said, "God is love." My friend, love can be expressed only within the bounds and context of truth. Love can be expressed only within the limitation and boundary that Scripture sets. Therefore, what

about the false teacher? May I say to you, you are not to love the false teacher. John is going to make that abundantly clear. In fact, he is going to say something quite amazing. He says, “You are not in any way to receive him or to have fellowship with him.” That is just about as strong as it possibly can be. (J. McGee)

The fact that these blessings stem from both the Father and the Son affirms the deity of Christ. (Z. Hodges) Grace for daily living as the Holy Spirit ministers to the spiritual needs of the yielded saint, mercy in the form of God’s care over the physical needs of the saint, and peace in the form of heart tranquility, shall be with us, John says. (K. Wuest) Remember that love must be exercised in the context of truth. There are folk who write to me and say, “You are very dogmatic in your teaching.” I always appreciate those letters because I am not always sure that I give that impression. I *want* to give that impression when I am teaching the Word of God. I am very dogmatic about it. (J. McGee) The chief point John makes in this epistle is that love must always be conditioned by truth. (D. Burdick)

2 John 1:3 May grace (Subj. Nom.; favor), mercy (Subj. Nom.; compassion), spiritual prosperity (Subj. Nom.; inner harmony and tranquility), from the source of God (Abl. Source) the Father (Gen. Appos.) and (connective) from the source of Jesus Christ (Abl. Source), the Son (Gen. Appos.) of the Father (Gen. Rel.), be (εἰμί, FMI3S, Gnostic, Potential Ind.; a package deal of spiritual blessings) with us always (Gen. Accompaniment) in the sphere of doctrine (Loc. Sph.; truth) and (connective) virtue love (Loc. Sph.).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:3** ἔσται μεθ’ ἡμῶν χάρις ἔλεος εἰρήνη παρὰ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ παρὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ πατρὸς ἐν ἀληθείᾳ καὶ ἀγάπῃ.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:3** sit nobiscum gratia misericordia pax a Deo Patre et a Christo Iesu Filio Patris in veritate et caritate

LWB 2 John 1:4 I was very pleased because I discovered *some* out of your children *that are* continuing to walk by means of doctrine, just as we received a mandate from the Father.

^{KW} **2 John 1:4** I rejoice greatly that I have found some of your born ones conducting themselves in the sphere of the truth, even as a commandment we received from the presence of the Father.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:4** I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John informs Nympha that he has discovered some news (Intensive Perfect tense) that makes him immensely happy (Constative Aorist tense). He has either seen or heard that some of her children are continuing to walk by means of doctrine (Iterative Present tense). John is referring

to specific children, probably those he crossed paths with in Ephesus. He isn't excluding other children Nympha might have that he didn't cross paths with. She trained them well when they were young and they are following her example in the Christian life. John couldn't be more happy. These children are following the mandate to reside and function in the love complex, the most important mandate we have received (Constative Aorist tense) from the Father. They are fulfilling God's plan. They are adhering to Bible doctrine. They are staying out of the cosmic system. What more could a mother and a pastor want?

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Gramatically, the partitive need not be taken literally, and the Presbyter may be saying no more than that he rejoiced because there were among the Lady's children those who were walking in truth, without the implication that he had also found some children who were not so walking ... Joy at finding "some of your children walking in truth" indicates that secession, while a danger, has not yet torn the church apart. (R. Brown) There is no greater joy on earth, whether to parents or pastors, than to find the children of their care staunch to the true and the right. (A. Plummer) Walking in truth is a term used to denote the life and conduct. Walking in truth is living in accordance with the truth which was specially believed by Christians. It implies that the children of the elect lady eschewed Gnosticism and other errors; that they held the truth concerning the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that they embodied the truth in their conduct – their life was Christ-like. (W Jones) The lady's children conducted their lives in the sphere of Christian truth. (D. Burdick)

He had come into contact with some of her children, whose walk was according to his mind. It was characterized by truth; and that was as God wished it to be. It was so appointed for the household by the Father. What greater joy can there be for a mother than to be told of this one and that one of her children walking according to Divine rule? (R. Finlayson) John had often been disappointed in the kind of lives some of the young people of the early Church were living. But when he met some of this elect Lady's children, he experienced a glad surprise ... He sits down and writes this Lady at once, telling her of the good news. The character of the lives which these children were living demonstrated to John that this was no spasmodic thing, but a practice with them - for the present results of the perfect tense are not lost sight of here. Evidently he had contact with them for some time. (K. Wuest) No man should ever leave money to his children. It is a curse to them. What we should do for our children, if we would do them the best service we can, is to give them the best training we can procure for them, and then turn them loose in the world without a sixpence to fend for themselves. (Cecil John Rhodes)

The last expression is literally "walking in truth" and must be very nearly equivalent to "living the Christian life." That it is put this way indicates the stress our writer places on the truth. (L. Morris) John has a warm attachment to them, and as well, he expresses joy and gratitude not only because they have so responded to the truth, but also because they were walking in it with faithful integrity. (R. Lightner) Possibly the lady's sons traveled abroad, either for accomplishment and acquaintance with the world, or on the account of their own business or the common affairs of the family, and in their travels might come to Ephesus, where the apostle is supposed to have now resided, and might there happily converse with him. See how good it is to be trained up to early religion! (M. Henry) It was old, in that Christians heard it from the first in the Gospel: new, in that love now rests on the

new principle of filial imitation of God, who first loved us, and gave Jesus to die for us. (R. Jamieson)

2 John 1:4 I was very (Adv. Degree) pleased (χαίρω, API1S, Constative; inner happiness) because (causal) I discovered (εὐρίσκω, Perf.AI1S, Intensive; found) some (ellipsis) out of your (Poss. Gen.) children (Partitive Abl.) that (ellipsis) are continuing to walk (περιπατέω, PAPtc.AMP, Iterative, Modal) by means of doctrine (Instr. Means, Loc. Sph.: in the Truth), just as (comparative) we received (λαμβάνω, AA1IP, Constative) a mandate (Acc. Dir. Obj.) from the Father (Abl. Source).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:4** Ἐχάρην λίαν ὅτι εὐρηκα ἐκ τῶν τέκνων σου περιπατοῦντας ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καθὼς ἐντολὴν ἐλάβομεν παρὰ τοῦ πατρός.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:4** gavisus sum valde quoniam inveni de filiis tuis ambulantes in veritate sicut mandatum accepimus a Patre

LWB 2 John 1:5 **And now, Lady [Nympha], I make a request of you, not as though writing to you a new mandate, but *one* which we had from the beginning: that we keep on exercising virtue love towards one another of the same kind [fellow believers].**

^{KW} **2 John 1:5** And now I entreat you, Lady, not as writing a commandment which we have been having continually from the beginning, namely, that we should be habitually loving one another with a divine love sacrificial in its essence.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:5** 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John has a request that he wants to present to Lady Nympha (Pictorial Present tense). It isn't a new request that she has never heard before, because he is not writing a new mandate (Concessive Participle) to replace an old one. They received this mandate (Historical Present tense) from the the beginning of his ministry, a reference to the Gospel of John. The important mandate (Imperative Subjunctive mood) is to keep on exercising virtue love (Iterative Present tense) towards fellow believers. And to help Nympha and all other believers, God the Father has given to us a power system to reside and function in, called the love complex. If we follow His precisely correct protocol (operating instructions) for living in this love complex, we will fulfill the mandate to exercise virtue love towards fellow believers. If we do not follow His protocol, or we invent some cheap substitute for it, we will not be residing in the love complex and we will not be exercising virtue love toward fellow believers. There is no way to fake virtue love by pretending to love everyone. It is supernatural, not human. You cannot substitute *phileo* or *eros* love for *agape* love. All human beings can have *phileo* or *eros* love, but only believers who are residing inside the divine system can exercise *agape* love. *Agape* love is of divine origin. It requires a continuous, experiential connection to the divine source.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There must be reciprocity among the saints as to this love. (K. Wuest) We can become over-sentimental in the church. There is a lot of sentimental tommyrot going on, and it is as sloppy as can be: "Oh, we love each other. We have the *agape* love," and all that sort of thing. But are you walking in the truth? Are you really walking in the knowledge of the Word of God? (J. McGee) The protocol plan of God includes two systems of spiritual growth. Gradual growth comes through the perception, metabolism, and application of Bible doctrine. God commands every believer to operate consistently under this system throughout his life on earth. The second system, accelerated growth, occurs when metabolized doctrine is tested under pressure. After attaining spiritual adulthood, further growth *requires* periodic suffering. This suffering for the purpose of blessing draws upon the believer's reservoir of doctrine, exercising and increasing his inner strength. Bible doctrine is spiritual *nourishment*; suffering for blessing is spiritual *exercise*. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 John 1:5 And (continuative) now (transitional & temporal), Lady (Voc. Address; Nympha), I make a request (ἐρωτάω, PAI1S, Pictorial; inquire, ask a question) of you (Acc. Agency), not (neg. adv.) as though (comparative) writing (γράφω, PAPtc.NMS, Pictorial, Concessive) to you (Dat. Adv.) a new (Complementary Acc.) mandate (Acc. Dir. Obj.), but (contrast) one (ellipsis) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.; mandate) we had (ἔχω, Imperf.AI1P, Historical) from the beginning (Gen. Extent of Time): that (introductory) we keep on exercising virtue love towards (ἀγαπάω, PASubj.1P, Iterative, Imperativ) one another of the same kind (Acc. Dir. Obj.; fellow believers).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:5** καὶ νῦν ἐρωτῶ σε, κυρία, οὐχ ὡς ἐντολὴν καινὴν γράφων σοι ἀλλὰ ἦν εἶχομεν ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἀγαπῶμεν ἀλλήλους.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:5** et nunc rogo te domina non tamquam mandatum novum scribens tibi sed quod habuimus ab initio ut diligamus alterutrum

LWB 2 John 1:6 Moreover, the love complex was brought into existence for this [purpose]: that we should keep on walking [gaining forward momentum] according to His mandates [grieve not, quench not, be filled with, walk in the Spirit]. The mandate [accompanying the gift of the love complex] is this, just as you have heard from the beginning: that you keep on walking [gaining forward momentum] in it [the love complex],

^{KW} **2 John 1:6** And this is the aforementioned love, namely, that we should be ordering our behavior dominated by His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you heard from the beginning, namely, that in its sphere you should be ordering your behavior.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:6** 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

God created the love complex (Historical Present tense) for a purpose: that believers would be provided with the ability to walk (Iterative Present tense) according to His mandates. The love complex was designed to be resided and functioned in by all believers. It was given to us as a gift from God the Father at the moment of regeneration by the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ “test drove” the system during His earthly ministry. He gave it to you for a distinct purpose, with some basic operating instructions on how to live in it and use it. It was not designed to be abandoned in favor of residing and functioning in Satan’s cosmic system. The conditional subjunctive mood means the daily decisions to walk in compliance with His mandates depends on us. He placed us in His love complex initially, but He doesn’t force us to live in it daily. Instead, He gave us mandates on how to be filled with the Spirit and how to walk in the Spirit – mandates that equate to residing and functioning in the love complex.

If we succumb to the world, the flesh, or the devil – additional mandates or instructions on how to get out of this sorry state of perpetual sin were also given to us: acknowledging our sins to God (1 John 1:9) and returning to the divine system. The two primary mandates or “operational warnings” are to avoid grieving or quenching the Spirit. If it helps you to think of it this way, the love complex is a new luxury automobile that God gives you at the new birth. It comes with basic operating instructions, mandates on how to get in it and drive it. It also comes with warnings just like an Owner’s Manual might have, such as not driving it without the appropriate kind oil and coolant and the proper amount of air in the tires. None of these instructions were given in the OT, because the love complex had not yet been test-driven by the Lord Jesus Christ, and had not yet been given to any believers. Therefore, the reference to mandates or commandments for the Christian way of life during the Church Age does not refer to the Ten Commandments or the larger scope of the Mosaic Law.

The coinciding positive mandate (Imperative Subjunctive mood) or operating instruction that accompanies the presentation of the gift of the love complex is this: keep on walking (Iterative Present tense) in it. The love complex loves to be driven! We are to gain and maintain forward momentum by residing and functioning in the sphere of this love complex, i.e., the system of *agape* love provided to us by the Father. Get in it, drive it down the road, and keep the cruise control engaged. And when you hit a bump in the road and are thrown-out, acknowledge your sin to God and get back in! There is no spiritual momentum in the cosmic system. Residence and function in the cosmic system destroys the spiritual life. Forward momentum is only made inside the love complex. This system of divine power and love is elaborated on by John and Paul in many of their epistles. This is not new information John is giving to Nympha and her family, but a reminder that they have heard it (Constatative Aorist tense) from the beginning – probably a reference to his discussion of *agape* love in his gospel.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To what does *en aute*, “in it,” in 6e refer? The shift from *kata* to *en* can be a stylistic variant, as can be seen from comparing Rom 14:15 and Eph 5:2 in terms of walking according to or in love ... *Agape* love is supported by most modern commentators ... *Alethia*, truth, is also suggested as an antecedent. (R. Brown) The Ten Commandments are basic to government and basic to

civilization, but the Christian is called to a higher plane where he is to produce in his life, by the Spirit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, etc. If these things are in us and abide in us, you and I are walking after His commandments. (J. McGee) Love should not violate truth; instead it should uphold truth and make it known to the greatest possible number of people. (D. Burdick)

2 John 1:6 Moreover (continuative), the love complex (Subj. Nom.) was brought into existence for (εἰμί, PAI3S, Historical; was created for) this (Nom. Purpose): that (introductory) we should keep on walking (περιπατέω, PASubj.1P, Iterative, Conditional; gaining forward momentum) according to (in compliance with) His (Poss. Gen.) mandates (Acc. Gen. Ref.; grieve not, quench not, be filled with, walk in the Spirit). The mandate (Subj. Nom.; coinciding, accompanying) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive; consists of) this (Pred. Nom.), just as (comparative) you have heard (ἀκούω, AAI2P, Constative) from the beginning (Gen. Extend of Time): that (introductory) you keep on walking (περιπατέω, PASubj.2P, Iterative, Imperative; gaining forward momentum) in it (Loc. Sph.; the love complex),

^{BGT} **2 John 1:6** καὶ αὕτη ἐστὶν ἡ ἀγάπη, ἵνα περιπατῶμεν κατὰ τὰς ἐντολὰς αὐτοῦ· αὕτη ἡ ἐντολή ἐστίν, καθὼς ἠκούσατε ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς, ἵνα ἐν αὐτῇ περιπατήτε.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:6** et haec est caritas ut ambulemus secundum mandata eius hoc mandatum est ut quemadmodum audistis ab initio in eo ambuletis

LWB 2 John 1:7 Because many deceivers [pseudo-intellectual Gnostics] have gone out [exited the Johannine community which lives in the love complex and follows divine mandates] into the cosmic system [embracing cosmic panaceas and anthropocentric academic speculation], who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh [denying the 1st Advent]. This category of person [reversionistic Gnostic believer] is a deceiver and an antichrist.

^{KW} **2 John 1:7** Because many deceivers went forth into the world, those who do not agree [with the teaching] that Jehoshua, [the] Anointed One, sphere of flesh. This one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:7** For 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.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John has a secondary reason for reminding Nympha and her family to reside in the love complex and walk in His divine mandates. Many believers who were formerly members of John’s *agape* community have embraced some elements of Gnosticism and have gone out into the cosmic system (Dramatic Aorist tense). They have rejected life in the love complex for life in Satan’s cosmic system. They have rejected God’s mandates for the Christian way of life and have embraced cosmic panaceas and anthropocentric speculation instead. In particular, they no longer

acknowledge Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh (Historical Present tense) at the 1st Advent. They may still believe in His deity, but they are now rejecting His humanity. Everyone who remains within the Johannine community of believers acknowledges both the deity and humanity of Christ (Customary Present tense).

These reversionistic believers have decided that He never came to earth in the flesh, and that those who believe that He did are either deluded or were hallucinating His fleshly presence. John calls this group or category of Gnostic-leaning, reversionistic believer as deceivers (Latin: seducers) and antichrists. He does not mince words, even though these were former members of his community. The sanitized world of political correctness that we live in today would not put up with John for one minute. They would say his comments were out of line, and that the deceivers and antichrists merely had a different interpretation of Scripture. John, however, would not tolerate these deceivers for one minute. He will go so far as to prohibit them from entering Nympha's home and warns her not even to tell them to "have a nice day." Outspoken believers who function in the cosmic system must be opposed to prevent the spread of heresy.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

There are many deceivers who have entered into the world. They seem to have sort of centered right here in Southern California. This is a great incubation center for all kinds of false teachings. I used to say, as I spoke across this country, "I come from a land of flowers, fruits, and nuts – mostly religious nuts. I trust that you folk don't think that I am one of them!" The believer today walks a very dangerous pathway through the world. To the left side of the pathway is the jungle of liberalism and apostasy. It is a beautiful but dangerous jungle because in it are beautiful but dangerous animals which are ready to devour us ... I can spot a liberal, and I can say truthfully that I do not associate or fellowship with them. I have nothing in common with them ... But I have found that the most dangerous ones for me are the extreme fundamentalists. I would say that I am more afraid of them. They prattle pious platitudes and claim that they have the truth. But woe unto the man who disagrees with them on minor matters, especially the matter of separation, as if that were the all-important issue. Their priorities are not doctrine but assassination of character and name-calling on the lowest level. I have met both ministers and members of churches who frighten me more than a rattlesnake. The venom of bitterness and jealousy and hatred was dripping from their mouths as they feigned their love and devotion to Christ and to the truth. (J. McGee)

The false teachers will seek to set the children of the Elect Lady against the Presbyter with whose Christology and ethics they disagree. (R. Brown) A man who loses his temper in an argument cares more about himself than about the truth. (A. Plummer) They were not only aside from the truth in their teaching, but they practiced the art of deception in teaching what resembled Christianity while not actually Christianity. (R. Finlayson) The principle object of this letter seems to be a warning against those who spiritualize the coming of Christ, and deny His physical appearance in the future. (A. Knoch) Many deceivers (people who have taught erroneous views of the Christian way) have gone out. This implies that they had at one time been church members. (L. Morris) Because there were so many false teachers and seditious missionaries abroad, the church had to be constantly on guard ... Some of these had already

come and were damaging the believers by revising God-given truths to suit their own views. (R. Lightner) The aspect of the false teaching picked up here is the reality of Jesus Christ's humanity, His coming in the flesh. (C. Kruse) *Life is an expression of the doctrine of Christ.* (J. McGee) Reverse-process reversionism is the status quo of unrestrained perpetual sinfulness, fragmentation, and extensive cosmic involvement. The believer is brainwashed by satanic propaganda. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 John 1:7 Because (causal) many (Nom. Measure) deceivers (Subj. Nom.; pseudo-intellectual Gnostics) have gone out (ἐξέρχομαι, AAI3P, Dramatic, Deponent; exited the Johannine community) into the cosmic system (Acc. Place), who (Nom. Appos.) do not (neg. particle) acknowledge (ὁμολογέω, PAptc.NMP, Customary, Substantival, Articular) Jesus Christ (Acc. Dir. Obj.) as having come (έρχομαι, PMptc.AMS, Historical, Temporal) in the flesh (Loc. Sph.; denying the 1st advent). This category of person (Subj. Nom.) is (εἰμί, PAI3S, Descriptive) a deceiver (Pred. Nom.) and (connective) an antichrist (Pred. Nom.; reversionistic believer in the Church Age, not the "end times" Antichrist).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:7** Ὅτι πολλοὶ πλάνοι ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί· οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πλάνος καὶ ὁ ἀντίχριστος.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:7** quoniam multi seductores exierunt in mundum qui non confitentur Iesum Christum venientem in carne hic est seductor et antichristus

LWB 2 John 1:8 **Look out for yourselves, so that you do not lose the spiritual momentum which we have accomplished, but instead receive in return a full reward [supergrace blessings in time & eternity].**

^{KW} **2 John 1:8** Ever be keeping a watchful eye upon yourselves in order that you do not lose the things we accomplished, but that you receive a full reward.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:8** Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John couples a negative warning and a positive encouragement in this passage. He warns Nympha and her family to watch out for themselves (Imperative of Command). Most believers would do this as a natural precaution (Customary Present tense), but John warns them just the same because he has worked hard teaching his resident and non-resident congregations how to live the Christian way of life. He does not want them to lose the spiritual momentum (Constative Aorist tense) which they have accomplished together (Culminative Aorist tense). It's their own fault if they become distracted and crash-and-burn in the spiritual life. They have been warned about the enemy. Instead, he wants them to receive (Culminative Aorist tense) a full reward of supergrace blessings in time and for eternity. Two subjunctive moods combine in this verse. The

purpose for John's warning that they not lose their spiritual momentum, so the *result* will be a full reward of blessings.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

In our own day the peril of being led astray from truth is very great. Beware lest any one lead you from your faith in the great essential verities of Christianity revealed in the sacred Scriptures ... Seek to know more of Christian truth. Search the Scriptures. By so doing you will become established in the true faith; and if in anything your faith be erroneous or defective, by bringing it to the touchstone of the Word of God you will discover the error or defect. Maintain your spiritual vitality. In seasons of prevalent disease persons whose physical vitality is low are most likely to fall victims to it. (W. Jones) The doctrine of rewards is the necessary counterpart to the doctrine of salvation by grace. (L. Chafer) You do not lose your salvation when you have fellowship with the wrong folk – but you do put yourself in a dangerous position. (J. McGee)

To pay attention to such deceivers and follow them on the path of error would involve the waste of all their Christian service hitherto and the loss of the fruit properly accruing from it ... If, rejecting the enticement of error, they maintained the teaching which they had heard 'from the beginning' and continued the work they had been doing thus far, they would be paid their reward in full. (F. Bruce) The modern distaste for mentioning rewards and punishments is not shared by the NT writers. (L. Morris) There are degrees of heavenly reward proportioned to the capability of receiving heavenly blessedness. Each vessel of glory hanging on Jesus shall be full. But the larger the vessel, the greater will be its capacity for heavenly bliss. (R. Jamieson)

2 John 1:8 Look out (βλέπω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Command) for yourselves (Acc. Dir. Obj.), so that (purpose) you do not (neg. particle) lose the spiritual momentum (ἀπόλλυμι, AASubj.2P, Constative, Purpose; be ruined, destroyed) which (Acc. Gen. Ref.) we have accomplished (ἐργάζομαι, AMI1P, Culminative, Deponent), but instead (contrast) receive in return (ἀπολαμβάνω, AASubj.2P, Culminative, Result) a full (Acc. Measure) reward (Acc. Dir. Obj.; supergrace blessings).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:8** βλέπετε ἑαυτοὺς, ἵνα μὴ ἀπολέσητε ἃ εἰργασάμεθα ἀλλὰ μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:8** videte vosmet ipsos ne perdatis quae operati estis sed ut mercedem plenam accipiatis

LWB 2 John 1:9 Everyone who goes beyond the limits [of true doctrine] and does not remain [within the limits] through the doctrine of Christ, does not have [fellowship with] God. The one who remains [within the limits] through doctrine, this same one keeps on having [fellowship with] both the Father and the Son.

^{KW} **2 John 1:9** Everyone who goes beyond the limits [of true doctrine] and does not remain in the aforementioned teaching with reference to the Christ does not possess God. The one who remains in the aforementioned teaching, this one possesses both the Father and the Son.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:9** Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

This is a highly elliptical passage. The first verb John uses sets limits or boundaries on how to live the Christian life. Anyone who goes outside those limits does not have fellowship with God. Since there has been previous discussion on the love complex, that would be the first limit or boundary that comes to mind. But John adds the word *didaske* in this verse, which represents teaching or Bible doctrine. This is a direct refutation of the false teaching being spread by the Gnostic-leaning deceivers or antichrists just mentioned. These deceivers are still Christians, but they have gone beyond the limit of accurate Bible doctrine into false teaching. While doing this, they have also left the divine system and are functioning in the cosmic system. They no longer have fellowship with God.

By contrast, the believer who remains (Durative Present tense) within the limits through doctrine keeps on having (Iterative Present tense) fellowship with both the Father and the Son. The only way to “stay in bounds” in the spiritual life is to reside in the divine system and to apply accurate Bible doctrine to stay “in bounds.” When a believer rejects the divine system in favor of the cosmic system, and replaces accurate Bible doctrine with some human or satanic heresy, he exits “the playing field.” To continue the football metaphor, he might keep running down the sidelines, but he stepped out of bounds and his run has already been disqualified by the Referee. All that fleshly effort is a waste of time.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

We are required to abide in the true teaching. We are to be rooted and grounded in it; to grow up in it, etc. The sad consequence of failure in this respect should arouse us to maintain our steadfastness in the doctrine of Christ. (W. Jones) Because “abide” means “remain” or “continue,” it is evident that there are those who were once in the teaching of Christ who did not continue in that teaching. John is following up on his warning in the preceding verse about the danger of losing their rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. When he says that such a believer does not “have God” when he falls into deviation from the teaching of Christ, he is not saying that he is not regenerate. He simply means that God was not involved in this defection from pure doctrine. There is no exegetical evidence of which this writer is aware that “having God” ever means “be saved” in Johannine literature. It is simply not possible, therefore, to equate abiding with believing. Abiding involves all these works such as obedience, avoiding hatred, having love, public confession of Christ, remaining strong in the faith, holding on to truth first learned, and continuing in His Word. Whatever belief is, it is not conditioned upon works, nor does it consist of works. (J. Dillow) This struggle goes on always among those who approach the study of Christ. Is He a “landmark” merely or is He our goal and pattern? Progress we all desire, but progress towards Christ, not away from Him. (K. Wuest)

Bible doctrines are the bones of revelation, and the attentive Bible student must be impressed with the NT emphasis on “sound doctrine.” Not knowing the doctrines of the Bible, the child of

God will be, even when sincere, “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.” (L. Chafer) These Gnostics claimed to be the progressives, the advanced thinkers, and were anxious to relegate Christ to the past in their onward march. (A. Robertson) Gnostic teachers professed to have advanced a long way beyond the simple facts and simple moral teaching of the gospel; they “knew the depths;” they had “things ineffable, secret, higher than the heavens,” to disclose; and these secret things were often not merely incompatible with Scripture, but a complete reversal of it. (A. Plummer) John does not here condemn theological progress, which is a necessity of living and growing faith. A doctrine is a statement of Christian experience, and since there is always more in Christ than we have ever experienced, our doctrines can never be adequate or final. Even the inspired apostles did not comprehend all His fullness. Each saw only so much as was revealed to him, and declared only so much as he saw. (W. Nicole) There is an advance which involves desertion of first principles; and such advance is not progress but apostasy. (D. Burdick)

Anthropocentric academic speculation: Anthropocentric means “centered in man; considering man to be the most significant fact of the universe; assuming man to be the measure of all things; interpreting the world in terms of human values and experiences. If not seduced by religion, man can be deceived by philosophic, academic criticism to dismiss the Word of God as absolute truth. When philosophical assumptions give central importance to man instead of God, academic research can amass persuasive yet fraudulent evidence against divine viewpoint. Because human rationalism and empiricism cannot prove Biblical truth, the pseudo-intellectual rejects truth and “advances in knowledge out of bounds and does not remain on the field of play by means of the doctrine of Christ.” No one becomes a winner in life by running brilliant, intellectual touchdowns out of bounds, ignoring the mandates of the divine game plan. Life must be interpreted in terms of God’s plan not man’s experiences. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) To advance in heresy automatically prevents a Church member from continuing in Christian orthodoxy. (S. Smalley) “Of Christ” is the subjective genitive: the doctrine Christ taught and still teaches through His apostles. This word (*didaskalia*) does not occur in 1 John, but its equivalents, “the light, the truth, the Word” are found. “The doctrine,” like “the Word,” means that the truth is put into words which we hear, and so the truth comes to be taught, realized and apprehended, which means “believed,” trusted. (R. Lenski)

The meaning of “transgresseth” is whosoever advances beyond the limits of Christian doctrine. Such false progress is contrasted with *abiding* in the teaching. (M. Vincent) Those not remaining in the teaching of Christ are not lost if they have truly trusted Christ as Savior earlier. A true believer may later deny Christ’s person and work ... The person who does not abide in the true doctrine about Jesus Christ does not have God with him in his new perspective and/or lifestyle. More bluntly, he is out of touch with God, while he who abides in the doctrine of Christ is vitally in touch with God, i.e., this person has both the Father and the Son ... The NT writers were realists about the possibility of true Christians falling prey to heresy and warned against it ... To deviate from the truth is to leave God behind. God is not with a person who does so. What such a person does, he does without God. This, of course, does not suggest loss of salvation. Instead it points to a doctrinal deviation, with its accompanying disobedience. (Z. Hodges) The Bible describes the reversionist as an enemy of God, a child of the devil, double-minded. He is likened to a shipwreck in regard to his faith, to one who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching

of Christ, to one who deludes himself, forgetting what kind of person he was. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.) Much is being said about “doctrine.” People say that they do not want doctrine, and preachers try to accommodate them. Do we not want the truth, the great facts and realities about God, about Christ, and about ourselves, to be put into the proper words so that we may hear, realize, and believe them? Do we want sophisticated myths and fables instead? The one remaining in doctrine, this one, this one alone, has both the Father and the Son. (R. Lenski)

2 John 1:9 Everyone (Subj. Nom.) who goes beyond the limits (προάγω, PAPtc.NMS, Static, Substantival; of true doctrine, runs out of bounds) and (continuative) does not (neg. particle) remain (μένω, PAPtc.NMS, Durative, Substantival) within the limits (ellipsis) through the doctrine (Abl. Means; teaching) of Christ (Subj. Gen., Abl. Source), does not have (έχω, PAI3S, Static; fellowship with) God (Acc. Dir. Obj.). The one (Subj. Nom.) who remains (μένω, PAPtc.NMS, Durative, Substantival) within the limits (ellipsis) through doctrine (Abl. Means), this same one (Subj. Nom.) keeps on having (έχω, PAI3S, Iterative; fellowship with) both (adjunctive) the Father (Acc. Dir. Obj.) and (connective) the Son (Acc. Dir. Obj.).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:9** Πᾶς ὁ προάγων καὶ μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ θεὸν οὐκ ἔχει· ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ, οὗτος καὶ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:9** omnis qui praecedit et non manet in doctrina Christi Deum non habet qui permanet in doctrina hic et Filium et Patrem habet

LWB 2 John 1:10 **If anyone [Gnostic-leaning believer] comes face-to-face to you and does not bring this [accurate] doctrine, do not receive him [the Gnostic infiltrator] into your home [assembly] and never address him with a pleasant greeting.**

^{KW} **2 John 1:10** If, as is the case, a certain one comes to you and this teaching is not bearing, stop receiving him into your house. And stop giving him greeting.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:10** If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed:

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

If a Gnostic-leaning believer comes face-to-face to you (Customary Present tense) and does not bring accurate Bible doctrine with him, do not receive him (Imperative of Prohibition) into your home. In John’s day, a fairly wealthy matron would open her house to guests. In many cases, these same houses were meeting places for Christians. John uses several verbs in the customary present tense to portray the traditions of his locality. There were few if any formal churches at that time. This complicated things for the matron of a good-sized home that frequently allowed travelers an overnight stay. How? John commands Nympha to turn away deceivers and antichrists from her home. Not only are they not allowed to stay their overnight, John commands her to not so much as address them (Imperative of Prohibition) with a pleasant, traditional

greeting. John was not interested in being politically correct. John was not interested in being nice and friendly to enemies of Jesus Christ. He was interested in protecting the positive believers in his congregations from reversionistic Christians who had become deceivers and antichrists.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The attitude of avoiding contact with deviating brothers may have been heightened by the missionary situation. Hospitality to traveling coreligionists was an extremely important motif among early Christians. (R. Brown) Every Christian parent is bound to lay down as the law of the house – “This home is for Christ. The children are for Christ and for the truth, and I will not imperil their souls, nor lend a hand to the propagation of error, by letting the germs thereof be planted here!” (A. Plummer) Continuing in the truth about Jesus Christ calls for a firm response against those who have become purveyors of false doctrine ... If the truth is not part of his baggage, he should receive no hospitality from those who are loyal to that truth. (Z. Hodges) How perilous is the attitude of many who follow attractive ministers and religious guides only because they claim to be such and are sincere, and who are not awake to the one final test of doctrine by which alone the whole covered system of satanic lies may be distinguished from the truth of God. (L. Chafer)

Since the local church held its meetings, not in a building designated for that purpose, but in the homes of its members, it is very possible that the local church of her community met for worship in her home, since she was a woman of outstanding prominence. If this was the case, the command of John would extend to the responsibility of the local church of today to exclude Modernists from occupying its pulpit. She is forbidden to bid these false teachers “godspeed.” The word was used for a greeting or farewell. (K. Wuest) God will be no patron of falsehood, seduction, and sin. We ought to bid God speed to evangelical ministrations; but the propagation of fatal error, if we cannot prevent, we must not dare to countenance. (M. Henry) In that day the preacher was entertained in the home, but today my recommendation to you is to entertain him in a motel or hotel. The average minister needs a great deal of privacy for study and prayer, and he cannot get it when he is entertained in a home. (J. McGee)

To some modern minds these instructions seem unduly rigid and harsh. A great part of the problem, however, lies in the modern inclination to be highly tolerant of religious differences. One must frankly face the fact that the NT writers did not share this spirit of toleration. Their commitment to the truth and their consciousness of the dangers of religious error called forth many stern denunciations of false teachers. Not surprisingly, this modern age, having a diminishing sense of the dangers of heresy, has lost its convictions about the truth. (Z. Hodges) Parents must discriminate as to whom even among their relatives they entertain in their home. Some relatives might be of questionable character as to menace the moral, spiritual, and physical welfare of the children. Such relatives must be excluded. (F. Gaebelien) The elect lady was accustomed to entertaining Christian ministers. (W. Jones)

2 John 1:10 **If** (protasis, 1st class condition, “assumes it is true”) **anyone** (Subj. Nom.; Gnostic-leaning believer) **comes**

(ἔρχομαι, PMI3S, Customary, Deponent) **face-to-face to you** (Prep. Acc.) **and** (continuative) **does not** (neg. adv.) **bring** (φέρω, PAI3S, Customary) **this** (Acc. Spec.; accurate) **doctrine** (Acc. Dir. Obj.), **do not** (neg. particle) **receive** (λαμβάνω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Prohibition) **him** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; the Gnostic infiltrator) **into your** (ellipsis) **home** (Acc. Place; church, local assembly) **and** (continuative) **never** (neg. particle) **address** (λέγω, PAImp.2P, Customary, Prohibition; duties of church officers, not individual members) **him** (Dat. Ind. Obj.) **with a pleasant greeting** (χαίρω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. As Modifier; traditional welcome).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:10** εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ταύτην τὴν διδαχὴν οὐ φέρει, μὴ λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ μὴ λέγετε·

^{VUL} **2 John 1:10** si quis venit ad vos et hanc doctrinam non adfert nolite recipere eum in domum nec have ei dixeritis

LWB 2 John 1:11 For the one who addresses him [the Gnostic infiltrator] with a pleasant greeting participates in his evil activities [cursing by association].

^{KW} **2 John 1:11** For the one who gives him greeting is a partner in his works which are pernicious.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:11** For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

The believer who addresses (Customary Present tense) a Gnostic infiltrator or other false teacher with a pleasant greeting ends up sharing (Iterative Present tense) in his evil activities (Latin: malignancy). Even a simple thing like friendly conversation with a false teacher can rub-off and give you cursing by association. You have no idea who sees or hears you conversing with such a person, and anything you might say or do could be understood as an approval of this evil person's activities, teaching, writing, etc. Even customary greetings must be set aside when dealing with this type of reversionistic believer. The doctrine of separation should kick-in immediately. At a minimum, you should separate from him mentally. If doctrine is compromised, you must find a way to separate from him physically as well. Many lives have corrupted by ignoring this warning. This warning, however, should be tempered with your responsibility to function as an ambassador for Christ. It's difficult to help a believer re-enter the divine system if you won't even speak to him! In other words, use spiritual common sense. There's also a good contextual argument, that this warning is only addressed to those who are sponsoring an assembly in their homes – and obviously a warning for pastors and teachers. But I'm not completely convinced that John meant to restrict it in this manner.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

To give countenance and sanction to false doctrine is to share in the responsibility for all the harm which such false doctrine does. (A. Plummer) There were ministers of false teaching abroad who were likely to call upon this lady ... Do not aid the teachers of false doctrine by our hospitality. The apostle is not giving directions concerning the case of an ordinary traveler seeking hospitality, but of an active agent in the propagation of error, and error as to a fact of vital importance. (W. Jones) The reason for the prohibition of hospitality and greeting in the case of false teachers, here, the Gnostics, was that the Christian who did offer both, became a sharer or partner of the false teachers in the disseminating of heresy ... There was no way of escaping responsibility for the harm wrought by these propagandists of evil. It is not a case of mere hospitality to strangers. (K. Wuest) To greet such a man is to share his wicked work. The Christian is to avoid all evil. (L. Morris) Because Christian greetings generally carried a recognition of the true Christian standing of those greeted and invoked a blessing upon them, the elder knew that it was not possible for his readers to 'greet' the secessionists without that greeting implying a recognition of the secessionists' Christian standing, and thus identifying themselves with their 'wicked work.' Their 'wicked work,' of course, was propagating aberrant teaching. (C. Kruse)

We may be sharers in the iniquities of others. How judicious and how cautious should the Christian be! There are many ways of sharing the guilt of other people's transgressions; it may be done by culpable silence, indolence, unconcernedness, private contribution, public countenance and assistance, inward approbation, open apology and defence. (M. Henry) How flexible can the perimeters of Christian belief be without sacrificing the integrity of faith itself? (T. Johnson) We cannot have communion with saints and with antichrists at once. (R. Jamieson) Charity has become a big racket today. Collecting money under false pretenses is one of the biggest rackets there is. This is the reason I sometimes mention that I haven't yet started an orphan's home for stray cats in the Aleutian Islands! In fact, I don't know whether there are any cats up there or not. My business is giving out the Word of God, and I hope this is your business, too. (J. McGee) She must neither let him pervert "the church in her house" nor send him on his way to a neighboring church with the recommendation of her confidence and goodwill. (W. Nicole) I may take a Jew, a Mohammedan, a heathen, a tramp, a beggar under my roof; I may bid the time of day to any and to all men. But a notorious proselytizing errorist? Do you as a true believer want even the least fellowship with his works? (R. Lenski)

Those who express judgmental attitudes toward another person's religious viewpoint or toward someone's lifestyle are condemned today as lacking in love. But this contemporary mentality simply reflects a rejection of absolute truth. In what is called postmodernism, everyone's perspective may be regarded as "true" within his or her own frame of reference. But the NT makes claims of absolute truth. To reject the possibility of knowing absolute truth is tantamount to rejecting the NT as anything but a record of the early Christians' circumscribed, theory-laden interpretation of their experience. It is useless to argue with those who approach the NT this way about the degree of "tolerance" the author of 2nd John should have shown. The question for Christians, however, is whether or not we have been affected by the mentality of our age ... In a tolerant age, we must learn a true measure of *holy intolerance* ... The modern spirit of toleration toward variant religious convictions is possible only where a belief in the working of Satan has receded far into the background. That there have been excesses and errors done in the name of

truth in no way diminishes the dangers of satanic delusion. Indeed, Satan can trade on such failings to create a tolerant atmosphere in which error can stand on an equal footing with truth. So, for example, in our own day homosexuality is no longer considered a gross perversion of morality, but merely a lifestyle choice! We are urged to accord legal protections to those who commit a sin for which God judged Sodom and Gomorrah with fire and brimstone. (Z. Hodge)

2 John 1:11 **For** (explanatory) **the one** (Subj. Nom.) **who addresses** (λέγω, PAPtc.NMS, Customary, Substantival) **him** (Dat. Ind. Obj.; the false teacher) **with a pleasant greeting** (χαίρω, PAInf., Customary, Inf. As Modifier) **participates in** (κοινωνέω, PAI3S, Iterative; cursing by association) **his** (Poss. Gen.) **evil** (Instr. Manner) **activities** (Dat. Disadv.).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:11** ὁ λέγων γὰρ αὐτῷ χαίρειν κοινωνεῖ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ τοῖς πονηροῖς.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:11** qui enim dicit illi have communicat operibus illius malignis

LWB 2 John 1:12 **Although I have many things to write to you [Nymphas and her family], I do not wish to do so with paper and ink [comments or topics John doesn't want in the canon of Scripture], but instead I hope to come to you [to conduct a Bible conference in Laodicea] and teach face-to-face, so that our inner happiness might be filled to the point of overflowing [final floor of the *edification complex of the soul* is completed].**

^{KW} **2 John 1:12** Having many things to be writing to you, I did not, after giving the matter mature consideration, desire to do so with pen and ink, but I am hoping to be present with you and to speak face to face, in order that our joy, having been filled completely full, might persist in that state of fullness through present time.

^{KJV} **2 John 1:12** Having many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John admits that he has many things to write to Nympha and her family (Concessive Participle), but he realizes that this short letter is going to be part of the canon of Scripture, so he holds off on these topics. Perhaps they were outlines for future sermons; perhaps they were personal comments about her children. We don't know. What we do know is that he didn't want to write them down at this point in time (Epistolary Aorist tense) with pen and ink. But he did have something else in mind. He was planning to come to Laodicea (Culminative Aorist tense) to conduct a Bible conference. This is a venue used often by pastors of non-resident congregations. They teach by writing when they are absent, like John was in all three of these epistles. And they travel to a geographical centre point in a specific region and teach as much as they can before returning home to their resident congregation.

John's *plan* was to go to Laodicea. His *purpose* was to teach a Bible conference. His *expected result* is that their inner happiness (reciprocity) might be filled to the point of overflowing

(Consummative Perfect tense). They already have a degree of inner happiness, no doubt due to their intake, metabolization and application of Bible doctrine while learning from their non-resident pastor and teacher. This conference would provide complementary face-to-face teaching which would enable them to extend that inner happiness to supergrace status. Another way of expressing his wish is that they might complete the final floor of their edification complex of the soul. Inner happiness from the spiritual life is progressive, but it is not guaranteed. The potential subjunctive mood means it is a possibility that lies before them, but getting there will require a lot of positive daily decisions to learn doctrine and apply what they learn to life.

RELEVANT OPINIONS

Presumably the Presbyterian had many other things to say to the addressees, but he did not wish to write them. (R. Brown) When we do this in technical meetings, we use the phrase “take this topic off-line” which means the conversation that will follow is either too private or too complicated or detailed for everyone present. (LWB) “Our” joy is most likely the Johannine school as in 1 John 1:1-5. (R. Brown) How excellent is writing when speech is unattainable! (W. Jones) The sight of people’s faces appeals to one’s heart and softens one’s speech. When one meets with people and talks with them, one’s judgment of them and their opinions is often modified. (K. Wuest) The presbyter apparently moved around the Johannine congregations in Ephesus. On his arrival he intends to talk “face to face” with the members of a particular community. (S. Smalley)

In the dualistic Johannine worldview even the simplest hopes were probably seen as dependent on the struggle between the Spirit of Truth and the spirit of deceit. (R. Brown) The ‘paper’ which he mentions is papyrus; a short letter like 2 John would be accommodated on one papyrus sheet of normal size. (F. Bruce) Excellent ministers may have their joy advanced by their Christian friends. (M. Henry) John makes it clear that doctrine brings us to this completed state of happiness. If we seek happiness apart from God’s plan, we will always be unhappy. God’s game plan calls for us to seek truth, since happiness comes as a natural consequence of learning and applying the truth. (R.B. Thieme, Jr.)

2 John 1:12 Although I have (ἔχω, PAPtc.NMS, Static, Concessive) many things (Acc. Measure) to write (γράφω, PAInf., Iterative, Inf. As Dir. Obj. of Verb; future sermons by letter from your non-resident pastor and teacher; personal topics that John doesn’t want to be in the canon) to you (Dat. Adv.; Nymphas and her family), I do not (neg. adv.) wish to do so (βούλομαι, API1S, Epistolary, Deponent) with paper (Abl. Means; Egyptian papyrus) and (connective) ink (Abl. Means; soot, vegetable or mineral substance), but instead (adversative) I hope (ἐλπίζω, PAI1S, Customary; anticipate) to come (γίνομαι, AMInf., Culminative, Purpose/Plan, Deponent) to you (Acc. Place; to conduct a Bible conference in Laodicea) and (continuative) teach (λαλέω, AAInf., Culminative, Purpose) face-to-face (Acc. Manner; literally: mouth to mouth), so that (result) our (Gen. Poss.) inner happiness

(Subj. Nom.; in gate 7) **might be** (εἰμί, PASubj.3S, Progressive, Potential) **filled to the point of overflowing** (πληρώω, Perf.PPtc.NFS, Consummative, Result; completed, final floor of the ECS is attained in gate 8).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:12** Πολλὰ ἔχων ὑμῖν γράφειν οὐκ ἐβουλήθην διὰ χάρτου καὶ μέλανος, ἀλλὰ ἐλπίζω γενέσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλήσαι, ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ἡμῶν πεπληρωμένη ᾖ.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:12** plura habens vobis scribere nolui per cartam et atramentum spero enim me futurum apud vos et os ad os loqui ut gaudium vestrum plenum sit

LWB 2 John 1:13 **The children [in Laodicea] of your elect sister [first cousins to Nympha] salute you [respect for family members who reside & function in the divine system].**

^{KW} **2 John 1:13** There greet you the born-ones of your sister, the selected-out one.)

^{KJV} **2 John 1:13** The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

TRANSLATION HIGHLIGHTS

John communicates a warm greeting and salute (Pictorial Present tense) to Nympha, including one from some of her first cousins whom he met in Laodicea. They were children of her elect sister (Latin: sorority), which means her sister was also a Christian. These children held their Aunt Nympha in great respect because they knew she was a believer who lived and functioned in the divine system every day. Some variant manuscripts identify the elect sister as living “in Ephesus.”

RELEVANT OPINIONS

The term “elect” is frequently applied to individuals who are chosen to salvation. (L. Chafer) The fact that the writer of 2 John speaks with an air of authority to a congregation other than his own possibly suggests that he had general responsibility for all the Johannine churches in his area. (S. Smalley)

2 John 1:13 **The children** (Subj. Nom.; in Laodicea) **of your** (Gen. Rel.) **elect** (Gen. Adv.) **sister** (Gen. Poss.; first cousins to Nympha) **salute** (ἀσπάζομαι, PMI3S, Pictorial, Deponent) **you** (Acc. Dir. Obj.; respect for family members who are living in the divine system).

^{BGT} **2 John 1:13** Ἀσπάζεται σε τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου τῆς ἐκλεκτῆς.

^{VUL} **2 John 1:13** salutant te filii sororis tuae electae

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