

STEP BY STEP

Saturday, February 17

Reading: 2 & 3 John

2 John 1:4 *It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us. 5 And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another. 6 And this is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands. As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that you walk in love.*

I came across this interesting poem the other day:

One step won't take you very far
You've got to keep on walking
One word won't tell folks who you are,
You have to keep on talking.
One foot won't make you very tall,
You have to keep on growing
One trip to church won't tell you all,
You Have To Keep On Going.¹

This is the message of these verses in John's second little letter. Though some view "dear lady" as a reference to the church, I believe 2 John was written as a personal letter to a lady and her children. John commends them for their godly walk with God. While the letter may be personal, the message is for all of us who name Christ as our Savior.

Two words stick out in this short letter. We should not be surprised that one of them is "love" (used 4 times). This has been a major theme of the apostle in his gospel and his first letter. But the second word John emphasizes is "truth" (used 5 times). He commends these believers for "walking in the truth" and reminds them to "walk in love." The picture of walking describes a steady, consistent relationship. The Christian life is not a onetime race but a lifetime pursuit. As the poem says, we must "keep on walking."

There is an inseparable link between truth and love. Truth without love leaves one hard and judgmental. Love without truth leaves one soft on doctrine and willing to compromise for the sake of unity or peace. Both truth and love must be kept in balance to walk successfully with Christ. Love is not some mushy emotional feeling. It is obedience to the truth of God. Likewise walking in truth is not some rigid, "follow this list of rules" mentality that runs roughshod over people. Love and truth complement and control each other. John has repeated this over and over again in his gospel (cf. John 13-15) and 1 John.

LESSON: Are you walking in both truth and love? Are your actions and attitudes controlled by God's Word and God's love? Let's keep walking, step by step with the Lord.

¹ <http://www.staugustineslocking.org.uk/bible.htm>