

2 JOHN

- 1) See 1 John note #1 for authorship, etc.
- 2) 1 – The elder probably does not hold an official position in a particular church, but is a respected man of advanced age, perhaps a “presbyter,” a term to provoke respect (See Acts 14:23, 20:17, 1 Peter 5:1, etc). /// The elect lady is the church. The children are the congregation. But, John Wesley believed that a particular woman (Kyria) who was a leader in a house church. (There were no capital letters in Hebrew or Greek to show that a word was someone’s name.) /// “Life in the truth” was the elder’s equivalent of Paul’s “Life in Christ.”
- 3) 4 -- The use of “some of your children” may indicate that all is not well within the Johanine circle.
- 4) 7-8 – These two vv summarize most of 1 John: → many misleaders → the antichrist went out into the world → those who don’t confess that Jesus has come in the flesh. It emphasizes the schism developing in some unclarified way concerning the incarnation of Jesus.
- 5) 10-11 -- Probably trying to stem the spread of false teachings and the contamination of Christian fellowship. This was a serious recommendation at a time when travelers depended on strangers’ hospitality. But many exegetes state emphatically that vv 7-11 encourage bigotry and intolerance and should be left out of our readings. Others point out that Jesus himself fraternized with sinners and society’s despised. On the other hand, offenders within the church, whose sins tore the community apart, were to be excommunicated (Matt 18:15-17, 1 Cor 5:1-13, Titus 3:10-11). Sometimes the door should be open, sometimes shut (Matt 18:18, John 20:23).

6) REFLECTIONS 2 JOHN

None of it included in the Common lectionary, so never read or heard by anyone who doesn’t read the Bible. Yet no part of the Bible has caused more writings by commentators, primarily because of its prescription of Christian shunning in 7-11. J.L.Houlden: This passage...has, on any showing, an ugly look.” D. Moody Smith: “Perhaps the unique feature of this letter is best left unheeded. There is a sufficiency of bigotry and intolerance about, so that we don’t need the 2nd epistle of John to encourage it.” But the elder perceives a direct threat to many congregations by men trying to destroy them from within. It is these people that the elder is trying to exclude from the community. So the elder is not asking us to shun the tax collector, prostitute, etc., just to shun the agitator who is trying to turn the Christian away from the belief in the incarnation of God in Jesus.