

02/16/2025

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2 JOHN

YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH!

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Some of you probably remember Jack Nicholson's famous words from the movie "A Few Good Men" as he shouted "YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE TRUTH" to young Tom Cruise.
1. BTW – the language in that movie can be pretty brutal – so I am not recommending it:
 2. But let me ask this question this morning as we start our study in 2 John:
- B. Can we handle the truth?
1. **John 18:37-38 (NKJV) — 37** Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "**You say *rightly* that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.**" **38** Pilate said to Him, "**What is truth?**" And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, "I find no fault in Him at all."
 - a) For Pilate – truth was subjective!
 - (1) So it is for the world these days.
 - (a) As I mentioned in a previous teaching, truth has become whatever you want it to be as long as you are living your "truth".
 - (i) A man can be a woman, a woman can be a man, and who knew.....men can even have babies.
 - (ii) You can even identify as a dog, or a cat, or even a chair if that is your truth!
 2. But Jesus said: **John 14:1-7 (NKJV) — 1** "**Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. 2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it* were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you may be also. 4 And where I go you know, and the way you know.**" **5** Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" **6** Jesus said to him, "**I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. 7**" **"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."**
 - a) Jesus makes it clear that truth is not subjective!
 - (1) **HE IS THE TRUTH**
 3. In a world that is this mixed up and confused, can we easily distinguish what is fake from what is real?
 4. As some you know – I like science fiction.
 - a) But the key word here is "fiction" – though they are produced in such a way as to try to make you believe that aliens exist – that you can teleport

into another universe, and that there really are cyborg cops – none of these shows ARE NOT MEANT TO BE REAL.

(1) Or are they.....? (Meant lighthearted)

5. But have you ever watched a show that seemed so real that you were either depressed or frightened when it was over?
 - a) Becky can really get into a show!
 - b) I have to constantly remind here that it is just a script and they are actors and no one is really getting hurt.
 - (1) But for her, during that 30 minutes to an hour – it is almost TOO REAL!
 - (2) My point is that it is not always as easy as you might think to tell the truth from the lie.
 - (a) We have imitation jewelry, imitation cologne, knock-off clothing, stunt-doubles, fake nails, fake hair, (fake other things) – and even more and more men are getting implants in their thighs and calves and the list goes on and on.
 - (b) Not to mention people's Facebook pictures!
 - (i) What is "real" is getting harder and harder to determine.
 - (ii) And yet there has never been a more needful time – for Christians to know what the truth is and stick to it!

II. **2JN 1:1-3 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.**

- A. John addresses himself here as "The Elder". He was the last surviving Apostle and most likely close to 100 years old at the time of this letter. If anyone would qualify as "The Elder" it certainly would be John!
 1. You know in the NFL – if you hit 33 – you are considered an old man – but in the faith, you are just begging at 33.
 2. John is writing to the elect lady and her children, but no one is absolutely certain if the "elect lady" was an actual person or if this is some sort of "code" that John is using to protect this person or church – from the persecution that was so destructive in Jerusalem at the time!
- B. I want you to notice that John uses the word "**truth**" a lot!
 1. *Although John talks about **love** more than any other writer in Scripture, he also emphasizes **truth** more than any other writer—using the word "truth" **twenty times in his Gospel, nine times in 1 John, five times in these opening verses of 2 John, and five more times in 3 John.*** (Jon Courson – E-Sword Commentary)
 - a) Could it be because truth and love are inseparable?
 - (1) Websters = fidelity, constancy, sincerity in action, character: fact (2): the body of real things: actuality, a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality, a judgment, proposition, or idea that is true or accepted as true.
 - (2) As mentioned earlier: John told Thomas in **Joh 14:6 Jesus said to**

him, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.**

- (a) Love without truth is all emotion and no logic and that will get us into great trouble because: - **Jer 17:9 "The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?**
 - (i) Here is the point, real love cannot be defined outside of God's Word.
 - (ii) If God's Word is not the anchor of our love, it will be a fake or false love or at best an imitation of real love.
 - (a) BTW – John told us that **1Jn 4:8 ...God is love** – so real love is Godly love – built in the truth of God's word.
- (b) Truth without love can be cold, calculating and very "religious".
 - (i) The Scribes and the Pharisees had the truth, but they did what they did out of duty and not love.
 - (ii) Something can indeed be true, but very unloving.
 - (a) If you came to me and said, "Your ugly" – it might be true, but it would also be very unloving.
 - (b) Christians can allow certain liberties in their lives that are not technically "sin" – that is truth, but those liberties can also be very unloving towards others.

III. **2JN 1:4-6 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.**

A. John commended the "Elect Lady" because he had **found some of her children walking in the truth!**

- 1. Jesus already claimed to be the Truth, so the Apostle John is commending **the elect lady and her children** for walking **according to His commandments**. In other words, walking in Truth and in love!

IV. **2JN 1:7-11 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 GREETES HIM SHARES IN HIS EVIL DEEDS.**

A. Even in John's day – there were those trying to pervert the Truth.

1. John is so bold to call them “deceivers” and “antichrist(s)”.
2. He says, **(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.**
 - a) I would say that John is calling for a certain degree of separation from the false, the fake, and the lies.
 - b) And I believe that he also makes it clear that the “fake” is anything or anyone that distorts who Jesus is!
 - c) We as Christians MUST BE able to tell the difference between the Truth and a lie!

V. **2JN 1:12-13 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.**

VI. CONCLUSION

A. Have you watched any of the street magicians?

1. Some of those guys are pretty amazing?
 - a) You know....magic is the art of illusion?
 - b) **2Co 11:14-15 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. (15) Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.**
 - c) **Eph 6:10-13 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. (11) Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. (12) For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. (13) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**
 - d) The Bible makes it clear what Truth is, and it isn't subjective
 - (1) Jesus is the way the truth and the life.
 - (a) And the rest of that verse saith this: **No one comes to the Father except through Me.**
 - (2) But there are lot of folks that either don't want to or can't handle that truth!