

Lessons From II John

Face To Face Visitation

(II Jn 12-13)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of "Lessons From II John."
 - a. Last week we examine the issue of "Biblical Hospitality."
 - i. John was emphatic that to stand in truth and love one must not show hospitality to false teachers.
 - b. John, in these last two verses, makes a statement that I think we could learn from today in the church.
 - i. That is that there is a need for "Face To Face Visitation."
3. We live in a society that is different from any other in the past.
 - a. We live in a technologically advanced society.
 - i. We can pick up a phone and talk from anywhere now.
 - ii. We can send a letter instantly through email.
 - iii. We can "chat" or "text" instantly without ever getting a letter or phone call.
 - iv. We have social media that allows us to "keep" up with what everyone is doing" at a near instant level from all over the world.
 - b. All of this however has in many ways made Christians both closer and farther.
 - i. Closer, in the fact that we now can get to know "about" more people and their activities...likes and dislikes.
 - ii. Farther in the sense that we don't "meet face to face" to get to "know" people as well anymore.
4. As John writes to the elect lady and her children we see John wanted that personal face to face meeting that can be so much more effective than distant relationships.
 - a. Having been in many a different congregation and meeting a lot of people face to face recently that I had previously only known through "technology" I have seen and felt the difference first hand.
 - b. One of the things that I hear and say constantly is "it is so good to finally get to meet you."
 - i. It is not that they or I haven't been able to learn a lot about each other but there is no way really to get to know someone without spending time with them in person.
5. So with that in mind we are going to look at two things that need "Face To Face Visitation."

I. Individual Face To Face Visitation

- A. Personal visitation
 1. We need personal visitation.
- B. Some areas where face to face visitation is needed and can always get better is...
 1. Hospitality (visiting & inviting to homes)
 - i. This is the area I struggle with the most, not in inviting people over, but as a preach inviting myself over.
 - a. I was raised, as most are, that it is not proper to "invite" yourself over to someone's home.

Lessons From II John

1. If they invite you than that is well and fine but it was not proper etiquette to invite yourself over.
 - b. Yet if you are a preacher this rule somehow doesn't apply as you are for some reason supposed to do this and thus most members don't "invite" with dates in mind preachers over.
 1. It is more of a continuous open invitation.
 - c. I say this not to suggest this congregation or any other that does this is wrong.
 1. It is simply just the way things are and have been done which is neither right or wrong but an observation on my part.
- ii. We must all make every effort to not only show hospitality but accept it as well.
 - a. It allows us to have a deeper level of communication when there is one on one, face to face discussions that in turn grows our brotherly affection for one another all the more.
 1. **Ro 12:9-10** "Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. 10 Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor."¹
 - b. This was a reason Jesus went house to house.
 1. **Lk 10:38** "Now as they went on their way, Jesus entered a village. And a woman named Martha welcomed him into her house."
 2. **Lk 19:5-8** "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." 6 So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." 8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.""
 - c. This is the reason John says don't show hospitality to the false teacher because of the "closeness" or "fondness" one can end up having with that one and possibly falling into the false teaching.
 1. **II Jn 10-11** "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, 11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works."
 - iii. Brethren there is much to gain by face to face hospitality.

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

Lessons From II John

2. Sympathy and empathy (visiting the sick and grieved)
 - i. Defining these terms:
 - a. Sympathy is when one has gone through a similar situation and therefore can sympathize or understand what the other person is going through.
 - b. Empathy is when one has not gone through a similar situation but they are aware of the pain and bare that pain as well being with the idea up putting themselves in the "other persons shoes."
 - c. Example:
 1. I can sympathize, thus support, a couple that has lost and had to bury their child or children.
 2. I can empathize, thus support, a couple or person who does not have Christians for parents.
 - ii. We are to be both sympathetic and empathetic as Christians and the best way to do this is face to face.
 - a. We see this of course as expectation in scripture.
 1. **Mt 25:36** "I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me."
 2. **Ro 12:15b** "...weep with those who weep."
 3. **I Co 12:26a** "If one member suffers, all suffer together..."
 4. **He 13:3** "Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the body."
 - b. We see this in action with Jesus.
 1. **Jn 11:17, 33-36** "Now when Jesus came, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days...33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in his spirit and greatly troubled. 34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." 35 Jesus wept. 36 So the Jews said, "See how he loved him!""
 2. **Lk 7:12-13** "As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her. 13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep.""
 - c. We see this in action with Paul.
 1. **Ac 28:8** "It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery. And Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him."

Lessons From II John

- iii. Brethren there are few comforts that are greater than having a brother or sister there with you to sympathize or empathize your pain.
 - a. **Ja 1:27** "Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." (NKJV)
- 3. Celebrations (visiting the exciting things that happen to each other)
 - i. There are a number of great things that happen to Christians that are worthy of a face to face joyous celebration. A birth of a child, wedding, one becoming a child of God...
 - a. **Ro 12:15** "Rejoice with those that rejoice..."
 - b. **I Co 12:26b** "...if one member is honored, all rejoice together."
 - ii. We see examples of this as well.
 - a. **Mt 2:10-11** "When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh."
 - b. **Lk 2:16** "And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger."
 - c. **Jn 2:1-12** (The Wedding at Cana)
- 4. Encouragement (visiting to build up the brethren)
 - i. This life can be difficult and we need encouragement that is so much greater in face to face visitation. There is nothing more uplifting than a brother or sister stopping by to simply say "keep up the good work you do" or "I have confidence in you." We are to be encouragers.
 - ii. There are so many examples of this.
 - a. **Ac 14:21-22** "When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God."
 - b. **Ac 15:30-31** "So when they were sent off, they went down to Antioch, and having gathered the congregation together, they delivered the letter. 31 And when they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement."
 - c. **Ro 1:11-12** "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you— 12 that is, that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine."

Lessons From II John

5. Correction (visiting to reprove and rebuke)
 - i. It is unfortunate that we all sin and need to be reprovved and rebuked but it is a reality and is most effective when done face to face.
 - ii. Paul understood this when he wrote to the Corinthian brethren.
 - a. **II Co 13:1-2** "This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 2 I warned those who sinned before and all the others, and I warn them now while absent, as I did when present on my second visit, that if I come again I will not spare them"
 - b. **Ga 6:1** "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted."
 - iii. Jesus understood this.
 - a. **Mt 18:15-16** "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses."
 - iv. There is no better way than face to face correction.

II. Congregational Face To Face Visitation

- A. There are great reasons for congregations to come together in face to face visitation
 1. Though each congregation/church is autonomous there has always been an expectation of visitation and thus working together in Christ.
- B. Some areas churches can do better at as a whole in the brotherhood concerning visitation
 1. To find out the spiritual health of a congregation and if need study together.
 - i. There are so many congregations that have doctrinal differences.
 - ii. This, to me, seems to come from an unwillingness to visit each other and study together.
 - a. I am in no way suggesting that this eliminate autonomy and thus one congregation's leadership follow another's.
 - iii. We have gotten away from a willingness it seems though to strive to be a people that have no differences of mind.
 - a. **I Co 1:10** "I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment."

Lessons From II John

- iv. This wasn't the case in the scriptures however.
 - a. **Ac 15** is a great example of this.
 - 1. Here we have congregations meeting to make sure they are doctrinally accurate.
 - i. There is nothing wrong with this scripturally.
 - ii. It only becomes a problem when this is done for the "church as a whole" to follow ie denominational conferences.
 - iii. The reason that is wrong is because man is fallible and congregations are thus fallible and "making doctrine" for the church as a whole is unscriptural ie in essence illuminating autonomy.
 - a. Example: If you have ever studied with a Southern Baptist they will point you to their "Confession of Faith" for what they believe.
 - 1. They say they are autonomous but if you go against their creed they will not support you.
 - b. Example: A Methodist will point you to the Book of Discipline.
 - iv. The churches in **Ac 15** could not arrive at the wrong decision and thus the reason why the decision was made for the whole.
 - a. **Ac 15:28** "For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements"
 - 2. The "seeing how each other are spiritually" is biblical if done scripturally.
 - i. **Ac 15:36** "And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are.""
 - v. Thus we need more spiritual health check and study visitation.
- 2. The supporting of local works.
 - i. Whether it be a gospel meeting, door knocking campaign, or any other good work that is being done.
 - a. **Ac 11:20-23** "But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus. 21 And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. 22 The report of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. 23 When he came and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose"

Lessons From II John

- ii. This is a good thing supporting our brethren and their good works.

CONCLUSION

1. Brethren as I consider our congregation I know there are some here who are excellent at these things and there are some here who are not.
 - a. Let it be said of each of us that we seek to grow all the more if we are good at it or seek to improve and get better if we are not.
 - b. I know this is going to be a priority of mine and I hope it is of yours as well.
2. Question: Do you seek to visit and thus grow closer to your brethren or do you shrink back into the background?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**