

2 John 1:5-13 “When Love Goes Too Far”

9.27.17

Tonight we will conclude our study of 2 John. As we have learned over the last several months of our study of 1 John and 2 John I would suppose to you that the entire reason John wrote 1, 2nd and EVEN 3rd John could be summed up in ONE WORD: Truth. John was concerned about the TRUTH.

Tonight, I would also suppose to you that it would be next to impossible to really overemphasize the importance of DIVINE TRUTH. Not just a truth...but what is THE TRUTH. Like gravity...the sun comes up in the east, there are 60 seconds in a minute. These things are irrefutable. And so the question begs to be asked: Is the truth about Jesus irrefutable. Is He telling the truth when He says, “I am the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father except by me.” Is that the truth? We would answer, based on the Word of God: “Yes, based on the Word of God, Jesus Christ is the truth.”

You see, we live in a world of lies. The whole of humanity is in a thick, black, dark cloud of deception and cannot see the truth of God. Believers, on the other hand, those of us who know God, live in the light of the truth. Truth characterizes us because the truth, JESUS CHRIST, is living inside of us! Therefore, we must understand, that we’re constantly going to be confronted with the lies of Satan and with deception, and so we must guard our lives and continue to be students of the truth. We are to uphold the truth. We are to defend the truth. And we are to proclaim the truth.

Remember the word for “truth?” It’s the Greek word:

Alaytheia: absolute, divine truth, for a certainty

So let’s sum up...Listen carefully as I repeat this truth: the Truth, Jesus Christ lives in us and this is more than just some religious creed that we’re convicted to share...the actual PERSON of Jesus Christ is living inside of us via the Holy Spirit. So, this is not a discussion about religion, this is a discussion about a person, Jesus Christ.

And that was the issue that John was writing about to this lady in Asia Minor. There was a lady who unbeknownst to her, who was housing false teachers who were teaching that Jesus was not the Son of God, He was not deity and He was not the way to God. They were liars and they had infiltrated the church that was likely meeting in her home and John was warning her: Don’t do it sister! Don’t house this fakes! **Watch this play out...**

2 John 1:5-13

⁵ And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. ⁶ And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it. ⁷ For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸ Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. ⁹ Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ 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. ¹² Though I have much to write

to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete. ¹³ The children of your elect sister greet you.

Church, it's verse 9 that jumped out at me... Look at it again...I believe it is the glue that holds this entire passage together.

2 John 1:9

⁹ Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.

It's the phrase "Everyone who goes on ahead," is the key phrase. It literally in the Greek means to go too far... Here's the Greek word:

Proago- to go beyond the truth, to go further than what is proper, too far.

It's like what happens when you try to see beyond your headlights. You are going to be risking a wreck if you try to drive beyond your headlights. You'll go too far. And that's why I've titled the message **"When Love Goes Too Far..."**

This lady has such a great desire to show hospitality and help out some supposedly "itinerant preachers," but in so doing, she's helping to house false teachers who could destroy the church meeting in her home with their lies. It's amazing how evil people will prey on those who are kind and gracious. They typically prey on the older folks. So, here's the paradox...we've been taught to love...but, John is saying be careful who you love. John spent 3 years with the man of love: Jesus...listening to Jesus say things like this... (recorded in his Gospel...)

John 13:34-35

³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. ³⁵ By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

I really believe this lady meant no harm in what she was doing, but she was obviously bringing false teachers into her home and they were playing on the love and sympathy of this lady. They played on her hospitality and perhaps others in the church. They were literally embedding themselves in the homes of true believers and John sent this letter to warn them to stop housing these guys because they were unknowingly helping to spread the gangrene of their false teaching. This letter is basically a warning to guard the truth!

Remember the picture of Florida State quarterback, Jameis Winston when they won the 2014 National Championship in Football?



See how carefully he's holding that glass football? He knows how precious it is. I believe we should treat the Word of God like that. Unfortunately, many Christians don't see the Bible as the supernatural Word of God and because of that, they

seldom read it. We read all the social media and watch TV and movies and videos. But, Satan has tricked us.

Here's the thing church... The only way you can guard the truth is to know the truth! Do you know the truth? Do you know the Word of God well enough to be able to recognize that which is false? You won't if you don't read the Bible. I pray you are reading the Bible. If you aren't, then you are starving yourself to death.

Now let's think about how this lady could have been deceived. You might remember that during the first century, preachers and evangelists traveled and stayed in homes. Remember, Paul did. He stayed with Jason in Thessalonica and Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth. Peter stayed in Cornelius' home. Remember, the inns of that day or what we'd call "motels" were really pretty rough places. They were mostly considered to be brothels and places of disease...very unacceptable for most, unless one was in an absolute desperate need. (Like for Joseph and Mary when there was no room in the inn. Thankfully, there was a cave that was used as a stable behind that inn and a manger.)

Therefore, so as not to have to stay in one of these terrible places, traveling preachers would try to find someone who might show hospitality and take them in. **Turn with me to Luke 10.** Remember, when Jesus sent out the 72 and He expected them to stay with folks in their homes.

Luke 10:4-8

⁴ Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. ⁵ Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' ⁶ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. ⁷ And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house. ⁸ Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you.

Well, the false teachers knew about the hospitality of Christians so they were abusing it. They would approach those who professed Christ, saying they were preachers of the gospel needing a place to stay and it was in that way they'd become embedded in the church. And this is exactly what happened with this lady that John is writing to here in 2 John. She had unwittingly and unintentionally opened her house to some false teachers. Bless this lady's heart. She was only trying to follow the teachings of Jesus and the commands of Scripture because Christians are called to show hospitality, right?

Romans 12:13

¹³ Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Hebrews 13:2 says that we're to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it. 1 Timothy 5 says that a woman couldn't be put on the "widow's list" in the church in Ephesus if she hadn't shown hospitality to strangers.

1 Timothy 5:9-10

⁹ Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, ¹⁰ and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work.

Did you know for me to be an Elder that I'm to show hospitality?

1 Timothy 3:2

² Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach.

So hospitality is very important and we're commanded to show it.

Truly, showing hospitality is a proof of our Christianity. But, I'm not sure how much we actually show it in our culture...because the truth is...usually the only people we tend to show hospitality to is our own families and perhaps our very closest friends. Honestly, most families seldom have anyone in their homes, because they're so busy and they don't have time and they don't want to fool with cleaning the house.

I'm not even sure why we worry so much about how our houses look on the inside, because no one but our family ever sees the inside of our houses. Church family, the Bible doesn't change with the culture, we're still called to show hospitality.

Pam and I have tried to take the command to show hospitality seriously. We truly like opening up our home to people. And I don't say that to say that we're anything or to boast. I say that in hopes that we might lead by EXAMPLE.

In fact, we said when we built our home in 2001 that it was God's house to do with whatever he likes. So, we've brought in orphans...we've brought in preachers who come to the church to teach/preach. We've brought in missionaries and last year we started bringing in our college students, when we have what we call: "College Connect," when the students are on break. In fact, we'll be having our annual Staff and Deacon Dinner this weekend, which we've been doing since we've been in ministry for 12 years. Truly, it's a joy to see our home as a tool for God's blessing...to be used for His kingdom and glory, and not just for our family and for our entertainment.

I want you to take a look at this sweet lady's picture. This was Janice Lambey's mother, Mattie Wright. She passed away on September 11th. She was 95 years old.



I want to show you what her obituary said. It ties right in to what we've been talking about regarding hospitality.

"As a young girl Mattie accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. She was an active member of Arbor Grove Baptist Church until her health declined, and then she enjoyed listening to Charles Stanley on Sunday mornings. Mattie was a wonderful mother and grandmother. She was happiest when she was spending time with her family. She especially enjoyed getting the family together for

Sunday dinners. These were not your usual meat and two vegetables, but the table was laden with a variety of meats and so many side dishes there was hardly room on the table for them all. **Many of her sick or bereaved neighbors and relatives were the recipients of her good home cooking.**"

Mattie Wright showed hospitality! But, I know... I know many no longer cook. Folks don't cook like Mattie. Okay, so be it...but, we still eat. We can buy food for folks and still show hospitality even if it's just pizza and brownies. That's what we do for CONNECT and they're happy as a lark! ☺

As I thought about showing hospitality, I thought about our hostesses. Have you heard of these folks? We provide a meal for immediate family members who were members who pass away. We can provide a meal to a families home or provide it here at the church. Of late this group is made up of some pretty fantastic couples: like Sharron and Ronald Huffman and her crew of Gwynda and Jerry Marlowe and Janet and Eugene Eller and Susan and Claude Sturgill. My wife and I help and so do Pastor Dale and Lori.

And so, here we are...we've got a first century issue of showing hospitality to the wrong people. Honestly, I see this lady that John is writing to as a sweet lady with a kind heart, but perhaps wasn't as discerning as she needed to be.

Yes, we must show hospitality, but we must also be discerning. There's a balance. No! We're not to be unloving and critical and so analytical and so skeptical that this overpowers our responsibility to love people, but we're to pray for discernment as well, because we don't want to miss out on the reward.

2 John 1:8

⁸ Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward.

The word reward is "Mithos" and it means: full payment. Yes, God rewards us for showing kindness and hospitality to others, but not to those who are tearing down spiritual development.

It's the teaching of these men that was bad and they should have caught it. Three times John uses the word Didakto (teaching) and described as bad ...

2 John 1:9-11

⁹ Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰ 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.

It's all about proper teaching... We've got to watch out for the subtleties of error. But, listen, I'll say it again...you've got to know the Bible to catch the subtleties. If we do, there will be joy!

2 John 1:12

¹² Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

Joy is connected to walking in the truth. I'll be so bold as to say this...to the degree that you read the Word of God is to the degree you will know joy. I dare you! Read the Bible for 30 straight days

and see what God does! You see the Bible is JESUS...the TRUTH. And when you read the Bible, you are reading Jesus.

I'll end with the words of Jesus...and John recorded these words in his gospel...

John 15:9-11

⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.