

II & III John

2nd & 3rd John deal with two sides of the same issue, namely, the relationship of the truth and Christian love.

2nd John – Protecting the truth. Deals with ideas.

3rd John – Upholding the truth. Deals with specific cases.

2nd John and 3rd John are more personal than 1st John with 3rd John being perhaps the most personal letter in the New Testament.

II John – Protecting the truth by rejecting error.

I. Introduction – 1-3

II. The Importance of the truth

A. Practicing the truth – 4-6

B. Protecting the truth – 7-11

III. Conclusion – 12-13

The importance to John of revealed truth:

1. He based his own love on it – verse 1
2. He based the love of all Christians on it – verse 1
3. He based his writing of the epistle on it – verse 2
4. He based the three great graces on it – verse 3
5. He commended them for basing their lives on it – verse 4

Love for others is the fruit of abiding in the truth.

“...this is love, that we walk according to His commandments...” verse 6

Love cannot be separated from truth! What we believe will determine if we really love each other.

The truth generates an exclusive Christian community, 1-3

The truth demands a distinctive Christian ethic, 4-6

The truth involves propositional Christian doctrine, 7

The truth requires unceasing Christian vigilance, 8-11

III John – Upholding the truth by supporting its representatives.

I. Introduction – 1

II. Upholding the truth

A. Commendation of Gaius – 2-4

B. Encouragement of Gaius’ support – 5-8

C. Indictment of Diotrephes – 9-11

D. Commendation of Demetrius – 12

III. Conclusion – 13-14

Gaius Commended:

1. His behavior is worthy of God – 6

It was in tune with God’s behavior.

2. His behavior is necessary – 7

We should not expect the unsaved to support God’s work.

3. His behavior makes him a partner in the truth – 8

We have a share in the work that others do when we support them materially.

Diotrephes Indicted:

1. His words were lies – 10

He was making false accusations against others to elevate himself.

2. His actions were selfish – 9

He was withholding hospitality and support because these acts threatened his own security.

3. His actions toward others were oppressive – 10

He used intimidation to force others to conform to his will rather than submitting to them. He even excluded others from the fellowship of the church meetings rather than fostering unity among the brethren.

Our activities reveal our true attitudes! We can see if our attitude is loving or selfish, not by examining our emotions, but by examining our actions. Do our actions demonstrate love or selfishness?