

**FOR THE BROTHERS:
A STUDY IN THE EPISTLES OF JAMES, JOHN, JUDE
AMEN BIBLE STUDY 2016-2017**

**John: Dealing with Friends and Foes
II John and III John
April 27, 2017**

I. It is good for the people of God to be united in Truth.

II John 1-3; III John 1-4

A. United in the essentials.

II:¹ The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth, ² because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us forever: III:³ For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth.
cf. Ephesians 2:14

B. View others as family.

II:³ Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love. III:¹ The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. ² Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.
cf. John 14:17

C. Our command.

II:⁴ I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. III:⁴ I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.
cf. Matthew 5:13-14

1. For our good
2. For God's glory

II. We fulfill God's command to walk in Truth by following Jesus.

II: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.
cf. Mathew 22:37-40; I John 4:21

A. Terms:

1. Truth – God's story of salvation in the person and work of Jesus
2. Love – the sacrificial love of God
3. Command – to follow Christ in response to love received in Christ.

B. How?

1. Possess the Truth personally
2. Practice the Truth publically

III. The people of God must guard the Truth.

A. Guard the doctrine of Christ.

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.

B. Guard the Truth by:

1. Pursuing conservation over innovation.

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.

2. Rejecting those who deny the Truth.

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.*

IV. The people of God must support the Truth.

A. It is our moral obligation.

III⁸ *Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.*

B. By being hospitable to the brothers.

III⁵ *Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, ⁶ who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. ⁷ For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.*

C. By following good examples.

III⁹ *I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. ¹⁰ So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church. ¹¹ Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.*

D. It is our worship.

III⁶ *who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God.*

Discussion Questions

1. What caused John to rejoice greatly in these two letters? What causes you to rejoice greatly in the lives of those you care about?
2. What does the phrase “the Truth abides in us” mean?
3. What false Gospels are especially attractive to you? Why?
4. Why is it important to hold fast to “what we have heard from the beginning”? How might you do that?

Going Deeper

In his 2nd and 3rd epistles, John shows us that as the people of God, we must love and stand for the Truth of the Gospel.

1. Do you love the Truth of Christ enough to love and be united to others who love the Truth of Christ? What barriers often bring division in our relationships with other brothers, especially with those who are different than us?
2. Do you love the Truth of Christ enough to walk in the Truth in the public arena? What might keep you from doing so?
3. When it is necessary, why does rejecting those who deny the Truth not contradict our call to “walk in love”?