

# 2 John

## Introduction

The second letter of John is Simplistic in vocabulary and structure, yet profound in its aletheological and agonological scope. John presents concepts of the believer's daily walk in truth and love contrasted with deception and heretical revisionism.

1. **Walk in truth**
2. **Love One Another in truth**
3. **Guard the truth**

Ἀγάπη love is the main characteristic of the true Christian since this love is the characteristic of God Himself. It is the sign that God lives in us. This is the prefacing statement found in verses 5 and 6 that leads to the warning in verse 7. Deceivers cannot display God's love because God is not in them. They have neither love nor truth.

Love and truth are inseparable in a consistent walk with God. Truth without love leads to legalism. Love without truth leads to liberalism. There is a danger of treating truth as something to know in a merely academic way, but the truth is actually found in the person of the Son of God. Far from being an academic expression of truth, he is the truth for a vital purpose—to bring us to God the Father (John 14:6). Progressive, self-proclaimed advanced thinkers and revisionists who claimed to have a more enlightened approach to Christ and the scriptures were enemies and corrupters of the truth. The Apostle Paul's approach to Heretics was in step with John's (Rom 16:17-18; Tit 3:10-11).

We have a basic understanding of these perverted doctrines from John's other writing beyond the specific statement here (2 John 7). The purveyors of these lies have continued to march through the church age with new faces, new names but the same diabolical concepts that seek to undermine the truth of Christ in His humanity, deity, and salvation by grace through faith in Him. These are the three primary and distinct departures from biblical Christology that identify false religion.

These two concepts must be in focus as we study 2 John. We can't get tied up in endless debates about questionable issues. We must come away with a clear picture of what it means to love in truth and to guard that truth with exigency.

## Overview

- I. Greeting and Benediction: Verses 1 – 3
- II. Walking in truth and loving one another: verses 4 – 6
- III. Deceivers and the danger of Christological error: Verses 7 – 11
- IV. Writing on the heart and the impartation of joy through face to face teaching: Verse 12
- V. A final greeting: Verse 13

### Comparative scope of doctrine in Johannine literature

	2 JOHN	1 JOHN	3 JOHN	GOSPEL OF JOHN
Love In Truth Know The Truth	1	2:21;3:18	1	8:32
Truth Abides	2	1:8; 2:4; 4:6		8:44; 14:6,16-17; 15:7; John 15:26; 16:13
Father And Son	3	1:3; 2:23,24; 4:10		3:35; 5:19-26
Walking In Truth	4	1:6-7; 2:6	3	
Old/New Commandment	5	2:7; 3:14-18; 4:7- 12		13:34-35; 15:12,17
This Is Love	6	2:7,24; 5:3		14:15,21; 15:10,14
Deceivers	7	2:18-22; 4:1-3		
Rewards (cf. Rev 3:11)	8			4:36
Abide In Doctrine	9	1:3; 2:23		5:23; 7:16-17
Rejection	10			
Participation	11			
Joy Made Full	12	1:4	13, 14	15:11; 16:12,24; 17:13
Greetings	13			

## I. Greeting and Benediction: Verses 1 – 3

### Verse 1

#### The Elder

**4245** πρεσβύτερος [*presbuteros* /pres-boo-ter-os/] adj. Comparative of *presbus* (elderly); TDNT 6:651; TDNTA 931; GK 4565; 67 occurrences; AV translates as “elder” 64 times, “old man” once, “eldest” once, and “elder woman” once. **1** elder, of age,. 1A the elder of two people. 1B advanced in life, an elder, a senior. 1B1 forefathers. **2** a term of rank or office. 2A among the Jews. 2A1 members of the great council or Sanhedrin (because in early times the rulers of the people, judges, etc., were selected from elderly men). 2A2 of those who in separate cities managed public affairs and administered justice. 2B among the Christians, those who presided over the assemblies (or churches) The NT uses the term bishop, elders, and presbyters interchangeably. 2C the twenty four members of the heavenly Sanhedrin or court seated on thrones around the throne of God.

A man who, by virtue of position in the family, clan, or tribe; or by reason of personality, prowess, stature, or influence; or through a process of appointment and ordination, exercised leadership and judicial functions in both religious and secular spheres in the ancient world, both among biblical and non-biblical peoples. The roots of the development of the council of elders in the New Testament and postapostolic church originate in Judaism and the Old Testament, though the figure of the elder or groups of elders can also be found in the world surrounding ancient Israel (Gen 50:7; Num 22:7) and in the Greco-Roman world of the New Testament period.

In the Old Testament: Judicial, administrative and spiritual - Gen 23:10, 18; Job 29:7; Pro 24:7; 31:23; Deut 21:19; 22:15; Deut 19:12; 21:3, 6; 25:7–10; Ruth 4:1–12; 1 Sam 30:26; 2 Kgs 10:5; 1 Kgs 21:8–11; 2 Kgs 23:1; Ex 24:1, 9; Lv 4:15)

In Judaism of the New Testament (Mt 16:21; Mt 21:23; 26:3, 47, 57; Mt 26:57; 27:1, 3, 12, 20, 41; Acts 4:5; Acts 4:8).

In the Church: Acts 14:23; 15:2, 4, 6, 22f; 16:4; 20:17; 21:18; 1 Tim 5:17, 19; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1 Pet 5:1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1

Zane Hodges considers this usage in 2 John as Self-effacement (The Old Man).

The majority of the Church Fathers ascribe this epistle to John the son of Zebedee. The most notable quote is from Irenaeus (*Against Heresies*, 1.16.3):

But as many as separate from the Church, and give heed to such old wives' fables as these, are truly self-condemned; and these men Paul commands us, “after a first and second admonition, to avoid.” And John, the disciple of the Lord, has intensified their condemnation, when he desires us not even to address to them the salutation of “good-

speed;" for, says he, "He that bids them be of good-speed is a partaker with their evil deeds;" and that with reason, "for there is no good-speed to the ungodly,"<sup>2</sup> saith the LORD.

## To the Elect Lady and Her Children

**1588** ἐκλεκτός [*eklektos* /ek·lek·tos/] adj. From 1586; TDNT 4:181; TDNTA 505; GK 1723; 23 occurrences; AV translates as "elect" 16 times, and "chosen" seven times. **1** picked out, chosen. **1A** chosen by God,. **1A1** to obtain salvation through Christ. **1A1A** Christians are called "chosen or elect" of God. **1A2** the Messiah in called "elect", as appointed by God to the most exalted office conceivable. **1A3** choice, select, i.e. the best of its kind or class, excellence preeminent: applied to certain individual Christians.

**2959** κυρία [*Kuria* /koo·ree·ah/] n f. From 2962; TDNT 3:1095; TDNTA 486; GK 3257; Two occurrences; AV translates as "lady" twice. **1** a Christian woman to whom the second Epistle of John is addressed.

1. A corporate singular, in which case it is a reference to a local church and this title is used metaphorically. The New Testament sometimes uses female personifications to refer to the church, which John in his other book (where he does identify himself—see Rev. 1:1, 4, 9; 21:2; 22:8) described as a 'bride adorned for her husband', and as a 'bride, the Lamb's wife' (Rev. 21:2, 9). The apostle Paul compared the relationship between husbands and wives to that between Christ and the church (Eph. 5:22–32) and, more to the point, used the same picture of marriage to describe a local church (2 Cor. 11:2). (cf. Lam 2:13; Eze 23:4).
2. An Individual, in which case this letter is addressed to a woman and her literal children. A likely possibility is Mary the mother of Jesus (Matt 27:56; Mark 15:40;16:1; John 19:25-27).

It is best to recognize that the identity of the elect lady is uncertain with our present knowledge. The content of the letter is of far greater importance than the characters addressed.

## Whom I Love In Truth

**25** ἀγαπάω [*agapao* /ag·ap·ah·o/] v. Perhaps from *agan* (much) [or cf 5368]; TDNT 1:21; TDNTA 5; GK 26; 142 occurrences; AV translates as "love" 135 times, and "beloved" seven times. **1** of persons. **1A** to welcome, to entertain, to be fond of, to love dearly. **2** of things. **2A** to be well pleased, to be contented at or with a thing.

**225** ἀλήθεια [*aletheia* /al·ay·thi·a/] n f. From 227; TDNT 1:232; TDNTA 37; GK 237; 110 occurrences; AV translates as "truth" 107 times, "truly + 1909" once, "true" once, and "verity" once. **1** objectively. **1A** what is true in any matter under consideration. **1A1** truly, in truth, according to truth. **1A2** of a truth, in reality, in fact, certainly. **1B** what is true in things appertaining to God and the duties of man, moral and religious truth. **1B1** in the greatest latitude. **1B2** the true notions of God which are open to human reason without his supernatural intervention. **1C** the truth as taught in the Christian religion, respecting God and the execution of his purposes through Christ, and respecting the duties of man, opposing alike to the superstitions of the Gentiles and the inventions of the Jews, and the corrupt opinions and precepts

of false teachers even among Christians. **2** subjectively. 2A truth as a personal excellence. 2A1 that candour of mind which is free from affection, pretence, simulation, falsehood, deceit.

John uses the word which often functions in the LXX and the NT to express the particular kind shown by God to men and which must be shown by men to God and to one another. The use of this word, rare in secular writing, shows the need to emphasize the unique elements of Christian love. This love is based on the sacrificial integrity of the subject rather than the beneficent worthiness of the object.

When the Father expresses love for the Son, both φιλεω and αγαπαω are used (John 3:35; 5:20).

We don't need a cultural compass to understand what John is talking about here. Truth is personified, realized and magnified in Jesus Christ. Perfect love comes from Him, through Him and to Him in such a way that it cannot be recreated or counterfeited. Without Christ, love is a motivated self-interest. Cf. 1 John 3:16-19 and John 21:15-17

## **And Not Only I But Also All Who Know the Truth**

**1097** γινώσκω [*ginosko* /ghin·oce·ko/] v. A prolonged form of a primary verb; TDNT 1:689; TDNTA 119; GK 1182; 223 occurrences; AV translates as “know” 196 times, “perceive” nine times, “understand” eight times, and translated miscellaneously 10 times. **1** to learn to know, come to know, get a knowledge of perceive, feel. 1A to become known. **2** to know, understand, perceive, have knowledge of. 2A to understand. 2B to know. **3** Jewish idiom for sexual intercourse between a man and a woman. **4** to become acquainted with, to know. *Additional Information:* For synonyms see entries 1492, *eido*; 1987, *epistamai*; and 4920, *sunimi*. See entry 5825 for comparison of synonyms.

This knowing (perfect active participle) is a current state of experiential knowledge resulting from a past completed action of intellectual understanding. They came to know the truth and continue knowing the truth through experientially living the truth.

## **Verse 2**

### **For the Sake of the Truth Which Abides In Us and Will Be With Us Forever**

**3306** μένω [*meno* /men·o/] v. A root word; TDNT 4:574; TDNTA 581; GK 3531; 120 occurrences; AV translates as “abide” 61 times, “remain” 16 times, “dwell” 15 times, “continue” 11 times, “tarry” nine times, “endure” three times, and translated miscellaneously five times. **1** to remain, abide. 1A in reference to place. 1A1 to sojourn, tarry. 1A2 not to depart. 1A2A to continue to be present. 1A2B to be held, kept, continually. 1B in reference to time. 1B1 to continue to be, not to perish, to last, endure. 1B1A of persons, to survive, live. 1C in reference to state or condition. 1C1 to remain as one, not to become another or different. **2** to wait for, await one.

Here is a deepening reality of the truth manifested within us on a permanent basis. John has a tendency to repeat himself but with the effect of accentuating the point. Cf. John 14:16-17

*The nature of God stands in the sharpest contrast to the devil and the world which are characterized by lies, hatred and evil. This Contrast, presented throughout the New Testament, is depicted in absolute terms without any intermediate shades of grey between the light of God and the darkness of sin. – I. Howard Marshal from the NICNT Cf. John 8:44*

### **Verse 3**

**Grace, mercy *and* peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.**

John's words of greeting here are exceptionally powerful. Grace, mercy and peace are not particularly Johannine, but are conventional ecclesiastic terms (cf. 1 Timothy 1:3; 2 Timothy 1:2) vital to an understanding of salvation. The grace of the Father in sending His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (Romans 3:24; 5:15; Ephesians 2:5-8) is what allowed Him to show mercy (Titus 3:4-6; 1 Peter 1:3) to those who believe in the Son bringing peace (Romans 5:1; Isaiah 52:7; Ephesians 6:15; Col 1:20). The succession marks the order from the first notion to the final satisfaction of God. This is sacrificial integrity love in action because there is nothing in us that makes us worthy, that would make God the Father like us so much that He would crush and kill His unique Son in order to save us.

*Grace is God doing for us what we do not deserve, mercy is his not doing to us what we do deserve, and peace is God giving us what we need based upon his grace and mercy. The word order is significant. God's grace is always prior. Mercy and peace flow from it. – NAC*

What is most powerful here is the concept of God the Father setting exclusive terms for salvation. Indeed, the Title of Father has taken on a new significance for Christianity that it never had for Judaism. It is through the revelation of His Son that God is known as Father, not merely of Christ, but also of all believers. Rejection of the Son means rejection of the way in which God has chosen to reveal Himself as Father. Cf. 1 John 2:23; 4:10, 14, 15; 5:10; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5

## **II. Walking in truth and loving one another: verses 4 – 6**

### **Verse 4**

**I was very glad to find *some* of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment *to do* from the Father.**

Obedience begins at the moment you say yes to God's grace and mercy, but in order for us to understand the purpose for these, it is imperative that we continue in obedience (Phil 2:12-13; 1 Peter 2:2). God the Father has given the commandment that we first believe in The Son. No complicated doctrines are involved in trusting Him, which is why Jesus said we must come to Him like a child (Matthew 18:3; Luke 18:17). A child easily realizes he is helpless and in need. But what happens as that

child grows? One of two things occur, either he is obedient to his parent's teaching or he is on a path to self-destruction (Romans 6:17; 1 Timothy 1:8-10). A thorough study of this concept is beyond the scope of our study, but Nehemiah 9:26-31 is a great outline of the process.

The path to maturity is not paved with perfection, but is characterized a growing sanctification and decreasing rate of failure. If we are following Christ, we must constantly be in motion toward Him, our character and conduct becoming more conformed to His along the way. *If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.* - 1 John 1:6

The contrast between law and grace is staggering. This is the beauty of understanding the difference in stages of growth from infancy to maturity. The law is good if one uses it lawfully (1 Timothy 1:8), as a tutor to bring us to Christ (Gal 3:24-25).

*This is His commandment: that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. The one who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We know by this that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.* - 1 John 3:23-24

*"My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."* – John 7:16

*"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."* – John 13:34-35

*"What we live is what we believe. Everything else is just religious talk."* – Vance Havner

## Verse 5

**Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another.**

How can you command someone to have an emotion? This is a typical objection, but the response is simple. ἀγαπαω is not an emotion, it is an action, a decision, a choice to be compassionate. Φιλεω is an emotion, it is affection which can develop alongside ἀγαπαω. We are commanded to ἀγαπαω our enemies, but not φιλεω. We do all we can out of a choice to be compassionate to show them Christ and tell them the Good News, but we are never told to develop affection for them.

More important here is the biblical understanding that an Elder or Pastor or spiritual authority derives his authority from scripture. Every command from the pulpit is to be accompanied by diligent study of the scripture to see if these things are so. John is truly relaying the command, not commanding it

himself. In this case, the command is a familiar one, but one that causes no trouble to remind the reader

**2065** ἐρωτάω [*erotao* /er-o-tah-o/] v. Apparently from 2046 cf 2045; TDNT 2:685; TDNTA 262; GK 2263; 58 occurrences; AV translates as “ask” 23 times, “beseech” 14 times, “pray” 14 times, “desire” six times, and “intreat” once. **1** to question. **2** to ask. 2A to request, entreat, beg, beseech. *Additional Information:* For synonyms see entries 154, *aiteo*; and 1189, *deomai*. See entry 5802 for comparison of synonyms.

## Verse 6

### **And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments.**

This is where things get interesting as John builds on the concepts with each repetition. It is impossible to notice in English where he makes the shift from speaking to an individual to speaking to individuals, but here in verse 6 the verbs of address become plural. However we understand the elect lady, we can't forget about her children. To me, it's like John just started pointing at everyone in this room and saying, “this is for you.” “This is your responsibility.” Everything said here has an individual and corporate application, so listen up!

Have you ever thought about what Jesus meant when he summed up the law in “love God, love you neighbor?” If you look at the Decalogue, this is exactly how it would be summarized: Theological and social orientation to ἀγαπή expression. How much easier is it to keep these commandments when you want to? When the compassion and affection you have guides your thinking and actions, you don't even think about commandments. We desire to please God not as a personal investment but simply because it pleases Him. We don't want to worship other gods. Not just because they are all false, but because He is all we want. We don't want to make idols because it's His face we are seeking. We don't lift up His Name for empty purposes because we glory in His Name, because we give thanks to His Holy Name, because we praise the Name of the Lord for His Name alone is exalted.

The relevance of John's point is obvious even today when we hear “all you need is love”. Such advice is meaningless if the nature and genesis of love is not defined and the scope of our trinity indwelt capacity is not realized.

### **This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.**

John says, “You understand what this is all about, now start being intentional about your walk.” We have a tendency to be careless about our moment to moment existence and think more of a day to day concept. In verse 8, we will look at what it means to be mindful and to maintain momentum.



### III. Deceivers and the danger of Christological error: Verses 7 – 11

#### Verse 7

Ὅτι πολλοὶ πλάνοι ἐξῆλθον εἰς τὸν κόσμον  
**Because many deceivers went out into the world**

Because (Ὅτι) - Verse 6 presents action to be taken (you should walk in it), verse 7 presents the reason for the action.

Important vocabulary:

**4108 πλάνος** [*planos* /**plan**-os/] adj. Of uncertain affinity; TDNT 6:228; TDNTA 857; GK 4418; Five occurrences; AV translates as “deceiver” four times, and “seducing” once. **1** wandering, roving. **2** misleading, leading into error. 2A a vagabond, “tramp”, imposter. 2B corrupter, deceiver.

Deceivers and the deceitful, Satan’s missionaries on assignment (Matthew 27:63; 2 Corinthians 6:8; 1 John 2:26; 2 John 7).

**1831 ἐξέρχομαι, διεξέρχομαι, ἐκβαίνω** [*exerchomai* /**ex-er**-khom-ahee/] v. From 1537 and 2064; TDNT 2:678; TDNTA 257; GK 2002 and 1446 and 1674; 222 occurrences; AV translates as “go out” 60 times, “come” 34 times, “depart” 28 times, “go” 25 times, “go forth” 25 times, “come out” 23 times, “come forth” nine times, and translated miscellaneously 18 times. **1** to go or come forth of. 1A with mention of the place out of which one goes, or the point from which he departs. 1A1 of those who leave a place of their own accord. 1A2 of those who are expelled or cast out. **2** metaph. 2A to go out of an assembly, i.e. forsake it. 2B to come forth from physically, arise from, to be born of. 2C to go forth from one’s power, escape from it in safety. 2D to come forth (from privacy) into the world, before the public, (of those who by novelty of opinion attract attention). 2E of things. 2E1 of reports, rumours, messages, precepts. 2E2 to be made known, declared. 2E3 to be spread, to be proclaimed. 2E4 to come forth. 2E4A emitted as from the heart or the mouth. 2E4B to flow forth from the body. 2E4C to emanate, issue. 2E4C1 used of a sudden flash of lightning. 2E4C2 used of a thing vanishing. 2E4C3 used of a hope which has disappeared.

This letter appears as the first line of defense against the seeds of Christological heresy, logically followed by 1 John which treats these issues in much greater depth. We cannot cry “Gnostic” quite yet, but the first steps were definitely apparent. Zane Hodges believes 1 and 2 John were written and sent out together and the elect lady would have received both at the same time. I have a hard time following this line of thinking considering verse 12.

At this point in the first century, as we can see here and in 3 John, itinerant teachers were visiting churching with regularity. But some of these were advocating for a move beyond the established doctrine. The implication here with the use of πολλοὶ πλάνοι, the stressing of Christian love, and the addressing of some serious sin issues in 1 John, is that these teachers had not only moved far away from Christ in doctrine but also in application. There was no ἀγάπη love, no truth, but a walk in darkness

apart from God. John expresses the feeling that they were never of Christ to begin with (1 John 2:19; 4:1). This is consistent with the tares among the wheat doctrine (Matthew 13:24-30) and Paul's warning to the elders from Ephesus in Acts 20.

οἱ μὴ ὁμολογοῦντες Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐρχόμενον ἐν σαρκί  
**Those who do not concede Jesus Christ coming in flesh**

Important vocabulary:

**3670 ὁμολογέω** [*homologeō* /hom-ol-og-eh-o/] v. From a compound of the base of 3674 and 3056; TDNT 5:199; TDNTA 687; GK 3933; 24 occurrences; AV translates as “confess” 17 times, “profess” three times, “promise” once, “give thanks” once, “confession is made” once, and “acknowledgeth” once. **1** to say the same thing as another, i.e. to agree with, assent. **2** to concede. 2A not to refuse, to promise. 2B not to deny. 2B1 to confess. 2B2 declare. 2B3 to confess, i.e. to admit or declare one's self guilty of what one is accused of. **3** to profess. 3A to declare openly, speak out freely. 3B to profess one's self the worshipper of one. **4** to praise, celebrate.

One of three facets of Christological error is addressed here, although holding to this error also forces one into error in salvation by grace through faith. If Christ is not coming in the flesh, a substitutionary sacrifice cannot be made, that flesh cannot be raised and our faith is empty (1 Corinthians 15:14). Here and in 1 John 1, the eyewitness testimony case is made for Jesus Christ being 100% human. In John 1, the case is made for Jesus Christ being 100% divine. The wisdom of this world claims these concepts don't make any logical sense and proposes a more sophisticated intellectual proposition. God is never impressed by human wisdom and logic. Harry Ironside says, “... God is above all your rules of logic. He is not concerned about them.” Indeed, each time I hear the words “that makes no sense”, I think of Isaiah 55:9, “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.” He sits above the circle of the earth and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers (Isaiah 40:22). Humanity is so completely arrogant in its intellectual pride it is amazing that Satan has to do anything but sit back with his popcorn and laugh.

John doesn't give us a rundown of names, philosophical or personal, but simply equips the believer to identify deceivers. We will follow his example in this.

It does not matter what names they go by today, because the names will change. John has provided the simple test for us in guarding ourselves and the flock from savage wolves. As we discussed before, I believe the change in verbs from singular to plural indicates that each believer needs to have his senses trained to discern good from evil (Hebrews 5:14).

οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ πλάνος καὶ ὁ ἀντίχριστος  
**This is the deceiver and the antichrist**

Important vocabulary:

**500 ἀντίχριστος** [*antichristos* /an·tee·khris-tos/] n m. From 473 and 5547; TDNT 9:493; TDNTA 1322; GK 532; Five occurrences; AV translates as “antichrist” five times. **1** the adversary of the Messiah.

Antichrists are deceivers, liars and deniers (1 John 2:18-24).

## Verse 8

βλέπετε ἑαυτοὺς  
**Be mindful of yourselves**

**Important vocabulary:**

**991 βλέπω** [*blepo* /blep·o/] v. A primary word; TDNT 5:315; TDNTA 706; GK 1063; 135 occurrences; AV translates as “see” 90 times, “take heed” 12 times, “behold” 10 times, “beware” four times, “look on” four times, “look” three times, “beware of” three times, and translated miscellaneous nine times. **1** to see, discern, of the bodily eye. 1A with the bodily eye: to be possessed of sight, have the power of seeing. 1B perceive by the use of the eyes: to see, look descry. 1C to turn the eyes to anything: to look at, look upon, gaze at. 1D to perceive by the senses, to feel. 1E to discover by use, to know by experience. **2** metaph. to see with the mind’s eye. 2A to have (the power of) understanding. 2B to discern mentally, observe, perceive, discover, understand. 2C to turn the thoughts or direct the mind to a thing, to consider, contemplate, to look at, to weigh carefully, examine. **3** in a geographical sense of places, mountains, buildings, etc. turning towards any quarter, as it were, facing it. *Additional Information:* For synonyms see entries 3708, *horao*; and 4648, *skopeo*. See entry 5822 for comparison of synonyms.

It is here that John uses the concept of mindfulness. Mark 13:9 says “be on your guard”. Maintain your momentum. Every moment that you are vigilant to guard against error and deceit is imperative here. Jesus used the word several times to warn his disciples about those who might deceive them (Mark 8:15; 12:38; 13:23; cf. also Heb 3:12). Understand the significance of the term antichrist and realize you have adversaries prowling around seeking to devour!

ἵνα μὴ ἀπολέσητε ἃ εἰργασάμεθα  
**In order that you (pl.) might not lose what we have worked for**

Important vocabulary:

**622 ἀπόλλυμι** [*apollumi* /ap·ol·loo·mee/] v. From 575 and the base of 3639; TDNT 1:394; TDNTA 67; GK 660; 92 occurrences; AV translates as “perish” 33 times, “destroy” 26 times, “lose” 22 times, “be lost” five times, “lost” four times, and translated miscellaneously twice. **1** to destroy. 1A to put out of the way entirely, abolish, put an end to ruin. 1B render useless. 1C to kill. 1D to declare that one must be put to death. 1E metaph. to devote or give over to eternal misery in hell. 1F to perish, to be lost, ruined, destroyed. **2** to destroy. 2A to lose.

**2038 ἐργάζομαι** [*ergazomai* /er·gad·zom·ahee/] v. Middle voice from 2041; TDNT 2:635; TDNTA 251; GK 2237; 39 occurrences; AV translates as “work” 22 times, “wrought” seven times, “do” three times, “minister about” once, “forbear working + 3361” once, “labour for” once, “labour” once, “commit” once, “trade by” once, and “trade” once. **1** to work, labour, do work. **2** to trade, to make gains by trading, “do business”. **3** to do, work out. 3A exercise, perform, commit. 3B to cause to exist, produce. **4** to work for, earn by working, to acquire.

Receiving reward - you/ we (Passages to consider: 1 Corinthians 3:8, 14).

ἀλλὰ μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε  
**But that you might receive a full reward**

**618 ἀπολαμβάνω** [*apolambano* /ap·ol·am·ban·o/] v. From 575 and 2983; GK 655; 12 occurrences; AV translates as “receive” 10 times, “take aside” once, and “receive ... again” once. **1** to receive. 1A of what is due or promised. **2** to take again or back, to recover. 2A to receive by way of retribution. **3** to take from others, take apart or aside. **4** to receive any one hospitably.

**3408 μισθός** [*misthos* /mis·thos/] n m. Apparently a primary word; TDNT 4:695; TDNTA 599; GK 3635; 29 occurrences; AV translates as “reward” 24 times, “hire” three times, and “wages” twice. **1** dues paid for work. 1A wages, hire. **2** reward: used of the fruit naturally resulting from toils and endeavours. 2A in both senses, rewards and punishments. 2B of the rewards which God bestows, or will bestow, upon good deeds and endeavours. 2C of punishments.

Don't sacrifice what God has done through you in the work that has been accomplished. Every moment of obedience to the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ stacks up rewards in heaven and has significant impact in time as well.

Making disciples should always follow preaching the gospel. (cf. Mark 16:15-16; Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 14:21; Ephesians 2:8-10; Ephesians 4:11-12). Winning souls to Christ is only the first step in a process.

## Verse 9

Πᾶς ὁ προάγων καὶ μὴ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ  
**Anyone who does not abide in the doctrine of Christ but moves beyond it**

Important vocabulary:

**4254 προάγω** [*proago* /pro·ag·o/] v. From 4253 and 71; TDNT 1:130; TDNTA 20; GK 4575; 18 occurrences; AV translates as “go before” 14 times, “bring forth” twice, “went before + 2258” once, and “bring out” once. **1** to lead forward, lead forth. **1A** one from a place in which he has lain hidden from view, as from a prison. **1B** in a forensic sense, to bring one forth to trial. **2** to go before. **2A** preceding, prior in time, previous. **2B** to proceed, go forward. **2B1** in a bad sense, to go further than is right. or proper.

**3306 μένω** [*meno* /men·o/] v. A root word; TDNT 4:574; TDNTA 581; GK 3531; 120 occurrences; AV translates as “abide” 61 times, “remain” 16 times, “dwell” 15 times, “continue” 11 times, “tarry” nine times, “endure” three times, and translated miscellaneous five times. **1** to remain, abide. **1A** in reference to place. **1A1** to sojourn, tarry. **1A2** not to depart. **1A2A** to continue to be present. **1A2B** to be held, kept, continually. **1B** in reference to time. **1B1** to continue to be, not to perish, to last, endure. **1B1A** of persons, to survive, live. **1C** in reference to state or condition. **1C1** to remain as one, not to become another or different. **2** to wait for, await one.

μένω is used 27 times by John, just in his epistles, 40 times in the gospel. When we define it, we think of having our dwelling in something. Not in the same simple way we see in 1 Tim 4:15 where Paul exhorts Timothy to be absorbed in these things (ἐν τούτοις ἴσθι). He says, “in these things, be.” But here we have a view of mental occupation, fixation, a present continuous action of belonging to and remaining in the object. In context, John contrasts προάγω with μένω with the implication that the Christology that was established and handed down is the truth regarding the Son of God. This truth must be a permanent dwelling place for all believers.

Passages to consider: John 5:38; John 8:31 (definition of discipleship - “If you continue (μένω in the subjunctive – intentionally and continuously abide) in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine”); John 15:1-11; 1 John 2:6,10,14,17,19,24,27,28; 3:6,9,14,15,17,24; 4:12,13,15,16.

**1322 διδαχή** [*didache* /did·akh·ay/] n f. From 1321; TDNT 2:163; TDNTA 161; GK 1439; 30 occurrences; AV translates as “doctrine” 29 times, and “has been taught” once. **1** teaching. **1A** that which is taught. **1B** doctrine, teaching, concerning something. **2** the act of teaching, instruction. **2A** in religious

assemblies of the Christians, to speak in the way of teaching, in distinction from other modes of speaking in public.

John is speaking of believers (verse 8 and the use of *μενω*) who propose to advance beyond the established doctrine about Christ and away from the gospel as though these things were for children and not the intellectually mature (cf. Titus 1:9; Romans 16:17; 1 John 2:22).

Compromising biblical Christology means exceeding what is written, which glorifies Christ, in favor of ideas that glorify men. You cannot abide in Christ if you move beyond Him (1 Corinthians 4:6).

“διδαχὴ τοῦ Χριστοῦ” is best viewed as an objective genitive, the doctrine concerning Christ, given the context (cf. verse 7).

ΘΕὸν οὐκ ἔχει

**does not have an active relationship with God**

Important vocabulary:

**2192 ἔχω** [*echo /ekh-o/*] v. Including an alternate form *scheo* (**skheh**-o), used in certain tenses only), a primary verb; TDNT 2:816; TDNTA 286; GK 2400; 712 occurrences; AV translates as “have” 613 times, “be” 22 times, “need + 5532” 12 times, translated miscellaneously 63 times, and “vr have” twice. **1** to have, i.e. to hold. 1A to have (hold) in the hand, in the sense of wearing, to have (hold) possession of the mind (refers to alarm, agitating emotions, etc.), to hold fast keep, to have or comprise or involve, to regard or consider or hold as. **2** to have i.e. own, possess. 2A external things such as pertain to property or riches or furniture or utensils or goods or food etc. 2B used of those joined to any one by the bonds of natural blood or marriage or friendship or duty or law etc, of attendance or companionship. **3** to hold one’s self or find one’s self so and so, to be in such or such a condition. **4** to hold one’s self to a thing, to lay hold of a thing, to adhere or cling to. 4A to be closely joined to a person or a thing.

Aristotle – “Having” means, in one sense, an activity, as it were, of the one who has and the thing had, or as in the case of an action or motion; for when one thing makes and another is made, there is between them an act of making. In this way between the man who has a garment and the garment which is had, there is a "having." Clearly, then, it is impossible to have a "having" in this sense; for there will be an infinite series if we can have the having of what we have. But there is another sense of "having" which means a disposition, in virtue of which the thing which is disposed is disposed well or badly and either independently or in relation to something else. For example, health is a state, since it is a disposition of the kind described. Further, any part of such a disposition is called a state; and hence the excellence of the parts is a kind of state.

All those who, in error, move beyond the revealed and established Christology have run on ahead and left both the Son and the Father behind. There has been no true progression but a fatal and flawed digression.

ὁ μένων ἐν τῇ διδαχῇ, οὗτος καὶ τὸν πατέρα καὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἔχει

**The one abiding in the teaching, this one has a consistently active relationship with both the Father and the Son.**

John puts the stress on fellowship. The argument here is not that mere orthodoxy leads to dynamic fellowship but that genuine fellowship issues from right doctrine (1 John 1:2-3; 2:18-24).

### Verse 10

εἴ τις ἔρχεται πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ ταύτην τὴν διδαχὴν οὐ φέρει

**If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine**

#### Important vocabulary:

**2064 ἔρχομαι** [*erchomai* /er·khom·ahee/] v. Middle voice of a primary verb (used only in the present and imperfect tenses, the others being supplied by a kindred [middle voice] *eleuthomai* (el·yoo·thom·ahee), or [active] *eltho* (el·tho), which do not otherwise occur); TDNT 2:666; TDNTA 257; GK 2262; 643 occurrences; AV translates as “come” 616 times, “go” 13 times, translated miscellaneously 13 times, and “vr come” once. **1** to come. **1A** of persons. **1A1** to come from one place to another, and used both of persons arriving. **1A2** to appear, make one’s appearance, come before the public. **2** metaph. **2A** to come into being, arise, come forth, show itself, find place or influence. **2B** be established, become known, to come (fall) into or unto. **3** to go, to follow one. *Additional Information:* For synonyms see entries 898, *bathmos*; 4198, *poreuomai*; and 5562, *choreo*. See entry 5818 for comparison of synonyms.

**5342 φέρω** [*phero* /fer·o/] v. A primary verb (for which other and apparently not cognate ones are used in certain tenses only, namely, *oio* (oy·o), and *enegko* (en·eng·ko)); TDNT 9:56; TDNTA 1252; GK 5770; 64 occurrences; AV translates as “bring” 34 times, “bear” eight times, “bring forth” five times, “come” three times, “reach” twice, “endure” twice, “carry” once, and translated miscellaneously nine times. **1** to carry. **1A** to carry some burden. **1A1** to bear with one’s self. **1B** to move by bearing; move or, to be conveyed or borne, with the suggestion of force or speed. **1B1** of persons borne in a ship over the sea. **1B2** of a gust of wind, to rush. **1B3** of the mind, to be moved inwardly, prompted. **1C** to bear up i.e. uphold (keep from falling). **1C1** of Christ, the preserver of the universe. **2** to bear, i.e. endure, to endure the rigour of a thing, to bear patiently one’s conduct, or spare one (abstain from punishing or destroying). **3** to bring, bring to, bring forward. **3A** to move to, apply. **3B** to bring in by announcing, to announce. **3C** to bear i.e. bring forth, produce; to bring forward in a speech. **3D** to lead, conduct.

**The two verbs work together, motion towards while carrying.**

μη λαμβάνετε αὐτὸν εἰς οἰκίαν καὶ χαίρειν αὐτῷ μη λέγετε

**Do not receive him into *your* house and do not say to him greetings**

Greeting and welcoming involve 3 particular terms and are an important aspect of fellowship that cannot be extended toward believers whose doctrine is unknown and especially toward known false teachers and deceivers.

This is not the same as hospitality toward strangers (1 Timothy 5:10; Hebrews 13:2).

**Important vocabulary:**

**5463 χαίρω** [*chairo* /*khah-ee-ro*/] v. A primary verb; TDNT 9:359; TDNTA 1298; GK 5897; 74 occurrences; AV translates as “rejoice” 42 times, “be glad” 14 times, “joy” five times, “hail” five times, “greeting” three times, “God speed” twice, “all hail” once, “joyfully” once, and “farewell” once. **1** to rejoice, be glad. **2** to rejoice exceedingly. **3** to be well, thrive. **4** in salutations, hail!. **5** at the beginning of letters: to give one greeting, salute.

Passages to consider: Acts 15:23; Acts 23:26; Romans 12:15; 2 Corinthians 2:3; James 1:1; 2 John 10, 11

**782 ἀπασπάζομαι, ἀσπάζομαι** [*aspazomai* /*as-pad-zom-ah-ee*/] v. From 1 (as a particle of union) and a presumed form of 4685; TDNT 1:496; TDNTA 84; GK 571 and 832; 60 occurrences; AV translates as “salute” 42 times, “greet” 15 times, “embrace” twice, and “take leave” once. **1** to draw to one’s self. **1A** to salute one, greet, bid welcome, wish well to. **1B** to receive joyfully, welcome. *Additional Information:* Used of those accosting anyone; of those who visit one to see him a little while, departing almost immediately afterwards; to pay respects to a distinguished person by visiting him; of those who greet one whom they meet in the way (even not in the East, Christians and Mohammedans do not greet one another); a salutation was made not merely by a slight gesture and a few words, but generally by embracing and kissing, a journey was retarded frequently by saluting.

Passages to consider: Romans 16:21; Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:10; Colossians 4:12; Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:21; Philemon 23; 1 Peter 5:13; 2 John 13

**5264 ὑποδέχομαι** [*hupodechomai* /*hoop-od-ekh-om-ah-ee*/] v. From 5259 and 1209; GK 5685; Four occurrences; AV translates as “receive” four times. **1** to receive as a guest.

Passages to consider: Luke 10:38; Luke 19:6; Acts 17:7; James 2:25



They must be examined carefully (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22).

Different is not necessarily wrong, but when a different spirit preaches a different gospel and another Jesus, this is NOT to be tolerated (2 Corinthians 11:4).

Pseudo-Jesus is a satanic doctrine promoted by the spirit of antichrist (1 John 4:2, 3).

It is logically impossible for “another of the same kind” to exist when Jesus Christ is the “unique” Son (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John 4:9).

A different Spirit is always going to be false because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 4:1-6).

A different gospel is not another gospel. It does not save. It distorts and disturbs and its evangelists are to be anathema (Galatians 1:6-9).

Would you really want to say “have a good day” to a man you knew to be an enemy of the truth? Suppose he really *did* have a good day! Would that not be a *bad* day for the truth? Thus, with such an expression, we must either speak hypocritically or actually wish him well in his spiritually destructive labors.

## Verse 11

ὁ λέγων γὰρ αὐτῷ χαίρειν κοινωνεῖ τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ τοῖς πονηροῖς  
**for the one who says to him greetings has  
become a fellow-worker in his wicked works**

Important vocabulary:

**2841 κοινωνέω** [*koinoneo /koy-no-neh-o/*] v. From 2844; TDNT 3:797; TDNTA 447; GK 3125; Eight occurrences; AV translates as “be partaker” five times, “communicate” twice, and “distribute” once. **1** to come into communion or fellowship with, to become a sharer, be made a partner. **2** to enter into fellowship, join one’s self to an associate, make one’s self a sharer or partner.

**4190 πονηρός** [*poneros /pon-ay-ros/*] adj. From a derivative of 4192; TDNT 6:546; TDNTA 912; GK 4505; 76 occurrences; AV translates as “evil” 51 times, “wicked” 10 times, “wicked one” six times, “evil things” twice, and translated miscellaneous seven times. **1** full of labours, annoyances, hardships. 1A pressed and harassed by labours. 1B bringing toils, annoyances, perils; of a time full of peril to Christian faith and steadfastness; causing pain and trouble. **2** bad, of a bad nature or condition. 2A in a physical sense: diseased or blind. 2B in an ethical sense: evil wicked, bad. *Additional Information:* The word is used in the nominative case in Mt. 6:13. This usually denotes a title in the Greek. Hence Christ is saying, deliver us from “The Evil”, and is probably referring to Satan.

**2041 ἔργον** [*ergon /er-gon/*] n n. From a primary (but obsolete) ergo (to work); TDNT 2:635; TDNTA 251; GK 2240; 176 occurrences; AV translates as “work” 152 times, “deed” 22 times, “doing” once, and “labour” once. **1** business, employment, that which any one is occupied. 1A that which one undertakes to do, enterprise, undertaking. **2** any product whatever, any thing accomplished by hand, art, industry, or mind. **3** an act, deed, thing done: the idea of working is emphasised in opp. to that which is less than work.

Passages to consider: Ephesians 5:11; 2 Corinthians 6:14-16; 1 Timothy 5:22

#### **IV. Writing on the heart and the impartation of joy through face to face teaching**

##### **Verse 12**

Πολλὰ ἔχων ὑμῖν γράφειν οὐκ ἐβουλήθην διὰ χάρτου καὶ μέλανος  
**Having much to write to you, I do not intend (to write) using papyrus and ink**

Important vocabulary:

**1125 γράφω, καταγράφω** [*grapho /graf-o/*] v. A root word; TDNT 1:742; TDNTA 128; GK 1211 and 2863; 209 occurrences; AV translates as “write” 206 times, “writing” once, “describe” once, and “vr write” once. **1** to write, with reference to the form of the letters. 1A to delineate (or form) letters on a tablet,

parchment, paper, or other material. **2** to write, with reference to the contents of the writing. **2A** to express in written characters. **2B** to commit to writing (things not to be forgotten), write down, record. **2C** used of those things which stand written in the sacred books (of the OT). **2D** to write to one, i.e. by writing (in a written epistle) to give information, directions. **3** to fill with writing. **4** to draw up in writing, compose.

**1014 βούλομαι** [*boulomai* /**boo**-lom-ahee/] v. Middle voice of a primary verb; TDNT 1:629; TDNTA 108; GK 1089; 34 occurrences; AV translates as “will” 15 times, “would” 11 times, “be minded” twice, “intend” twice, “be disposed” once, “be willing” once, “list” once, and “of his own will” once. **1** to will deliberately, have a purpose, be minded. **2** of willing as an affection, to desire.

John wants to write in a more permanent way that will bring things from abstract conceptual notions to concrete practicalities (Proverbs 3:3; Proverbs 7:3; 2 Corinthians 3:3 cf. Jeremiah 17:1).

ἀλλὰ ἐλπίζω γενέσθαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς καὶ στόμα πρὸς στόμα λαλῆσαι  
**But I confidently expect to come to you and to speak mouth to mouth**

### **Important vocabulary:**

**1679 ἐλπίζω** [*elpizo* /el-**pid**-zo/] v. From 1680; TDNT 2:517; TDNTA 229; GK 1827; 32 occurrences; AV translates as “trust” 18 times, “hope” 10 times, “hope for” twice, “things hoped for” once, and “vr hope” once. **1** to hope. **1A** in a religious sense, to wait for salvation with joy and full confidence. **2** hopefully to trust in.

Confident expectation (Romans 15:24; 1 Corinthians 16:7; 2 Corinthians 13:6; 1 Timothy 4:10; Philemon 22; Hebrews 11:1; 2 John 12; 3 John 14).

**4750 στόμα** [*stoma* /**stom**-a/] n. Probably strengthened from a presumed derivative of the base of 5114; TDNT 7:692; TDNTA 1089; GK 5125; 79 occurrences; AV translates as “mouth” 73 times, “face” four times, and “edge” twice. **1** the mouth, as part of the body: of man, of animals, of fish, etc. **1A** since

thoughts of a man's soul find verbal utterance by his mouth, the "heart" or "soul" and the mouth are distinguished. **2** the edge of a sword.

Face to face, mouth to mouth or soul to soul? (Exodus 33:11; Judges 6:22; Ezekiel 20:35; Acts 25:16; 1 Corinthians 13:12; 2 John 12; 3 John 14)

ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ἡμῶν πεπληρωμένη ᾖ  
**so that our joy might be in a state of having been made full**

**4137** πληρόω [*pleroo* /play-ro-o/] v. From 4134; TDNT 6:286; TDNTA 867; GK 4444; 90 occurrences; AV translates as "fulfil" 51 times, "fill" 19 times, "be full" seven times, "complete" twice, "end" twice, and translated miscellaneously nine times. **1** to make full, to fill up, i.e. to fill to the full. 1A to cause to abound, to furnish or supply liberally. 1A1 I abound, I am liberally supplied. **2** to render full, i.e. to complete. 2A to fill to the top: so that nothing shall be wanting to full measure, fill to the brim. 2B to consummate: a number. 2B1 to make complete in every particular, to render perfect. 2B2 to carry through to the end, to accomplish, carry out, (some undertaking). 2C to carry into effect, bring to realisation, realise. 2C1 of matters of duty: to perform, execute. 2C2 of sayings, promises, prophecies, to bring to pass, ratify, accomplish. 2C3 to fulfil, i.e. to cause God's will (as made known in the law) to be obeyed as it should be, and God's promises (given through the prophets) to receive fulfilment.

In a state of having been made full (John 3:29; 15:11; 16:24; Colossians 2:10; 2 John 12).

## **V. A final greeting: Verse 13**

Ἀσπάζεται σε τὰ τέκνα τῆς ἀδελφῆς σου τῆς ἐκλεκτῆς  
**The children of your chosen sister greet you**

The language is based on verse 1 so that the metaphor of the two sisters provides the frame for the letter as a whole.