

One Chapter Books of the Bible (3)

2 JOHN

Introduction

- 1) Five books of the Bible have only one chapter – *Obadiah, Philemon, 2 & 3 John, Jude*
 - a) Due to their brevity, they get overlooked – seldom read and studied
- 2) **2 John** is one of four New Testament books with only one chapter (13 verses)
- 3) The epistle of 2 John is the subject of our study – truth, love, and the danger of error

I) **Background**

- A) Author is **John**, the apostle
 - 1) Style and content is virtually identical to 1 John, which has strong internal evidence and external historical evidence for the apostle John as the author
 - 2) Common themes: commandments, truth, love, little children, antichrist, error
 - 3) Refers to himself as “the elder” (v. 1; cp. 3 Jn. 1; advanced age, leadership)
- B) *Date of writing*: AD 85-95
 - 1) John also authored fourth gospel, 1 John, 3 John, and Revelation
- C) Written to “the elect lady and her children” (v. 1); form of a personal letter
 - 1) Could be a particular woman and her family or code language for a church
 - a) Similar language: “children of your elect sister” (v. 13)

II) **Priority of Truth and Love (vv. 1-6)**

- A) “Truth” (1:1, 2, 3, 4); “Love” (1:1, 3, 5, 6)
 - 1) “Truth” – objective reality; opposite of subjective perception; especially refers to revelation from God concerning his will – “according to His commandments” (v. 6)
 - 2) “Love” – self-giving, other-centered service toward others
- B) Truth and Love are inseparable
 - 1) Woven together by John in the first several verses
 - 2) Relationship between truth and love:
 - a) Love must be motivated and guided by truth (1 Jn. 4:9-10, 19; Rom. 12:9; 13:10)
 - b) Truth must be tempered by love and promote love (Eph. 4:15; 1 Tim. 1:5)
 - 3) Beware of valuing one more than the other
 - a) “We are very loving and caring” (but will not preach all the truth)
 - b) “We never compromise the truth” (but fail to show genuine love for one another)
 - c) True danger is becoming more extreme one direction or another
 - 4) Set goals to grow in both truth and love (2 Pet. 1:5-7)

III) **Danger of False Teaching and False Teachers (vv. 7-11)**

- A) Many deceivers had gone out who did not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh (v. 7)
 - 1) Gnostic Docetism – flesh bad, spirit good; antichrist = anti-truth = deception of evil
 - 2) Beware! Lose reward if follow deception of error (v.8)
- B) Whoever transgresses (goes onward) and does not abide (remain, continue) in the doctrine of Christ has not God (no fellowship); abide in doctrine of Christ – fellowship! (v. 9)
 - 1) “Doctrine of Christ” – not only teaching *about* Christ, but that which is *from* Christ
 - 2) Equal to the “truth” of the whole gospel; place of abiding (Jn. 14:23)
 - 3) Not to extend fellowship to one who does not bring the doctrine of Christ (vv. 10-11)

IV) **Speaking Face to Face (vv. 12-13)**

- A) Literally, “mouth to mouth” – communication with physical presence
- B) Must not let our “technology” replace the need for face to face personal contact

Conclusion

Are you following the truth in love, and resisting false teachers and error? Abide in Christ today!