

2 John – Remain in Christ

The second letter of John, unlike 1 John, is in letter form. It has the form, 1) from 2) to 3) greeting 4) thanks 5) main content 6) final greetings. The author and recipients were not mentioned by name. The content of the letter shares similar content with 1 John. The main addition in 2 John is instruction on what to do with false teachers when they come to your town.

Read 2 John 1:1-3.

Who was the letter from? Who was “the elder”? The content, vocabulary and style make a good argument that “the elder” was the Apostle John. Some think it was another person who was known as “John the Elder”. Who were the recipients of the letter? Some have argued that the letter was sent to a lady named “Electa” or “Kuria” or to a nameless “dear lady”. Some take it as the church at large. The best option is to take “elect lady” as a local church and “her children” were the members of the church. The letter was probably written in the early 90s (90-95 AD). (1:1)

The first three verses contain some of John’s favorite words: love, knowledge, and truth. What did John say about love, knowledge, and truth in verses 1-3? What was John’s greeting to the church? (1:1-3)

In verse 4, why did John rejoice? Does “some of your children” imply that the others were not walking in [the] truth? How was “walking in [the] truth” further characterized? (1:4)

In verse 5, what command did John emphasize? See John 13:34; 1 John 2:7-11. How was the commandment to love both new and old? Did “the beginning” refer to the beginning of time or to the beginning of Jesus’ ministry or another beginning? See 1 John 1:1. In verse 6, how did John describe love? Why did John emphasize that the command was not new but from the beginning? Verse 5 had the singular of “you”. Verse 6 had the plural of “you”. (1:5-6)

In verse 7, why did they need to continue in love and follow God’s commands? What characterized the false teachers who had gone out into the world? Why is the humanity of Christ so important? See 1 John 2:18-19; 22, 1 John 4:1-2. (1:7)

In verse 8, what were they in danger of losing if they were not alert to the false teachers? (1:8)

In verse 9, how were the false teachers described? ESV has “goes on ahead”. NASB has “goes too far” which is supported by BDAG. NIV has “runs ahead”. NKJV has “transgresses” (a manuscript variant “thing”). What was the problem with what the false teachers were doing? What was true of those who did not abide / remain in the teaching of Christ? What is true of those who do abide in the teaching of Christ? How does this verse apply to Progressive Christianity? (1:9)

Verse 10 contains a specific application. If someone came to them who did not abide in the teaching of Christ, how were they to treat such a person? Why did Christian hospitality not apply in this case? (1:10)

In verse 11, what was true of someone who welcomed a person who did not abide in the teaching of Christ? Is there a place and time when a debate with a false teacher is appropriate? Remember, there were no podcasts in the first century AD. That’s a joke, son! (1:11)

In verse 12, John had a lot to say, but why did he believe that he could keep his letter brief? ESV, NKJV, and NIV have “our joy”. NASB has “your joy” with a footnote. See 1 John 1:4. (1:12)

In verse 13, who sent their greetings to the church? Who was “your elect sister”? (1:13)

Which mainline church denominations do you think have “gone on ahead” and have not remained in the teaching of Christ? Which Christian schools and seminaries do you think have “gone on ahead” and have not remained in the teaching of Christ? If you were in a church which did not remain in the teaching of Christ, would you stay in the church or would you leave the church? If the PCA does not remain in the teaching of Christ should Cornerstone remain in the PCA? Hopefully it will never come to that.