

The Book of 2nd John

Verse 1. John and Peter each called himself an elder. It is not merely an allusion to their age, because they both use an article before it which would make a noun out of the word. **Lady** is from the Greek word KURIA, which Thayer says means “.Cyria,” and then gives us the explanation, “A Christian woman to whom the second epistle of John is addressed.” Robinson defines it, “Mistress, lady,” and then adds an explanation much like that of Thayer. In the early days of the Gospel the church in some localities was contained in one family and had its regular assemblies in their house. This woman named Cyria and her children constituted the group to which John wrote this epistle. She is called **elect** which means a person chosen of the Lord through obedience to the Gospel. Love in the truth, is said because John is using his favorite subject from a religious standpoint. All they that have known the truth indicates further that the apostle is speaking of “brotherly love.”

Verse 2. For the truth's sake denotes that John loves this woman and her children because of their devotion to the truth. This truth shall be with us for ever, hence a love that is based on it will be permanent.

Verse 3. This is a form of friendly salutation which many of the writers of the New Testament used. Aside from the brotherly sentiments it expresses, the important principle is set forth that such blessings as grace, mercy and peace are to come from God and Christ if they are to be lasting.

Verse 4. I found of thy children. We do not have definite information as to how many of her children John had seen nor just where it was. The important thing is that in conversing with them he found them devoted to the truth for which he greatly rejoiced. This truth in which her children were walking had come by commandment from the Father, so that their lives were not moulded by their own sentiments.

Verse 5. Lady is the same as that used in the first verse. **Not new commandment.** (See the comments at 1 John 2: 7, 8 as to why it was not a new commandment.) It pertains to the subject of love which is a precious one especially to John.

Verse 6. Love, like faith, is to be shown by works, hence this verse says that to walk after the commandments is love; to walk means to keep moving onward.

Verse 7. This verse corresponds with 1 John 4:1.

Verse 8. Look to yourselves means for them to watch and not let the deceivers get in their evil work of leading souls astray. John had converted them to the Gospel and he

did not want to have the disappointment of seeing them perverted by false teachers. That is what he means by lose not those things which we have wrought. He did not wish to lose the work he had accomplished in leading them to Christ. **Full reward.** No worker for Christ is to be rewarded with eternal life on the basis of his success in converting people nor on the faithfulness of his converts. But the reward consists in the joy (at the present time) of seeing them faithful. This is virtually the meaning of his statement in 3 John 4 regarding his "children."

Verse 9. This and the following verse is written in view of the warning expressed in verse 8. John is giving this group some instructions on how to detect false teachers. Of course the principles laid down are general in their application and should be observed by churches today. To **transgress** means to go beyond something, or go farther than it indicates. The particular thing that John means is expressed by the words **doctrine of Christ**. The word "to go beyond" offered above as a definition of **transgress** is confirmed by the words in this verse, namely, abideth not in; the man who does this hath not God. This is logical and consistent with other passages in the New Testament. God is to be found in His word only as far as salvation is concerned, hence if a man leaves the word it necessarily follows that he leaves God. The **doctrine of Christ** cannot be restricted to the teaching that He gives in person, for he is not on the earth now and was not when John was writing. In John 13:20 Jesus says: "He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me." This shows that the doctrine of Christ includes the teaching of the apostles and all others who are inspired.

Verse 10. **This doctrine** refers to the **doctrine of Christ** in the preceding verse where it is explained. A man coming unto the disciples who does not remain true to that doctrine is to be rejected. **Not into your house.** The question is often asked whether this means our personal home or the church building. It means either where the services are being conducted. Of course in this particular instance it means the personal home because the church was contained 'in that place, but the same principle applies with reference to the regular church house. It should be understood this means not to receive him as a teacher. No man can be barred from coming into a church house as a spectator as long as he behaves himself, because it is a public place to which the laws of the land admit all people. And the same applies to the family home when it is used for church services. That is because all gatherings claiming to be by the church must be made public in order to be scriptural, regardless of where they are conducted. This verse requires the church to forbid all false teachers to speak to the assemblies, and if that instruction had always been observed the cause of Christ would have been preserved in many places.

Verse 11. This verse extends the remarks at the close of the preceding one. It shows that we have no right to encourage false teachers even to the degree of expressing our good wishes. If we do we are *partalcers* (having fellowship) of his evil deeds and thus become his partner in heresy.

Verse 12. *Not write with paper and ink.* This does not mean that he was thinking of writing by some other method, but that he would not depend upon writing at all, There were so many needed instructions in his mind that he preferred to impart them personally. This is understandable as we know that personal conversations have many advantages.

Verse 13. *Elect* has the same meaning here as elsewhere, namely, a person chosen of the through obedience to the truth (1 Peter 1:2). I can find no dependable information as to the identity of this *sister*, but since John calls her elect we understand she was a faithful disciple and that she had children also interested in the Lord. Friendly salutations were common in those times, and it was natural for these children who evidently were with John to join in friendly greetings to their mother's sister.