

## WALKING IN THE TRUTH

### I. 2 John 1:1-13

A. Back in January we began a sermon series on 1 John and it ran all the way into March. I've decided to do a sermon series on 2 John. It starts today. It will run all the way to about 11:30. You see, 2 John is only one chapter with 13 verses. So if anyone asks, you can tell them your pastor did a whole sermon series on 2 John, all in a single sermon. The theme of this letter is all about walking in truth.

B. As we learned back in the winter, John was a former redneck fisherman whom Jesus chose to be one of His Twelve. While he referred to himself in his gospel as *the disciple whom Jesus loved*, he later became known throughout the early church as *the apostle of love*. Though tortured and imprisoned for his faith, John would be the only disciple who did not die a martyr's death.

C. Much of what we read today will sound familiar. John is writing to a church with members he holds dear. Like he did in his first epistle, John raises caveats & concerns about false teachers. He exhorts his brethren to stay true to the Lord and not fall for false teaching. This letter has proven relevant in every era of church history over the past 2000 years. That most certainly includes now.

#### D. 2 John 1:1-13 (ESV) tells the truth about the truth...

1) **V1-3: 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: 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. (Jesus was full of grace & truth. He was and is the Truth! I shared this recently about God's love and its relationship to the truth: "God's love is never separated from His truth. God's love is never separated from His justice. God's love is never separated from His holiness. And God never turns a blind eye to sin. Sin incurs God's wrath because He is righteous, holy, and just. Any sort of love that turns a blind eye to sin is not the love of God. So God has taken our sin and imputed it to His Son, Jesus, who took it to the cross where God's wrath was unleashed upon Him. God has taken the holiness and right-standing of His Son, and bestowed that upon us. When we talk about God's love, that's what we're talking about!" This is the love-saturated truth we offer as the Gospel!)*

2) **V4-5: 4** *I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. 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. **(That new commandment was delivered at the Last Supper, the night Jesus washed His disciples feet, the very night He was betrayed and denied. John 13:34-35 (ESV) records Jesus' words: 34** *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. 35* **By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another. (Over and over again John will champion these words. When a stranger walks through these chapel doors, or overhears a bunch of you at a restaurant, or sits by you at a ballgame or a funeral or birthday party, this kind of genuine love for one another is what I desperately want them to encounter. I want them to immediately realize, you all are the genuine article, the real deal!)**

3) **V6: 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. (God's love is also inseparable from obedience. Last Sunday I shared: John 14:15: "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments. John 14:21: "Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me." John 14:23a: "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word. John 14:24a: "Whoever does not love Me does not keep My words. And the word that you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me." John 15:10 "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." (I thought I only needed faith!" John Piper said, "Salvation is owned by faith. Salvation is shown by deeds.")*

4) **V7: 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. (Back in February we learned the Greek word for *anti* (an-tee) means, "*against*" and/or "*instead of*." Broadly, an antichrist is anyone who denies or rejects Jesus as the Christ. More narrowly, an antichrist is anyone who becomes a human agent of Satan in opposition to Christ. They will typically deny His deity or they will deny His humanity. But the Bible reveals He was *fully God and fully Man*.)*

5) **V8: 8** *Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. (Even when someone's salvation is not at stake, their full heavenly reward can be jeopardized by falling into error that leads to disobedience. Have you ever noticed at the beginning of a marathon, hundreds of people are crowded at the starting line. But at the finish line, people stagger across, limp across, crawl across, and sadly some don't make it across. I'm praying you all make it across!)*

**6) V9-11: 9** *Everyone who goes on ahead (Goes ahead of God's revealed Word.) 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. 10* **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, (Avoid anything that could be depicted as endorsing a huckster of errant teaching or doctrine.) 11** for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works. **(Beware of counterfeit gospels pedaled by cunning charlatans. They'll sweet talk you out of your soul! These have been tutored by the Deceiver himself. They may even tote Bibles and quote Scripture, just as Satan quoted Scripture to Jesus when tempting Him. Always be on your guard! Clutch the truth tightly! Don't let go! Never!)**

**7) V12-13: 12** *Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete. (Hear John's deep love for these folks?!)* **13** *The children of your elect sister greet you.*

**E. The Word of God is the Voice of God--in writing! The voice of reason is not the the voice of God when it differs from His voice. You can reason yourself into disobedience. You can be reasoned out of your loyal allegiance to the One who loves you most. The *Serpent* reasoned with Eve, who in turn reasoned with Adam, and they ate the forbidden fruit. Their reasoned disobedience brought the fall. Sin and death befell mankind. Their sublime relationship with God was broken. They were evicted from the Garden. And we were born with their sinful natures!**

**1) Aaron reasoned it was better to pacify his people by molding a golden calf to worship rather than waiting for Moses to return from that God-rocked mountain called Sinai where Yahweh's Word was carved in stone. Aaron's reasoned disobedience led to him appeasing the people rather than pleasing God!**

**2) Ten out of twelve spies reasoned that entering the Promised Land was ill advised because the giants and fortresses there, even with God's intervention, could not be subdued. Their reasoned disobedience resulted in being banned from entry, wandering in the wilderness for 40 years, and dying in disgrace!**

**3) Sampson reasoned marrying the pagan foreigner, Delilah, would be of little consequence. But his reasoned disobedience cost him more than his hair; it cost him his strength, his vision, his freedom, his people, and ultimately his life!**

**4) King Saul reasoned it was better to spare his enemy king and the the best of his enemy's sheep and cattle rather than slay them all as God had instructed. His reasoned disobedience led to grieving God and being rejected as Israel's king!**

**5) King David foolishly engaged in an immoral fling with his neighbor's wife, Bathsheba. Her husband was Uriah, David's loyal commander. David's reasoned disobedience resulted in an unplanned pregnancy, leading David to plot Uriah's murder. It also resulted in the death of his own son conceived in that adulterous affair!**

**6) Every king of Israel and most of the kings of Judah reasoned that worshiping foreign gods, manmade idols representing demons, was better than trusting in Yahweh, the God of all Creation. Their reasoned disobedience led to Israel being exiled and dissolved into Assyria and Judah led off as captives into Babylon!**

**7) Ananias & Sapphira's reasoned disobedience led to them selfishly holding back part of an offering for the needy, pledged to the church, even while pretending to give all. It led to God striking them down dead!**

**8) All these and many more--instead of reasoning to heed and implement the Word of God, reasoned instead, sometimes with accomplices, to disobey. Perhaps you've been there. Perhaps you are there. Perhaps you're listening to voices that differ from the Voice of God. Is the *voice of reason* you're listening to God's voice? Entertaining other voices ultimately means you don't trust the Lord. Based on God's Word, how do you think your reasoned disobedience will turn out?**

**F. Let's close with a reprise of John's words: 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. 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.*

**\* Close with Prayer...**

## Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

### 2 John 1:1-13 (ESV)

**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: **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. **4** I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. **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. **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. **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. **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. **12** Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink. Instead I hope to come to you and talk face to face, so that our joy may be complete. **13** The children of your elect sister greet you.

### John 13:34-25 (ESV)

**34** A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. **35** By this all people will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

## Film Clips & Article Links

**Our Dangerous Love Affair with Human Approval - Jennie Allen Interviews John Piper**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTJ\\_zJwzBgY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qTJ_zJwzBgY)

**What is the Fear of Man, and Why Is It So Dangerous? - Ed Welch**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqpxFLqyhuo>

**Lay Aside the Fear of Man - Article by Jon Bloom - Desiring God**

<https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/lay-aside-the-fear-of-man>

**The Surprising Story of Colonel James Gardiner (1688-1745) by Faith Cook**

<https://www.evangelical-times.org/19434/the-surprising-story-of-colonel-james-gardiner-1688-1745/>

## Bonus Stuff

### 1 Samuel 15:24-28 (ESV)

**24** Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. **25** Now therefore, please pardon my sin and return with me that I may bow before the LORD." **26** And Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you. For you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel." **27** As Samuel turned to go away, Saul seized the skirt of his robe, and it tore. **28** And Samuel said to him, "The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from you this day and has given it to a neighbor of yours, who is better than you.

### Psalms 27:1-3 (ESV)

**1** The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? **2** When evildoers assail me to eat up my flesh, my adversaries and foes, it is they who stumble and fall. **3** Though an army encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war arise against me, yet I will be confident.

### Psalms 56:10-11 (ESV)

**10** In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise, **11** in God I trust; I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?

### Psalms 118:5-9 (ESV)

**5** Out of my distress I called on the LORD; the LORD answered me and set me free. **6** The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me? **7** The LORD is on my side as my helper; I shall look in triumph on those who hate

me. **8** It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in man. **9** It is better to take refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

#### **Proverbs 29:25 (ESV)**

**25** The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.

#### **Luke 12:4-7 (AMP)**

**4** "I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have nothing more that they can do. **5** But I will point out to you whom you should fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority and power to hurl [you] into hell; yes, I say to you, [stand in great awe of God and] fear Him! **6** Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? Yet not one of them has [ever] been forgotten in the presence of God. **7** Indeed the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not be afraid; you are far more valuable than many sparrows.

#### **Galatians 1:10 (ESV)**

**10** For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

#### **Hebrews 13:5-6 (ESV)**

**5** Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." **6** So we can confidently say, "The LORD is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"

#### **Quote by Martin Luther**

"At these words I was utterly stupefied and terror-stricken. I thought to myself, "With what tongue shall I address such majesty, seeing that all men ought to tremble in the presence of even an earthly prince? Who am I, that I should lift up mine eyes or raise my hands to the divine Majesty? The angels surround Him. At His nod the earth trembles. And shall I, a miserable little pygmy, say 'I want this, I ask for that'? For I am dust and ashes and full of sin and I am speaking to the living, eternal and the true God."

#### **Quote by J.C. Ryle**

"Young man, be of good courage. Care not for what the world says or thinks: you will not be with the world always. Can man save your soul? No. Will man be your judge in the great and dreadful day of account? No. Can man give you a good conscience in life, a good hope in death, a good answer in the morning of resurrection? No! no! no! Man can do nothing of the sort. Then "fear not the reproach of men, neither be afraid of their revilings: for the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool" (Isa. 51:7,8). Call to your mind the saying of good Colonel Gardiner: 'I fear God, and therefore I have none else to fear.' Go and be like him."

- J.C. Ryle, *Thoughts for Young Men*.

#### **Quote by Matthew Henry**

"In order to the attaining of all useful knowledge this is most necessary, that we fear God; we are not qualified to profit by the instructions that are given us unless our minds be possessed with a holy reverence of God, and every thought within us be brought into obedience to Him... As all our knowledge must take rise from the fear of God, so it must tend to it as its perfection and centre. Those know enough who know how to fear God, who are careful in every thing to please Him and fearful of offending Him in any thing; this is the Alpha and Omega of knowledge."

#### **Quote by Kevin DeYoung**

"There is no sin so prevalent, so insidious, and so deep as the sin of fearing people more than we fear God."

#### **Quote by William Gurnall**

"We fear men so much, because we fear God so little."

#### **Quote by A.W. Tozer**

"When men no longer fear God, they transgress His laws without hesitation. The fear of consequences is no deterrent when the fear of God is gone."

#### **Quote by Leonard Ravenhill**

"A man who is intimate with God is not intimidated by man."

#### **Quote by Paul Chappell**

"The fear of man strangles us, because we can never please everybody; but the fear of the Lord frees us, because it challenges us to live and serve for an audience of One."

**Quote by Joy Dawson**

"The fear of the Lord means being more impressed with God's reactions to our actions than with other people's reactions."

**Quote by Dorothy Patterson**

"If you please man and never please God you have nothing; If you please God and man forsakes you, you have everything."

**Quote by John Witherspoon**

"It is only the fear of God that can deliver us from the fear of man."

**Quote by Charles Spurgeon**

"He who fears God has nothing else to fear."

**Quote by Oswald Chambers**

"The remarkable thing about God is that when you fear God, you fear nothing else, whereas if you do not fear God, you fear everything else."

**Quote by Benjamin Rush**

"Upon my return from the army to Baltimore in the winter of 1777, I sat next to John Adams in Congress, and upon my whispering to him and asking him if he thought we should succeed in our struggle with Great Britain, he answered me, 'Yes-if we fear God and repent of our sins.'"

**Quote by Phil Robertson (Duck Dynasty)**

"Fear God. Love your neighbor. And shoot ducks."

**Quote by Frederick W. Robertson (English Clergyman 1816 - 1853)**

"Truth lies in character. Christ did not simply speak the truth; He was truth; truth, through and through; for truth is a thing not of words, but of life and being."

**Quote by Jonathan Edwards**

"Temples have their images; and we see what influence they have always had over a great part of mankind. But, in truth, the ideas and images in men's minds are the invisible powers that constantly govern them; and to these they all pay universally a ready submission."

**Quote by Charles Spurgeon**

"Nothing makes a man so virtuous as belief of the truth. A lying doctrine will soon beget a lying practice. A man cannot have an erroneous belief without by-and-by having an erroneous life. I believe the one thing naturally begets the other."

**Quote by Charles Spurgeon**

"Saints not only desire to love and speak truth with their lips, but they seek to be true within; they will not lie even in the closet of their hearts, for God is there to listen; they scorn double meanings, evasions, equivocations, white lies, flatteries, and deceptions."

**Quote by John MacArthur**

"Truth has no degrees or shades. A half truth is a whole lie, and a white lie is really black."

**Quote by John MacArthur**

"Love and truth must be maintained in perfect balance. Truth is never to be abandoned in the name of love. But love is not to be deposed in the name of truth... Truth without love has no decency; it's just brutality. On the other hand, love without truth has no character; it's just hypocrisy."

**Quote by Henry Ironside**

"Great truths that are stumbling blocks to the natural man are nevertheless the very foundations upon which the confidence of the spiritual man is built."

**Quote by David Brainerd**

"Give yourself to prayer, to reading and meditation on divine truths: strive to penetrate to the bottom of them and never be content with a superficial knowledge."

**Quote by C.S. Lewis**

"If you look for truth, you may find comfort in the end; if you look for comfort you will not get either comfort or truth only soft soap and wishful thinking to begin, and in the end, despair."

**Quote by Watchman Nee**

"The believer in addition should assail the lies of the evil spirits. Every suggestion from the enemy must be met resolutely with the truth of the Bible. Answer doubts with the texts of faith; respond to despair with words of hope; reply to fear with words of peace. If he does not know the appropriate verse, let him pray for direction. Victory is obtained by wielding the Sword of the Spirit."

**Quote by A.W. Pink**

"An honest heart loves the Truth."

**Quote by Augustine**

"A thing is not necessarily true because badly uttered, nor false because spoken magnificently."