

Overview of John's 2nd Epistle

Bible Study and Discussion Questions

1. Who is the author of 2 John? How does he refer to himself in the salutation (1:1)? To whom is he writing?

2. The author begins his second epistle with several warm and complimentary expressions. What are some of the positive words expressed in the beginning of his letter (1:2-4)? How and why might it be helpful when we speak or write to others to follow his pattern?

3. According to 2 John 4, why does the author "*rejoice greatly?*" When we compare the phrase "*walking in truth*" with what the author previously wrote in 1 John 1:6 what is involved with such a commendable walk (see also 1 John 2:4)?

4. In 2 John 5, John repeats a phrase common to his writings: "*love one another*" (cp. John 13:34-35). Yet, what does John intrinsically tie to "*love*" in 2 John 5-6 (see also John 15:12-14; 1 John 5:3)?

5. Love without truth is misguided sentimentality. Truth without love leads to cold formality. What will happen to us individually and as a church when one or the other of these key qualities is absent?

2 John Outline

- I. Salutation (v. 1 – 3)
- II. Commendation (v. 4)
- III. Exhortation (v. 5 –6)
- IV. Caution (v. 7 –11)
- V. Conclusion v. (12 –13)

6. Why was it important for John to emphasize truth in the current spiritual climate in which he was writing? What danger was threatening the church (2 John 7-8; cp. Acts 20:30; 1 John 2:22; 4:1-3)? Based on the language, does the term “antichrist” in verse 7 refer to one person or can it be any person?

7. The phrase “*doctrine of*” is found with reference to several individuals or groups in Scripture.

- The Pharisees (Matthew 16:2; Acts 2:42)
- The Lord (Acts 13:12)
- God (Titus 2:10)
- Christ (Hebrews 6:1-2)
- Balaam (Revelation 2:14)
- Nicolaitans (Revelation 2:15).

How important is it to abide “*in the doctrine of Christ*” (2 John 9)? In other words, how important is it that Christ be the source of our teaching? Does this phrase refer to just one command of Christ or the body of teaching from Christ (consider v. 6)?

8. Sometimes we may be tempted to allow our “*love*” to cause an overly tolerant atmosphere of acceptance of false teaching or living. How does John deal with this temptation in what he says in 2 John 10-11? How might the teaching of this passage mesh with what we read in 1 Corinthians 5:11-13?

Three Great Dangers in 2 John

--Going *Backwards* Into Sin (v. 8)

--Going *Beyond* Christ's Doctrine (v. 9)

--Going *Along With* False Teaching (v. 10-11)

9. John had more things to say, but wanted to say them “face to face” (2 John 12). Thinking of this practically, why might it be better to say some things in person than over a written message?

10. Whether this letter is written to an individual or a church or both, it has some practical applications for us to consider. What are some principles you can put into practice in your life from this text?