

# Series: The Confident, Loving Church – week 26

**CDOBC – beginning on 2/14/10**

Title: **“The Pastor’s Joy”**

*2 John 1-6 ~ September 19, 2010*

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**OBJECTIVE:** To help believers devote themselves to God’s truth.

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## **Announcements**

- Welcome / guests – communication cards
- College Class – 9:00 @ Cetas’ home
- Clothing Exchange – Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>
- Youth Night – Sept. 26
- Welcome Class – Oct. 6 & 13
- Baptism – Oct. 10<sup>th</sup>
- WOF – Michelle Rocioppo

Recognition of Pastor Ken’s retirement from CDOBC and his ministry that has spanned 58 years.

Ken began pastoring churches in Indiana/Kentucky during his senior year in college. He pastored Methodist churches for 20 years, then took 2 years out before returning to ministry in 1975 and pastored independent churches for another 17 years before retiring from full-time ministry.

Upon moving to Tucson in 1994 he served in a variety of positions in another church before coming to CDO and serving as the Assoc. Pastor to Seniors for the past 5 years.

Opening prayer

## **Turn to 2 John**

Before diving into the teaching of this letter, I want to take a few minutes to deal with the opening salutation – specifically vs. 1 – which has some ambiguity.

<sup>2JN</sup> 1:1 “The elder, To the chosen lady and her children...”

**First**, who is the author?

The author begins in vs. 1 with a reference to himself as – “The elder”.

There is some debate as to the identity of the author – but most throughout Church history have believed the Apostle John was the author.

**Second**, who was the letter written to?

Two options are feasible here.

First, the letter was written to a woman who had children. This is the most literal understanding – and 3 John is written to a specific individual.

Second, the letter was written to a local church and “chosen lady and her children” were metaphors describing the church and its congregants. *This is the view I will take in this sermon.* The reason put forth for this metaphorical way of referring to the church is thought to be the persecution many Christians were experiencing at the end of the first century. The use of the metaphors would have protected the identity of its readers if the letter fell into the wrong hands.

Now – let’s get into the teaching of this short letter. John MacArthur calls 2 and 3 John ‘postcards’ because they are so brief. But don’t think that because they are short letters, that they aren’t full of great teaching. As most ladies know – some of the best things come in small packages!

So, let’s dive into the text!

Vs. 1-3 comprise the opening greeting/salutation. But John has included some gold nuggets here for us to find.

**Read vs. 1-3**

### **3 by-products of God’s truth...**

The main theme of 2 John is the priority of God’s truth. The Apostle will apply this in the area of hospitality in vs. 7-13 – but the truth of God is the focus of the letter.

5x John uses the word “truth”.

4x John uses the word “command”.

God’s truth *inspires* love. vs. 1b

“whom I love in the truth—and not I only, but also all who know the truth...”

John expresses his love for the church (vs. 1 - “whom I love in the truth”) – and notice that his love is defined by the truth. He also adds that others – other churches / believers – also love them because of their knowledge of the truth.

**Illus.** – Parking garage at hospital – walking to my car carrying my Bible – complete stranger says, “*I like the book you have there!*”

Complete strangers – yet there was a bond – there was unity there because of the truth of God’s Word.

What truth is John referring to? Whose truth is he referring to?

He answered that in his first epistle. In 1:1-8, John gives his eye-witness testimony of Jesus – and in vs. 8 he specifies that the Gospel of Christ is the truth.

As believers in this local church, we do not love each other – we are not united with each other because of worship style – denomination – race – economic status – or gender. We are united with one another – we love one another because of the Gospel – the truth of Jesus Christ. We love each other “in the truth” of God – not because we agree about everything or because we cheer for the same sports team. It is our common belief in the Gospel truth that fuels our love for one another!

Another way God's truth inspires us to love is because He commanded us to love one another. In the Bible – which is God's truth – He commands us to love our neighbor – even to love our enemies. The truth of God leaves the Christian no other option but to love!

God's *eternal* truth *abides* in us. vs. 2

“...because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever”

One of John's favorite words is “abide” – he uses it more than sixty times in his writings!

When we place our faith in Christ, God in His grace and mercy not only gives us new life and forgiveness of sins – but His Spirit indwells / abides in us. Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as “The Spirit of Truth” (John 14:17). We also know that God will never leave us nor forsake us (Matt. 28:20) – He will be with us forever – which speaks to the eternal nature of our relationship with Him!

The truth of God is not something we hear on certain occasions, it becomes part of the Christian's everyday life – because of the mutual abiding relationship we have with God in Christ.

The *blessings* of God's truth vs. 3

<sup>2JN 1:3</sup> Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love.

Notice these three things are from God the Father – and from Jesus Christ – and the promise is that these three things will be with us “...in truth and love.” In other words, when we live / walk in truth and in love, the

grace, mercy, and peace of God will be a part of our life.

**“Grace”** – undeserved favor...receiving what we don't deserve. The primary point of the Gospel is to help people realize their sin – and their need of a Savior. The Gospel is clear that the only Savior that can save us from our sins is Jesus – and He paid the price for our sins when He died on the cross. We can't earn our salvation – we can't earn our forgiveness. Our sinfulness prevents us from doing anything to atone for our sins – and the payment that God demands for our sin is too high for us to pay. When you put your faith in Christ and His sacrifice on the cross – God is overjoyed and gives you what you don't deserve – complete and eternal forgiveness of your sins.

**“Mercy”** – means we don't receive what we do deserve. Because of our sin – we deserve death. Because of His holiness and His righteousness, God must punish sinners – God must punish sin. He cannot turn a blind eye to sin – it must be atoned for. The truth of Scripture is that because of His great love for us – God does not give us what our sins call for – but in our place, He poured out His wrath on His Son – Jesus – as He hung on the cross. God has been merciful to us who believe.

**“Peace”** – real – lasting – eternal peace is only found in the truth and love of God. Biblically, peace is much more than just an absence of conflict – it includes that, but it also includes fullness and satisfaction in life. This kind of peace is only found in God's truth and in His love.

“...created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” Eph. 2:10

Imagine...all of that in the opening salutation!

## **The pastor has joy when:**

Believers are walking in the truth vs. 4

<sup>2JN 1:4</sup> It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us.

Psalm 58:3 (Speaking of the unconverted)

“Those who speak lies.”

Isaiah 59:4

“They do not plead for truth.”

Jeremiah 9:3

“They are not valiant for the truth.”

Jeremiah 9:5

“They are skilled at teaching their tongues to lie.”

Romans 1:25

“They exchanged the truth of God for the lie.”

1 Timothy 6:5 (false teachers)

“They're destitute of truth.”

2 Timothy 3:8

“They resist the truth.”

2 Timothy 4:4

“They turn their ears from the truth.”

The command to “walk in the truth” – vs. 4

God commands us to know the truth – and to embrace the truth.

This command works against our sinful desire to define truth according to our own likes and dislikes – according to the accepted things of the culture we live in.

This means that belief in God's truth is not optional!  
We must believe His truth – not the invented 'truth' of some human philosophy or some other religion.

Gal. 1:8

“But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!”

**Illus.** – Cult-like group missing in CA – 5 adults & 8 minors

Jesus said “I am the way, the truth, the life...” John 14:6

Jesus said to the Father “...Your Word is truth.” John 17:17

So, the truth that God commands us to follow is the truth of Christ – the truth of the Bible.

Believers are walking in love vs. 4-6

The command to “love one another” / “walk in love” – vs. 4-6

Look quickly at 1 John 5:2 – the Apostle tells us that loving one another – and obeying the commands of God are inseparable. Don't make the mistake of segregating the love of God from the truth of God. Love and doctrine are two sides of the same coin – different parts of the whole.

Why does God command us to love each other?

Because our sin nature leads us toward loving ourselves at the detriment of loving others. Our sinful nature puts self before all others. This is not Christian love.

Christian love does not deny or neglect self (Phil. 2:4), but makes the needs of others an equally high priority.

The fallacy of “All you need is love...” (The Beatles)

Love is incomplete and without guidance if truth is absent.

The Beatles – “All You Need Is Love” written by Lennon/McCartney

Love, Love, Love

Love, Love, Love

Love, Love, Love

There's nothing you can do that can't be done.

Nothing you can sing that can't be sung.

Nothing you can say but you can learn how to play the game.

It's easy.

Nothing you can make that can't be made.

No one you can save that can't be saved.

Nothing you can do but you can learn how to be you in time.

It's easy.

All you need is love.

All you need is love.

All you need is love, love.

Love is all you need.

All you need is love.

All you need is love.

All you need is love, love.

Love is all you need.

Nothing you can know that isn't known.

Nothing you can see that isn't shown.

Nowhere you can be that isn't where you're meant to be.

It's easy.

All you need is love.

All you need is love.

All you need is love, love.

Love is all you need.

All you need is love (All together, now!)

All you need is love. (Everybody!)

All you need is love, love.

Love is all you need (love is all you need)

(love is all you need) (love is all you need)

(love is all you need) Yesterday (love is all you need)

(love is all you need) (love is all you need)

Yee-hai!

Oh yeah!

Love is all you need, love is all you need, love is all you need, love is all

you need, oh yeah oh hell yea! Love is all you need love is all you need  
love is all you need.

## **Application**

Make God's truth the cornerstone of your life.

Everything in your life is built on God's truth.

If you don't make God's truth the cornerstone in your life – you not only live in disobedience to God – but by default, your own version of the truth will become the cornerstone. As human beings, each of us live our life with a truth or principle guiding us. Some who disregard God's truth as their cornerstone – maybe they think it's too harsh and not loving or gentle – their guiding truth or principle may be loving kindness toward others. But sooner or later – they will encounter someone they don't love and they don't want to be kind to. Or, they will encounter someone they determine is not worthy of their love.

God's truth is the higher value – the larger cornerstone. God's truth commands love – even toward our enemies! Love for others is secured by the authority of God's truth!

There is no greater cornerstone to build your life upon than the truth of God – the truth of His Word.

May you walk in His truth each day.

May you walk in His love each day – loving others as you do.

Closing prayer