

The Second Epistle of John

Salutation

¹ The elder¹ unto the elect lady² and her children,³ whom I love in the truth;⁴ and not I only, but also all they that have known⁵ the truth; ² For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever. ³ Grace be with you, mercy, *and*⁶ peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

Truth and Love

⁴ I rejoiced greatly that I found of⁷ thy children⁸ walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father. ⁵ And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.⁹ ⁶ And this is love, that we walk¹⁰ after his commandments.¹¹ This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning,¹² ye should walk in it. ⁷ For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in

¹ ὁ πρεσβύτερος *ho presbuteros* lit. the older one, which became a title for an office. The Presbyterian Church derives its name from this GR word. The same title is used in 3 John 1:1.

² The elect lady stands metaphorically for another congregation (a house church) to which the author was writing. Some have argued that a specific woman is meant here, but the references to her vary between the singular and plural throughout the letter, thus indicating that the elect lady is to be understood as a collective entity.

³ John follows Jesus' example (John 13:33; 21:5) by referring to members of the Church as children (see 1 John 2:1, 12-13, 18, 28; 3:7, 18; 4:4; 5:21), though he employs two different Greek words. See also 2 John 1:4, 13; 3 John 1:4.

⁴ The words "in the truth" here are not the equivalent of an adverb (IE, not "whom I truly love"), but rather stand for the truth of the Gospel (as opposed to the false teachers against whom this letter is directed).

⁵ The perfect tense of the verb suggests more than mere intellectual assent; the reference is to those who have come to know the truth; those who have embraced it.

⁶ The word "and" is italicized because it is not lit. present in the GR text; this intentional omission of the conjunction is called *asyndeton*.

⁷ OR some of. The genitive is partitive.

⁸ IE members of the congregation to which the author writes.

⁹ This is the commandment recorded in John 13:34; 15:12, 17. John seems to have been very impressed by this teaching, for he repeated Jesus' commandment to love in his epistles (cf. 1 John 3:11, 14, 18, 23; 4:7, 11-12; 5:2).

¹⁰ The verb "walk" is used repeatedly in this letter as a metaphor for the way one lives one's life (one could substitute ENG "live").

¹¹ John recorded this commandment in John 14:15, 21. See also 1 John 5:3; D&C 124:87.

¹² For Jesus as the beginning, see the note to 1 John 1:1.

the flesh.¹³ This is a deceiver and an antichrist.¹⁴ ⁸ Look to yourselves,¹⁵ that we lose not those things which we have wrought,¹⁶ but that we receive a full reward.⁹ Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.¹⁰ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed:¹⁷
¹¹ For he that biddeth him God speed¹⁸ is partaker of¹⁹ his evil deeds.

Final Greetings

¹² Having²⁰ many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with paper²¹ and ink:²² but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face,²³ that our joy may be full.²⁴ ¹³ The children²⁵ of thy elect sister²⁶ greet thee. Amen.

¹³ Cf. Romans 10:9; Philippians 2:11; 1 John 4:15. John frequently writes of Christ coming into the world (John 3:19; 6:14; 9:39; 11:27; 12:46; 16:28; cf. 2 John 1:7). The notion that Jesus had not actually physically come into the world was called Docetism (from the GR verb meaning "to seem"; IE he only seemed to have a body of flesh and be physically crucified). We see in John's letters the beginnings of this early heresy against which the Church would struggle mightily in the second century AD.

¹⁴ ὁ ἀντίχριστος *ho antichristos*. Cf. 1 John 2:18, 22; 4:3; Alma 30:6, 12.

¹⁵ OR beware.

¹⁶ OR worked for.

¹⁷ The idiom "God speed" is English and does not reflect the Greek text, in which this is a salutation. IE do not greet him.

¹⁸ OR for he that greets him.

¹⁹ OR shares in.

²⁰ The participle is concessive; IE although I have many things to write to you.

²¹ Papyrus, which is the origin of our word "paper."

²² The GR word μέλανος *melanos* lit. means "black," but stands for ink here.

²³ στόμα πρὸς στόμα *stoma pros stoma* lit. mouth to mouth, the GR equivalent of our idiom "face to face."

²⁴ The concept of fullness of Joy is drawn from Psalm 16:11 (cited in Acts 2:28). Cf. John 15:11; 16:24; 1 Peter 1:8; 2 John 1:12; 1 Nephi 5:7; 2 Nephi 9:18; Alma 26:11, 16, 30; 27:17; 29:13-14; Helaman 5:44; 3 Nephi 17:20; 28:10; D&C 59:13; 101:36.

²⁵ See the note to v. 1.

²⁶ IE the sister church from which the author is writing.