

Let Us Love

Truth and Love

2 John 1-13

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not only I but also all who know the truth, because of the truth that abides in us and will be with us for ever: Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, in truth and love. I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father. But now, dear lady, I ask you, not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but one we have had from the beginning, let us love one another. And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment just as you have heard it from the beginning—you must walk in it. Many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh; any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist! Be on your guard, so that you do not lose what we have worked for, but may receive a full reward. Everyone who does not abide in the teaching of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God; whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. Do not receive into the house or welcome anyone who comes to you and does not bring this teaching; for to welcome is to participate in the evil deeds of such a person. Although I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink; instead I hope to come to you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete. The children of your elect sister send you their greetings.

REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

We have been reminded of the inseparable relationship between truth and love through this brief study of 2 John. In his previous letter, John teaches that we should not love in word or speech, but in action. Anglican bishop Rowan Williams writes: "Truth makes love possible, and love makes truth bearable." **When you hear truth and love together, how does it make you feel? Do you worry someone will tell you something you don't want to hear, in an effort to speak the truth in love?**

In order to love someone, we must know something about them and meet them where they are. Love is not only truthful, but specific. Since love can be found in the details, we can clearly see love through the specific actions of others. A nurse taking care of a patient, someone willing to sit and listen, a teacher tutoring, a coach giving honest feedback. **What would you add to this list? Who has gotten into the details of your life and made you feel loved?**

The message John conveys to the community to which he writes is not a universal command to love everyone. Rather, it is a reminder to put in the work to know others in their specificity and be vulnerable enough to let people get to know us. Though our lives may seem more hidden from each other than ever, they are not hidden from God. We have the opportunity to live out the command to love one another in unique, detailed ways. **What can help you cling to the reminder you that God sees you, knows you, and loves you? How might you see God calling you to love others specifically right now?**

Dear God, thank you for loving us enough to live among us and understand every human experience. Open our eyes to love others in the detail of their lives as you love us. Amen.