

1.24.21 ~ 2John, Christian Hospitality: Part One...

2John was written about the same time as 1&3John, sometime between A.D. 90-95, while John was serving the church in Ephesus; sometime before his arrest and excommunication to the island of Patmos.

John was elderly at this writing, but he writes as one with spiritual authority, expecting his listeners to accept and apply his instruction.

Read 2John 1-6... John is writing to a Christian woman and her children, someone he was no doubt, close to; most likely she was well known in the church. John is commending this woman for doing that which pleases God, while living as an example of Christ in this world.

John knows this woman desires to obey and serve the Lord, and so he makes it clear, that what he is instructing her (and all who receive his letter), is not a new command, but is wrapped up in the most fundamental truth of love and obedience (**John 14:15**), "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments," (**John 14:21**), "The one who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will reveal Myself to him."

It would appear that John has a special love and respect for this woman, and he reminds her that our love for God, is synonymous with our obedience to live out the fundamentals of our faith: the what, why, where, when, and how we live, should display our obedience to God's Word and our love toward others.

John is reminding this saintly woman (and all his readers), that those who belong to God should live out the same attitude exemplified by Christ (**Philippians 2:6-8**), "who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Read 2John 7-11... John describes these deceivers as, "those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh," they are moved by the spirit of the antichrist and they seek to destroy the work of God, especially in the lives of those who belong to Christ.

Christians must be on guard against false teachers and false doctrine, for they are many and very deceptive, just as Paul warns us (**2Corinthians 11:13-15**), "For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds," (**Galatians 1:8-9**), "But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! As we have said before, even now I say again: if anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to

what you received, he is to be accursed!" (**11-12**), "For I would have you know, brothers *and sisters*, that the gospel which was preached by me is not of human invention. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but *I received it* through a revelation of Jesus Christ."

And one of the clearest exhortations in the New Testament, concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ is found in **1Corinthians 15:1-8**, "Now I make known to you, brothers and sisters, the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received, in which you also stand, by which you also are saved, if you hold firmly to the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I handed down to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles; and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also."

The Biblical record proclaims that Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man; any teaching to the contrary is heresy, and anyone who teaches such heresy is not to be shown Christian hospitality.

Please turn to **Romans 1:1-4**, "Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures, concerning His Son, who was born of a descendant of David according to the flesh, who was declared the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" [cf. Romans 10:9-10].

God expects us to be hospitable to those who are truly in need (if we can), as we are to care for the poor, the hungry, the downtrodden, and for the widows and orphans who are without immediate family support.

Christians are to show hospitality to those in need, if at all possible, for that is what Christ would do (**Matthew 25:31-40**), "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me *something* to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me *something* to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You *something* to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When

did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ The King will answer and say to them, ‘Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even the least of them*, you did it to Me.’”

1John 2:4-6, “The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him: the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked.”

Colossians 3:23-24, “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

Yes, we are to do good, to treat others the way we want to be treated ourselves, but we must discriminate to whom we show Christian hospitality, for it is God we are serving. John warns us not to show hospitality to false teachers.

John is not talking about those with whom we have minor disagreements, but with those who teach falsely about the combined divinity and humanity of Christ [Incarnation]. We are not to associate with such deceivers, and we are not to welcome them into our homes, for in so doing so, we do evil (see **3John 11**).

There are two main religious cults who promote false doctrine in our area (the Mormons and the Jehovah’s Witnesses); they send out their disciples to knock on our doors, with the desire to not only gain entrance into your home, but into your heart/mind with their deceptive and godless teachings.

When they come to your door, and you tell them, you are a Christian, they may say something like: “We are students of the Bible, just like you.” “We believe in Jesus, just like you.” But is that the truth? No!

Mormon doctrine Teaches that Jesus is a spirit child of Elohim, and is also a brother to Satan; but, through obedience and devotion Jesus obtained Godhood. They teach that there are many God’s, all of whom were once mortals like us, until they attained Godhood, through the teachings of Mormonism.

Jehovah’s Witness doctrine teaches that Jesus is not God, nor is He the Creator; but that He is none other than Michael the archangel, the very first creation of God.

So is John saying that you shouldn’t show hospitality to false teachers? Yes, I believe that is exactly what he is saying; but, and please understand, if you are equipped to authoritatively reprove these deceivers in reference to what God’s Word says in the areas where their cult has lied to them, and they will listen to you... go for it!

2Timothy 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

If you aren’t equipped to handle the Word of God accurately, or if those who are deceived won’t listen (but only promote their own false teachings), you must turn them away. You are not to show them hospitality.

Read 2John 12-13... John's desire is to speak "face to face" [up close and in person], to this woman and those who are part of the fellowship to which she belongs.

John writes a greeting to this woman from her sister, her nieces and nephews, who all appear to be believers. Perhaps John is experiencing Christian hospitality with them, as he writes this letter to her.

There were in John's day, just as there are today, many false teachers who roam about, for the purpose of planting doubt, propagating falsehoods and deceptive doctrines in the minds and hearts of susceptible people, attempting to lead them away from the One True God.

2Timothy 3:12-13, "All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil men and impostors will proceed *from bad* to worse, deceiving & being deceived."

We must always submit to sound biblical doctrine, exposing any teaching about Christ that does not acknowledge and confess that He is God: the Creator, Sustainer, Lord, Savior, and Judge over All.

Jesus is God in the flesh, He conquered sin, death and judgment forever, so that all who repent of sin, believing in and following Him, receive eternal life.

Our hospitality to others must be Holy, i.e., it must conform to that which pleases God; and so, we are not to help, in anyway, those who promote false teachings about the divinity and humanity of Christ.

As believers and followers of Jesus Christ, we above all people on the earth should be hospitable to each other, and those who need to be shown hospitality.

1Peter 4:7-9, "The end of all things is near; therefore, be of sound judgment and sober *spirit* for the purpose of prayer. Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint."

Pastor Mike

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