

Walking In Truth

2 John

Pastor John Miller

Ever heard the little phrase, good things come in small, what?

Packages.

Okay, that was the women who said that. You want to know why? Because the ladies like those little packages. I know this is my diamond ring. I know this is my earrings. I know this is the piece of jewelry that I've been waiting for. And so they open those little... Big packages, it's a toaster, it's a blender, it's a exercise machine or something like that. Don't you love those little glittery things inside those little packages? 2 John is a little package. It was written on one piece of Papyrus, which would be the size of a large postcard. He would just write out this one letter. It was a personal letter to a woman called the elect lady. But it is packed with good things. And if you've never read or studied, 1 John or 2 John, I hope today that you'll discover the glories of this little epistle.

Actually, 2 John and 3 John are the shortest books of the New Testament. This has only 13 verses, and even though Jude and Philemon are only one chapter, 2 John still is shorter than those epistles. Now the theme of 2 John is found in Verse 4, and I want to jump ahead and look at that for just a second. John says, "I rejoice greatly." This is his commendation of the elect lady. "I rejoice greatly that I found of thy children" here it is, "walking in truth as we have received a commandment from the Father." So the thing that brought John joy, the thing that made his heart rejoice was that this elect lady, and we'll talk about her in just a moment, was walking in truth as well as her children. God wants us, as his children, to walk in truth. Love, yes, but truth. Guiding us, directing us, educating us, influencing us. We want to be loving, that's the mark of a Christian, but we want a discerning love. We don't want a sloppy agape as has been said. We want a discerning love that is based upon truth.

So the theme is walking in truth, which basically means that we order our life by the word of God. We order our life by the word of God. That's what it means to walk in the truth. It means that the Bible shapes the way I think, the Bible shapes the way I speak, the Bible shapes the way I feel, the Bible shapes my attitude and outlook, and thus the Bible shapes the way I live. Did you know that what you believe determines how you behave? What you believe will influence the way that you behave. So there's nothing more important than having a biblical worldview. Nothing more important than thinking biblically in your marriage about yourself, about God, about other people, about the church, about the Bible. We must think biblically. That's why the Bible encourages us not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed. How? By the renewing of your minds, that you may prove what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God. And nothing renews the mind and the heart and the soul more than the word of God because it's living, it's active, and it's powerful.

Now, why was this short little letter of 2 John written? Well, there was an issue that existed

when this letter was written, and believe me, it is just a letter, but it is given by inspiration of God. And that was, in those days, they didn't have hotels. You see, the problem was they didn't have hotels. The problem was they didn't have hotels. They had inns, but those were like brothels. They were party places and it was just an open courtyard and you'd have to lay by other people to be drinking and partying and all kinds of things going on. And so when the evangelists or the pastors or the preachers, the teachers of the gospel, when they traveled through the Roman world on Roman roads with the Greek language spreading the gospel, what happened is that the traveling teachers would have to stay in homes.

Now, this is good. I like staying in homes. Today we have hotels and you have more privacy and you can come and go as you please, but when a guest speaker comes to our church, we put them in a hotel for the night, and so they would stay in homes. And what was happening was false teachers, false apostles, false prophets, spreaders of lies were coming to the Christian homes. Now, remember this, the churches met in their homes. So when we talk about staying in the homes, we're talking about staying in the church, and this is where the churches met. So what was happening was this elect lady, and we look at her in Verse 1, she was opening her home to false teachers, to false prophets. She was wanting to show loving hospitality, but she was doing it by the absence of truth.

And so John is writing to her. Maybe she asked the question, who should I open my home to? Who should I let in my home? Who should we support? Basically, who should come into our church? And John is writing her to say, your love must be balanced with truth. Your love must be controlled and educated by truth. And so that's basically what 2 John is all about. It's basically that truth and love go together. In the early church, they had what they called the Didache. It was written about 100 AD. And in this Didache, which means doctrine, they had to delineate who they should let, as traveling, itinerant speakers, into their homes. And they gave some fine points or criteria by which they could tell whether they were false prophets or not. This is not inspired scripture, but just a teaching that they had or a book that they had that they circulated.

And a couple of things that they said. They said, if a teacher comes to your home and he stays more than three days, he's a false prophet because he's sponging off of you. He can't stay more than three days. Secondly, they said, if he asks for money, he's a false prophet. Remember when Jesus sent the disciples out and he said, "Take your staff, take your purse. Don't take anything else, and whatever home you stay, bless that home and whatever they give you to eat, eat it." That's a biblical thing, you can tell your kids that. Jesus said that. Whatever they put in front of you, you eat that, you don't complain. You just accept that. And that's the way you go out. Just your staff, just your purse, and you depend on these people and you bless them as you go.

So if they stay more than three days, you're a false prophet, if they ask for money, they're a false prophet, and I really love this one, in the Didache it said, if they stay in the spirit, thus sayeth the Lord fix me a big meal, and then they eat it, they're a false prophet. I like that. Thus sayeth the Lord, I want a burrito. I want an extra large burrito in Jesus' name. False prophet. Doesn't matter if you're asking for enchiladas, guacamole, beans, or rice. I like those things, but

I don't ask for them in the spirit. I'm usually in the flesh when I ask for those things. And if they eat that meal, they're a false prophet, you don't take them into your home. You don't accept them. Again, a little sneak preview, look at verse 7. "There are many deceivers that have entered into the world who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh." That's the litmus test. Do they believe that Jesus Christ was God in flesh? This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

So Verse 10 says, "If there come any unto you that bring not this doctrine, don't receive them into your house, neither bid them God's speed." Don't even say, "God bless you." Don't say, "Goodbye." The origin of goodbye is God, be with you. God go with you. Don't even bless them. Don't help them. Don't support them. If these false teachers come, you're not to welcome them into your home. So love, which is hospitality, must be controlled by truth, which is the clear teaching of the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Now, I want you to look first of all with me at the greeting of this letter. It's found in Verses 1-3. Starts in Verse 1 with, "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth: and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth; for the truth sake, which dwells in us, and shall be with us forever. Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father in truth and love. Now, in Verses 1-3, four times, John used the word truth. Truth, truth, truth, truth. And then again in Verse 4, he used the word truth. So five times in four verses, he used the word truth. I want you to notice some things about truth. In Verse 1, Truth unites believers, it is truth that is the uniting glue and the basis for Christian fellowship.

Now, he opens with the elder, that's the writer, and that is a reference to the Apostle John, the same man who wrote 1 John. Why does he call himself the elder? Because number one, he was old and number two, he was a spiritual leader in the church. The word elder, pastor, bishop, overseer, are all synonyms for the same man. I'm not just a pastor, I'm an elder. I'm not as old as John was, but I'm getting old. A couple of weeks ago we went to the Grand Canyon, we went to the national park and I've been driving all day, I'm tired and I look up and there's all these numbers on the board and I didn't know what was going on. For some crazy reason, it was my wife and I and my 23-year-old son. I pull up to the little booth, I tell the lady, "I want two adults and one child."

That's what happens when Pastor Miller drives all day. She looked at me like, "This is not the theater, dude." And then I saw it said senior discount. I thought, "Oh, praise God. I don't know what a senior was." So I go, "What age is a senior?" She goes, "62." I go, "That's me. Give me that." 10 bucks, by the way, if you're 62, this is a good deal. 10 bucks, lifetime entrance into all the national parks in the United States. That's a good deal. You can praise God for that. So there are some blessings and benefits of senior discounts. Amen? All the old people say, "Amen, preach about it." So I got my little \$10 card, and for the rest of my life I can go to a national park, which I don't do very often, but it's good for life. I don't know how much longer I'm going to live though because I am 62.

So John was an old fella, he was 90. That's old even though old is relative and he was the elder

and he's writing to Verse 1, the elect lady and her children. Now two views of who the elect lady is. Number one, they say that it's the church. I don't believe that that's the case, but it's okay if you want to believe that, it's a figure of speech for the church. Problem is that the church is the virgin bride of Christ and never in the Bible is the church pictured as a woman with children. So I don't believe that's really what it's conveying. The other view is just that it is a elect lady. Duh. It's pretty simple. When the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense. Who is the elect lady? Just a lady. And she had children. That's what she was. And John is writing her a letter. She probably had questions about opening her home and who should stay and who she should feed and who she should support, give actually supplies to go out and do ministry.

That's why John in Verse 10 tells her, don't let false teachers into your home. Evidently, she was doing that. She had love, but she didn't have truth. So what do we need? We need love and truth. We need a love that's educated and controlled by truth. But the basis of our fellowship is truth. Notice it in Verse 1, I love you in the truth and you have known the truth and for the truth's sake, which dwells in us, Verse 2, and shall be with us forever. So truth unites believers, verse 1, truth in dwells believers, Verse 2, and the truth blesses believers, Verse 3. What do we have because of the truth? We have grace, we have mercy and we have peace. And where does it come from? Verse 3, from God, the Father and our Lord, Jesus Christ. And it comes in truth and love.

Now, grace is unmerited favor. It's the Greek word charis. Charis. It means all that is beautiful, lovely and charming. Beautiful name for a girl, by the way, charis, means grace and it also means that God gives us what we do not deserve. We are saved by grace. That's what the Bible teaches. "By grace, you have been saved; and not that of yourself: it is a gift of God: not of works, lest anyone should boast." So we are saved by the charis, the unmerited, undeserved, unearned favor of God. Jesus paid for our salvation. We get it for free. And then mercy comes to us because of God's truth. And mercy is God not giving us what we do deserve. Grace, he gives us what we don't deserve. Mercy, he doesn't give us what we do deserve. Now this is what we do deserve, all have sinned, fallen short of the glory of God; No one righteous, no, not one. The wages of sin is what?

Death.

Death. But instead through Christ we have eternal life. Amen?

Amen.

What a blessing that is. And so God doesn't give us death or separation in hell, but he gives us eternal life and as a result, we have peace with God. Now, the actual etymology of the word peace means to be at one. It means to be bound together at onement. When you worry and you have no peace and you're anxious, it means you're being torn apart or torn in different directions. And when you have peace, your heart is at one. It's trusting in God, but we were sinners, estranged from God, rebelling against God, running from God and through the blood of the cross of Jesus Christ, we have peace with God. So we, who are far off, are now made nigh.

We are brought together in union, in one, with God, through Jesus Christ, and we have peace.

Now, grace always comes before peace. You can't have the peace of God or peace with God until you have the grace of God in salvation. But both love and truth need to be balanced in our lives. So notice Verses 4-6, truth must be balanced by love and this is where he commends the elect lady and he encourages her to walk in love which she was doing. Notice Verse 4 down to Verse 6, "I rejoiced greatly," John says, "That I found of thy children," so she had children that were walking in truth, "As we have received the commandment from the father. And now I beg you, I exhort you, I plead with you, "Not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning that we should love one another. And this is love," Verse 6, "That we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, that, as ye have heard from the beginning, and you should walk in it."

Now, I want you to notice some things again about the truth. Number one, Verse 4, the truth controls believers. What does it mean to walk in the truth? I already said it. It controls you, it directs you, it motivates you. Everything you do is based upon God's truth. It should control your marriage relationship, it should control your thought life. Think about what is true and good and of good reports. It should motivate your actions and how you treat people. Then notice Verse 5 and 6, love balances believers. In Verse 5, there's the exhortation to love. And by the way, in Verse 5, that exhortation to love is in the present tense. That means continually, ongoingly, keep on showing love. And then in Verse 6, there's an explanation of love and what is love? It's keeping God's commandments. We love God and we want to keep the commandments that he has given to us. Don't tell me that you love God, but you don't keep his commandments. Don't tell me you love God, but you're not doing the things that he's commanded you.

Now, we don't keep his commandments for salvation. We keep his commandments because we are saved and he has given us his grace and his mercy and his peace. And now because we love him, we want to obey him and we want to keep his commandments. But here's the main point, Verses 4-6, and that is the Christian life must be balanced, truth and love. Ray Stedman likened it to salt and sugar. He said, "Some Christians are all salt," or truth, "And some Christians are only sugar." Some Christians only want salt. Give me doctrine, give me truth. They dot every I, they cross every T. They're theologically correct, but they're not loving, they're not kind, they're not merciful, they're not compassionate. But man, they're right, dead right and they're just a deadness about them.

Now don't get me wrong, I'm all for truth. And I hesitate to even say this, but if you had to sacrifice one for the other, you start with truth. Without truth, we have nothing. Truth is where it all starts. If we don't have truth, we don't have anything. We live in a culture today that has abandoned truth. We actually live in a culture today, especially among the millennials, where we have abandoned truth. We don't believe that there is such a thing as anything truth. And they're sure that that's true, that there is no truth. Interesting, but the Bible is true. Truth is anything that corresponds with reality. So we're living in a world where people doesn't think anything's real. Anything that corresponds with reality, God is a God of truth. God's word is true. Jesus said, "I'm the way, the truth and the life."

So the Bible affirms that God is true, his word is true, Christ is true, and we can know the truth and the truth will set us free, but that truth needs to be balanced by love, so he exhorts them. Verse 5, and love is the keeping of the truth, the commandments of God's word. So don't just be salt but be sugar as well. But then there's other people that go the other extreme and they're sugar Christians. I call them cream puff Christians. In love, I call them that, by the way. It's all, let's not talk about doctrine that divides. Let's not nitpick about whether the Bible's the Word of God or Jesus was God or salvation's by grace through faith. Let's not talk about doctrine. Let's all just hold hands, have a harmonic conversion. Whatever that is. Let's all sing Kumbaya. Let's accept all religions as true. Let's co exist, to quote a familiar bumper sticker. Let's be tolerant.

Let's love one another. That's the most important. The greatest of these is love. Let's be love chapel and let's not have any doctrine. Let's not talk about truth and all paths lead to God and it's just this cream puff Christianity and we want to show love to everyone, even people that are the enemies of God. Now, I don't believe we should be harsh or critical or fault finding. Jesus said in Matthew 7, "Judge not, lest you be judged," but that didn't mean that we couldn't know truth or right from wrong. He's saying, don't be critical. Don't be fault finding. Don't have a censorious critical spirit. There's a lot of Christians that have critical spirits. They're all salt and they're no sugar. Jesus was loving and patient and kind and forgiving with a woman, John 8, caught in adultery who was repentant, but he did say to her, "Go and sin no more. I forgive you, but go and sin no more."

But when he encountered the Pharisees, the religious leaders who were hypocritical, he said, "Oh, ye scribes, you Pharisees, you hypocrites. Ye compass heaven and earth to make one proselyte and when you've made him, he's twofold, the child of hell that you are. Whoa, get down Jesus." Did he just call them children of hell? Yes, he did because of their hypocrisy and their phoniness. I want to see us as a church committed to truth. Truth matters. Truth is important, but I want to see as people that are balanced and that we temper that truth and control that truth by love. Now, in Verses 7-11, I want to point out thirdly that we have a reason for walking in truth and that's because there's dangers. It's dangerous not to walk in truth, only to walk in love.

Follow with me beginning in Verse 7. John says, "There are many deceivers." Why should we walk in truth? Because, "There are many deceivers and they entered into this world and they confess not that Jesus has come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and antichrist. Now look not to yourselves, that you lose those things which we have wrought, but that we receive the full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, has both the Father and the Son.

Verse 10, "If there come any unto you, and they bring not this doctrine." Now again, he's writing to an actual woman who is showing hospitality but not showing discernment onto who she should give it to. And remember that the church met in their homes, so they had to be careful who they invited in. So if they come into your home, they bring not this doctrine, "Receive them not into your house." Why? Verse 11, "For he that bids him God speed actually becomes partaker or partners in their evil deeds." Now here are the four dangers. If you're taking notes,

write them down. Danger number one is in Verse 7, the danger of deceivers. You are absolutely foolish to not understand that not everyone that preaches, not everyone that says, "Lord, Lord," not everyone that has a Bible, not every so-called Christian church is preaching the true doctrine of Christ.

Now, that doesn't mean that you become overly suspicious and critical and fault finding, but you are to be wise and discerning. If I'm thinking about going to a church, the first thing I want to know is it sound in its doctrine? Not is it fun? Is it hip? Is it cool? Do they have a nice sanctuary? Is there plenty of parking? Is there a good program for the kids? Is the worship good? Is the pastor funny? Is he young? I'm going to stop right there. I want to know what they believe. You know why? Because what we believe determines how we behave. You want to blessed life? Believe right. You want a miserable life? Think wrongly, believe wrongly. It'll affect the way you live. God doesn't judge sin. You go into sin, you reap its consequences. Sown of the flesh, reap of the flesh, reap corruption.

Bible's not the word of God. I don't have to obey that. I know I have no biblical basis for divorce. I don't care. I'm going to do what's good for me. I want to live for me. I want to do what makes me happy. I don't care what the Bible says. I don't care what Jesus says. I'm going to do whatever I want to do. You'll suffer the consequences. Pain and misery and heartache will be your lot. You say, "I want to know what God says. I want truth. I want to live my life governed by the word of God." You'll have a blessed life. You'll have a fruitful life. You'll have a prosperous life. This is why we teach the Bible at Revival Christian Fellowship. I want you to be blessed people. I want your lives to be blessed. I want you to know the Bible and live by the Bible.

So I want you to understand the danger of deceivers. There are false prophets and false Christs and false teachers today who will knock on your door, try to sell you magazines and books and they don't believe Jesus is God, of whom is the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, Islam, Christian Science, the new age movement, the liberals of our day, the emergent movement all deny the doctrine of Christ. Verse 7, they do not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. What does that mean? It means that they deny the center doctrine of Christianity and that is the deity and humanity of Christ. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh and they deny that. Every false cult, every false religion denies the deity of Jesus Christ. They might affirm his humanity, but they don't think it's sinless humanity. He wasn't born of a virgin.

But the Bible teaches in the doctrine of Christ that he is the second person of the Godhead, very God, who came down to earth through the womb of the Virgin Mary. He took on thus humanity, but sinless humanity. He lived a sinless life. He died a substitutionary death and he physically bodily rose from the dead and he ascended visibly bodily back into heaven and he's exalted and seated by the right hand of God the Father, and he lives to make intercession for us, and he's coming back in power and glory. That's the doctrine of Christ. And anyone who variates from that doctrine is antichrist. You go, "Well, that's not very loving," but it's true. And let me say this, the most loving thing you can do for anybody is be truthful with them. That's the most loving thing you can do. That's why the Bible says speak the truth in what?

Love.

Love. Truth without love is brutality. Love without truth is hypocrisy. I want us to be a people of truth balanced by love. But notice the second danger, the danger of loss in Verse 8, look to yourselves, which means guard yourselves. So in Verse 7, don't be deceived. Verse 8, be careful, look out, watch out, that you do not lose those things which you have received or that have been wrought, but that you receive a full reward. Now, John is not warning us that we will lose our salvation. That's not the topic here. He's not saying that you're going to lose your salvation, you're going to go to hell. If you are not born again and you follow teachers of lies, you will end up in hell. This is why this is important. You follow the wrong teaching, you can end up in hell if you haven't been born again. But if you're born again and you get influenced by false teaching, you're going to lose your reward, not your salvation.

He's not saying you're going to lose your salvation. He's saying you're going to lose your reward. You're going to lose the blessing and benefit of walking with God, being blessed by God, and one day when you stand before the Bema Seat or the reward seat of Christ, as he says in Verse 8, you will not receive a reward. So the danger of loss. Then the third danger is in Verse 9, the danger of going beyond. Notice Verse 9, whosoever transgresseth and abides not in the doctrine of Christ. If you don't abide in the doctrine of Christ that he's God in the flesh, you do not have God. He that abides in the doctrine of Christ, he both have the Father and the Son. Now, is that clear or what? It's pretty clear, right?

But there's a word there I want you to take notice. It's the word transgresseth. You know what that word literally means? It means to go beyond. To transgress means to step over the line and in the context here it has the idea of going beyond or going further, going beyond or going further. Listen to carefully to me, in what way? Going beyond the teachings of the Bible, going beyond the teachings of the doctrine of Christ. How many false religions and false cults knock on your door and say, "We have a new revelation. It's called the Book of Mormon. It supersedes the Bible. It's for us in America. It came by an angel named Moroni, which I've never found Moroni in the Bible. And it's interesting, in the Galatians, Paul said to them, "If I or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel, then that what you first receive, let them be anathema, cursed to the lowest hell." How's that for commitment to truth?

So they say, "Well, we got this new Bible" or "We got this new book" or "We got this new magazine" or "We've seen the light and we want to give you something that goes beyond Christianity. It goes beyond the Bible." I love what Harry Ironside used to say. He used to say, "If it's new, it's not true. If it's true, it's not new." Anytime somebody says, "We have something new. We have new truth for you," reject it. God has given to us all we need to know in the Bible, so we need to be careful. Let me make this statement. I could talk for hours about this point, but let me make this statement. Don't judge truth by your experience.

When someone says, "I know it's true because I experienced it," it's all right. I've talked to Mormons on my doorstep before and they said, "We know that this is true because we have a burning in our bosom." Really? No archeological evidence? No manuscript evidence? No

reason to believe other than a burning in your bosom? At 62, when I eat a burrito, I get a burning in my bosom. At 62, anything I eat gives me a burning in my bosom. That's one of the disadvantages of being old. I mean, that could be a burrito. How do you know that means that your doctrine is true? There's historical evidence for believing Christianity is true. I've been to Israel, I've seen the empty tomb. I've seen the places Jesus walked. Some of the fanciful cities and names and places in the Book of Mormon, no archeologist has ever unearthed. No archeology has ever discovered. There's no archeological evidence to support the Book of Mormon, yet they believe it's true because they have a burning in their bosom.

Now, my Pentecostal brothers that like to jump and shout and roll on the floor when they have church, they're brothers, I accept them, that's fine. You want to jump, but don't base whether it's truly a work of the spirit or not, just because you feel the emotion. That doesn't have anything to do with it. What does the Bible say? What does the Bible teach? People are always wanting to push me as a pastor. Push me. "What about this? What about that? What about this? Let's do this. Let's do that." "Is it in the Bible? Is it scriptural? Is it biblical? Is the church supposed to do that?" "Well, it doesn't matter, but it's the new thing. It's the new movement. It's what's happening now. Hallelujah."

I'm all about what is in the Bible and what God has made clear to us. You could spend your whole life just discovering new truth in the Bible. I don't need to go outside the Bible. Let's just stay within the confines of God's word. Don't judge truth by experience, but this is what you do judge. You judge your experience by truth. You judge your experience by truth. How do I know what I'm experiencing is true? The answer is it's clearly taught in the word of God. Now for service, I preach a little too long and so I can't do this second service, but I want you to write down this cross-reference, 2 Peter, Chapter one, Verse 16-21. I'm going to relate it to you. 2 Peter, Chapter 1, if you can turn there real quick, I'll just relate it rather than read it. Chapter 1, Verse 16-21. This is what it says. Peter says, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the word of God," or the truth of God, but we were what? Eyewitnesses, right? We were eyewitnesses.

Now you guys have all turned there, so I'm going to turn there, I guess. He says Verse 16, "We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known to you the power and the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, but we were what? Eyewitnesses. "For," Verse 17, "We receive from God the Father honor and glory, when we came such a voice from him excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I'm well pleased. And this voice," Verse 18, "Which we heard from heaven, when we were with him on that holy mountain." Now stop right there. What's he talking about? Mount Transfiguration. Peter, James and John were on a mountain with Jesus and what happened? He was transfigured, transformed so that his ray became white as light and they couldn't even look on him. They woke up and he was glowing. It was the glory of God.

And then an audible voice spoke out of heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I'm well pleased. Hear ye him." Now you talk about having church. This is smoking. I mean, you talk about a meeting on the mountain, hallelujah. Get down Lord Jesus. I mean, we saw the glory, we heard the voice. It was awesome. And that's a glorious thing. I love it when we gather and

Jesus promised to be with us, but we experience him. We meet him in the sanctuary. But I want you to notice the very next thing that Peter says, Verse 19, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy;" or we have a more sure prophetic word, "Whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in the dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your heart. Knowing this first," Verse 20, "No prophecy of scripture as of any private interpretation." Why? Because, "Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but by holy men of God that they were born along," spoke as they were moved or carried along by the what?

Holy Spirit.

Holy Spirit. You know what Peter's saying? He said, "Man, that was powerful on the mountain. We saw, we heard it was amazing." But he goes, "You know what's more sure? The word of God." More sure than our burning in the bosom is the Bible more sure than what we see and what we hear. Feelings can be deceiving, sight can be deceiving, but more sure than what I feel or what I see or what I hear is the sure word of prophecy, the sure word of God. Now, when he says that no man wrote the scriptures of any private interpretation, what he means is that they didn't write it out of their own mind or out of their own heart, and he makes that clear.

That last verse there in Verse 21, he says, "For holy men were moved or born along by the Holy Spirit." That's a verse for the inspiration of scripture. And the word moved means to be carried along. It was used of the wind filling a sail on a boat and carrying it over the water. You ever been on a sailboat when they hoist the sail and whammo, the wind hits the sail and it gets taunt. You hear that slapping of the sail, the wind fills the sail and the boats carry it over the water. It's a great feeling. What a rush that is. That's what that word means to be carried along by the Holy Spirit. When the authors of scripture wrote, when Paul wrote to the elect lady, the Holy Spirit was carrying him along.

It would be described like this, the Holy Spirit superintended the human authors, so that the very words that they wrote were the very words of God. It wasn't dictation, it was inspiration. And there's only one book, only one book on planet earth that is given by inspiration of God. And there's a lot of good evidence for believing that. You do the research. And that's the Bible. All scriptures given by inspiration of God and is profitable for what we believe and how we behave, for what is right and what is wrong, how to get right, how to stay right.

So we have a more sure word of prophecy. Don't let people tell you you need something more. When I was a baby Christian back in 1972, I was a newly-born Christian. All my pot smoking, acid dropping, surfer buddies got into TM. Remember the big TM, transcendental meditation movement in the early 70's? It even went into the public schools. It just helps to expand your mind. Well, I mean, we're dropping LSD. We need all the mind help we can get. We've messed up our brains, but I become a Christian. I'm born again. I love Jesus now, but all my TM friends, my transcendental meditating friends, they said, "John, if you want to be a really good Christian, if you really want to know the Bible, if you really want to understand the words of Jesus, you need TM. You need transcendental meditation. It'll make you a better Christian. Now, who doesn't want to be a better Christian?" So I'm thinking, "Yeah, that sounds good." So I talked to

my parents who were believers and they said, "No, you don't want to go there. You have Jesus. You have the Bible."

And then I discovered years later, as I know now that it's really Hinduism and the mantra they give you to chant while you're supposedly emptying your mind of what very little is there, is actually worshipping a Hindu God and you're offering the flowers and the fruit and your initiation and all that. It's Hinduism and it's being promoted in our public school. But the illustration is given to just give you this point, if you've got Jesus, you've got everything you need. You don't need some other religion. You don't need to yoga or meditate or to hyperventilate or contemplate your navel. I'm going to sit in a lotus and contemplate my navel. You won't find truth. You might find lint, but you won't find truth.

But if you open the Bible, God's word, you can be sure this is truth, this is truth, and you need to live by it and govern your life by it. But there's also fourthly, and lastly, Verse 10-11, I got to wrap this up. There is the danger. Go back with me to 2 John, Verse 10 and 11. There's the danger of working with them. How? By opening your home to them. There's the danger of supporting them and then working with them and helping them. So if they're coming into you bringing out this doctrine of Christ, don't receive them into your house. Now, this isn't saying that you can't invite a Mormon into your home or a Jehovah's witness in your home.

At the time that this was written, he's talking about supporting them and the church met in the home. Should you invite them in your home? If you feel that you can handle it. If not, share your testimony. Be nice to them. Be kind to them, but don't say God bless you, God be with you. Why? Because God's not blessing them. God is not with them. They're promoting doctrinal error and false doctrine, and you don't want to partner with them. That's why he says in Verse 11, "For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." And you go, "Well, that's mean. That's just flat out mean." Now, you would only think that because you have a low view of truth. You have a low view of the importance of truth, and you are focused on, you're all sugar. I don't want any salt. It's all truth. We want to be nice. We want to be loving. We want to be kind. Jesus said, love one another, so it doesn't matter what you believe. Come on into my home. I'll help you out.

When you watch Christian television, think about what you're hearing. Think about what you're listening. Think about what they're not saying. Sometimes false teachers isn't what they say, it's what they don't say. That's one of the problems. It's not what they say, it's what they don't say. And ask yourself, what is this doctrine of Christ? What's their doctrine of salvation? What did they really believe? Before you write that check or send them money or support them. You do not want to be partaker of their evil deeds. Be discerning. Know the truth and the truth will set you free. So he closes Verse 12 and 13. He says in Verse 12-13, "Having many things to say to you, I would not write them with paper and ink:" or papyrus and a very primitive kind of ink, "But I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full. The children of the elect sister greet you. Amen."

Now, why did John want to come to them face to face? To instruct them, to teach them, to give

them truth. You're to be commended today that you're in church, and I don't know your motive. I don't know why you're here. Maybe your wife drug you here, maybe a friend drug you here, maybe you just come because it's Sunday and there's nothing else to do. But I pray that you've come to know the truth, to hear the truth. I pray that you've come to learn the truth and Christian fellowship face to face. I like the fact that John says I could write everything. I could tell you everything, but basically today, it'd be like, "I'm not going to send you any more texts. I'm not going to email you." People don't even talk to each other anymore. Families sit in the car and text each other in the car. You go out to eat your family, you're texting. "What are you getting?" "I don't know. What are you getting?" They don't know how to talk. It's like turn that thing off and talk.

Amen.

Let's talk. Now I mean, I thank the Lord that people that can't come to this church can watch it online, but if you can get in a car and you can come to church, you should be here. "I was too tired. I just watched it online. I just stay home. I eat cereal and watch you while you preach." Come to church. There's no substitute. We need to be together face to face. We need to be subject to instruction in the word of God, and we need to love one another, right? How do you practice the one another's if you stay home and just watch church on a computer? You can't practice the one another's. Love one another, forgive one another, wash one another's feet, pray for one another. You need to participate in the body of Christ. Truth binds us together, and we need to be subject to truth, learning truth. So what do we do? Walk in truth balanced by love and truth is found in Jesus. And Jesus is found where?

In the Bible.

In the Bible and the Jesus that we find in the Bible is the true and living God. Amen?