

2 John 1-2 | The nature of Christ's church
Redemption Hill Church | Simon Murphy
Sunday 19th April 2009

2 John 1-2: The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in 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 forever.

Why are we studying 2 John? John is writing into a situation similar to ours today. John was writing at a time when there was a great spread in Christianity with small churches springing up all over. There were many traveling preachers. The message that they brought wasn't always true to the message the Apostles were preaching.

John's wants them to be established in the truth, which results in a change of lifestyle.

Who was John? Known as the apostle of love and 'the chest'. One of disciples and dearest friend. Wrote gospel and letter.

At the time of John's writing he was an old man and all his fellow apostles had been martyred. **There was incredible pressure on him to deny Christ.** Simon - crucified, Luke hanged, Thomas was thrust through with a spear, Bartholomew - cruelly beaten and then crucified in India. Matthew was stoned, Andrew was beat and stoned by the Jews at 94. Peter was crucified upside down. **Yet a blazing love for Jesus remained in his heart!**

Old pastor - part of Jesus' inner circle.
 He prepared the last supper
 Asked Jesus who would betray him
 He witnessed Jesus sweating blood
 Followed him to his trial
 He stood at the foot of the cross and watched Jesus die

And was appointed by Jesus to care for his mother
 He was the first to enter Jesus' tomb
 First to recognize Jesus
 He stood gazing into heaven as Jesus ascended
 He is called the one that Jesus loved

'The elder': In 1 Peter 5 .1-3 there are 3 Greek words for the name elder used interchangeably. **Elder:** Leadership, Guide. **Shepherds / Pastor:** Care for, Feed, Guard **Overseers:** Rule, Govern. **PLURALITY.**

In **Acts 20.17** Paul uses all three words again to speak to the same people. There were not 3 separate groups.

What do they do? Prayer and Scripture study, Ruling/leading the church, Caring for people in the church, Living exemplary lives, Teaching the Bible correctly, Preaching, Praying for the sick, Teaching sound doctrine and refuting false teachings, Working hard.

He writes out of care, concern and love for people – like an elder!

John is a great picture of an elder – not a new convert, testimony, love Jesus, truth and love.

"elect lady": Some have thought it was to a particular lady "Kyra" or "Electa", maybe a motherly figure, or a widow. But this poses some problem 'all who know the truth love her'.

But the word 'Kyria' is the feminine form of 'Lord' and that 'chosen' is an adjective frequently applied to the church as the bride of Christ. It seems to make most sense to regard this letter as addressed to a church whose members are the children. (Vs 1, 3,4)

It cannot be the universal church as she has no sister (vs. 13). **Therefore it's a local church. This also shows us that bible study is a collective effort! We need each other!**

He uses family as the metaphor for the church. This is a wonderful picture that we should consider. The church is a family. Ephesians 3.15 says 'For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and earth derives its name'. **Roles!!!**

What are the implications of this? What does a healthy family look like? In each others lives, love, concern and care. Safe place, where you can be vulnerable.

'whom I love in truth'. John expresses his love! Many Christians are afraid to express their love and emotion. They think it will make them appear weak, or that they might be taken advantage of, or they are afraid to show their feelings. **Luke 10th Grader and his mom!** John has none of these fears and tells the believers how much he loves them. We mustn't cheapen this word love, we must use it rightly!

Why are we scared? TARRYN AND !!! Sin has made us proud, withdrawn, scared etc. We are scared, so to say I love you makes us incredibly vulnerable! What if we get rejected? But Jesus was highly vulnerable on the cross – I love you!

Bono: love must be expressed. Pg125 *'Love must be incarnated. It needs to find form, intimacy needs to be whispered. Essence has to manifest itself, love has to become an action or something concrete. Love must be made flesh'*. **Jesus's love was demonstrated.**

Father's to your children. Children to your parents. Husbands and wives. Demonstrate. If you can't say, there is something wrong. Don't just say that you can't express it.

'know the truth': Its not just subjective, because it's also true of 'all who know the truth'. There is a truth to be known! What is truth?

Truth is contentious. People think religious fundamentalism always leads to terror... like after 911. It depends on the fundamental is? What if it at the very center of your fundamental is a man who died for his enemies, who when accused did not retaliate? **Our truth don't make us hate enemies, because the person we are fundamental about died for his enemies!**

We claim truth!! The bible says that truth changes us, it sets us truly free, and bears fruit – we love! **You must decide not if Christianity works for you but if it's true..**

Now Jesus makes some radical claims about the truth: He is truth, and it sets free! 8.32

How does it set us free? In day to day life we often cover up to hide our weaknesses. We know that when we tell the truth it's hard but so liberating. And Spiritually, it's the same. The truth comes and tells us that we are wicked sinners, (ok the truth is out) but that we are loved and saved! So the gospel is very liberating. Can you see it's implications?

Now this truth is revealed in God's Word. And what did we learn last week? The greatest revelation of God's word is Jesus. (John 14.6: I am the way, the truth and the life).

'abides in us .. forever': Because Jesus is the truth, it's not simply something that we know in an academic way, but the truth is actually bound up in the person of the Son of God.

Truth is a person, not a concept! It is Christ! It is because of Christ's truth – that He really is who He claimed to be – that we are transformed by Him. Therefore truth is primary for the Christian. Christian truth results in love since it is both an internal force and an external reality.

John 15.4: What happens as we abide? It transforms us and we bear his fruit. As our lives are built on truth, we discover our purpose and life for which we were created.