

2 John 4-6 | Walking in the Truth
Redemption Hill Church | Simon Murphy
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Recap: There is truth, that lives with us and will last forever, and we are loved in that truth.

2 John 4-6: I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it.

This passage has three components: Walking in truth, loving people, and God's commands. John says walk in truth, then show truth's main fruit (love) then here's how to do it (commands).

'rejoiced greatly': Paul writes about this, most memorably in 1 Thessalonians 2.19-20 and 3.8. We delight when people walk in truth because they are walking with God. This is a pastor's life and aim, for his people. *'Present everyone perfect in Christ' Col 1.28 (Email Example)*

'walking in the truth': He is concerned with living out the truth. **Galatians 2.14.** The gospel reveals truth about God and us which reorders our lives. **It's not just "don't lie"**. Col 2.6 "As you have put on Christ, so walk in Him". **It must redefine your life! Your goals, methods, motives, what you give your time and attention to, way you treat people etc.**

This also means walking in the light, **being honest about our sin / failings**. Jesus says 'worship in Spirit and truth' (John 4.23). "Surely you delight in truth in the inward being" Ps 51.6

However not everyone does. 'some' Attending church doesn't make us Christians. We are saved by Jesus, not church. Our hearts are the key. Love Him? **Asian culture: Save face** so we try to look good but it can't be at truth's expense. Pharisees had 'truth' but no love.

The main way we know we're walking in truth and not hypocrisy is that we love others. He's says 'truth is not alone'. This is not theoretical, because **truth is first and foremost a person**, not a body of doctrine that God himself is bound too. God is truth.

'love one another': This is the main point. It's the thing that he is most concerned with. Love is the greatest fruit (1 Cor 13: 'the greatest').

This is not a new commandment but one they've had from the beginning, from Jesus' commands (Matt 22.37). **Though it's a simple commandment, it's really hard to follow.** We are called to **love our enemies**. Some people are hard to love.

But, you may ask, 'how is love the fruit of truth?' Thought truth divides? **There are three ways:**

1. It shows us what true love is (it's the model of perfect love):

God's love was all giving - nothing in return. Selfless love, not eros or phileo. It's love for our sake, not His. It shows us how we are to love our enemies.

2. You can only love God's way if you are free, and only truth sets free.

You may ask 'do I need to be a Christian to love?' Can't I just follow God's good example? No! Idolatry and loving people are in sharp conflict.

Idols enslave us because they become something we devote allegiance too, and when they get threatened we come under threat (our identity is wrapped up in them). Loving people

means we come second, only possible when we are free and loving God. Else we want to protect ourselves. Therefore worshipping God our identity is wrapped up in Him. Can never be threatened. When we are freed in God, satisfied in Him alone with no idols.

3. The truth is personal

It's truth about us – deeply affecting. Earthquake in Monrovia? Or held up at gunpoint.

‘this is love, that we walk ... His commandments’: Here is how we walk in love! It's somewhat surprising!

What does it mean to walk in these commandments? To love the Lord is to obey Him in every detail of his will – expressed in his commands. This is why Paul summarizes in **Romans 13.10**: 'love is the fulfilling of the law'. **Startling!**

God is love, therefore his commands are good. **Love is the outworking of the commands.** **Matt 7** says that the law is summed up in love (ie it's aim is that we love) and **Matt 22** says it hangs on love.

So what does it mean to love? Jesus says 'love your neighbour as yourself'.

The focus is not whether that person is an enemy of friend, but that we desire their good as we desire our own. Every personal longing you have for your own safety, security, peace, success and happiness we must feel for others as though they were me!

This undercuts our self preserving, self seeking, self exalting humanness.

Unbelievers: if you feel that loving God, loving people, obeying all of God's commandments are not perfectly compatible, you have missed the truth.

Why should we love people? We show the greatness and the glory of God (Matt 5.16).

Conclusion: John is showing us how godliness, holiness, loving people, learning truth are not independent goals we must pursue. They are indeed one and the same thing!

As we pursue Christ we become more like Him, as we become like Him we see truth, it cuts us, humbles us, makes us real, less hypocritical, love others more, deepens our love for Christ. Christianity is one glorious circle of loving God with all of our hearts and see every other fruit coming to bear in our lives.

Let us pursue Christ at all costs – let us find our joy and satisfaction in him, and love with flow.