

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

2 John 1:1-3
Lesson #26
Truth and Love
07/03/2022

2 John 1

“1 The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I **love in truth**; and not only I, but also all who know the **truth**, 2 for the sake of the **truth** which abides in us and will be with us forever: 3 Grace, mercy and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in **truth and love.**”

General Observations

1. “**Chosen lady and her children**” - may refer to the church (Eph.5:25-33, Jn.3:29) but it is unclear.
2. “**Truth & love**” are at the **heart of Kingdom life** both in the church and in the world.
3. “**Truth & love**” are the **foundation** of the exhortations and warnings that preceded and will follow in John’s teaching.
4. “**Grace, mercy, & peace**” are the fruit of “**truth & love**”.



Which is the greatest challenge?

Defending the truth?
Demonstrating love?
Doing both together?

test cases:
Abortion
Homosexuality
Gender roles
Theological systems



Truth

Is not just being “honest” but rather is “**the Word and Way of the Cross**”.

John 14:6

“**I am the way, and the truth**, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.”

John 14:17

“that is the **Spirit of truth**, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him”

John 17:17

“Sanctify them by Your **truth**. Your word is **truth.**”

John 8

“31 If you abide in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; 32 and you shall **know the truth**, and **the truth shall make you free**”

Love

Is not just a warm feeling but rather “**agape**” **self sacrificing service.**

1 John 3

“18 Little children, let us not **love** with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. 19 **We shall know by this that we are of the truth**, and shall assure our heart before Him,”

1 John 4:8

“The one who does not love does not know God, for **God is love.**”

Be warned:

- Don't focus on TRUTH **without LOVE.**
- Don't equate TRUTH with winning debates over Biblical rules **rather than acquiring wisdom.**
- Don't equate the Word of God with the inerrancy of the Bible **more than its message and living model (Jesus).**



The truth cannot be known and is hard to spread apart from LOVE.

6

“Fundamentalism has fallen into the error of textualism, which is simply orthodoxy without the Holy Spirit - “Bible taught” but not “Spirit taught.”



A.W. Tozer

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Truth and Love

1. - are the **tools of our ministry** in building the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 4

“15 but **speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

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Truth and Love

2. - are the **power of our witness** to this world as alien / ambassadors.

1 Peter 2:12

“**Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles**, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

Hebrews 12

“14 Pursue **peace with all men**, . . . 15 See to it that no one **comes short of the grace of God**; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;”

9

Truth and Love

3. - should **guide us** through civil discourse as spiritual aliens in secular culture.

Romans 12:18

“If possible, so far as it depends on you, **be at peace with all men.**”

Matthew 22:21

“**render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's**; and to God the things that are God's.”

1 Peter 2:17

“**Honor all people**, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”

10

Jeremiah 29:7

“Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.”

11

1 Peter 2

“11 Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. 12 **Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles**, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

12

1 Timothy 2

“1 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, **so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.** 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,”

- Christian ethics start with the **disposition of the heart** toward peace with both God and man.
- Christian are not called to **conquer or curse** others in the name of Jesus but to **cherish & care** for them.
- At the heart of ethical civil service is the **preservation of personal dignity and rights.**

13

1 Corinthians 5

“9 I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; 10 **I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world**, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would have to go out of the world. . . . 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? 13 But those who are outside, God judges.”

- Christians are to be in the world without being of it or **demanding that it conform** to Christian moral standards (without the Cross).
- As salt and light - **wet the appetite and show the way.**

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Points of tension among Christians



- Is the Kingdom of God to be expressed through the church (New Covenant) or the nation (Old Covenant)?
 - What does it mean to be a spiritual alien?
 - Is Christian nationalism a goal?
 - Is America a “Christian nation”?
- Is secular legislation to be based on “general” revelation “nature’s God” (common to all) or “special” revelation (Christian doctrine)?

15



Public policy



- When should public policy and law in a secular state reflect Christian doctrine? **When it reflects the common sense of the people or natural law.**
- Is it possible and reasonable to be pro-life personally and pro-choice politically? **YES, in the same way it was possible for Jesus’ disciples to pay taxes to Caesar and be true to God.**
- Christians fail to respect American Caesar when:
 1. They try to impose special revelation on the state.
 2. They fail to apply general revelation to the state.

16

"Senator, when you took your oath of office, you placed your hand on the Bible and swore to uphold the Constitution. You didn't place your hand on the Constitution and swear to uphold the Bible."

Jamie Raskin, as a law professor testifying to the Maryland State Senate in 2006.

17

John 18:36

“**My kingdom is not of this world.** If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”

What does this suggest we do in response to moral legislation?

Do we make peace or disturb it?

18

Truth and Love

4. - will demand **respect for cultural contexts** which may call for differing applications.

Matthew 19

“7 They said to Him, “Why then did Moses command to *give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?*” 8 He said to them, “**Because of your hardness of heart, Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way.**”

19

Truth and Love

5. - are **modeled** in the life of Jesus and the Apostles.

John 3

“16 For God so **loved the world, that He gave** His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

“17 For **God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world**, but that the world should be saved through Him.”

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Conflict is an opportunity for Christians to respond with wisdom and grace as peacemakers.



1 Cor. 13:4-7

Love is a response to:

- patient
 - kind
 - not jealous
 - does not brag
 - is not arrogant
 - does not act unbecomingly
 - does not seek its own
 - is not provoked
 - does not take into account a wrong suffered
 - does not rejoice in unrighteousness
 - rejoices with the truth
 - bears all things
 - believes all things
 - hopes all things
 - endures all things
- trials
 - insults
 - success of others
 - success of self
 - power and authority
 - freedom
 - competition
 - challenging confrontation
 - injustice
 - failure of others
 - gossip and slander
 - loss
 - doubts
 - discouragement
 - delayed expectations

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James 1:19

Listen with empathy
Speak with humility
Act with rationality

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The Word of the Cross

The path to Resurrection Life starts and ends with a Cross.

The Way of the Cross

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