UBTC Mongolia/CIC Dr. Rick Griffith

9 June 2016/3 July 2016 *The Gospel in NT Emails Series* Message 2 of 4

NLT 40 Minutes

**Limits to Love**

Title

***2 John***

**Topic:** Love

**Subject:** How can you live out the gospel?

**Complement:** Live the gospel by not aiding those who hinder the gospel.

**Purpose:** The listeners will protect themselves and others from heresy.

# Introduction

### Interest: It’s a lazy Saturday afternoon and you’re catching up on a few projects around the house. Then a knock comes at the door. You open it to discover two Jehovah's Witnesses. After talking a few minutes, they say to you, “It sounds like you have a keen interest in spiritual things. Can we hear more from you and tell us our understanding?” In such a situation, would you invite them inside your home? Why or why not?

• JWs

Case Study

#### We often vote with our hands, but today I want you to vote with your feet, walking to a certain part of the room.

• Right group

#### Please get into the right group: those who would keep them out move left, those who would let them in move to the right side of the room, and those who need more information or feel it depends on certain factors move to the back. Ready, vote!

• Podium & 3 options

#### Why are you in that group? Tell those around you for the next minute.

#### Please take your seats now.

### We are talking about the gospel—and how we respond to it.

Gospel

#### Most of us are here today because we believe Jesus died for our sins, was buried, and came alive again. Paul calls this the “good news” in 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

Circle

#### The gospel is supposed to change lives.

Sunset

### Need: Why doesn’t the gospel change our lives like it should?

#### The gospel is supposed to change lives, showing us how to respond in a difficult situation such as dealing with false teaching.

#### In such a situation, how does the gospel tell us to respond?

### Subject: How can you live out the gospel? How do you act in a way that really honors God—especially when faced with heresy right in your face?

Subject

### Background: The first century had challenges threatening the very existence of the faith.

Context  
(4 slides)

#### The context of 2 John is a small email amidst late NT writings.

#### Chief of all the challenges at this time was Gnosticism—a heresy that denied either the full humanity of Jesus or the full deity of Christ—both through a so-called “secret knowledge” that only some had.

Gnostics  
• 2 types

Hidden  
(6 slides)

### Preview: John wrote a woman to help her see how to live out the gospel in this difficult context. He told her two ways to respond in light of this very tough situation where the gospel was being compromised.

Woman  
(4 slides)

### Text: Today we will see how to live out the gospel in the “email” of 2 John!

Subject

(How can you live out the gospel?)

# I. Aid true teachers (1-6).

MP

[Support those advancing the truth.]

## We must support both truth and love in balance.

Balance

## Let’s see how love and truth are in balance in verses 1-6.

### John greets a woman and her children with an emphasis on truth and love to prepare them for his warning on overemphasizing love by helping false teachers (1-2).

1-2

#### The Apostle John, the leader of the Ephesian church, identifies himself in a short epistle in the latter years of his life that the recipients might know that the contents have the stamp of apostolic authority (1a).

#### An anonymous recipients woman and her children are affectionately greeted in love and truth to emphasize John's basis for his love, and they are kept anonymous probably to protect them from more severe persecution should the letter fall into the wrong hands (1b-2).

##### The recipients, a woman and her children, are kept anonymous probably to protect them from more severe persecution if the letter fell into the wrong hands (1b).

##### The recipients are affectionately greeted in love and truth from John and other believers to emphasize that John's basis for his love was God's truth so that the woman might know that her response to his limits on love are to protect the truth (1c-2).

###### John expresses not only his love for the woman based upon truth but reminds her that all who know God love her too since true love is based upon truth (1c).

###### John declares that his love is based upon the eternal, indwelling truth of God which all Christians share so that the woman might know that her response to his limits on love are to protect the truth (2).

### John commends the woman for the obedience of her children in order to buffet his later correction with this word of sincere appreciation (3-4).

3-4

#### John notes that God's blessings always come in both truth and love to stress this balance as preparation for his teaching to follow on how love must be limited by truth (3).

#### John had joy from the woman's children living the truth, thus letting her know of his high esteem for her in order to buffet his later correction with this word of sincere appreciation (4a).

#### The woman's children please not only John but God the Father by their obedience, which would serve to encourage her that God was pleased with her life as well (4b).

### John exhorts the woman to practice the truth through a life of love shown in obedience so that she won't think by his later comments that he is discouraging love altogether (5-6).

5-6

#### John notes that God has always expected those who fear Him to love one another so that his later statements won’t be misunderstood as discouraging love altogether (5).

#### A life of love is the same as it always has been–obedience to God's commands (6).

## Hospitality was a priority in the early church, commanded in other NT texts and in *The Didache*, which was the earliest Christian writing outside the NT.

Subject

Hospitality  
(12 slides)

(How can you live out the gospel? Positively, aid true teachers. Now, negatively, you can live out the gospel when you…)

MPI

# II. Avoid false teachers (7-13).

MPII

[Withdraw your support from those who fight against the gospel.]

## We must not support heretics (7-11).

7

### False teachers who deny that Christ is incarnate God are numerous, deceptive and totally against Christ, so the woman should consider how she may be supporting such men (7).

### John cautions the woman not to lose her rewards by aiding or believing false teachers’ heresies to encourage her to please God by remaining steadfast in doctrine (8-9).

8-9

#### Believers can lose the rewards that they have earned for the Judgment Seat of Christ to cause the woman to consider whether her aid to false teachers really receives God's blessing (8).

#### Rewards can be lost when believers go beyond orthodox teaching by adhering to heresy without God's approval, so she should please God by remaining steadfast in doctrine (9).

### (10-11) John warns that a Christian must never encourage the spread of heresy by inviting false teachers inside one’s home or even greeting them to stress how the woman's love must have discerning limits based upon the truth of the gospel.

10-11

#### A Christian must never invite false teachers inside one’s home or even greet those who propagate destructive heresies, so this woman's love must be discerning and have limits (10).

10-11

#### Anyone who even greets a proselytizing false teacher encourages him in his heresies and helps promote his evil work, so the woman must see she is aiding Satan's workers (11).

##### This is the key verse in 2 John.

Key Verse

##### Scholars disagree on its meaning.

Options

##### John cautions “too good to be true” theology.

“Too good”  
(8 slides)

###### Joyce Meyers

###### Oprah Winfrey

###### Joel Osteen

###### World Vision shows how to repent.

### The book chart moves us to the final section (12-13)…

## Follow up relationally (12-13).

12-13

### John wants to clarify his teaching about discerning love by a personal visit which is better than a letter and would result in a joyful time rather than a list of stern regulations (12).

### John sends greetings from her nephews and nieces to end in an affectionate way (13).

Subject

(How can you live out the gospel?)

# Conclusion

### Live the gospel by not aiding those who hinder the gospel (MI).

MI

### How can you live out the gospel (MPs)?

MPI

(12 slides)

#### Aid true teachers (1-6).

MPII

(9 slides)

#### Avoid false teachers (7-13).

### Exhortation

#### How do Christians aid heresy?

How do we aid?

#### What kind of teaching is fighting against the gospel in your midst?

Rewards

(36 slides)

#### Are you losing your rewards?

Watchtower

#### You are a watchtower, so don’t contribute to or encourage any false religion.

# Preliminary Questions

**Verses Questions**

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

# Questions

# Tentative Subject/Complement Statements

Text

# Possible Illustrations

### Text

# Possible Applications

### Text

**2 John**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Limits to Love** | | | | |
| **Aid True Teachers** | | | **Avoid False Teachers** | |
| **Verses 1-6** | | | **Verses 7-13** | |
| **Walk in Commandments** | | | **Watch for Counterfeits** | |
| **Positive** | | | **Negative** | |
| **Demonstrate Truth** | | | **Defend Truth** | |
| **Greeting in Truth and Love**  **(1-3)** | **Children’s Obedience Commended**  **(4)** | **Exhortation to Love**  **(5-6)** | **Prohibition to Help False Teachers**  **(7-11)** | **Expected Visit & Greetings**  **(12-13)** |
| **Ephesus** | | | | | |
| **AD 85-95** | | | | | |

**Key Word: Limits**

**Key Verses: “Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your home or welcome him” (2 John 9-10).**

**Summary Statement: John exhorts *limitations to love* for a Christian woman and her children who show hospitality to missionaries but need warning not to extend the same to false teachers to warn against *aiding the spread of destructive heresies.***

**Application: Don’t contribute to or encourage in any way Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses or any other false religion.**

**2 John**

**Introduction**

**I. Title**: The Greek title (’Iwa.nnou b , *Second of John*) follows the standard practice of naming the General Epistles after their authors and distinguishes this epistle from John's two others.

**II. Authorship**

A. External Evidence: The Church has long viewed this epistle as penned by the Apostle John, leader of the church of Ephesus in Asia Minor and author of the Gospel, 1 John, 3 John and Revelation.

B. Internal Evidence: The designation “the elder” (v. 1) has always been considered another designation for John until the rise of liberal scholarship. Themes such as love (vv. 1, 3, 5, 6), joy (vv. 4, 12; cf. 1 John 1:4), truth (v. 4), and antichrist (v. 7) bear remarkable resemblance to emphases in 1 John and the Gospel of John.

**III. Circumstances**

A. Date: Most scholars believe that John recorded this epistle about AD 90, although nothing in it excludes an earlier date (see 1 John notes). Thus it was written in about AD 85-95.

B. Origin/Recipients: John invested the final years of his ministry in Ephesus, which makes this capital of Asia the likely origin. The letter is addressed to the “chosen lady and her children” (v. 1), which has caused some debate as to who really is being addressed.

1. Some believe the title is a personified form for a local church, citing the following arguments:

a. No personal names are found in the epistle—either for the woman herself, her children or her nephews (in contrast to 3 John).

b. The literary form which addresses nations, cities, and churches as female personages is common in the Bible (“the daughter of Zion” for Israel; “the bride of Christ” for the church in Eph. 5:29f.; 2 Cor. 6:2f.; “she who is in Babylon” for a church in 1 Peter 5:13).

c. “The greeting in verse 13 is more natural if sent from one church to another than from a group of people to their aunt by means of a third party” (Guthrie, 892).

d. John often referred to the people in the church as “children” (1 John 2:12, etc.).

e. Nothing is known in the New Testament of a woman named *Eklecta* or *Kyria*—the Greek titles for “chosen” and “lady” which some see as the woman’s name.

f. The lady was known not only by John, but by “all who know the truth” (v. 1), which is more probable if it refers to a community than to a woman.

g. The subject matter regarding false teachers matches that of a church more than that of an individual, “although this might have been equally necessary for a prominent private person in the habit of entertaining visitors freely” (Guthrie, 892).

h. The predominant use of the second person plural (vv. 8, 10, 12) suggests a composite community more than a family.

i. The “new commandment” (v. 5) “has more point if applied to a community rather than to the narrower limits of a family circle” (Guthrie, 892).

2. The Virgin Mary who resided in Galilee (Knauer's view cited by Barnes, 1501).

3. An anonymous woman and her children are addressed (v. 1), who probably opened their home for church services and housed traveling preachers. This more literal view depicting an actual woman in a local church is probably preferable for several reasons:

a. Her children are mentioned (vv. 1, 4) and “the reference to the lady's children is quite intelligible if these were by now grown up” (Guthrie, 891).

b. She may have been named *Eklecta* (“chosen”) or more likely *Kyria* (“lady,” a popular proper name for Christian women [although only in later times]; cf. Barnes, 1501) as the Syriac and Arabic versions translate it as a proper name

c. Possible grammatical constructions include “the Elect Lady,” “an Elect Lady,” “Eklecta the Lady,” “The elect Kyria,” and “Eklecta Kyria.”

d. This better distinguishes between the woman herself and her children (physically or spiritually). If the “lady” is the church, then who are the “children”?

e. If the “lady” refers to the leader of the church then it would be odd to refer to the leader of a church by a feminine title.

f. The New Testament pattern for addressing churches is to refer to them by name.

g. The woman's name may have been kept secret to protect her from persecution.

h. It’s best to follow the literal sense unless it doesn’t make sense (it does here).

i. The woman's nephews and nieces (v. 13) make good sense taken literally.

j. Adopting the literal meaning better accounts for the reluctance of some of the early Christians to use this epistle. “A private letter written to a lady would not seem of sufficient importance to receive canonical status” (Guthrie, 893).

C. Occasion: Before the New Testament writings were completed and circulated among the early believers, the churches had to rely upon traveling preachers and teachers for truth. Since inns were unsafe and few in number, these teachers stayed with Christians. A question with which many struggled was, “How could someone know *which* teachers to allow into his/her home?” John answers this question in this epistle where he pointedly commands a hospitable woman to “put limits on her love” by refusing to house false teachers or to encourage them in any way.

**IV. Characteristics**

A. This letter is the second shortest book in the Bible (3 John is slightly shorter; cf. p. 306).

B. This is the only NT letter addressed to a woman.

C. Verse 10 is the most controversial part of this letter. The issue is whether false teachers should be allowed to: (1) stay in believer's homes, (2) enter their homes, or (3) neither. The third view is the normal interpretation so that believers are not involved in promoting false teaching even in the slightest sense. See the study on pages 302-4 for different views on this subject.

**Argument**

John’s second epistle warns a woman zealous in hospitality against providing lodging to false teachers so she wouldn't help spread their destructive doctrines. His greeting balances truth and love to illustrate this point (vv. 1-3), followed by a commendation of the woman for her love (v. 4) balanced with the importance of truth (vv. 5-6). Next follows the main teaching of the letter, which warns her to demonstrate her love with discerning limits by refusing hospitality to false teachers (vv. 7-11). A conclusion follows (vv. 12-13).

**Synthesis**

**Limits to love**

**1-6 Aid True Teachers**

1-3 Greeting in truth and love

1a Author

1b-2 Recipients

3 Blessing

4 Commendation for children's obedience

5-6 Exhortation to love

**7-13 Avoid False Teachers**

7-11 Prohibition to help false teachers

7 Heresy defined

8-9 Rewards lost for aiding heresy

10-11 Never aid heresy

12-13 Expected visit/greetings

**Outline**

**Summary Statement for the Book**

**John exhorts *limitations to love* for a Christian woman and her children who show hospitality to missionaries but need warning not to extend the same to false teachers to warn against *aiding the spread of destructive heresies.***

**I. (1-6) John encourages a woman in both truth and love to prepare her for his later rebuke.**

A. (1-3) John greets a woman and her children with an emphasis on truth and love to prepare them for his warning on overemphasizing love by helping false teachers.

1. (1a) The Apostle John, the leader of the Ephesian church, identifies himself in a short epistle in the latter years of his life that the recipients might know that the contents have the stamp of apostolic authority.

2. (1b-2) The recipients, a woman and her children, are affectionately greeted in love and truth to emphasize John's basis for his love, and they are kept anonymous probably to protect them from more severe persecution should the letter fall into the wrong hands.

a. (1b) The recipients, a woman and her children, are kept anonymous probably to protect them from more severe persecution if the letter fell into the wrong hands.

b. (1c-2) The recipients are affectionately greeted in love and truth from John and other believers to emphasize that John's basis for his love was God's truth so that the woman might know that her response to his limits on love are to protect the truth.

1) (1c) John expresses not only his love for the woman based upon truth but reminds her that all who know God love her too since true love is based upon truth.

2) (2) John declares that his love is based upon the eternal, indwelling truth of God which all Christians share so that the woman might know that her response to his limits on love are to protect the truth.

3. (3) John notes that God's blessings always come in both truth and love to stress this balance as preparation for his teaching to follow on how love must be limited by truth.

B. (4) John commends the woman for the obedience of her children in order to buffet his later correction with this word of sincere appreciation.

1. (4a) John had joy from the woman's children living the truth, thus letting her know of his high esteem for her in order to buffet his later correction with this word of sincere appreciation.

2. (4b) The woman's children please not only John but God the Father by their obedience, which would serve to encourage her that God was pleased with her life as well.

C. (5-6) John exhorts the woman to practice the truth through a life of love shown in obedience so that she won't think by his later comments that he is discouraging love altogether.

1. (5) John notes that God has always expected those who fear Him to love one another so that his later statements won’t be misunderstood as discouraging love altogether.

2. (6) A life of love is the same as it always has been–obedience to God's commands.

**II. (7-13) John warns the woman not to help false teachers to help her see love’s limits.**

A. (7-11) John warns the woman to protect the truth by not assisting false teachers who deny that Christ is God become man to stress how love must discern with limits.

1. (7) False teachers who deny that Christ is incarnate God are numerous, deceptive and totally against Christ, so the woman should consider how she may be supporting such men.

2. (8-9) John cautions the woman not to lose her rewards by aiding or believing false teachers’ heresies to encourage her to please God by remaining steadfast in doctrine.

a. (8) Believers can lose the rewards that they have earned for the Judgment Seat of Christ to cause the woman to consider whether her aid to false teachers really receives God's blessing.

b. (9) Rewards can be lost when believers go beyond orthodox teaching by adhering to heresy without God's approval, so she should please God by remaining steadfast in doctrine.

3. (10-11) John warns that a Christian must never encourage the spread of heresy by inviting false teachers inside one’s home or even greeting them to stress how the woman's love must have discerning limits based upon the truth of the gospel.

a. (10) A Christian must never invite false teachers inside one’s home or even greet those who propagate destructive heresies, so this woman's love must be discerning and have limits.

b. (11) Anyone who even *greets* a proselytizing false teacher encourages him in his heresies and helps promote his evil work, so the woman must see she is aiding Satan's workers.

B. (12-13) A personal visit to clarify about false teachers is better than a letter so John hopes to see the woman and sends greetings from her sister's children to end this serious letter affectionately.

1. (12) John wants to clarify his teaching about discerning love by a personal visit which is better than a letter and would result in a joyful time rather than a list of stern regulations.

a. (12a) John has more teaching on the delicate subject of responding to false teachers but expresses that a letter was not the best means to communicate this so that the woman might know that he would further clarify the nature of discerning love later.

b. (12b) John expresses a desire for a personal, face-to-face visit which would better clarify his teaching and result in a joyful time rather than a list of stern regulations.

2. (13) John sends greetings from her nephews and nieces to end in an affectionate way.

**The Meaning of 2 John 10**

**A Study of How to Respond to False Teachers**

**Translations**

1. “ … do not take him into your house or welcome him” (NIV).

2. “ … do not receive him into *your* house, and do not give him a greeting” (NASB).

3. “ … receive him not into *your* house, and do not bid him God speed” (KJV).

4. “ … do not receive him -- do not accept him, do not welcome him *or* do not admit him -- into

[your] house or bid him Godspeed *or* give him any encouragement” (Amplified).

5. “ … don't have him inside your house; don't even greet him” (J. B. Phillips).

6. “ … don't even invite him into your home. Don't encourage him in any way” (Living Bible).

7. “ … don't take him into your home or greet him “ (Beck).

8. “ …you must stop welcoming him to your house and stop bidding him good morning” (Williams).

9. “ … stop receiving him into your house. And stop giving him greeting” (Wuest)

10. “ … do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting” (Revised Standard Version)

11. “… stop receiving him into [your] house and stop saying a greeting to him” (my translation)

12. “… mhV lambavnete aujtoVn eij” oijkivan kaiV caivrein aujtw'/ mhV levgete” (Greek).

**Interpretive Issues**

1. Definition: The lexical (dictionary) meaning of caivrein (caivrw) is twofold (BAGD 873-74):

a. “rejoice, be glad” (e.g., Romans 12:15a “Rejoice with those who rejoice…”).

b. used as a formula of greeting--

1) as a form of address, often on meeting people… “welcome, good day, hail (to you), I am glad to see you,” sometimes (e.g., Hermas) “how do you do?” or even the colloquial “hello”… “good morning”; … “greet someone, bid someone the time of day” 2 John 10f.

2) elliptically at the beginning of a letter… “greetings” (James 1:1).

2. Parallel Passages: The word is used in the sense of “b.” above in 2 John 10 but also in…

a. “Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, '**Greetings**, Rabbi!” and kissed Him (Matt. 26:49)

b. “… They put a staff in His right hand and knelt in front of Him and mocked Him. “**Hail**, King of the Jews!” they said (Matt. 27:29b).

c. “Suddenly Jesus met [the women after His resurrection]. '**Greetings**,' He said. They came to Him, clasped His feet and worshiped Him” (Matt. 28:9; cf. Mark 15:18; John 19:3).

d. “The angel went to her [Mary] and said, '**Greetings**, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you” (Luke 1:28).

3. Tense Usage: The use of the present imperative tense here has either of two possibilities:

a. Iterative: repeat an action at successive intervals or whenever the occasion arises; i.e., “whenever a false teacher comes don't receive him into your house” (cf. J. A. Moulton, *Grammar of the New Testament Greek*, Vol. 1, Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1908, 125).

b. Prohibitive: a command to discontinue an action already going on; i.e., “stop receiving him into the house” (Eugene Van Ness Goetchius, *The Language of the New Testament*, New York: Charles Schribner's Sons, 1965, 263).

c. Therefore, John wrote the woman given to hospitality to immediately stop demonstrating hospitality to false teachers (which could only occur the next time she had opportunity to encourage them in their propagation of their false gospel).

**Notes from Commentaries Allowing Entrance Into Homes**

1. John Stott makes three key observations on 2 John 10 (*The Epistles of John*, 213-14). I agree with “a.” and “c.” but show my disagreement with “b.” in brackets []:

a. “John is referring to teachers of false doctrine, not merely to believers in it… Christians may certainly welcome and entertain someone who holds false views, and will seek to bring him to a better mind. It is those who are engaged in the systematic dissemination of lies, dedicated missionaries of error, to whom we may give no encouragement.”

b. “John's instruction may well relate not only to an 'official' visit of false teachers, but to the extending to them of an 'official' welcome, rather than to private hospitality [because]:

(1) “this letter was addressed, to a church, not to an individual [But verse 1 says it was written to a woman and her children!], and

(2) “the phrase *if there come any unto you* (plural, *humas*) describes the anticipated visit of a false teacher (or group of them, verse 7) to the church in question… They had left the church where John was . . . but had evidently not yet arrived where the recipients of the Second Epistle were” [but if this were true why didn't John specifically say, “There are some false teachers en route to you from our area . . .”? Also, the plural “you” obviously refers to the woman and her children in verse 1 since a church is nowhere mentioned in the letter].

(3) “John's order [is] not to *receive him . . . into your house*, which is literally 'into the house' (RSV). Which house? Of course he may mean that every Christian house was to be closed to the false prophets. But may it not be that John was referring to 'the house' . . . in which the church met for worship?” [Of course, the woman's house probably was also the same place believers met for worship–besides this, should false prophets be banned from church services but welcomed into private homes?]

NOTE: Stott contradicts this whole second argument (b) when he writes concerning (3) above, “How then can we make him welcome in our home or church or wish him well on his journey?” (p. 214).

c. “John is referring to teachers of false doctrine about the incarnation, and not to every false teacher.” [Here Stott brings up a good point: those in view are first of all *teachers*, and second, they are *not* divergent in a *small* issue (e.g., a different perspective on baptism, church structure, divorce, etc.) but a *big* issue–whether Jesus is indeed God in the flesh].

2. F. F. Bruce writes, “The injunction not to receive any one who does not bring 'the teaching of Christ' means that no such person must be accepted as a Christian teacher or as one entitled to the fellowship of the church. It does not mean that (say) one of the Jehovah's Witnesses should not be invited into the house for a cup of tea in order to be shown the way of God more perfectly in the sitting-room than would be convenient at the doorstep” (*The Epistles of John*, 142).”

Therefore, the above authors believe that the verse prohibits false teachers from a teaching ministry in the church. In this view, it does not prohibit believers from showing hospitality to false teachers within their own homes.

**Notes from Commentaries Denying Entrance Into Homes**

1. “For their hospitality and keep [traveling Christian preachers] depended upon the generosity *of the members* of the church. Such hospitality was not to be offered to preachers with a false message; it can be taken for granted that they were not to be allowed to minister in the church [emphasis mine]” (Marshall, *The Epistles of John*, 74).

2. “Do not receive such a teacher as one who can justly claim the privilege of Christian hospitality as a brother” (Westcott, *The Epistles of St. John*, 231).

3. “Neither the local church *nor the individual* believer are to have any fellowship whatsoever with those teaching erroneous views which deny the person and work of Christ [emphasis mine]” (Robert Weldon Wilson, “An Exposition of Second and Third John,” Th.M. Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1955, 36).

**Summary of the Differing Views:**

**Can False Teachers**. . .

**View *Stay* in Believers Homes? *Enter* Believers' Homes? Adherents**

1 Yes Yes John R. Stott

F. F. Bruce

2 No Yes Stanley Toussaint

3 No ? I. Howard Marshall

B. F. Westcott

Robert Weldon Wilson

4 No No Rick Griffith

**Views Explained**

1. False teachers can stay overnight with believers and can be invited to enter the private homes of believers because the command prohibits them only from church services (Stott, Bruce)

2. False teachers should never stay overnight with believers *but* can be invited to enter the private homes of believers for a chat (Toussaint, Dallas Seminary)

3. False teachers should never stay overnight with believers but the question of staying inside for a few minutes is not addressed (Marshall, Wilson, Westcott)

4. False teachers should never stay overnight with believers *and* should never be invited to enter the private homes of believers (Griffith). In my opinion, this is the natural sense to the expression, “Do not take him into your house or welcome him.” Anyone who invites a heretical teacher into his house even for a few minutes has welcomed false teaching into the home.

**Limits to Love**

***2 John***

**Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)**

# *Exegetical Idea*: The purpose John exhorts *limitations to love* for a Christian woman and her children who show hospitality to missionaries but need warning not to extend the same to false teachers was to warn against *aiding the spread of destructive heresies.*

# *Exegetical Idea*: The way to live out the gospel is to show hospitality to true missionaries but limit that love by *not* *aiding false teachers.*

# I. The way John encouraged a woman to live out the gospel was to encourage her to live in both truth and love (1-6).

## John greets a woman and her children with an emphasis on truth and love to prepare them for his warning on overemphasizing love by helping false teachers (1-3).

### The Apostle John, the leader of the Ephesian church, identifies himself in a short epistle in the latter years of his life that the recipients might know that the contents have the stamp of apostolic authority (1a).

### An anonymous recipients woman and her children are affectionately greeted in love and truth to emphasize John's basis for his love, and they are kept anonymous probably to protect them from more severe persecution should the letter fall into the wrong hands (1b-2).

#### The recipients, a woman and her children, are kept anonymous probably to protect them from more severe persecution if the letter fell into the wrong hands (1b).

#### The recipients are affectionately greeted in love and truth from John and other believers to emphasize that John's basis for his love was God's truth so that the woman might know that her response to his limits on love are to protect the truth (1c-2).

##### John expresses not only his love for the woman based upon truth but reminds her that all who know God love her too since true love is based upon truth (1c).

##### John declares that his love is based upon the eternal, indwelling truth of God which all Christians share so that the woman might know that her response to his limits on love are to protect the truth (2).

##### John notes that God's blessings always come in both truth and love to stress this balance as preparation for his teaching to follow on how love must be limited by truth (3).

## John commends the woman for the obedience of her children in order to buffet his later correction with this word of sincere appreciation (4).

### John had joy from the woman's children living the truth, thus letting her know of his high esteem for her in order to buffet his later correction with this word of sincere appreciation (4a).

### The woman's children please not only John but God the Father by their obedience, which would serve to encourage her that God was pleased with her life as well (4b).

## John exhorts the woman to practice the truth through a life of love shown in obedience so that she won't think by his later comments that he is discouraging love altogether (5-6).

### John notes that God has always expected those who fear Him to love one another so that his later statements won’t be misunderstood as discouraging love altogether (5).

### A life of love is the same as it always has been–obedience to God's commands (6).

# II. The way John encouraged a woman to proclaim the gospel was to warn her not to help false teachers (7-13).

## A. John warns the woman to protect the truth by not assisting false teachers who deny that Christ is God become man to stress how love must discern with limits (7-11).

### False teachers who deny that Christ is incarnate God are numerous, deceptive and totally against Christ, so the woman should consider how she may be supporting such men (7).

### John cautions the woman not to lose her rewards by aiding or believing false teachers’ heresies to encourage her to please God by remaining steadfast in doctrine (8-9).

#### Believers can lose the rewards that they have earned for the Judgment Seat of Christ to cause the woman to consider whether her aid to false teachers really receives God's blessing (8).

#### Rewards can be lost when believers go beyond orthodox teaching by adhering to heresy without God's approval, so she should please God by remaining steadfast in doctrine (9).

### (10-11) John warns that a Christian must never encourage the spread of heresy by inviting false teachers inside one’s home or even greeting them to stress how the woman's love must have discerning limits based upon the truth of the gospel.

#### A Christian must never invite false teachers inside one’s home or even greet those who propagate destructive heresies, so this woman's love must be discerning and have limits (10).

#### Anyone who even greets a proselytizing false teacher encourages him in his heresies and helps promote his evil work, so the woman must see she is aiding Satan's workers (11).

## A personal visit to clarify about false teachers is better than a letter so John hopes to see the woman and sends greetings from her sister's children to end this serious letter affectionately (12-13).

### John wants to clarify his teaching about discerning love by a personal visit which is better than a letter and would result in a joyful time rather than a list of stern regulations (12).

#### John has more teaching on the delicate subject of responding to false teachers but expresses that a letter was not the best means to communicate this so that the woman might know that he would further clarify the nature of discerning love later (12a).

#### John expresses a desire for a personal, face-to-face visit which would better clarify his teaching and result in a joyful time rather than a list of stern regulations (12b).

### John sends greetings from her nephews and nieces to end in an affectionate way (13).

**Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)**

The listeners will protect themselves and others from heresy.

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)

# Introduction

### Interest: How would you act in our case study to show how the gospel is supposed to change lives?

### Need: Why doesn’t the gospel change our lives like it should?

### Subject: How can you live out the gospel?

### Background: Gnosticism threatened the very existence of the first century church.

### Preview: John gave a woman two ways to live out the gospel in this difficult context.

### Text: Today we will see how to live out the gospel in the “email” of 2 John!

(How can you live out the gospel?)

# I. Aid true teachers (1-6).

## We must support both truth and love in balance.

## Read verses 1-6.

## Hospitality was a priority in the early church.

## How would you respond to this case study?

(How can you live out the gospel? Positively, aid true teachers. Now, negatively, you can live out the gospel when you…)

# II. Avoid false teachers (7-13).

## We must not support heretics (7-11).

## Follow up relationally (12-13).

(How can you live out the gospel?)

# Conclusion

### Live the gospel by not aiding those who hinder the gospel (MI).

### How can you live out the gospel (MPs)?

#### Aid true teachers (1-6).

#### Avoid false teachers (7-13).

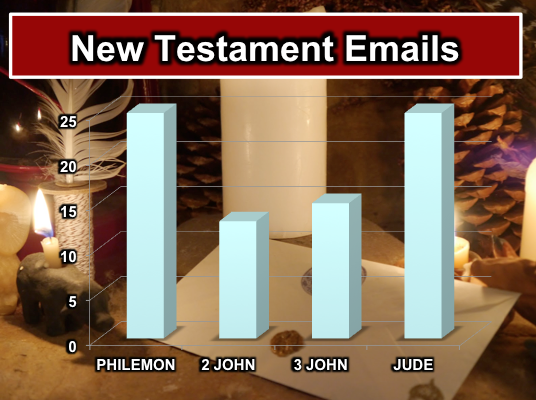
### Exhortation

#### How do Christians aid heresy?

#### What kind of teaching is fighting against the gospel in your midst?

#### Are you losing your rewards?

#### You are a watchtower, so don’t contribute to or encourage any false religion.



**Rick Griffith**

3 July 2016

Message 2 of 4

**Limits to Love**

***2 John***

# Introduction

### How would you act in our case study to show how the gospel should change lives?

### How can you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the gospel?

### Gnosticism threatened the very existence of the first century church.

# I. Aid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ teachers (1-6).

## We must keep both truth and love in balance.

## Hospitality was a priority in the early church.

# II. Avoid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ teachers (7-13).

## We must not support heretics (7-11).

## Follow up relationally (12-13).

(How can you live out the gospel?)

# Conclusion

### Live the gospel by not aiding those who \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the gospel (Main Idea).

### Questions to Answer

#### How do Christians aid heresy?

#### What kind of teaching is fighting against the gospel in your midst?

#### Are you losing your rewards? How?

**Thought Questions**

1. Read 2 John aloud. Contrast what John says about love and truth:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Love** | **Truth** |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |

1. Have you ever seen a Christian lose what he worked so hard to achieve (v. 8)? When?

Text

Text

1. How should your own Christian experience change in order not to aid heresy?

Text