



## Truth Matters... So Learn the Truth!

Lesson 9 • 2 John 12-13

Big Idea	The Message of 2 John: Truth Matters in a World of Lies! LONG for the Truth and Make it a PRIORITY in ALL of LIFE!			
Sections	Truth Matters to God's Elect Leaders & Churches [Truth and True Believers in the Church] 1-6		Truth Matters in a World of Lies & Liars [Truth and False Teachers in the World] 7-13	
Truth & Abiding	Walk in the Commandments <i>Prove the Truth Abides in You by Loving and Obeying!</i>		Watch for the Counterfeits <i>Prove You Abide in the Truth by Being Inhospitable to Error!</i>	
Truth & Loving	Truth Promotes Love for One Another		Love Protects Truth with One Another	
Lesson	LOVE by the Truth! 1-3	LIVE in the Truth! 4-6	LOOK OUT for the Truth! 7-11	LEARN the Truth! 12-13
Focus	Truth's PROVISION	Truth's PURPOSE	Truth's PROTECTION	Truth's PURSUIT

Truth Matters: So Become LIFE-LONG Learners of Sound Doctrine!

*The best defense is a good offense!*

*"Though I have many things to write to you, I do not want to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that your joy may be made full. The children of your chosen sister greet you." 2John 12-13*

The Truth Matters as the Measure of Authentic Christianity, Churches, and Christians			
1 John	Written in General to Churches and Christians	The Truth Measures Authentic Christianity.	<i>Principles for the Universal Church</i> No Single Church or Specific Person
2 John	Written to a Local Church	The Truth Measures Authentic Churches	<i>Personification of a Local Church</i> The Elect Lady and Her Children
3 John	Written to an Individual Christian	The Truth Measures Authentic Christians.	<i>People in a Local Church</i> Gaius and Demetrius versus Diotrephes

### Three Ways to Pursue the Truth as Life-Long Learners

#### 1. Learn to DISCERN the deceptive ways of false teachers and false teaching.

*"Though I have many things to write to you..." 2John 12*

##### Learn to Discern the Degrees of Error

- False teaching is *more than* SCHISM. 1Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:1-4; 11:17-19; 12:25; 2Corinthians 12:20

Division and strife due to carnal, immature, or self-righteous thinking and/or behavior coupled with a major lack of love and Christlikeness.

**"DIVIDED (Schism)"** = the condition of being divided because of conflicting aims or objectives, *division, dissension, schism*

**"FACTIONS (Heresies)"** a group that holds tenets distinctive to it, *sect, party, school, faction*

**"STRIFE"** = Engagement in rivalry, especially with reference to positions taken in a matter, *strife, discord, contention*

- False teaching is *more than* **ERROR**.

A wrong interpretation or belief or even behavior that is not consistent with or contradicts the truth revealed in the Bible.

1) Error of **BELIEF**: Apollos' Error in Instruction (would also include Interpretation) – *Acts 18:25-28*

2) Error of **BEHAVIOR**: Peter's Error in Application – *Galatians 2:11-14*

- False teaching is a subtle **DISTORTION** or outright **DENIAL** of the Truth that is taught as if it is true.

Greater than *error* in that the wrong interpretation ***relates to a fundamental of the faith or major doctrine and is taught to others as being consistent with the truth***. Not everyone who holds to or even passes on false teaching is a false teacher. The issue is one of motivation and intentionality: Is the issue ignorance or arrogance? Are they simply self-deceived or intentionally seeking to deceive others?

Learn to Discern the Mathematics of Heretics

- **ADDING** to the truth. *Revelation 22:18*
- **SUBTRACTING** from the truth. *Revelation 22:19*
- **DIVIDING** the truth. *2Timothy 2:15; 3:16-17*
- **MULTIPLYING** errors and doubt regarding the truth. *2Timothy 3:16; 2Peter 1:20-21*

Learn to Discern Levels of Essentials

- **UNIVERSAL** Essentials for Salvation – Everyone must believe and not deny!
- **LOCAL** Essentials for Service - Less Essential for Salvation Universally but More Essential for Service Locally!
- **PERSONAL** Essentials for Sanctification – Less Essential for Salvation and Service but More Essential for Sanctification Personally.

*"Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Jude 3-4*

## 2. Learn to **DEVELOP** your understanding of gospel essentials and sound doctrine

*"I do not want to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face..." 2John 12*

Three Ways to Develop Your Understanding of Sound Doctrine:

- Read **WRITTEN** truth in the Bible and books filled with sound doctrine.
- Listen to **SPOKEN** truth through preaching and teaching.
- Experience **SHARED** truth in community through classes (Discovery Hour) and small groups (GrowGroups).

## 3. Learn to **DEEPEN** our community (= fellowship) around the Truth and the Tests of Life.

*"but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that your joy may be made full. The children of your chosen sister greet you." 2John 12-13*

## How to Deepen Our Unity and Joy in a World of Lies and Liars

- Community based on the truth of sound doctrine **UNITES** us to the Father and His Son in the Spirit. *1John 1:3-4; 2John 1-3, 9, 12*
- Community based around the test of life **COMPLETES** our joy with one another *1John 1:3-4; 2John 1-3, 10, 13*

TESTS of LIFE	Authentic Christians Pass These Tests	False Teaching and False Teachers Fail These Tests
<b>DOCTRINAL Test</b>	They habitually <b>WALK in the TRUTH</b> as a pattern of life.	<b>Truth is Twisted.</b> <i>God's truth is subtly distorted or outright denied.</i>
<b>RELATIONAL Test</b>	They habitually <b>WALK in LOVE</b> for one another as a pattern of life.	<b>Love is Lacking.</b> <i>God's love for the local church is dismissed or deemed unnecessary or even dangerous.</i>
<b>MORAL Test</b>	They habitually <b>WALK in OBEDIENCE</b> to all of God's commands as a pattern of life.	<b>Obedience is Optional.</b> <i>Godly obedience is optional or outright rejected.</i>
<b>CHRONOLOGICAL Test</b>	They <b>PERSEVERE</b> in what they have received from the beginning as a pattern of life.	<b>Perseverance is Passing.</b> <i>Godly perseverance in truth, love, and obedience is not permanent as they distort the gospel and seek to deceive God's elect people.</i>

*"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh." Jude 20-23*

### In a World of Lies and Liars...

- 1) Some will **have doubts** and need mercy. (Issue of Truth?)
- 2) Some will **be deceived** and need to be urgently snatched from the fire of eternal judgment. (Issue of Love?)
- 3) Some will **descend into such immorality** and need much mercy from us but with fear that we too may become defiled. (Issue of Obedience?)

**We MUST LONG for the TRUTH by BEING LIFE-LONG LEARNERS of GOSPEL TRUTH in COMMUNITY!**

*And our joy will be complete in the unity of fellowship with God the Father, His Son, and His local church!*

"It is a dangerous thing to live for Christ in an atmosphere of false teaching and seductive morals. It is a hazardous thing to try to rescue men for the gospel out of such an environment. If you get too near the fire, it will burn you; if you get too near the garment stained by the flesh, it will defile you. Is withdrawal the answer, then? No. Advance against the forces of evil, face the dangers involved, so long as you are strong in the Lord's might." ~ Michael Green

*"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen." Jude 24-25*