

**A PERSONAL  
VERSE BY VERSE COMMENTARY**

**2JOHN**

**SHARON CRAVENS**

**2John 1:1 The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;**

John addresses himself (whom he identifies as the elder) to the “elect lady” and her children. When John uses the term elder to identify himself, I think it is a statement of his qualification to be able to give advice with authority based on his spiritual maturity.

As I read through this letter, it seems to me that he is addressing a friend, a sister in Christ (i.e. elect). He talks about her children, his love for her as a Christian sister, and the fact that he hopes to visit her “face to face.” He loves her “in the truth,” the truth being based on the teachings of Jesus. Then he emphasizes that this is a love in the Lord just like she is loved by other believers. (Women are so emotional and quick to read more into something than is there sometimes. It’s like he is being extra careful that she not get the wrong idea.)

**2John 1:2 For the truth’s sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.**

John goes on to emphasize that this love is possible only because of the truth that Christ taught. Love originates from God; and as believers, this love will be a part of our being forever.

**2John 1:3 Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.**

Now John comments on the blessings we have from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He also emphasizes that Jesus is the Son of God the Father. These blessings are grace, mercy and peace. I’ve always understood grace to be “being given something you don’t deserve” (the gift of salvation) and mercy as “not being given what you do deserve” (eternal judgment for your sin). Peace is a mixture of things to me—lack of anxiety based on trust in the Lord, contentment, security..... Because these blessings are based on God’s truth and love, they aren’t possibilities—they are sure blessings for the believer who is striving to please God.

**2John 1:4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.**

John refers to the joy he feels upon hearing that the testimony of her children was that they are walking according to the commands of the Father. (We should feel joy when we see fellow believers around us growing and walking with the Lord.)

**2John 1:5 And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.**

John wants this lady to know that his reason for writing is not to tell her anything new, but to reinforce a foundational teaching (one of the very first things you are taught)—that we love one another.

**2John 1:6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.**

John goes on to define what this love is—walking in obedience to the commands of the Savior. From the very beginning Christ commanded us to love one another. More than that—we are to “walk in love.” (Our way of life is to be a continual forward progress in love—selfless concern for others; looking and acting towards others as Christ would see them and treat them.)

*John 14:23 “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”*

**2John 1:7 For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.**

Now John warns his friend of the deceivers who have gone out into the world, those who would mislead others about the truth. These deceivers do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ (the Son of God) came in flesh. Another name for these people, these deceivers, these false teachers is antichrist.

**2John 1:8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.**

John warns his friend not to lose what she has worked for--referencing rewards, not salvation. (God has promised rewards for the believers who overcome in different areas.) He wants her to enjoy the fruits of her full reward (the best and most she can earn).

**2John 1:9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.**

The person who continues in sin and doesn't live according to the doctrine of Christ doesn't have God (and in my understanding never had God).

1John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

The NIV uses the term “runs ahead and does not continue.” That makes a good point to me. Running is at a much faster pace than walking. One who is running doesn't have/take the time to be as careful or observant as one who walks. One who walks has more time/ability to avoid “potholes” in the road, to better heed instructions along the way, and to absorb the beauty/truth/teaching around him/her. I think that's why we want to “walk with Christ” in our daily lives. If one tries to “run ahead,” he is more likely to stray from the path (that isn't always so clearly marked because Satan likes to ambush us in any way he can—usually using our own weaknesses to mislead us.)

A true believer is one who continues (abideth) in the teaching of the Father and the Son. This doesn't mean that we will never sin; it just means that we won't continue in sin.

**2John 1:10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed:**

Now John warns her not to welcome these false teachers into her home. (I think she must have had the gift of hospitality and was the type who expected the best from people. John was warning her that she also needed to be more discerning.)

**2John 1:11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.**

When you welcome / give support to a false teacher, you have a part in their “evil deeds.”

**2John 1:12 Having many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.**

All of a sudden John feels he has said enough for the time being. He tells her that he has much more to tell her, but he wants to come visit her and talk with her “face to face.” That will make their joy complete. Writing is fine, but there’s nothing like fellowship in the company of one you care about and being able to share the things that are important to you “face to face.”

It gives me pause to know I will one day actually see the Lord “face to face.” To feel the security and assurance that never again will I struggle with sin or doubts or inconsistency in my life. To know that my responses will always be what they should be—to know I’ll always make the right choices. To know that I and everyone around me have pure motives. To be full of joy and praise for the love of the Savior and never concerned if I’m going to “turn someone off” by expressing that feeling at any time. The thought of that first meeting carries a bit of shame as well, because even though He “remembers our sin no more” and I am seen through the cleansing power of the shed blood of Jesus, I will remember. Then I can’t wait for that first hug that I am positive will completely put me at ease in His presence for the rest of eternity. COME LORD JESUS!!

**2John 1:13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.**

John closes by sending greetings from the children of her sister in Christ. These children could be physical or spiritual and the sister could represent another church just as the person addressed could be a church. It just seems to be more personal to me.