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Watch Out for Deceivers!

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **April 26, 2015**

2 John 1:1-13

Introduction: THE authenticity of these two epistles was doubted by many in the early Christian church, and it was not before a considerable time had elapsed that their canonical authority was fully admitted. The **FIRST** of the three epistles was always received as the undoubted production of the **apostle John**; but, though not positively and absolutely rejected, there were many doubts entertained in regard to the authorship of the **second** and **third**. Their exceeding brevity, and the fact that they were addressed to individuals, and seemed not designed for general circulation, made them less frequently referred to by the early Christian writers, and renders it more difficult to establish their genuineness.

The *evidence* of their genuineness is of two kinds--**external** and **internal**. Though, from their brevity, the proof on these points must be less full and clear than it is in regard to the first epistle; yet it is such as to satisfy the mind, on the whole, that they are the production of the **apostle John**, and are entitled to a place in the **canon of Scripture**.

The canonical authority of these epistles depends on the following things: (1.) On the evidence that they are the writings of the apostle John. In proportion as that evidence is clear, their canonical authority is of course established.

(2.) Though brief, and though addressed to individuals, they are admitted into the canon of Scripture with the same propriety as the epistles to Timothy, to Titus, and to Philemon, for those were addressed also to individuals.

(3.) Like those epistles, also, these contain things of general interest to the church. There is nothing in either that is inconsistent with what John has elsewhere written, or that conflicts with any other part of the New Testament; there is much in them that is in the manner of John, and that breathes his spirit; there is enough in them to tell us of the way of salvation. Of the time when these epistles were written, and the place where, nothing is known, and conjecture would be useless, as there are no marks of time or place in either, and there is no historical statement that gives the information. It has been the common opinion that they were **written at Ephesus**, and when John was old. The appellation which he gives of himself, **"the elder,"** accords with this supposition, though it does not make it absolutely certain.

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/)

2 John 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**...*

NOTE: John the apostle, who was now a very old man, generally supposed to be about ninety, and therefore he uses the term presbyter or elder, not as the name of an *office*, but as designating his **advanced age**. He is allowed to have been the **oldest** of all the apostles, and to have been the only one who **died** a **natural death**.

This title led some of the ancients to attribute this epistle to a person called *John the*

Presbyter, a member of the Church at Ephesus; and not to John the apostle. But this is a groundless supposition.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary* classic.studylight.org/com/acc/)

NOTE: ...the elect lady is the **person** he writes unto; by whom is designed **not** the **church** of Christ, since such a way of speaking is unusual; and besides, he speaks of coming to see her **face to face**, and of the **children** of her elect **sister**: but some particular person, some rich, as well as gracious woman of John's acquaintance; and these words, "elect lady", are neither of them proper names of the person: **SOME** think that the word "Kyria", rendered "lady", was the name of the person, as "Domina" with the Romans, and answers to the Hebrew word "Martha"; for as (rm) , "Mar", signifies lord, so (atrm) , "Martha, lady"; and then the inscription runs, "to the choice" or "excellent Martha"; and the Syriac and Arabic versions read, "to the elect Kyria": and **OTHERS** think that the word rendered elect is a proper name, and that this person's name was "Electa", as "Electus" is a man's name; and then it must read thus, "to the lady Electa"; but her sister also is so called, and it can hardly be thought that **two sisters** should be both of a name; **neither** of them **are proper names**, but characters and titles of **respect** and **honour**: she is called a "lady", because she was a person of distinction and substance, which shows that God sometimes calls by his grace some that are rich and noble; and also that titles of respect and honour, where flattery is avoided, may be lawfully given to persons of dignity and wealth; so Nazianzen calls his own mother by the same title; and it was usual to call **women** by this name from **fourteen years of age**: and this person also is said to be "elect"; either because she was a choice, famous, and excellent person, not only for her birth, nobility, and riches, but for her virtue, grace, and good works;

(Source: biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/)

2 John 1:2, For the **truth's** sake, which **dwelleth (abide) IN us**, and shall be with us **for ever**.

Thought 1. In regard to the "truth" dwelling IN us "forever", I'm reminded of Jesus' words spoken in reference to the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, spoken to the apostles in John 14. Jesus told them "HE", the Spirit of truth would "dwell with them for ever." The Greek word for "dwelleth" and "abide" written in John 14 are one and the same.

John 14:16-17, And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that HE may **abide (dwell)** with you **FOR EVER**; Even the **Spirit of truth**; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but **ye know him**; for **he dwelleth WITH** you, and shall be **IN** you.

Thought 2. John's words about the "truth" dwelling IN us "forever", and Jesus' words about the "Spirit" dwelling IN us "forever" has caused some Christians to believe what's meant is "Once saved, always saved." However, there're other scriptures that make plain that the "truth" and HE, not IT, (the Spirit) will dwell with and IN "believers" as long as they are "believers" in Jesus, trusting him for (salvation) their spiritual well-being.

So, if a person who believes in Jesus departs from him through the sin of UNBELIEF, the Holy Spirit is no longer IN them and nor do they have the truth IN them anymore. But, they are again "spiritually dead", and their names are erased from the Book of Life.

Luke 8:6, 13, And some fell upon a **rock**; and as soon as it was sprung up, it **withered away**, because it lacked moisture.

...They on the **rock** are they, which, when they hear, **receive** the **word** with joy; and these have no root, which **for a WHILE believe**, and in time of **temptation (experience of evil) FALL AWAY (desert [leave permanently], DEPART)**.

1 Timothy 4:1, Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times **SOME** shall DEPART from **the faith**, giving heed to seducing spirits, and **doctrines** of devils...

Hebrews 3:12-13, Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an **evil** heart of UNBELIEF, in **departing from** the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you **be hardened** through the deceitfulness of **sin**.

Hebrews 6:4-6, For it is **impossible** for those who were once **enlightened**, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made **partakers** of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, IF they shall **FALL AWAY**, to renew them again unto **repentance**; seeing they **crucify** to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Romans 11:19-22, Thou wilt say then, The branches were **broken off**, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of **unbelief** they were broken off, and thou **standest** by **FAITH**. Be not highminded, but FEAR: For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold therefore the **goodness** and **SEVERITY** (harshness, strictness) of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward the goodness, IF thou **CONTINUE** in his goodness: **otherwise** thou also shalt be **CUT OFF**.

Faith defined 4102, pistis pronounced pis'-tis, moral conviction (of religious truth), especially RELIANCE upon Christ for salvation; abstractly, CONSTANCY in such profession.

2 Thessalonians 2:3, Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a **FALLING AWAY** first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition...

Falling Away defined 646. apostasia pronounced ap-os-tas-ee'-ah; defection (falling away) from TRUTH ("apostasy" an abandonment of what one has professed; a total desertion, or DEPARTURE from one's FAITH or religion.).

Revelation 3:5, He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not **blot out (erase)** his **name OUT** of the **BOOK** of **LIFE**, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

2 John 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.*

NOTE: This is addressed to *her*, her household, and probably that part of the Church which was more immediately under her care. **The Son of the Father** The apostle still keeps in view the *miraculous conception* of Christ; a thing which the Gnostics absolutely denied; a doctrine which is at the ground work of our salvation.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

2 John 1:4-5, *I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking (live) in TRUTH, as we have received a commandment from the Father. 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.*

NOTE: I have already supposed this Christian matron to be mother of a family, probably a widow, for no mention is made of her husband; and that she was also a **deaconess** in the church, and one in those house the travelling evangelists preached, and there they were entertained. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

NOTE: I rejoiced greatly that I found, etc. That I learned this fact respecting **SOME** of thy children. The apostle does not say how he had learned this. It may have been that he had become personally acquainted with them when they were away from their home, or that he had learned it from others. The word used (\~eurhka\~) would apply to either method. (Source: *Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/*)

1 John 3:23, And **this** is **his commandment**, That we should **BELIEVE** on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and **LOVE** one another, as he gave us commandment.

Believe defined 4100, pisteuo pronounced *pist-yoo'-o*; to have **FAITH** in, by implication, to **ENTRUST** (especially one's spiritual well-being to Christ).

Thought 1. Notice, he didn't mention any commandments written in the Law. Because of Jesus' death, a New Covenant is in force, which replaced the Old. This verse makes plain that ALL humans have a command to "entrust their Spiritual well-being" to the authority that's in Jesus, or be eternally lost. And then after believing, we believers are commanded to **CONTINUE** to believe and **LOVE** one another as he loved. (John 13:34)

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

NOTE: This is the commandment. That is, this is his great and peculiar commandment; the one by which **his disciples** are to be peculiarly characterized, and by which they are to be distinguished in the world. See Barnes " John 13:34".

(Source: Barnes' Notes on the New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bnn/

John 13:34-35, A new commandment I give unto you, that ye **LOVE one another**; AS (like) I have **loved** you, that ye also **love** one another. By this shall all men **know** that ye are **MY** disciples, **IF** ye have **love** one to another.

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

Antichrist defined 500, antichristos pronounced *an-tee'-khris-tos* from 473 and 5547; an **opponent** of the Messiah.

NOTE: Antichrist ... Of particular interest is this term, occurring here in the singular; however, it is quite clear that **no single person** is meant, from John's identification of "antichrist" with "many deceivers." In Campbell's famous debate with Purcell, Campbell did not identify "**the man of sin**" with John's "antichrist," despite the fact of Purcell's addressing his entire refutation against an affirmation which was not made by Campbell. Despite the general confusion to the effect that Paul's **man of sin** (2 Thess. 2) should be identified with John's "antichrist," there is no solid ground for this. It could be, however, that "**antichrist**," a **spirit** already **working** in John's time, should be identified with the "lawless one" to be revealed shortly before the Second Advent; for, as Paul said, "**the spirit of lawlessness**" was already working in his time also (2 Thessalonians 2:7); but neither "antichrist" nor the "lawless one" may be absolutely identified with "the man of sin," except in the sense of being an ultimate development of the **apostasy** evident in "the man of sin."

Many deceivers ...

"These were formerly members of the Church who had **apostatized** (1 John 2:19)."

1 John 2:18-19, Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that **antichrist** shall come, even now are there **many antichrists**; whereby we know that it is the last time. 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.

They confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh ... The heresy of the false deceivers was that of denying the Incarnation. Various scholars have identified such

teachers as **Docetists, Cerinthians, and Gnostics.** (Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

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

NOTE: The more deceivers and deceits abound, the more **watchful** the disciples must be. Delusions may so prevail that even the elect may be endangered thereby. **Two** things they must beware of:-- **1.** *That they lose not what they have wrought* (2 John 1:8), what they have done or what they have gained. It is a pity that any religious labour should be in vain; **SOME** begin well, but at last lose all their pains. The hopeful gentleman, who had kept the commands of the second table from his youth up, **lost all** for want of less love to the world and more love to Christ. Professors should take care not to lose what they have gained. Many have not only gained a fair reputation for religion, but much light therein, much conviction of the evil of sin, the vanity of the world, the excellency of religion, and the power of God's word. They have even tasted of the powers of the world to come, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit; and yet **at last lose all.** *You did run well, who hindered you, that you should not obey (or not go on to obey) the truth?* Sad it is that fair and splendid attainments in the school of Christ should all be lost at last.

2. *That they lose not their reward, none of it, no portion of that honour, or praise, or glory that they once stood fair for. That we (or you, as in some copies) receive a full reward.* "Secure you as full a reward as will be given to any in the church of God; if there are degrees of glory, lose none of that grace (that light, or love, or peace) which is to prepare you for the higher elevation in glory. **Hold fast that which thou hast (in faith,** and hope, and a good conscience), *that no man take thy crown*, that thou neither lose it nor any jewel out of it," Revelation 3:11. The way to attain the full reward is to abide true to Christ, and **constant** in religion to the end.

(Source: The Matthew Henry Commentary on the whole Bible classic.studylight.org/com/mhc)

2 Peter 2:20-22, For if **after** they have **escaped** the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are AGAIN **entangled** (entrap: capture) therein, and overcome, the latter end is **worse** with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, **after** they **have known it,** to **turn from** the holy **commandment** delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that **was WASHED** To her **wallowing** in the **mire.**

2 John 1:9, Whosoever transgresseth, and **abideth (continue)** NOT in the **doctrine** of **Christ,** hath not God.

He that **abideth (continue)** in the **doctrine** of **Christ,** he hath both the Father and the Son.

NOTE: The **false teachers** evidently considered themselves "**advanced thinkers,**" progressing beyond the teaching of Christ; but the apostle here denied the pretensions of such men. Whoever advances beyond the New Testament, has advanced right out of Christianity. "Our aim should be not to be advanced, but to **abide** in the **doctrine** of **Christ.**"

Many have rationalized their departure from the teachings of Jesus Christ through the vain belief that, "Theology is to God's revelation in Grace as science is to his revelation in Nature"; but it is not true that the apostles were limited in what they revealed to mankind in the New Testament. The **Holy Spirit** guided them into **"all truth,"** a fact that was much in John's mind as he wrote these letters; and those theologians who fancy that they are able to discover more and more glorious things concerning God and the redemption of human souls, than those eternal truths revealed in the New Testament, are totally and radically wrong, that being the categorical affirmation of this 2 John 1:9.

(Source: Coffman Commentaries on the Old & New Testament classic.studylight.org/com/bcc/)

1 John 5:10-13, He that **believeth** on the **SON of God** hath the **witness** IN **himself**: he that believeth not God hath **made** (**appoint** [to settle as an opinion]) him a liar; because he **believeth not** the record that God gave of **his Son**. And this is the record, that God hath given to us **eternal life**, and this life is in **his Son**. He that **hath the Son** hath **life**; and he that hath NOT the Son of God hath NOT **LIFE**. These things have I written unto you that **believe** on the **name (authority)** of the Son of God; that ye may KNOW that ye have ETERNAL LIFE, and that ye may **BELIEVE on** the **name (authority)** of the **Son of God**.

2 John 1:10, *If there come any unto you, and bring not this DOCTRINE, receive him not into your house, neither bid him **God speed (be well: -- farewell, be glad)...***

NOTE: Under the character of an apostle or evangelist, to preach in your house; *and bring not this doctrine*, that **Jesus** is **come** in the **flesh**, and has **died** for the **redemption** of the world.

Receive him not unto your house ...Give him no entertainment as an evangelical teacher. Let him not preach under your roof. **Neither bid him God speed**. *And do not say, Health to him-* do not salute him with *Peace be to thee!* The usual salutation among *friends* and those of the same religion in the east is, [Arabic] **Salam aleekum**, "**Peace be to you;**" which those of the same religion will use among themselves, but never to strangers, except in very rare cases. This is the case to the present day; and, from what John says here, it was a very ancient custom. We have often seen that peace among the Hebrews comprehended every spiritual and temporal blessing. The words mean, according to the **eastern use** of them, "Have no religious connection with him, nor act towards him so as to induce others to believe you acknowledge him as **a brother.**"

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

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

NOTE: But what St. John says here **does not** mean that we should deny such the common offices of humanity, charity, and mercy. No. In these offices we are equally bound to all men; **far less** does it intimate that we should **persecute** such on account of their heretical or heterodox sentiments. **No**. This right has God given to no man, to no Church, to no state. (Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

Galatians 6:10, As we have therefore **opportunity**, let us **do good** unto **ALL MEN**, especially unto them who are of the household of **faith**.

2 John 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.*

NOTE: That is, I have many things that I might write to thee, but I think it best not to commit them to paper, because I hope to visit thee shortly, and speak fully of those matters, which will be a means of increasing the comfort both of thee and thy family, as well as my own. There is more comfort in mutual interviews among **friends** than in epistolary (contained in letters) correspondence,

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)

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

NOTE: Probably her *own sister*, who lived at Ephesus; and, being acquainted with the apostle's writing, desired to be thus remembered to her. **Elect**, both in this and the first verse, signifies *excellent, eminent, or honourable*.

(Source: *The Adam Clarke Commentary classic.studylight.org/com/acc/*)