

**Lesson 7**  
**2 John**  
**A FAITHFUL FAMILY**

**Memory verse:** “And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.” (Romans 5:5 NIV)

The writer of this book identifies himself as the Elder. Presumably, his first readers knew exactly who he was, and from the earliest times, Christians have understood this was the Apostle John writing.

“John the apostle, who was now a very old man, generally supposed to be about ninety, and therefore 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.” (Clarke)

John probably did not name himself, the elect lady or her children by name because this was written during a time of persecution. Perhaps John didn’t want to implicate anyone by name in a written letter. If the letter was intercepted and the authorities knew who it was written to by name, it might mean death for those persons.

But we know that this elect lady was a godly mother. Some Bible students have concluded that “the elect lady” refers to a local church and that “her children” are the believers fellowshipping in the church. “Thy elect sister” (2 John 13) would then refer to a sister church that was sending Christian greetings.

While it is true that John does address a group in this letter (note the plural in 2 John 6, 8, 10, 12), it is also true that he addresses an individual (2 John 1, 4–5, 13). Perhaps the solution is that a Christian assembly was meeting in this home, along with the family of the “elect lady,” so that John had both the family and the congregation in mind (see Rom. 16:5; 1 Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Philem. 2). He was concerned that this godly woman would permit anything false to come into her house (2 John 10) or into the assembly.

We see John quite focused on the idea of truth, as he was in all of his writings. He used the word truth some thirty-seven times in his New Testament writings. This shows that what binds Christians together is not social compatibility or political compatibility or class compatibility. What binds us together is a common truth. This is why truth is important to Christians.

The apostate teachers not only invaded the churches, but they also tried to influence Christian homes. Titus faced this problem in Crete (Titus 1:10–11) and Timothy faced it in Ephesus (2 Tim. 3:6). As goes the home, so goes the church and the nation; thus the family is an important target in Satan’s war against truth.

The dominant feelings in this little epistle are those of friendship and joy, even though these are mixed with concern and warning. If you and I are to keep our homes true to Christ, then we must have the same characteristics as this family to which John wrote.

John’s closing words (2 John 12–13) are almost identical to the farewell in 3 John, and they require no explanation. They do, however, express the importance of Christian fellowship and the joy that it should bring to our hearts (see 1 John 1:4). It is wonderful to receive letters, but even more wonderful to receive God’s people into our homes and hearts.

Things to learn: 1) Importance of knowing the Truth 2) Walk in the Truth 3) Continue in the Truth

**Discussion questions:**

1) John in verses 1 to 3 urges all to know the Truth. Why is it so important? (10 mins)

2) What did John meant “to walk in the truth” and why is it necessary for believers to do so as commanded in verses 4 to 6? (20 mins)

3) As John closes the epistle, explain why from verses 7 to 11, he encourages us to abide (continue) in the faith and also warned about false teachers. (20mins)