

**INTRO:** Certainly in the world in which we find ourselves living there is a lack of the truth being expressed throughout the land and even from the pulpits of our land. We are being inundated with half-truths and outright lies and even heresy in the religious arena of today as we have taken the political correctness of the day and have brought it into the churches where ministers have become either afraid to speak the truth or intimidated into being more careful about what is said. There are still some preachers who will speak the truth, regardless of the consequences, but those are becoming less and less. In our text, we find that John is especially concerned over the person of Jesus Christ as there were some in his day that denied Jesus Christ ever came in the flesh, and even though against overwhelming testimony to the contrary, we seem to be facing a similar argument today as more and more seem to be rejecting the idea that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and came and lived on this earth in the form of a human. Most will readily admit Jesus Christ lived, there is too much evidence to discount that, but to say He was also the Son of God or to say He lived a sinless life and to understand He was more than just a mere man seems to be forbidden among some circles. Too many have now reduced His influence to just that of a good man with some pretty good morals, but His teachings are more suggestions than commandments. He desired that the children of God live in a spirit of mutual love for one another demonstrated by the love Jesus Christ had for His disciples and those that were His, but there were also warnings given to be on the alert, to be on guard for there were, even at that time, deceivers coming among the congregation of the believers teaching heresy and error and false doctrine trying to deceive the saints of God and move them away from the truth and thus destroy their relationship with God. False teaching has been around since the beginning, since the Garden of Eden, and we are warned by John to be on the alert and not to entertain or accept this error, rather to avoid it at all costs.

**A.** In the case of John's writing there was a branch of Gnosticism going around that was teaching Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh and this teaching was infiltrating the churches that John was writing to. Might just mention the "lady" that John was writing to in verse 1 of this epistle.

1. I have read commentaries that pointed to this "lady" as being an acquaintance of John and I have read where the "lady" may have simply been making a reference to the church as a whole, since the church is sometimes addressed in a feminine tone. As far as the truth that is presented here, it would not necessarily make a difference, but it would seem if this were the only two options, I would go with the church itself since there is no direct name such as given in III John.

2. The important part of this little epistle is the words presented that should be a deterrent not only to the Gnosticism of that day but also to the erroneous charismatic doctrines of our modern day cause many of these have taken the truth of God's Word and have twisted it to mean something other than what God intended or, in some cases, they have almost discarded God's Word in favor of their own programs or agendas that they consider to be important.

**B.** Much of John's writings are for combating error that was rampant in the church of his day, especially the error that was going around that Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh. He commends whoever he is writing to, whether literally or symbolically, that some of their "children" were following the truth and had not accepted the false teachings that were coming from the false prophets. This is good and as verse 6 stated, this demonstrates a love for God and His commandment as they were not easily swayed away from the truth that they had been taught.

1. However, he also gives warning here to be on the alert so as not to lose what you have already accomplished. (Calvinism refuted again as they could have lost what they once had obtained, so obviously they must have once obtained). We can see that the "love" that has to modify itself or accommodate itself to that which is truth is not love at all, but is a false love. The commandments of the Lord are true and if we think we must adjust the truth of His word that we have learned in His Word in order to fit with some man-made "dogma" that is being preached under the guise of truth, we are mistaken. If we do such a deed, we will lose what we had at one time.

2. Even in his day, John speaks about the deceivers that have gone out into the world teaching those things that were improper, erroneous and even heretical, but I would venture to say we have been experiencing the same thing for years now with some of the modern teachings that are coming from various pulpits of our land. But there are some things that cannot be tolerated and are

so "off track" that John said just to stay away from and do not even allow in your midst. For if we allow error without exposing it, we are condoning it and becoming a party to the error. So we should be able to see the importance that the Word of God places upon the "truth". There simply is no room for compromise of the "truth".

**C.** Our culture has become so used to getting what we want quickly and with little effort that we have included that in our religious activities as well.

1. Rather than a real soul-searching and abandoning sin of all kind, repentance and asking forgiveness, restitution and a changing of direction in our life, we have said all we need to do is repeat some apparently "magic" formula and we will be saved, all will be well, and we will enter heaven's gate. After all, the Bible says **"If we confess with our mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved."** But salvation is much more than just this for when a man truly believes, there are changes made in his life that changes everything about him.

2. We have taken the baptism of the Holy Spirit and reduced that to speaking in some kind of "jibber-jabber" with no purpose whatsoever.

3. We have taught that it is always God's will to heal and if we are not healed, then there must be sin in our life.

4. We have been taught that we are "God's children" and He desires us to have the best of everything, to be wealthy and financially secure and He is our own great "genie" that is simply there to fulfill our every request and desire.

5. We have been taught that going to church is not necessary cause "me and Jesus got our own thing going", so "me and Jesus" stay home, go golfing, go fishing, go visiting, or just sleep in cause He understands cause "we got our own thing".

6. And it appears that when we fall for such errors, the main thing is that "we" get what "we" want. Others are there apparently for our benefit. How many "preach" that it is God's will for our greatest desires to be fulfilled?

7. Now others have fallen for the false truth that if we volunteer, if we just "help" feed the needy, give to the poor, then God will smile upon us even though we have done nothing to change our own way of living.

8. Over the years, there have been the ideas of baptismal regeneration, the Calvinist doctrine that you have no control over your own destiny, the idea that God honors those individuals who remain celibate, faith healers that claim it is always God's will to heal, the Word Faith movement, the Age of Aquarius, the laughing revival, etc., so many errors have been propagated in the name of religion and they always have their followers that come out of the established churches. Generally cause they have never really been taught the truth enough to recognize something that is not true.

**CONCLUSION:** Certainly the Bible is so replete with warnings about false prophets and false teachings that we would be the most calloused of readers to ignore what is being said. There comes a time in your Christian walk that you must make a stand and not accept those things that are false and do not even participate in their activities for if we participate, it is the same as consenting and we are only justifying them in their false position. So many have put out the position that all religions are primarily the same, we just simply come to God in different ways -- but there is only one way, if we believe the Bible! Some claim they do not want to go to church regularly cause that is a habit and nothing more, they must not have read Hebrews 10:25. Some say I do not have to go church to be a Christian, but where there are churches available and since Jesus Christ established the church in the first place, is this really an excuse? Some believe the Bible can be understood in many different ways even though 2 Peter 1:20 begs to differ. Others believe I can take a little from this religion, a little from that and create my own philosophy of life -- Matthew 16:6-12, Colossians 2:8 say this is not true. There are false teachings abounding today, even as they were in the days of the apostles, we have been warned, we are without excuse. We have a standard, judge everything by the standard God has given us.