

Isaiah 65:11–16

When to Grieve, Not Greet

Thursday, August 22, 2024 ▪ Read 2John v7–13

Questions from the Scripture text: Who have gone out into the world (v7)? What quantity? What do they not confess? What does this reveal about them? What must the apostle's readers look to (v8)? In order not to lose what? But receive what? What about for those who transgress this doctrine (v9)? What if one does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, what doesn't he have? What if one abides in the doctrine of Christ—what (Whom!) do they have? What may happen (v10)? What two things mustn't they do to false teachers? What does someone who greets a false teacher share in (v11)? But who greets them (v12)? In hopes of doing so in what manner? Who else greet them (v13)?

Why is the truth about Jesus so important? 2John v7–13 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these seven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the truth about Jesus is crucial, because lies about Jesus will keep you from having Jesus Himself.**

Joy augmented by grief, v7–8. One more reason for John's great rejoicing in v4 now appears. After having to deal with so many deceivers, it must have been a great joy indeed to find sound believers! How the apostle must have grieved over those who did not confess Jesus as God, Who has added humanity to Himself. These "antichrists" are not satisfied to believe falsely by themselves. Twice, v7 warns that they are "deceivers," and v8 warns the church to which John is writing, "Look to yourselves." Someone who seems to have believed, if he turns from the true doctrine of Christ, shows that he has believed "in vain" and has never believed or been justified (cf. 1Co 15:2).

Deadly Christology (or lack of it), v9. Christians are to abide, to remain, to dwell, to live in the true teaching about Christ. Indeed, Christians are to abide in Christ Himself, but if they do not abide in the true doctrine of Christ, then any "christ" in whom they dwell will be a figment of their imagination and not the Redeemer.

Many who begin to quibble about His divinity, or corrupt the truths about either His one divine personhood or His two complete, distinct, united, but unconfused natures... they question what the big deal is. Others who lack love for Him and interest in Him feel a moral superiority over those who are "too intensely" theological about Jesus. But v9 teaches us the big deal: it's about whether we have the Son and the Father. And there can be no bigger deal.

How the deadly disease spreads, v10–11. Why does the apostle teach this shunning? Isn't it unkind?! What is truly unkind is welcoming, encouraging, or expressing fellowship with someone who comes as if a Christian, but with wrong doctrine about Christ. John says that doing so gives you a share in his evil deeds. He has seen how Christians were lulled into tolerating Christ-denying, God-denying, soul-destroying heresy by other believers' toleration. Among excommunicants (cf. 1Co 5:9–13), the wolves (false teachers, cf. Mt 7:15) must especially be rejected and avoided (cf. 2Pet 2:1–3). By failure to do so, how many Christians have been sadly and subtly destroyed these twenty centuries!

One happy antidote, v12–13. The apostle now returns to the mutual delight and joy that he has with them as true believers. There's much more that he could write (v12), but he'd prefer the fuller joy for both of them that comes from greeting one another face to face. Greeting one another, taking delight in one another, is an important part of how God uses us in one another's lives. The members of the church that John is with at the time therefore send greetings with him back with those members who have so delighted them (v4). What we are not to do with the false teachers is precisely the thing we should seek to do as much as possible with one another!

With what false teachers/believers should you being careful not to associate? How do you bring the true doctrine of Christ into your thinking, praying, and conversation? What true believers do you take delight in, and greet, and encourage face-to-face as much as God gives you opportunity?

Sample prayer: Lord, forgive us for how tolerant we have been with those who claim to be Christians but do not confess Jesus Christ as God who has come in the flesh. Forgive us for how careless we have been to guard our own theology and that of others. We have worried so much about being friends to antichrists that we have sometimes acted as enemies of believers' souls. But You have guarded us in Your kindness, and atoned for our sin, and given us Your Spirit. Forgive us and cleanse us and grow us, and give us great fellowship with true believers, we ask through Your Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP197 "Christian Unity" or TPH406 "Jesus, with Thy Church, Abide"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

2, John verses 7 through 13. These are God's words. For many deceivers have gone out into the world, who did not confess. Jesus Christ is coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Look to yourselves that we do not lose things. We worked for But that we may receive a full reward.

Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ. Does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ as both. The father and the son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this Doctrine, Do not receive him into your house. Nor greet him.

For he who greets him shares in his evil Deeds. Having many things to write to you. I did not wish to do so with paper and ink, but I hope to come to you and speak face to face. That our joy may be full. The children of your elect sister greet you.

So far the reading of gods inspired and inerrant word last week in the first half of this little letter. We noticed that the Apostle, John rejoiced greatly When he found some members of this church to, which he is writing, walking in the truth. Loving one another as Christ has loved us in doing so.

Particularly in the knowledge that Christ is the son. That the father has commanded us to hear him. Differently than we hear any other Prophet. And he says, this is my beloved Son, hear him and he classes, Jesus above all men. And all merely human prophets. As represented at that time by Moses and Elijah on the Mount of transfiguration.

And now we find out one of the reasons why the Apostle had rejoiced so greatly. When he found some of these church members walking in truth, And that is because he has had much grief. When you have had the Grievous experience of running into many people, Who profess Christianity?

But they don't know Christ. They don't know that. He's God, come in the flesh. In fact, they think differently and they consider themselves to be respectable. Christians and argue for how they can be quote unquote, respectable Christians without believing that about the Lord Jesus. And you realize about That they have no spiritual life.

They don't have the father, they don't have the son, they don't know the Redeemer. Anything that looks. like love for the Brethren is not more than common decency or the restraint that common Grace can put Upon a man's sinfulness. And it's a great grief, indeed. To encounter someone.

Who has been? Deceived. And a greater grief to encounter someone who is deceiving others. So verse 4 connects to verse seven. I Rejoice greatly that I found some of your children walking in the truth. For many deceivers have gone out into the world. Who do not confess Jesus Christ.

That's coming in the flesh. Now, why are we? Insistent upon having good christology or christology at all. There are some, why do you make such a big deal out of theology theology? At all. Well, the reason to make a big deal out of theology, the reason to make A big deal about christology in particular who is Jesus that he is the second person of the godhead.

He is. God come in the flesh to save us is because if you do not have Christ. If you do not abide in the doctrine of Christ, verse 9 says, you do not have God. Well, how do we know that you don't have God? Well, because he who abides in the doctrine of Christ, he who confesses that Christ is in the flesh, he has God But you look at the parallel in verse 9, the counterpart to not having God is to have both the father and the son.

And so if you are lacking the father or the son, or the spirit, You do not have God. Any God who is not the Triune God? Any God, who is not the one who has revealed himself in the Lord? Jesus Christ is a figment of men's imaginations. He is not the true and living God.

The true and living God is the Triune God. Who became a man, the Lord Jesus Christ. God, the son became a man. In order to save, And not just that we might have forgiveness of sins. Although that is wonderful and necessary. Not just so that we might cleanse and be made.

Holy, although, that is wonderful and necessary. But that as those who are forgiven and those who are cleansed, we might have the father and the son. And so, Quite deadly. To lack christology, or to have a false. Christology. And, That which was deadly, that which was Grievous. Realizing that God's name was being blasphemed by many who did not acknowledge Christ, realizing that many thought that they Were saved, while they are still perishing.

It was a great grief. To the Apostle. And now he warns them against something. With the implication that this is how the deadly disease. Of false Theology and false christology spreads. He says, if anyone comes to you and does not bring this Doctrine Do not receive him into your house.

Nor greet him for he who greets him shares. In his evil Deeds. Well what are the evil Deeds? The evil Deeds are being deceiver and Antichrist from verse 7. And the Apostle commands, what people call shunning The fossil commands acting upon responding rightly to the excommunication of Who do not have the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

God, the son, having come in the flesh, And he says, if you receive him into your house, if you even greet him If you treat him as if he was a Believer if you give him the affection, that is due to a Believer. What you do is you give validity You give false validity to his wrong position as if someone could hold to his theology.

Without being as lost as the devil. And then what you have is theology like his spreads And you have more and more people who are calling themselves Christians but they're lost as the devil. They have neither, the father. Ignore the song. And so, the Apostle doesn't just say, it doesn't just warn against having the theology.

He warns against receiving him into your house. He warns against greeting him, he tells you, yes, you may not be spreading the same exact theology that he is, and the way that he is, but if you greet him You share in his evil Deeds.

And so, The grief of the Apostle over these others which contrasts the great joy that he has in those who are True, Believers, In verse 4. Is used by the Holy Spirit to give us under divine inspiration. This instruction. For what to do with someone. Who has a false Theology of Jesus and has made it known.

That he has a false theology. Of Jesus and evidently you're even to ask people. It seems to be implied. When that when John ran into these people who were calling themselves Christians, he examined them more closely. To make sure they had the doctrine of the Trinity to make sure they had the doctrine of the Divinity of Christ so that he could send a report to their home church about how greatly he rejoiced.

To find these walking in the truth. Because It has not always been great rejoicing. When he heard that someone was a quote unquote Christian. Sometimes it has been to great grief. And so he warns them. Not to bring such a person into their house, not to welcome such a person to their house or even greet them.

And then he gives again the antidote. That True Believers. Those who believe the doctor of the Trinity, those who believe the Divinity of Christ, those who are keeping the Commandment of Christ, not just as a merely human Prophet. But as God, the son, who has become a man to be our Prophet priest and King, Such people.

You ought to welcome. You ought to greet. You ought to eagerly desire to see each other. Face to face. Just as Closes in verse 12 with his own desire, there are many things that he might have written. And we actually have a shorter Bible. Because God, the Holy spirit has given us everything that we need for Faith and practice without some of these many things.

So that he might have the joy of the fellowship. Of the Believers speaking to them face to face that his and their Joy might be full verse 12 and those who are Genuine Believers church, members of true churches, ought to greet one. Another similarly verse 13, not the whole church that John is with at the time is going to be able to come to the church to which he is writing and from which he has found these members, and which he hopes to come soon.

And so they send their greetings, of course. with the Apostle verse 13. And so this is a happy antidote. To the grief that we have over false Christianity in the world. Is the joy that we have over genuine Christians. Who are in the world. Praise God. Let's pray.

Our gracious God and our heavenly father. We thank you. For your word. We thank you how for how it addresses? In places where we would so easily be mistaken and go astray by our flesh. And to Think, or say that which is harmful. Forgive us O Lord for our many sins, protect your church From false thinking about Jesus from false Christianity.

In which there are those who think that they are Christians, but are still in their sin and have neither. You our father, nor your son? Our Lord Jesus. And so we pray for the help of your spirit and his Spirit. That he would come and keep us walking in the truth that we might have you and your son.

In his name also we pray, amen.