

A MINISTER'S JOY (2 John 1-6)

I. A description of the lady.

- A. John first describes himself as an older man.
 - 1. John wrote this near 90 AD.
 - 2. This would put John at nearly 90 years of age.
- B. He then addresses the congregation as an elect lady.
 - 1. Election is a biblical term.
 - 2. God elected a certain group of people to be saved and that group is comprised of those who have been added to the Lord's church through baptism.
- C. He loves this congregation genuinely and truly.
 - 1. He loved this congregation because of her faithfulness to the truth.
 - 2. And this faithfulness was known by other Christians.
- D. What words of praise for a congregation.
- E. If John were writing us a letter, could he say that he loved us because of our faithfulness and that faithfulness was known to others in the kingdom?
- F. Could we be described like this faithful congregation?

II. The dwelling of truth.

- A. The reason for John's love and the love of other congregations is the fact that truth dwelt in this congregation.
 - 1. John didn't love them because they were more attractive or nicer than any other congregation.
 - 2. He loved them because they had the truth abiding in them as did he.
- B. This is a reason for all Christians to love each other.
 - 1. We have the truth dwelling in us through our study of the word of God.
 - 2. We can't love in truth if we don't love the truth.
 - 3. When God's word dwells in us, it shows others that we love the truth.
 - 4. Those that love the truth also love those who love the truth.
- C. These people had allowed the truth to take up residence in their lives - this is the meaning of the word dwelleth.
 - 1. It was a constant companion to them.
 - 2. No wonder their love for the truth was known to all.
- D. John reminds them that living this way will allow the truth to be with them forever.
 - 1. When one loves the truth and allows it to take up residence in his heart, this person is changed.
 - 2. He is not going to leave the truth, but it will stay with him forever because of his great love for it.
 - 3. He will handle it properly and use it in every area of his life.
- E. Again, could John write a letter to us telling us that he knew we had the truth dwelling in us?

III. The desire of the apostle.

- A. John desired grace, mercy and peace from God for these brethren.
- B. Grace is the unmerited favor of God.
 - 1. Jesus is the embodiment of this grace.
 - 2. He came even though we did not deserve Him.
 - 3. John wanted his readers to abide in God's grace.
- C. Mercy is defined by Strong's as "good will toward the miserable joined with a desire to help them."
 - 1. You and I were miserable in sin and still battle it.
 - 2. God showed His good will and a desire to help us by sending Jesus.
 - 3. You and I will always need God's mercy because we will always battle sin and temptation.
 - 4. God has shown His great desire to help and still provides help by allowing us continual access to the blood of Jesus.
- D. Peace is knowing one is right with God.
- E. All of this comes from God and Christ and no other source.
- F. The place for these three to be found and maintained is in truth and love.
 - 1. For us to have these three things in our lives, we must stay in the truth and walk in love.
 - 2. When we fail in either of these two categories, we miss out on the grace, mercy and peace of God and Christ.
- G. John desired for his readers to stay in the truth and love God, Christ and the brethren in order for them to continue to have God's grace, mercy and peace.
- H. The same is true for us today.

IV. The delight of the apostle.

- A. John had come into contact with members of this congregation and rejoiced because they were faithful to Christ.
- B. For any minister, this is a great joy.
 - 1. James Coffman wrote of attending a retreat in California and coming into contact with two people that he had baptized over 40 years ago.
 - 2. He mentioned what great joy it brought him to know that they were still faithful to Christ.
- C. The word "walking" carries the idea of habitual action.
 - 1. It was part of their every day conduct.
 - 2. This only happens when the truth dwells in us.
- D. When we are traveling, could it be said of us by someone we met that it brought them joy to see us being faithful?
 - 1. Sadly, for many Christians this probably would not be the case because so many fail to meet with the saints when they are traveling.
 - 2. Apparently, many of us think that when we are on vacation we get to have a vacation from worshiping God.
 - 3. We still owe God our presence while traveling.

E. It delighted John that these Christians were indeed faithful servants of God.

V. The demand of the apostle.

A. John reminds the congregation to continue in love.

B. This is something that John has repeatedly stressed in his writings.

C. When we love, we fulfill the law of Christ.

D. Someone may ask, "How do we show that we love?"

1. John answers that for us by saying that it means we keep the commandments of God.

2. No doubt, John had in mind the statement of Jesus, "If you love me, keep my commandments."

E. If we love God and the brethren, we show it by doing what God asks of us.

F. This is a common theme in the writings of John.