

1, 2, 3 JOHN
THIS IS THE LIFE
SMALL GROUP STUDY #11
“BAD COMPANY CORRUPTS...”
2 John

Ice Breaker: Of all the friends you’ve ever had, which one tended to get you into the most trouble? To the extent you feel you can, give some details of how they were a bad influence on you.

INTRO:

2 John was written to warn believers about false teachers who were spreading anti-Christian propaganda in the 1st century. He puts a so much emphasis on truth and love that it seems they are the antidote to being deceived. John’s message to his original readers is the same for us: be discerning and careful about what you allow into your mind and home.

READ: 2 John

1 *The elder,*

*To the chosen lady and her children, whom I **love** in the **truth**—and not I only, but also all who know the **truth**— 2 because of the **truth**, which lives in us and will be with us forever:*

*3 Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father’s Son, will be with us in **truth** and **love**.*

*4 It has given me **great joy** to find some of your children **walking** in the **truth**, just as the Father commanded us. 5 And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. **I ask that we love one another.** 6 **And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands.** As you have heard from the beginning, **his command is that you walk in love.***

*7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 **Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for**, but that you may be rewarded fully. 9 **Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God**; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 **If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him.** 11 **Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.***

12 I have much to write to you, but I do not want to use paper and ink. Instead, I hope to visit you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete.

13 The children of your chosen sister send their greetings.

Q: Who is John writing this letter to?

- No one knows for sure. It could be a particular woman, but most scholars think it is a church.

Q: How many times does John use the words “truth” and “love” in the first 6 verses?

- (5 times each)

Q: Why do you think John is so concerned about truth and love?

- Truth and love make for balance.
 - Eph. 4:15; *“Instead, **speaking the truth in love**, we will in all things **grow up** into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.”*
- Truth can be unflattering... even painful. Because of this, people often compromise on telling the truth.
 - Some people have no problem speaking the truth, but lack love.

Q: According to verse 4, what gave John great joy?

- What is the difference between *walking* in the truth and simply *knowing* the truth?
 - James 1:22 *“Do not merely listen to the word, **and so deceive yourselves**. Do what it says.”*

Q: What central truth does John emphasize in verses 5-6?

- **When we love each other, we are loving God.**

Q: In verse 7, John warns there are many deceivers in the world. He gives two signs (vs. 7 and 9) to identify deceivers by. What are they?

Q: According to verse 8, what will happen to those who are influenced by deceivers?

- **They can lose what they have worked for.**

Q: According to verse 9, those who run ahead and don't continue in the teaching of Christ don't have God. What would be an example of running ahead?

- **It could include embracing any doctrine not found in the original teachings of Christ and His apostles.**

Q: What does John say in verses 10-11 that strengthens his warning?

- What present-day applications do you see in these instructions?
- Would this also apply to various forms of media and entertainment? If so, how?

APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. How are you doing at walking in truth and love?
2. What do your relationships with other disciples tell you about your love for God?
 - a. What do your relationships with those are not disciples tell you about your love for God?
3. What can you do to develop discernment concerning what influences you “take into your house or welcome”?