



LOVE LETTERS

A Study Through 2 & 3 John

Nov 3 - Nov 10





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A STUDY

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LOVE LETTERS

John is known as the apostle of love. He writes us a new commandment, to love one another. It is new because the call to love that Jesus not only demanded but also demonstrated is radically different from the world. He calls us to love our neighbors, even or evil ones. He calls us to love the strangers, even those who have oppressed us. He calls us to love our enemies and to pray for them. And He teaches us that true love is life-giving...that love is demonstrated when we lay down our lives for others.

But John also writes us an old command, to love one another. It is old because God is love and God was there in the beginning, therefore God's command to love has been among us as long as creation, for Adam to love the earth and his wife and his children and most importantly God. In fact, the entire Old Testament can be summarized with just one word, "love." Love God. Love people. Love.

Love is a popular idea today. Love has become god. But the Bible reminds us that God is love, not that love is god. Unfortunately, when the world uses the word, "love," today it means something quite different from what the Bible teaches or what Jesus lived.

Love is tender (Do you love me) and tough (Get behind me Satan). Love is freeing and restricting. Love rends and binds up. Over the next few weeks we will listen to the Apostle of love teach us about love through the lens of truth and hospitality. It is my hope that we as a body learn to love the truth, that we seek the truth, and that we speak the truth...in love! It is my hope that we as a body learn to love strangers and neighbors in our homes as we open it to practice radically ordinary hospitality.

Learning to love with you,

TJ



Love Letters

Personal Truth

Week 1

November 3, 2019





Prepare your Heart

In the movie, "Couples Retreat," one of the main characters, Dave (Vince Vaughn), gets a little defensive during a counseling session and blurts out, "I know my truth." That's an interesting phrase that I have heard with increasing frequency over the past several years. Know your truth. Speak your truth. Live your truth. Don't let anyone infringe upon your truth.

Of course, this is not a new idea, that truth is relative, that truth is fluid, that objective truth does not matter. David Hume once encouraged humanity to take every book that is not mathematical or sense-perceptible and "commit it then to the flames: for it can contain nothing but sophistry and illusion." Even Pontius Pilate said to Jesus, "What is truth?"

Truth, it seems, has always been as elusive to catch as the wind. But what if truth wasn't an idea? What if truth wasn't some subjective experience or emotion? What if truth wasn't something to make us feel better about ourselves and our choices, but something to confront us to conform to some greater standard? What if truth could be not only known, but touched, reasoned with, and even seen? What if truth was a person?

This is what John wants us to come to understand, for Jesus is "the way, the TRUTH, and the life." Jesus didn't just speak truth; He didn't just live truth; He was (AND IS) truth come in the flesh and made known to us.



Scripture

Read 2 John privately and write down your personal thoughts on this short book.

Discoverable

- Read verse 1
- What are ways people search for truth today?
- Why do some people believe that truth can not be known?
- John teaches that knowing truth creates unity even among strangers (I love in truth...also all who know the truth). Share a time when you experienced this reality.
- Read John 8:32 and 14:17. Discuss how, as Christians, knowing truth is much more than mental knowledge.

Eternal

- Read verse 2
- Why are people so hesitant to believe that truth is always true at all times in all places?
- What are the practical outworking of John's teaching that truth will be with us forever?
- In what ways have our current culture not abided in truth?
- How does eternal truth bring you comfort?



Loving

- Read verses 4-5
- Give some examples of people walking in truth but not in love.
- Why are we so afraid that loving sinners will lead to compromising the truth?
- Give examples of people walking in love but not in truth.
- Give examples of how Jesus lived both truth and grace (John 1:14)?
- What does it look like to walk in love and truth in your marriage, church life, work relationships, parenting, neighborhood, etc?
- Which do you struggle with most, truth or love?

Besieged

- Read verses 7-11
- What area of truth is John most concerned with (what are the essentials)
- John calls us to "watch ourselves," Why?
- What are some practical ways we can watch ourselves?
- John speaks of deceivers who will lead people astray. What are some present examples of these deceivers?
- John encourages us to "abide in the teachings of Christ," what does that look like practically?
- Why does John warn us not to receive a deceiver (antichrist) into our home or even greet him? (See also 1 Cor. 4:9-13)
- What are some ways we might unintentionally give commendation to deceivers and antichrists (See also Matthew 18:6-7)?



Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another. Pray for the power to be both truth and love that you might point people to the Truth!

Prayer Requests

Praise Reports

