

One Chapter Wonders: 2nd John

Introduction to this Bible study (Pathways course description):

Singers or musical groups who have recorded only one recognizable song in their career are sometimes referred to as “one hit wonders.” In the Bible we might adjust and apply that phrase to those books of Scripture that consist of only a single chapter. There are five of them: Obadiah in the Old Testament, and Philemon, 2nd John, 3rd John, and Jude in the New Testament. While they may be short in length, like all of God’s Word, they are long in truth, and there is much we can learn from them. In this 6-week Bible study we will examine what God has to teach us through each of these “One Chapter Wonders.”

General Overview

- The letters of John: Who? What? When? Where?
- *The Bible Project*

The Backstory

- Portrait of John
- Life in the early church: house churches and itinerant missionaries

A Closer Look: Verse by Verse Exposition

¹ The **elder**,

To **the lady chosen by God** and to **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 I say this because **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 we^{am} 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 them into your house or welcome them.** ¹¹ **Anyone who welcomes them shares in their 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 sister**, who is chosen by God, send their greetings.

Romans 15:4: What is God Teaching Us Through This One Chapter Wonder?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Related Issues, Applications and Discussion Items

1. *What is your first and/or general impression of 2nd John? When and under what personal conditions could you see yourself turning to it?*
2. *John mentions “truth” five times in the first four verses. With what does he associate truth later on in this letter? Discuss the difference between the Christian’s and the unbelieving world’s view of truth, and how this can be a starting point in witnessing our faith.*

3. *The other word John mentions (four times) is “love.” Discuss the difference between the worldly concept of love and the Christian definition of love.*
4. *John uses the term “antichrist.” How does he define the term? Discuss this terminology in light of other Bible references and confessional Lutheran teaching.*
5. *What insight are we given on how we are to interact with those who embrace and promote non-Christian teachings?*
6. *Explain the difference between “heresy” and “heterodoxy.”*

Big Picture Portrait of John

1. **Family information**
2. **Discipleship – inner circle**
3. **Temperament and personality**
4. **Relationship to Jesus**
5. **Pillar of the early church**
6. **Ephesus and Patmos**
7. **Manner of death according to tradition**
8. **Author of five books of the Bible**
9. **“The Apostle of Love”**
10. **Our church bears his name**