

2 JOHN

THE elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

2 For the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever.

3 Grace be with you, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.

4 I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

5. And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

6 And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

7. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the

flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

10. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into *your* house, neither bid him God speed:

11 For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

12. Having many things to write unto you, I would not *write* with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

13 The children of thy elect sister greet thee. Amen.

3 JOHN

THE elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

2 Beloved, I wish above all

things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

9. I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbid-

deth them that would, and casteth *them* out of the church.

11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

12. Demetrius hath good report of all *men*, and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee:

14 But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace *be* to thee. *Our* friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

JUDE

JUDE, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, *and* called:

2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.

3. Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

5 I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not.

6 And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.

7 Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

8. Likewise also these *filthy* dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.

9 Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord

rebuke thee.

10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves.

11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core.

12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;

13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.

14 And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints,

15. To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard *speeches* which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.

16 These are murmurers, com-

plainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling *words*, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.

17 But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;

18 How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.

19 These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

20 But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith,

praying in the Holy Ghost,

21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.

22 And of some have compassion, making a difference:

23 And others save with fear, pulling *them* out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

24 Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you* faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

25 To the only wise God our Saviour, *be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTS

Again in II John notice that truth and love go together. Christians cannot have fellowship where there is false doctrine and lying. In verses 4-6 John admonishes us to practice truth. Note the repetition of the word "walk" in this chapter. Truth is not something we study about or believe; it is a motivating force in our lives. It is not enough to know the truth; we must show it through our actions wherever we are. John rejoiced because certain of this lady's children were walking in the truth. This is the equivalent of "walking in the light" which was discussed in I John 1. Christian love is not an emotion that we work up; it is simple obedience to the Word of God. When children love their parents, they obey them. If we love God, we will obey Him. Christ said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Christians too often love the Bible, but hate the brethren! While saints might differ in their interpretations of certain passages in the Word, they must all agree on loving one another. Where there is a sincere love for the Bible, there will be a sincere love for God's people. Loving

the truth and loving the brethren cannot be separated!

Not only must we practice the truth, but we must also protect it. There will come many false teachers who will try to deceive. In verses 7-11 John tells us that if a teacher comes and denies that Jesus Christ came in the flesh, then he is false and from the Antichrist. While there will be one great man of sin (or Antichrist) in the end times, the spirit of Antichrist is already in the world (I John 4:3). John also says those will come who will want to destroy the Christian and the things that have been wrought in Christ. The best way to get detoured in your Christian walk, and to lose all the spiritual ground you have gained, is to get tied up with false doctrine. Satan is a destroyer, and he uses lies to rob saints of their blessings. Throughout this chapter, John warns us not to entertain false teachers in our homes, or even to greet them! Any aid we give them is to share in their evil deeds. Find out what a man believes before you let him in your home or give him a donation. Check with your pastor if you have any questions. Whatever you do, don't be led astray by those

who claim to be of God, but are really of Satan!

The third epistle of John is the shortest book in the Bible, containing only 299 words. John's second epistle is the next shortest, with only 303 words. These two epistles were personal little notes to friends whom John expected to visit very soon. The title "elder" was that of John himself and the "elect lady" may have been a literal person, or may have been a particular church called by a woman's name. The word "truth" is used four times in the first four verses of this little book.

The writer of the Book of Jude was the half-brother of Christ, called Judah in Mark 6:3. Jude does not boast of his earthly relationship to Christ, but rather calls himself a "servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James." The purpose of the letter is stated in verses 3 and 4. He warns the believers of the false teachers in the church. Peter (II Peter 2) warned that false teachers would come. Jude says they are now at work. He identifies these men as the same men Peter described—creeping in secretly, bringing in false doctrine, and living in sin. "Turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" means that they told people that grace opened the door for living as they pleased.

PROVERB FOR TODAY

"A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken" (Proverbs 15:13).

TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING

Spend this month reviewing the previous 13 lessons. For today, review Memory Verse Assignment 28 (found on page 8).

HYMN FOR THE DAY

GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN

Stanzas by John W. Work, 1871-1925

For many people, another Christmas season is merely a rerun of the trivial and the sentimental. But for the devoted Christian, Christmas is much more than a once a year celebration. It is a fresh awareness that a Deliverer was sent from the ivory palaces of heaven to become personally involved in the redemption and affairs of the human race. The impact of this realization becomes a strong motivation to share the good news with needy and desperate people who need to know that there is an Emmanuel available who can meet their every need.

Men everywhere must hear these glad tidings if they are to benefit from them. With absolute clarity they must hear the message, "Here is your God!"

Negro spirituals had their roots in the late 18th and early 19th century camp meetings throughout the South as well as in the active evangelical ministry carried on among the black people during this time. However, few of their traditional songs were collected or published prior to about 1840. The stanzas for "Go Tell It on the Mountain" were written by John W. Work, Jr. He and his brother, Frederick J. Work, were early leaders in arranging and promoting the cause of Negro spirituals. Today's song was first published in *Folk Songs of the American Negro* in 1907. These traditional spirituals have since become an important part of the American folk and sacred music heritage and are greatly appreciated and enjoyed by all of God's people.

*While shepherds kept their watching
o'er silent flocks by night,
behold, throughout the heavens
there shone a holy light.*

*The shepherds feared and trembled
when lo! above the earth
rang out the angel chorus
that hailed our Savior's birth.*

*Down in a lowly manger
the humble Christ was born,
and God sent us salvation
that blessed Christmas morn.*

Refrain:

*Go tell it on the mountain,
over the hills and ev'rywhere—
go tell it on the mountain
that Jesus Christ is born!*

BIRTHDAYS TODAY

MAXINE HIGGINS

RUTH PUGH

ON THIS DATE IN HISTORY

1776

GENERAL WASHINGTON CROSSED THE DELAWARE.

Let us thank God for General George Washington. His knee prints were left in the snow in Valley Forge where he prayed for divine guidance. Let us pray today for our President and those who have authority over us that God will give them divine guidance. Let us pray for God to give us great national leaders, men

of character, wisdom, and spiritual depth. Pray for God to give us men who will not fog their minds with alcoholic beverages. Pray for men who will lead us under God. How we need them today!

THE DAY AFTER CHRISTMAS.

This being the day after Christmas, there is certainly a letdown. The excitement is over, the gifts are unwrapped, and the Christmas tree has lost its beauty and glamour. The climax is over. Let us spend a few moments today in meditation, thanking God for the Christmas season and asking God to bless our lives to His glory.

1928

COMMANDER BYRD REACHED THE ICE LAYER OF THE ANTARCTIC.

ON THIS DATE IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY

1848

William and Ellen Craft escaped from slavery in Georgia. Mrs. Craft impersonated a slaveholder and her husband, William, assumed the role of her servant in one of the most dramatic of the slave escapes.

1908

Jackson Johnson defeated Tommy Burns at Syney, Australia, for heavyweight Championship.

Eighty-nine blacks reported lynched in 1908.

1956

Birmingham blacks began mass defiance of Jim Crow bus laws.

The Story of the Psalms

PSALMS 144

AUTHOR: David

THE STORY BEHIND THE PSALM:

The first part of Psalm 144 is very similar to Psalm 18. Unknown are the conditions under which David wrote the Psalm, but it does fall into a beautiful outline. Verses 1 and 2 find the psalmist singing to God because of God's strength. In verses 3 and 4 he wonders at the Lord's regard for insignificant man. In verses 5-8 he reminds us of God's blessings in the hour of battle. In fact, God is called a Man of war. In verses 9-11 he again blesses God and extols His great-

ness. In the remainder of the Psalm God's people are congratulated because they have such a wonderful God.

The Psalm also bears a strong resemblance to David's last song in 2 Samuel 22.

The best conjecture is that this Psalm refers to the slaying of Goliath by the young stripling, David.

THE WAY IT WAS USED BY GOD'S PEOPLE:

When an Israelite felt extremely insignificant and wanted to praise the virtues of his great God, he would read and sing Psalm 144.

A Christian Life . . .

ULRICH ZWINGLI (1484-1531)

Swiss reformer. Ulrich Zwingli was educated at schools in Basel and Burn, Switzerland, and Vienna, Austria. He became a parish priest in 1506 and, on becoming pastor of the great Minster Church in Zurich, he began to preach against the unscriptural practices in the Catholic Church. He made an open break with Rome in 1522 after studying the works of Martin Luther. The break was completed in 1525 when he replaced the Roman Mass with the first reformed communion service at his church.

Zwingli differed with Luther in his views on communion, in that he maintained that the Lord's Supper is a memorial ordinance only, and it is found in I Corinthians, chapters 7 through 9.

He participated in armed warfare against the Catholic states around him, and died in battle, sword in hand, defending the Bible over tradition.



MEMORY VERSE ASSIGNMENT 28 (for review):

Please spend time reviewing these memory verses. If you have been completing the assignments in the TREASURE PATH TO SOUL WINNING, then you already have spent a week memorizing the Scriptures below. Now it's time to review!

EVIDENCE OF DIVINE INSPIRATION: CHRIST'S BIOGRAPHY PREWRITTEN

His Birth (742 B.C.)

() Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (Fulfilled—Matthew 1:23)

His Birth Place (710 B.C.)

() Micah 5:2

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. (Fulfilled—Matthew 2:5-6)

Rejected by His own people (712 B.C.)

() Isaiah 53:3

He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not. (Fulfilled—John 1:11)

Sold for 30 pieces of silver (487 B.C.)

() Zechariah 11:12

And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price: and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. (Fulfilled—Matthew 26:14-16)

Hands and feet pierced (1000 B.C.)

() Psalms 22:16

For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet. (Fulfilled—John 19:37)