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**Truth, Love, and the Truth in Love - Part 2**  
**"All You Need is Love?" - 2 John**

By Tal Davis

The Beatles were probably the most famous rock and roll band ever. On June 25, 1967, they made real world history. On that day, for the first time in its history, the world was united in a simultaneous live television broadcast by a satellite linked network called "Our World." As part of that technological milestone, John Lennon, Paul McCartney, George Harrison, and Ringo Starr, became the first musicians to perform live to a worldwide television audience. An estimated 500 million viewers, on five continents and in dozens of countries, heard "the Fab Four" sing, for the first time, one of their most popular hits, All You Need is Love. (to see a video of that performance, go to: <https://vimeo.com/252765355>)

Yes, it was the "Summer of Love" and everyone was talking about "love, love, love" like it was some new idea. Young people thought they had made an amazing discovery that "love is all you need." Actually, the New Testament was two thousand years ahead of the Beatles and the 1960's hippies to teach about real love.

As you may know, the Greek language has three words we usually translate as love. *Phileo*, occasionally found in the New Testament, is "brotherly love" (as in Philadelphia, the "City of Brotherly Love"). *Eros* is erotic or sexual love. That term is never used in the New Testament. Actually, those two kinds of love are most likely what the Beatles and the Summer of Love was really all about. The third Greek word for love is *agape* – God's kind of love. This is the love Jesus talked about and Paul expanded on in 1 Corinthians 13.

*1 If I speak with the tongues of mankind and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give away all my possessions to charity, and if I surrender my body so that I may glory, but do not have love, it does me no good. 4 Love is patient, love is kind, it is not jealous; love does not brag, it is not arrogant. 5 It does not act disgracefully, it does not seek its own benefit; it is not provoked, does not keep an account of a wrong suffered, 6 it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 it keeps every confidence, it believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away with; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away with. 9 For we know in part and prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away with. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully, just as I also have been fully known. 13 But now faith, hope, and love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love. (1 Cor. 13 NASB)*

The point is, that Christians are to proclaim and defend the timeless truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in love. In this three-part article, we are analyzing the Apostle John's Second Letter to "the Chosen Lady and her children." We are exploring how he explains the meanings of truth and love and then see how and why he

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ties them inextricably together. In Part One, we examined what John says about truth. As we said in that previous installment, the Greek term for truth is *alitheia*. It simply means that which is actual reality now and what was reality in the past. As simple as that concept seems, most people have a difficult time telling the truth. To read Part One go to:

<http://www.marketfaith.org/2021/09/truth-love-and-the-truth-in-love-part-1-tal-davis/>.

In this second segment we will turn to the other divine precept of love. In Part Three we will see how it relates to the truth, especially in the life of the Christian, in the church, and in confronting false teaching.

*1 The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth, 2 because of the truth which remains in us and will be with us forever: 3 Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love. 4 I was overjoyed to find some of your children walking in truth, just as we have received a commandment to do from the Father. 5 Now I ask you, lady, not as though I were writing to you a new commandment, but the one which we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. 6 And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you are to walk in it. 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but that you may receive a full reward. 9 Anyone who goes too far and does not remain in the teaching of*

*Christ, does not have God; the one who remains in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; 11 for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds. 12 Though I have many things to write to you, I do not want to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and speak face to face, so that your joy may be made complete.*

*13 The children of your chosen sister greet you. (2 John NASB)*

In 2 John, the "Disciple Whom Jesus Loved," that is, John himself (see John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2: 21:7, 20), uses, appropriately, "love" (*agape*) four times in verses 1-6. In verse 5, the Beloved Disciple reminds the church of a primary command "*that we love one another.*" This command came directly from Jesus Himself.

*I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you have love for one another." (John 13:34-35 NASB)*

John declares that adherence to this command is shown by obedience to Jesus who said "*to walk in it (love).*" It should characterize the attitudes and behaviors of His disciples, especially in their relationships with one another.

As we have emphasized, the key to this whole passage of Scripture is that truth and love are absolutely intertwined. You cannot have real truth without love. You cannot have real love without truth. Christians are to love one another, and others, in the truth. Jesus has broken down the arbitrary walls of division that we humans tend to build that separate us.

*For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall. (Ephesians 2:12 NASB)*

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Also, and this is a sobering fact, non-Christian people will judge the reality of our faith and our Lord Jesus Christ by how we believers love another.

*"By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another."* (John 13:35 NASB)

Unfortunately we don't do a very good job of obeying that command. The fact is, many people reject Christ because of bad experiences they have had with Christians, or they have seen believers fighting among themselves. Some are drawn to cults or other religions because they appear to demonstrate love better than do Christians and churches they know (cults are experts at hiding their conflicts or ejecting any members who disagree with their leadership). Likewise, many young adults raised in churches later leave them because

they have seen the hypocrisy of believers anger toward one another.

In any case, the truth is, most people who do come to Christ as their Savior and Lord, and join his church, do not do so because they have intensely studied all the evidences for Christianity or investigated its doctrines. Almost invariably, people become Christians because some Christian showed them the love of Christ and they have seen the love of believers for one another. Love leads them to the truth and the truth leads them to God's love.

In the next and final installment of this three-part series, we see how the concepts of truth and love are important for dealing with false teachers and false doctrines. This was John's main reason for writing the letter. As you know, our mission at Market

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