



**WORLDVIEW MADE PRACTICAL**  
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**Truth, Love, and the Truth in Love - Part 3**  
**"Sometimes Truth Needs a Soldier" - 2 John**

By Tal Davis

In the previous two installments we analyzed the teachings of the Apostle John in his Second Letter concerning the relationship of truth and love. We asserted that real truth requires real love to validate it in our lives. We showed how John told his readers to maintain the truth and to love one another as Jesus commanded. To read parts one and two go here:

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

The Truth in Love Part 2 -  
<http://www.marketfaith.org/2021/09/truth-love-and-the-truth-in-love-part-1-tal-davis-2/>

In this third and final part we will look at what John says is one of the key reasons why we must uphold the truth in love. In verse 7-10 the Beloved Apostle (John) expounds several principles for confronting false teachers who try to infiltrate the church or lead believers into heretical doctrines.

*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, verse 7, the Apostle issues a dire warning that "many deceivers have gone out into the world." He then introduces the insidious error they are promulgating. They are "those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh." John even goes so far as to accuse them of being "antichrist." He is not saying that they are the Antichrist who will appear at the end times to deceive the world before the Second Coming. In this instance, he is speaking of the "spirit of antichrist" that is already at work in the world about which he addressed in his First Letter.

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*Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming, and now it is already in the world. (1 John 4:1-3 NASB)*

In the cases of both 1 and 2 John, the false teachers were denying the full divinity and humanity of Jesus Christ. Apparently some teachers were circulating among the churches saying that Jesus was not fully human but only appeared to be so. That is as much a case of first class heresy as someone who denies the full Deity of Jesus and says He was only a man or an exalted angel.

One of this country's major crime problems is the counterfeiting of currency. Enterprising crooks print bills that appear real and then sell them to other crooks to purchase items in stores. Recently in Gainesville, Georgia, a counterfeiting ring was broken up by the state police and the U.S. Treasury Department. Literally thousands of fake 50 and 100 dollar bills were confiscated. How much more of it was actually put into circulation is anyone's guess. Even some criminal governmental regimes in other countries have gotten into the business. North Korea, for instance, is well known for printing extremely high quality counterfeit currencies which it sells on black markets in order to prop up its evil dictatorship.

The point is, there are not only money counterfeiters, there are also counterfeiters of truth. They disguise their false teachings using good sounding biblical terms, but actually they teach doctrines of demons.

*But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons. (1 Timothy 4:1 NASB)*

The truth is, not all religions are the same and not all are good. For more than forty years I have written and taught about the false teachings and practices of cults, sectarian groups, and world religions. We at MarketFaith Ministries have for years been helping believers understand about unchristian worldviews and belief systems. Today there is still a great need for Christians to practice biblical discernment. When confronted by new or unusual movements, they must take the time to examine what the groups teach and practice. John even warns:

*"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; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds. (2 John 10, 11 NASB)*

This does not mean we have to treat them disrespectfully or with disdain. But, the clear point is that we must contend for truth and expose falsehood, in love. When you encounter a religious movement that is unfamiliar to you, take time to investigate the following questions about it:

1. Does it affirm basic Christian doctrines? The Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, deny the Trinity and the Deity of Christ. They also deny that Jesus rose physically from the grave. All cults deny or redefine one or more essential Christian tenets.

2. Does it rely on the Bible alone for its doctrinal and church authority? The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (formerly AKA the Mormons) adds the Book of Mormon and other new scriptures, all of which contradict the Bible.

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3. Is it open about its basic beliefs? Many cults and sects are reluctant to discuss their theology, especially to prospective new recruits. They know if they are too open about their unusual teachings that many people will be turned off. So they often wait until the prospect has become fairly well assimilated into the group before revealing piecemeal their more esoteric beliefs. The Church of Scientology is probably the best example of this kind of modern Gnosticism.

4. Does it follow only one primary individual leader or a small anointed "Governing Body" or Council of Apostles? Does it look to one specially gifted interpreter of the Bible over all others? Christian Science teaches that only the metaphysical biblical interpretations of its founder, Mary Baker Eddy, reveal real spiritual truth. Followers of the late Victor Paul Wierwille, founder of the Way International (and its numerous splinter groups), are convinced that he figured out the real meaning of the Bible that everyone else got wrong.

5. Does it overemphasize or distort one particular doctrine? The Word of Faith teachers twist the Scriptures to assert that if one is ill, or financially strapped, then he or she does not have adequate "faith." So he or she must send their ministries a monetary "seed gift" to demonstrate the depth of his or her faith before receiving a healing or a blessing.

6. Is it open about its finances? Sad to say, even some evangelical churches are less than candid about their income and financial situations – keeping them hidden from public scrutiny and even their own members. Some cults hide behind their non-prophet tax status to keep their records concealed. One large group has for decades held a secret 100 billion+ dollar cash and investment portfolio. The fund was only recently publicly disclosed, even to the church's own membership, by a whistle-blower.

7. Does it emphasize personal experience over revealed truth? Many people are deceived by those who claim to offer profound spiritual experiences that do not square with biblical teaching. For instance, a couple of decades ago many people were

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swept away by less than scrupulous advocates of a spiritual fad called "holy laughter."

What people believe does matter. Jesus is our only Lord and Savior, and salvation is through Him alone. We can accept no substitute or counterfeit, nor can we idly sit by and tolerate it. Our responsibility is to shine light on falsehoods and, in love, tell the truth. As the Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians: *"And this I pray, that your love may overflow still more and more in real knowledge (truth) and all discernment."* (Philippians 1:9 NASB)