

What Kind of Christian are You

What kind of Christian are you? Are you a Christian who expresses his or her faith by acts of love toward others, or are you a Christian more inclined to express your faith by sharing and discussing the truth of God with others? If you stick to expressing your faith with just one of these, love or truth, then perhaps you aren't really doing either at all.

- The author of 2 John: “The Elder”
 - The language and subjects of 2 John are very similar to John’s other writings
 - John does not name himself in his other writings
- The recipients of 2 John: “The elect lady and her children”
 - “The elect lady” is likely symbolic for a church, and if so then “her children” almost certainly refers to members of that church
 - This seems to have been a church relatively local to John, in a world where reminders to love were needed and in which there were “many deceivers” (v. 7)
 - We too are a church in a world where it is hard to love well and in which truth is assaulted from all angles
- John’s greeting and introduction (vv. 1-3)
 - Immediately in his greeting to the “elect lady and her children” he introduces the themes of love and truth
 - Love and truth unite not only John to this church, but all Christians to each other. Those who know the truth and have the truth “in them”, love others who know and have the truth. (vv. 1-2)
 - In a sense, it is the Truth which abides in us, Jesus who abides in us, that makes us Christians. (John 14.16)
 - The blessings of God (grace, mercy, and peace) are guaranteed to those who practice truth and love. (v. 3)
- A call to keep the commandment to love one another (vv. 4-6)
 - We are called to love one another (v. 5)
 - If we genuinely love God, then we will keep His commandments (v. 6)
- A warning about false teachers and teachings (vv. 7-10)
 - People used to have a hard time believing Jesus is human, but now we have a hard time believing He is God (v. 7)
 - If don’t have a right view of Jesus, then we do not have a true saving relationship with God (v. 9)
- You cannot have love without truth (v. 11)
 - The meaning of “greeting”
 - False teaching leads to wicked works: if we do not have truth then we do not have obedience, and if we do not have obedience then we do not have love.
 - God’s simplicity: He is not one part love and one part truth. His love is truthful love, and His truth is a loving truth.
- If we are Christians, little Christs, then we cannot have truth without love, or love without truth.
- To those who consider themselves Christians inclined towards truth: Consider the relationships in your life. How can you get that truth from your head, to your heart, to your hands? If you really know truth, if you really have truth, then that truth will pour out and you will be a light in the world.
- To those who consider themselves Christians inclined towards love: Consider the doctrine in your life. Should there be more of it? Is your doctrine biblically, Christologically sound? If you really love God, then you will know and keep His commandments. And if you really love others, then you will share God’s truth with them.