

OPEN

WATCH

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DISCUSS

Truth matters. But we live in a world where truth is no longer rock-solid. It's become smoke—blowing wherever anyone wants it to, stinging the eyes of everyone else.

In the middle of the chaos of our culture, John's words in his second letter are invaluable.

According to Dr. Tony Evans, why is truth so crucial to our lives? (We wouldn't trust someone with our health or lives who didn't know the truth.)

How did Tony define truth at the beginning of this session? (Truth is an absolute standard by which reality is measured.)

Do you see this definition of truth in our world or culture? Why or why not?

Why do you think Tony's description of truth is so disliked these days?

In our day and age, few people like objective standards for reality. It means we'd have to submit to something outside ourselves. We'd have to live in light of something we don't control, or be declared disobedient.

That doesn't mean our world dislikes facts. But facts and truth are different.

How did Tony outline the difference between truth and facts? (Facts are statements about reality. Truth determines the "why" and the "so what" behind the facts.)

Read 2 John 1–3.

What is the source of the love that John (and all people) have for God's people (the elect lady and her children)? (Truth.)

Why would truth promote love?

Throughout the previous sessions covering his first letter, we saw how John spent most of his time highlighting how the truth—knowing God and His commands—is the source of Christian love. Here, in his second letter, John reminds his readers that love for God's people flows out of a true understanding of God.

Tony highlighted the problem with relying on facts versus truth to direct our affections and love. **What's the problem with determining truth based on feeling?** (Feelings change.)

Feelings may be facts—it's a fact that we feel grumpy when our car gets dinged in the parking lot. It's a fact that we feel happy when we find \$20 in our coat pocket. But facts aren't truth, and feelings change.

In our culture today, would you say "love" comes from feelings or from objective truth? Why?

What kind of impact does it have on our ability to love if our love depends on the right combination of feelings?

What does the love that John describes look like, if it's based on the truth of God's compassion toward us?

Do our feelings change the truth God has revealed to us?

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How could you encourage or challenge a fellow believer today to run a good race?

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The blessing of a church is the people. When we're looking out for each other's interests, praying for the life and fellowship God wants to give to all of His people, we help keep watch. Together, we can stand against deception, and maintain a strong grip on the truth.

Read verses 10–11. How does John expect a church to respond to false teachers—those who deny Jesus and God's truth? (By refusing to admit them to the church, and not entertaining them.)

John's words here can feel harsh. After all, aren't we supposed to love all people? The answer is yes. But John has set up throughout his two letters the principle that love comes from God's truth. If we allow a deceiver into our churches, it's not loving at all. It's welcoming in lies and denying God.

Tony concluded this session by pointing out that all the truth we need is contained in God's Word. Everything we need to understand reality—to figure out the “why” and the “so what” of life—is in the Bible.

How's your Bible reading going? How do you regularly engage in the Word of God personally? How about publicly?

What one thing could you do this week to get into God's Word a little deeper?

LAST WORD

Truth matters. There is objective, unchanging truth out there—it's God's truth and His alone. It doesn't matter how we feel, or whether or not life's working out for us. God's truth tells what reality is and how to live in light of it.

As you go through your week, remember that God has not left us on our own, wandering through life trying to make heads or tails of our experiences. He's given us His Spirit, His Word, and His people. Let's join together, love one another, and cling to the truth.

LIVE IT OUT

Read: Spend five minutes two times this week reading your Bible—the source of God's truth. Consider starting the gospel of John.

Write: Consider some of the lies that the world spins around us each day. Write out a list of lies you're tempted to believe. Next to them, write out God's truth.

Connect: Take time this week to connect with fellow believers outside of your normal church hours. Enjoy the fellowship with God's people, but also take time to savor the time spent with others who are defined by God's truth—not the world's.

Memorize: Commit to memory 2 John 8. Use it to maintain your focus on the truth, and resist the lies of the devil and the world.

Summarize: The book of 2 John isn't long. Tony called it a postcard. Take five minutes and summarize in your head or on paper the message of the book. Then share with someone this week what stood out to you in this tiny letter.

RightNow Presents **1, 2 & 3 John**
LEADER'S GUIDE

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