

“WALKING IN THE TRUTH IMITATING GOOD”

The Second and Third Letters of John

Who wrote The Letters of John?

The Letters of John were written by the Apostle John.

How did The Letters of John get their names and/or what do those names mean?

The Letters of John are named after the author, the Apostle, John.

When did these events take place?

The Second and Third Letters of John were written toward the end of the first century A.D.

For more about the Second and Third Letters of John:

See pages 1365 and 1367 in the Fireside Catholic Youth Bible – Next.

Being labeled progressive can be quite a compliment. If you are progressive, you're definitely not dull and you are probably always willing to look at solving old problems in new ways. Progressive people often push the envelope of adventure and usually are open to at least discussing any idea. They can be exciting people who are fun to be around. There are some situations in life, however, where these people are dangerous at best and the ideas they offer are flat-out wrong. Sometimes, their need for “new thinking” clashes with the truth. When this happens in regard to their religion, they begin to dream up all kinds adaptations designed to make their faith fit comfortably into a secular society.

In his second letter, the Apostle John singles out these “progressives” and advises us clearly how to respond to them. “Anyone who is so “progressive” as not to remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God; whoever remains in the teaching has the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him in your house or even greet him; for whoever greets him shares in his evil works.”

What does this mean to us? John calls on us to “Walk in the Light” by consistently living a Christ-like life. Then when we see someone who doesn't, make sure they know we disapprove both by the example we set and how we choose to respond to them. Have you ever stood silently by and listened to one of your friends make fun of or deny your Christianity just to get accepted? Are you or anyone you know “cafeteria Catholics” choosing to believe and practice only the parts of the faith that are comfortable for you? Do we look the other way when we see someone sin or do we welcome them into our lives without having the courage to let them know how we feel? Most importantly, do we turn our backs completely on anyone who teaches against Jesus and all He stood for?

The Third Letter of John challenges us to do even more. When we see others spreading the Good News of the Gospel, John reminds us that we have a responsibility to not only agree but to support their efforts. Again, he calls on us to “not imitate evil but imitate good” in doing so. What does this mean to us? The next time we have an opportunity to support a missionary effort whether at home or halfway around the world, the Second Letter of John calls us to do so. By following his advice, we will walk in the Light of Christ and be surrounded by His Love as well.

Interesting Fact: The editors of the New American Bible suggest that the Second and Third Letters of John are probably so short because that might have been all the words that would fit on one piece of papyrus.

Bonus Point: The New Testament contains only two letters written to individuals. The Third Letter of John is one of them. What is the other?