

5. October 2025  
SECOND LETTER OF ST. JOHN  
BEWARE OF HERETICS!

2 Jn 1:1-13

*The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth, and not only I but also all who know the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us for ever: Grace, mercy, and peace will be with us, from God the Father and from Jesus Christ the Father's Son, in truth and love. I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children following the truth, just as we have been commanded by the Father. And now I beg you, lady, not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning, that we love one another. And this is love, that we follow his commandments; this is the commandment, as you have heard from the beginning, that you follow love. For many deceivers have gone out into the world, men who will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh; such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. Look to yourselves, that you may not lose what you have worked for, but may win a full reward. Any one who goes ahead and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the doctrine has both the Father and the Son. If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greets him shares his wicked work. Though I have much to write to you, I would rather not use paper and ink, but I hope to come to see you and talk with you face to face, so that our joy may be complete. The children of your elect sister greet you.*

Truth and charity also occupy a central place in the Second Letter of St. John. In the epistle, the "Presbyter," who holds authority, addresses a Christian community designated as the "chosen Lady." This community needs to strengthen its fledgling faith. The presbyter rejoices that some of his faithful are walking in the truth. He now invites the brethren to love one another, emphasizing that love for God consists in keeping His commandments. Only then do we walk in the truth.

This is as true for the Christians of that time as it is for us today. God's truth is immutable! If we, as Christians, enjoy the immense privilege of coming with all our faults to the Cross of our Redeemer and receiving forgiveness from Him, we must also

bear witness that His commandments remain binding and cannot be relativized. If today there are those who claim that these commandments are not binding, they are false teachers—like those who threatened the young Christian community of that time. The "presbyter" clearly warns them: *"Look to yourselves, that you may not lose what you have worked for, but may win a full reward."* He continues: *"Any one who goes ahead and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God; he who abides in the doctrine has both the Father and the Son."*

One can perceive the presbyter's concern for the young community, lest it lose what the apostles sowed in it. To this end, he warns them about seducers and the Antichrist, those who *"will not acknowledge the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh; such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist."* He warns them even more emphatically about those who teach false doctrines: *"If any one comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into the house or give him any greeting; for he who greets him shares his wicked work."*

Today, we would hardly hear such a clear statement in the Church, where we often hear about fraternity among all men. Unfortunately, this fraternity is not founded on a common love for Christ and His teachings. Is the presbyter's caution—that one should not even greet those who transmit false doctrines—too much? What are we to think? That by doing so, one becomes an accomplice to the evil works of heretics?

Perhaps we are no longer aware of the dangers of false doctrines: how they obscure and poison people's thinking, and how they infiltrate the Mystical Body of Christ—the Church. Modernism, undoubtedly one of the main "languages" of anti-Christian influence, has poisoned the thinking of many Catholics, consequently weakening their moral convictions. If we open our eyes to reality, we can see the damage that modernism has caused to the entire Church and, consequently, to all of humanity.

Against this backdrop, we can better understand the exhortations in today's passage. They simply tell us: *"Do not associate with false teachers, for you will deceive yourselves and the other brethren."* Indeed, there is no common basis for true communion.

Therefore, it is all the more important that we pray for heretics and their followers, so they may return to communion with God. We must keep the doors open for them, allowing them to find their way back—without overlooking the truth.

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Meditation on today's reading: <https://en.elijamission.net/8712-2/>