

DON'T LOSE: YOUR TRUST IN THE TRUTH

THESIS: Don't Lose Trust

TEXT: 2 John

OPEN: "Scientists Believe They've Found Evidence For One Most Infamous Biblical Stories" By Sebastian Hughes (*dailycaller.com* 09/21/21)

Scientists believe they have found physical evidence that an "exploding space rock" could have inspired one of the most infamous stories in the Bible, archaeologist Christopher R. Moore wrote. Scientists may have found proof of an icy space rock hurtling through the atmosphere at about 38,000 mph toward the ancient Biblical city Sodom, now called Tall el-Hammam, roughly 3,600 years ago. The Bible describes the destruction of an urban center near the Dead Sea, with stones and fire falling from the sky. The discovery is the result of 15 years' worth of excavation work. Scientists suspect a firestorm led to the city's destruction due to the presence of a roughly 5-foot-thick jumbled layer of charcoal, ash, melted mudbricks and melted pottery, called a destruction layer. The group was able to determine through analysis that the only event that could have raised temperatures enough to melt many of the materials found at the site was a cosmic impact.

In **2 John** let's discover how to inspire confidence and joy in the reality of God's Word.

1. DON'T LOSE YOUR TRUST IN THE TRUTH AND LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST.

A. **2 John 1-3, 5** "To the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in the truth—and not I only, but also all who know the truth—²because of the truth, which lives in us and will be with us forever. ³Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and love...⁵And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another."

1. *Let's express our trust in the truth of Christ by loving the church like Him.*

a. God is graceful to His people so let's be graceful to church, too. He will be with you and bless you.

1. **Grace** (Greek: *charis*) means to bless, benefit, credit, or favor.

a. **1 Peter 4:10-11** "Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."

1. **Illustration: If You're A Duck, Swim!**

A group of animals decided to improve their general welfare by starting a school. The curriculum included swimming, running, climbing, and flying. The duck, an excellent swimmer, was deficient in other areas, so he took climbing, running, and flying. The rabbit, a superior runner, was forced to spend so much time in other classes that he soon lost much of his famed speed. The squirrel, who had been rated excellent as a climber, dropped to average because he spent hours trying to swim and fly. The eagle was rebuked for soaring to the tree-top, when he had been told to learn how to climb, even though flying was most natural for him. This parable portrays what may happen in church. We each have a gift from the Lord. Our abilities differ. Scripture teaches us to use the gifts that God has given us. Don't feel bad or neglect your talent if you perceive that someone does something better. If God made you a duck then swim—don't try to outrun, fly, or climb someone. Don't be upset if you waddle when you run because you were made to swim like no other. Swim like mad. If you're an eagle, stop expecting other believers to fly like you do. We each have our own gifts from God. We should use them accordingly to help others and to honor God.

- b. God is merciful to His people so let's be merciful to church, too. He will be with you and bless you.
1. **Mercy** (Greek: *eleos*) means compassion, kindness, or the outward manifestation of pity.
 - a. **Deuteronomy 15:7-8, 10** "If there is a poor man among your brothers in any of the towns of the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hardhearted or tightfisted toward your poor brother. Rather be openhanded and freely lend him whatever he needs...Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to."
 - b. **Matthew 18:21-35** "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before him. 'Be patient with me,' he begged, 'and I will pay back everything.' The servant's master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go. But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. 'Pay back what you owe me!' he demanded. His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. Then the master called the servant in. 'You wicked servant,' he said, 'I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn't you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?' In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. This is how My heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.'"
 - c. God is peaceful to His people so let's be peaceful to church, too. He will be with you and bless you.
 1. **Peace** (Greek: *eirene*) means agreement, friendship, harmony, tranquility, or unity.
 - a. **Proverbs 12:20b** "There is joy for those who promote peace."
 - b. **Rom 14:19** "Let us make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification."
 2. **Illustration: A Picture Of Peace** (Berit Kjos, *A Wardrobe from the King*, pp. 45-46)

Long ago a man sought the perfect picture of peace. Not finding one that satisfied, he announced a contest to produce this masterpiece. The challenge stirred the imagination of artists everywhere, and paintings arrived from far and wide. Finally, the great day of revelation arrived. The judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, while the viewers clapped and cheered. The tensions grew. Only two pictures remained veiled. As a judge pulled the cover from one, a hush fell over the crowd. A mirror-smooth lake reflected lacy, green birches under the soft blush of the evening sky. Along the grassy shore, a flock of sheep grazed undisturbed. Surely this was the winner. The man with the vision uncovered the second painting himself, and the crowd gasped in surprise. Could this be peace? A tumultuous waterfall cascaded down a rocky precipice; the crowd could

almost feel its cold, penetrating spray. Stormy-gray clouds threatened to explode with lightning, wind and rain. In the midst of the thundering noises and bitter chill, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls. One of its branches reached out in front of the torrential waters as if foolishly seeking to experience its full power. A little bird had built a nest in the elbow of that branch. Content and undisturbed in her stormy surroundings, she rested on her eggs. With her eyes closed and her wings ready to cover her little ones, she manifested peace that transcends all earthly turmoil.

B. **2 John 4, 6-11** “It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us...⁶And this is love: that we walk in obedience to His commands. As you have heard from the beginning, His command is that you walk in love. ⁷Many deceivers who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. ⁹Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. ¹¹Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work.”

1. *Let's express our trust in the love of Christ through loyalty to the truth in Him.*

a. Be loyal to truth by obeying the Lord's commands. He will reward you.

1. **Obedience** (Greek: *hupakoe*) means to listen to and submit.

a. **1 John 5:3-4** “This is love for God: to obey His commands. And His commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.”

2. **Quote from someone:** “Moses didn't come down the mountain with the 10 Suggestions.”

b. Be loyal to truth by acknowledging Jesus Christ came in the flesh. He will reward you.

1. **Historical:** The Gnostic heresy of that day spread the false teaching that the Son of God did not become flesh but that He temporarily rested upon the man Jesus between His baptism and crucifixion. From the Greek word *gnosis*, meaning “knowledge,” Gnosticism claimed to provide secret knowledge about God. Its adherents considered the Biblical God, the Creator of the world, to be an inferior god. In Gnostic teaching the material world was innately evil and thus its Creator a lesser deity. The Gnostic savior, rather than providing atonement for sin, brought the knowledge of humanity's “true” divine origins, thus freeing people from their ignorance and enslavement to the material world. In their view, the true Christ had no physical body. One brand of Gnosticism believed that Jesus was a divine spirit who only appeared to be physical but was only an illusion (*NIV Archaeological Study Bible*, p. 2029, 2033).

a. **Hebrews 2:14b-17** “Jesus too shared in their humanity so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels He helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that He might make atonement for the sins of the people.”

b. **Isaiah 7:14; 9:6** “The Lord Himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call Him Immanuel (‘God with us’)...For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government

will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

1. The virgin conception and birth of Jesus Christ—the miracle is not just the virginity of it but also the divinity of it—making God His Father. Therefore, Jesus is without sin and thus the perfect and sinless sacrifice to take away the sin of the world.
 - a. *Eternal existence of Christ*: John 1:1 teaches that the Word who became flesh was with God from the very beginning. Jesus is an eternal being. To be manifested into the world required Divine intervention. This is why the gospels record the virgin birth.
 - b. *Sinless nature of Christ*: Sinless nature of Christ. To be an unblemished sacrifice, one must be perfect, that is, without sin. Humanity has a sinful nature. Therefore, a miraculous entrance into this world of someone without a human father would be required, hence, the virgin birth.
- c. Be loyal to truth by continuing in God’s Word not falling for false teaching. He will reward you.
 1. ***Historical***: The early church met in private homes. It was common in the ancient world to receive traveling teachers in the home and offer them shelter and lodging. Welcoming false teachers indicates entering into fellowship with antichrists and a gesture of solidarity with them (*Linguistic Key To The Greek NT*, p. 798).
 - a. **2 John 8-9** “Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.
 1. **Lose** (Greek: *apollymi*) means destroy, perish, or ruin. It’s not the loss of being (extinction) but rather the loss of well-being.
 - a. **1 Corinthians 15:1-2, 16-20** “I want to remind you of the gospel *I preached to you*, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By *this* gospel you are saved, *if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you*. Otherwise, you have believed in vain...For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised either. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep (died) in Christ are lost. If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.”
 1. **Firstfruits** (Greek: *aparche*) means to make a beginning. It's an agricultural term indicating the first and superior installment of a crop which foreshadows and pledges an offering of more, eventually the whole.
 2. Jesus is the beginning—the first of the bodily resurrected ones. He is the Supreme One or the "cream of the crop" of resurrection with the promise of more to come.
 3. **Romans 8:23** “We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”
 2. Does Scripture warn that it is possible to lose one’s salvation?

- a. **Luke 8:13** “Those on the rock are the ones who receive the Word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away.”
- b. **1 Corinthians 9:26-27** “I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.”
 1. (*See also 1 Corinthians 10:1-13)
- c. **Colossians 1:22-23a** “God has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if you continue in your faith, established and firm...”
 1. **Colossians 2:18** “Do not anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize.”
- d. **1 Timothy 3:6** “(If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer/elder) he must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.”
 1. **Matthew 25:41** “Then He will say to those on His left, ‘Depart from Me, you who are cursed into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.’”
- e. **Hebrews 3:12-13** “See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily...”
 1. **Hebrews 6:4-8** “If is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the coming age, if they fall away, to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss they are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace.” (*See also Hebrews 10:26-29)
- f. **2 Peter 3:17** “Be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position.”
 1. (*See also Revelation 3:3-5)

Insight from NIV Archaeological Study Bible: The Apostle John’s warnings indicate that heresy can come in many forms, often in the guise of apostolic teaching. Those who deny the humanity of Jesus are equally as heretical as those who deny His deity. In addition, any doctrine that understands the created, material world to be fundamentally evil is dangerous and misguided” (p. 2029).

Illustration: Today who do some people say Jesus is?

- **Islam:** To the Muslim, Jesus Christ is only a man—a prophet inferior to Muhammad. They don’t believe Jesus died for man’s sins; claiming Judas, not Jesus, died on the cross.
- **Unitarianism:** They reject the deity of Jesus and believe He was no more or less divine than any man.
- **Jehovah Witness:** They do not believe Jesus is God instead they say He was God’s first created creature--denying Christ’s deity.
- **Judaism:** This religion does not accept Jesus as God’s Son nor as the Messiah.
- **Mormonism:** They teach that Jesus is a created being—the elder brother of Lucifer and one of many "gods" being once sinful and imperfect, earning His own salvation (John Ankerberg, *Everything You Ever Wanted To Know About Mormonism*, p. 131).

- **Hinduism:** They believe that every man is a "god." Gandhi said "It was more than I could believe that Jesus was the only incarnate son of God. And that only he who believed in Him would have everlasting life. If God could have sons, all of us were His sons. If Jesus was like God then all men were like God and could be God Himself."

How serious is the Lord regarding false teaching and those who are antichrist or follow/welcome antichrist teaching? Life and death...Heaven or hell serious:

Galatians 1:7b-10 "Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from Heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned! As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally condemned! Am I now trying to win the approval of men or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ."

CLOSE: Don't lose your trust in the truth and love of Jesus Christ because you will be fully rewarded and not fail.