

## “Who’s That Lady?”

### I. **INTRO:**

- A. **Title:** My title I choose...*Who’s That Lady?* Might stir up an old song by the *Isley Brothers*, but it begs the question regarding *who* this postcard was mailed to.
- B. There are 2 equally extreme misconceptions that many people have concerning what it means **to be a Christian** or **to live the Christian life**.
1. One view says, “*It doesn’t matter what you believe, as long as you are sincere and loving.*”
  2. The other one says, “*It doesn’t matter how you live as long as you believe the truth.*”
    - a) The reason why **both views** are **just as wrong** is because the Word of God binds both **truth** and **love** inseparably together. [They are friends, not enemies]
    - b) Nowhere will you see this perspective more clearly, than in **2nd John**.

### II. **WHO’S THAT LADY?**

- A. **TRUTH PLUS LOVE!** (1-6)
- B. (1) **The Elder** – Tradition tells us it’s John.
1. Could speak both of his **age & his office**.
  2. He was the sole surviving apostle when this was written. Hence He wouldn’t have had to sign his name.
- C. **The elect lady** – 2 possibilities: {We don’t know for sure}
1. [1] **An individual** who’s house this fellowship resides in.
    - a) Like **Lydia** in Acts 16:14,15; 40.
    - b) This lady in John was possibly a gracious hostess, opening her home for the sake of the ministry.
  2. [2] **Or, she’s the personification of a church or local congregation.**
    - a) *Whom* is in the masculine. John moves from singular to plural(back & forth) throughout the letter.
    - b) It was normal to personify towns or institutions in the 1st century much as we do today.

D. Her children – 2 possibilities:

1. [1] The **children** of the elect lady.
2. [2] Or, **members** of the local fellowship.
3. **Problem:** It's possible this lady/church's hospitality may have been hindering the cause of the gospel.
  - a) *Lacking discernment, she had allowed her love to "spill over" the boundaries of truth.*

E. (3) **Truth** and **Love** - (each found 4 x's here) (also, in 3 Jn.1)

1. **John** - My little children, let us not **love** in word or in tongue, but in deed and in **truth**. 1 Jn. 3:18
2. **Peter** - Since you have purified your souls in obeying the **truth** through the Spirit in sincere **love** of the brethren, **love** one another fervently with a pure heart, 1 Pet.1:22
3. **Paul** - ...we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the **truth** in **love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head; Christ; Eph. 4:14,15
4. **Also, Read** Phil.1:9-11.

F. (4) **Walking in truth** – [walk = to walk about, to conduct one's life]

1. "Truth is not something we simply study or believe; it is a motivating force in our lives!" (Wiersbe)
2. Phillips Brooks said, "**Truth** is always **strong**, no matter how weak it looks, & **Falsehood** is always **weak**, no matter how strong it looks."
3. Do you entertain **truth** in your heart as a **guest** or as a **Master**?

G. (5,6) **Love & commandments** – "**True love** never compromises its standards. It never consents to sin."

H. **RESEARCH, ROVING REVERENDS!** (7-11)

- l. Note the good guidelines we have when someone comes knocking on your door selling their "stuff"!
  1. Recognize 1st that false teaching concerns the doctrine of Christ.
    - a) **1st**, share in love not rudeness; **2nd**, be assertive & direct (no compromise of doctrinal position should be made); **3rd** no assistance or encouragement should be given in the spread of such false teachings.
      - (1) Love points people **to** Christ, **not away from** Him!

- J. (7) **Who to beware of** - Reminds us of *the test* 1 Jn.4:2.
- K. **Without Incarnation** there could be no fellowship with God, &, of course, no salvation!  
 1. **A Savior not quite God is a bridge broken at the further end.** (Bishop Moule)
- L. Note contrasts: **some**(4) vs. **many**(7).
- M. Note contrasts: **children** of the church(1) vs. **deceivers** of the church(7).
- N. (8) “It’s easy to lose what you have gained by making friends w/the wrong people.”
- O. (9) **Transgresses** – “goes ahead; go beyond”.  
 1. **Beware** of anybody who has something to **add** to your bible.  
 2. **Beware** of anyone who has just discovered **something new**, that no theologian has been able to, in the last 2000 years!  
 a) **Mormonism falls over flat, like the idol Dagon did, on just this one verse!**  
 3. Divine truth is both **sweet food** for babes & is in the highest sense **strong meat** for men!...**When should we ever look beyond that?**
- P. (10,11) There were **3 different kinds of ministries** in the early church (prior to the completion of the N.T.)  
 1. **[1] Apostles** – John at this time, being the only one left.  
 2. **[2] Prophets** – Wandering preachers not attached to a congregation. (they had the right of entry into all the churches)  
 3. **[3] Elders** – Were raised up in the local body. They were attached to a specific congregation & didn’t wander.  
 4. **So, not all “Roving Reverends” were worthy of such warm hospitality.**  
 5. **Even secular writers wrote about their abuses:**  
 a) **Lucian**, the Greek writer, in his work called the *Peregrinus*, draws the picture of a man who had found the easiest possible way of making a living w/o working. He was an itinerant charlatan who lived on the fat of the land by traveling round the various communities of the Christians, & settling down wherever he like, & living luxuriously at their expense.<sup>1</sup>
- Q. Know what people believe & teach, before you support them!  
 1. It’s a “**support issue**” **not** a **hospitality** or **politeness** issue.  
 2. **Some have used this verse to justify the most “unloving behavior”.**

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<sup>1</sup> Barclay; 2 John; pg. 157

3. Telling someone the truth may be difficult, but, in the long run, it is **the most loving thing** to do.
  4. Society today is riding the high horse of... **Tolerance!**
  5. Tolerance = *"If we really love people, we'll accept them regardless of their beliefs."*
    - a) Yet, what kind of love lets someone **believe a lie** that eventually destroys them?
      - (1) That's not love, that's **indifference**...the *opposite* of love!
      - b) To really love someone is to tell them the **truth!**
      - c) John Stott explains this well (Pg.104 Swindoll) "Our love is not so blind as to ignore the views & conduct of others. Truth should make our love discriminating...On the other hand, we must never champion the truth in a harsh or bitter spirit...So the Christian fellowship should be marked equally by love & truth, & we are to avoid the dangerous tendency to extremism, pursuing either at the expense of the other. Our love grows soft if it is not strengthened by truth, & our truth grows hard if it is not softened by love. We need to live according to Scripture which commands us both to **love each other in the truth** & to **hold the truth in love.**"
  6. **Q:** Do you know of someone who has placed his or her faith in **a lie**?
  7. **Q:** Have you found it difficult to speak the **truth in love** to them?
  8. Keep close to **Christ** by keeping close to the **truth**.
- R. **THE ELDERS ADIEU!** (12,13)
- S. **Face to face** is always best...*not text's(SMS MMS), email, letters, facebook...*
- T. **That our joy may be full!** (filled to overflowing)