

## **Books 63 & 64: II & III John**

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”

– 3 John 1:4

- The books 2 & 3 John are the shortest books in the New Testament.
- They may also be among the most neglected.
- Their length indicates they were first written to fit on one standard sheet of papyrus.
- They were written by John the Apostle near the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, around 90-95 A.D.
- He refers to himself in both letters as “The Elder”. He might have been well over 80 years old at this time.
- Though the New Testament is full of letters to churches, along with Philemon by Paul, these are the only personal letters we have among the various New Testament books.

### **Book 63: II John**

- Some believe that the “elect lady” of 2 John is actually church, therefore her “children” would be that church’s members.
- Others have suggested Martha of Bethany because of a linguistic connection between the Greek word “lady” and the name “Martha”.
- The bottom line is that we don’t know any more than the letter says.
- The subjects John brings up in 2 John are similar to those we see in other New Testament writings.

### **Book 64: III John**

- The issue in 3 John is Christian hospitality.
- Many preachers, teachers or evangelists in the early church had itinerate ministries. They were dependent upon the local assemblies to give them some food a place to stay.
- John here points out that his people needed to have a right attitude about these men.

### **Books 63 & 64: II & III John**

- To begin our study we’ll read through both letters. Then we’ll divide into two groups and have each group look at one of these letters.
- Take note of the following in each letter:
  - Key topics
  - Key words, including trying to define them
  - Similarities or differences you see between the early church and the church in the present day.