

Tonight I don't have nearly as big a task as I had last evening when I spoke. Because last night I surveyed for books (the Gospels), whereas tonight we are only going to deal with one book. As a matter of fact it is not one of the longest books in the Bible. It is the second epistle of John, the 63rd book of the Bible, 2nd John.

This second epistle is very interesting. It is not a long book, but contains a great deal of truth, and one which I think is particularly appropriate in our present day. Let us look first at the first verse of it. Let us look first at the first three-fourths of the verse. "The elder unto the elect lady and her children whom I love in the truth, and not I only but also all they that have known the truth."

"The elect lady whom I have loved in the truth." John is often called the Apostle of love. That is rather natural because he puts great emphasis on the place of love in Christianity. Yet it is strange in a way that that title should be so generally given specifically to John rather than to Paul, because after all Paul ~~has~~ wrote the greatest writing on love that ever was written -- 1 Cor. 13. What a shame it is that in our KJV the translators were influenced by the Douay version to substitute for the word love which was in earlier English translations, the word charity.

The word charity is entirely different. Charity as used today does not mean at all what Paul meant. "Though I speak with the tongue of men and of angels and have not charity. . . ." It is not charity, but love. It is exactly the same word that is used elsewhere where we read that God is love. We don't say God is charity. God is love. That is the word used in Greek. Caritas is a Latin translation. To transliterate that into English as charity is confusing.

When Paul wrote that wonderful 1 Cor. 13-- look at those first three verses. "Though I speak with the ~~maner~~ tongue of men and of angels and have not love . . . though I have the gift of prophecy . . . and though I have all faith to remove mountains and have not love, I am nothing. Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor and though I give my body to be burned and have not love it profiteth men nothing."

I'm sure you are all familiar with most of the ch. I'll just read the last verse again. Verse 13: "Now remain faith, hope, love, these three. But the greatest of these is love." When Paul wrote such a ch. as this, it is strange indeed that the title the Apostle of love should be usually given to John rather than Paul. I wonder why. I wonder if perhaps it is because people are so aware of Paul's stress == striking out against false doctrine. Of Paul's pointing out the errors of the church and showing the need of correction. Of the strong emphases Paul puts on these matters, that people rather overlook his great emphasis on Christian love. John we don't have so much from as we do from Paul, and in John it's true we have wonderful statements about love.