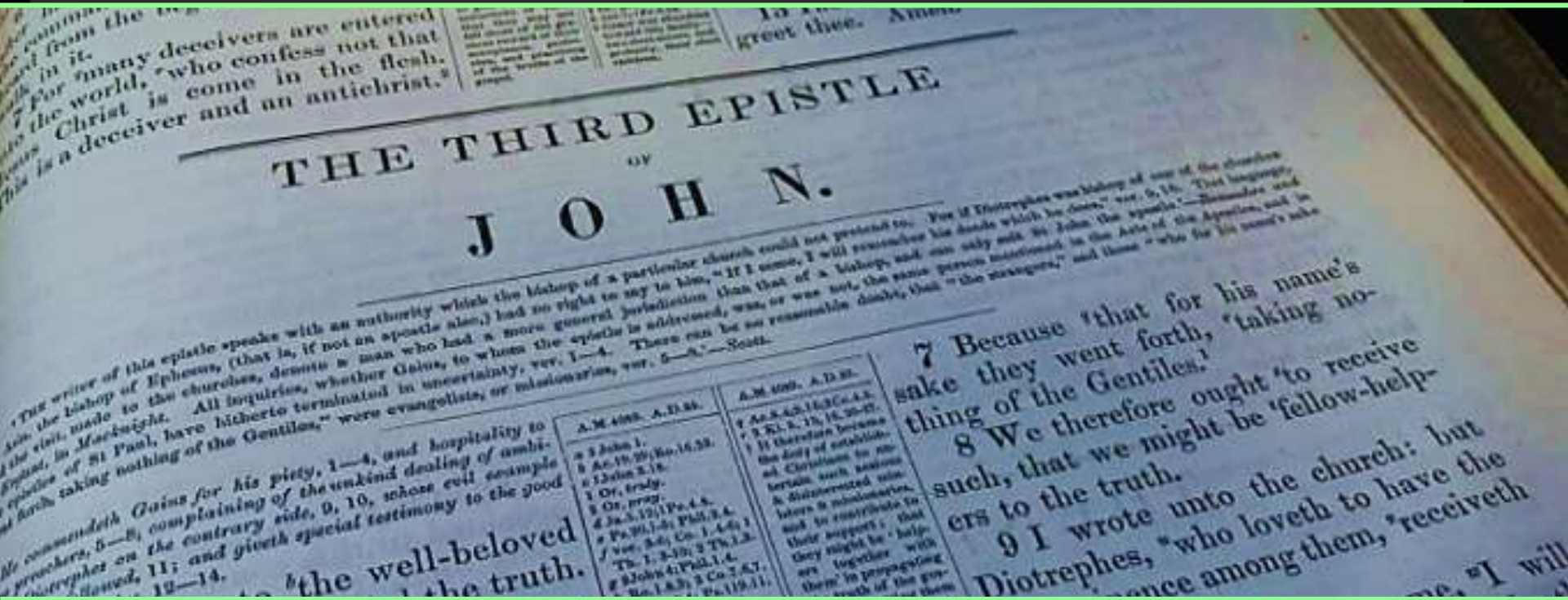




3rd John



...a verse by verse study

John's Letter to Gaius

- This is the 2nd of John's personal letters
- Written to his friend, 'son in the faith' and brother in Christ
- Theme: Encouragement & discerning Truth from Error
- Truth x6
- 3 types of love mentioned:
 - The Love between brothers (personal)
 - The Love for the brethren (general)
 - The Love of self (self aggrandisement)
 - Motivated by fear & insecurity

Knowing Who We Are

- God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love and a sound mind! -
- If we know who we are in Christ, we will not fear others
 - We will not need to defend ourselves, our position, our ministry.
- We will not fear what man may say.

Knowing Who We Are

- If we are in Christ, if we are in His will, - and that's the key – to be in His will not our own, – we will know that:
 - He has called us,
 - He makes us stand,
 - He sustains us,
 - He provides for us,
 - He guides us,
 - He protects us,
 - He deals with all who would be against us.
 - It is not our battle, it is His!

From: John the Elder.

To: Dear Gaius, whom I truly love.

Dear friend, I am praying that all is well with you and that your body is as healthy as I know your soul is.

Some of the brothers traveling by have made me very happy by telling me that your life stays clean and true and that you are living by the standards of the Gospel. I could have no greater joy than to hear such things about my children.

Dear friend, you are doing a good work for God in taking care of the traveling teachers and missionaries who are passing through. They have told the church here of your friendship and your loving deeds. I am glad when you send them on their way with a generous gift.

For they are traveling for the Lord and take neither food, clothing, shelter, nor money from those who are not Christians, even though they have preached to them.

So we ourselves should take care of them in order that we may become partners with them in the Lord's work.

I sent a brief letter to the church about this, but proud Diotrephes, who loves to push himself forward as the leader of the Christians there, does not admit my authority over him and refuses to listen to me.

When I come I will tell you some of the things he is doing and what wicked things he is saying about me and what insulting language he is using.

He not only refuses to welcome the missionary travelers himself but tells others not to, and when they do he tries to put them out of the church.

Dear friend, don't let this bad example influence you. Follow only what is good. Remember that those who do what is right prove that they are God's children; and those who continue in evil prove that they are far from God. But everyone, including Truth itself, speaks highly of Demetrius. I myself can say the same for him, and you know I speak the truth.

I have much to say, but I don't want to write it, for I hope to see you soon and then we will have much to talk about together.

So good-bye for now.

Friends here send their love, and
please give each of the folks there a
special greeting from me.

Sincerely, John

¹The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

3 John 1:1

- John never introduces himself by name
 - Except in Revelation 1:4 & 9
- 3 Gaius' mentioned in the NT
 - Acts 19:29 - in Macedonia
 - Rom 16:23 - in Corinth
 - Acts 20:4 - in Derbe

¹ The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

3 John 1:1

- There are those whom we 'love' ...
 - People we admire or whom we look up to
 - Those who support us or encourage us
- ...but this is more.
- This relationship was built on Christ!
 - There is nothing more precious than friendship with a believer who stirs your heart toward Christ
 - Someone with whom the central topic of conversation is Jesus
 - Someone who 'gets it' and shares your passion for Christ
 - Someone who makes you want to be more like Jesus

2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.

3 John 1:2

- It is well with my soul!
- That is the most important thing!
- Physical health and wellbeing are great...
- But it is better to be spiritually prosperous than physically healthy.

8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

Matthew 18:8-9

67 Before I was afflicted I went astray:
but now have I kept thy word.

68 Thou art good, and doest good; teach me thy statutes.

Psalm 119:67-68

- *“Many Christians would be desperately ill if their physical health was instantly in the same state as their spiritual health”.* – David Guzik

Spiritual Health

- Physical health:
 - Nutrition, exercise, cleanliness, proper rest, and discipline of a balanced life.
- Spiritual health: •
 - Nourishment: Word of God: Matt 4:4; what digestion is to the body, meditation is to the soul.
 - Godly work-out, exercise: 1 Tim 4:6, 7; Gaius read it, meditated on it, delighted in it, and then practiced it daily.
 - Keep ourselves clean: 2 Cor 7:1; avoiding the contamination and pollution of the world: 2 Pet 1:4; James 1:27.
 - Rest in the Lord, fellowship with Him: Matt 11:18-30; Rev 2:4.

³ For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.

⁴ I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

3 John 1:3-4

- There can be no greater joy for a parent than to see their children walking in the truth!
- The same is true of spiritual children
- It is not just about being born again...
- It is about seeing them grow in knowledge & grace

5th Commandment

¹² Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee

Exodus 20:12

- The greatest honour we can show to our parents (physical parents or spiritual parents) is to walk with the LORD
- Note that YOU receive the blessing if you do this!

⁵ Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;

⁶ Which have borne witness of thy love before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:

3 John 1:5-6

- v5. What a great testimony!
- *“Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?”* **Prov 20:6**
- v6. An encouragement to continue to show hospitality to visiting preachers!

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth,
taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 **We** therefore ought to receive such, that we might be
fellowhelpers to the truth.

3 John 1:7-8

- v7. Many have given up all for the sake of the gospel... It is right that we support them.
- v8. John was not above this!
- We should do all we can to further the preaching of the gospel

7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

3 John 1:7-8

- *“In that day, Christian travelers in general and itinerant ministers in particular were greatly dependent upon the hospitality of other Christians. John knew that when Christians assist those who contend for the truth, they become fellow workers for the truth”.* – David Guzik
- *“This also explains why John would pray for the prosperity of Gaius: he used his resources in a godly way, being a blessing to others. If God blessed him with more, others would be blessed more also.”.* – David Guzik

9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.

3 John 1:9-10

- John - the apostle of love - publicly rebuked Diotrephes by name! But he did not act outside of love. Instead, he followed the clear command of Scripture **Romans 16:17** and the example of other apostles **2 Timothy 4:14-15**.

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3 John 1:9-10

- Clearly Diotrephes had a big problem with insecurity!
- That will happen if your 'calling' came from you!

The Danger of Self

- Self-opinionated
- Self-exalting (rather than self-effacing)
- Self-made
- Self-sufficient
- Self-willed
- Self-satisfied
- Self-confidence
- In a word, in the flesh!

The Danger of Self

- *God designed human nature for Himself; individuality debases human nature for itself.*
- *The characteristics of individuality are independence and self-assertiveness. It is the continual assertion of individuality that hinders our spiritual life more than anything else*
- *God wants to bring you into union with Himself, but unless you are willing to give up your right to yourself He cannot. “Let him deny himself” — deny his independent right to himself, then the real life has a chance to grow.*

– Oswald Chambers

The Danger of Self

- *The disposition of sin is not immorality and wrongdoing, but the disposition of self-realisation — I am my own god. This disposition may work out in decorous morality or in indecorous immorality, but it has the one basis, my claim to my right to myself.*

– Oswald Chambers

- 3 John exposes two paths we can go down in the Christian walk:
 - The path of God-trusting, loving sacrifice, abandonment of self
 - The path of self-preservation
 - One enthrones God, the other enthrones ourselves

Lessons in Servanthood

And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned;

2 Samuel 16:5-14

Lessons in Servanthood

and the Lord hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man.

Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?

2 Samuel 16:5-14

Lessons in Servanthood

And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day. And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.

2 Samuel 16:5-14

Lessons in Servanthood

And the king, and all the people that were with him, came weary, and refreshed themselves there.

2 Samuel 16:5-14

- *“Another thing that distracts us is our passion for vindication. St. Augustine prayed, “O Lord, deliver me from this lust of always vindicating myself.” Such a need for constant vindication destroys our soul’s faith in God. Don’t say, “I must explain myself,” or, “I must get people to understand.” Our Lord never explained anything— He left the misunderstandings or misconceptions of others to correct themselves.” - Oswald Chambers*
- Do you trust God that much?

Lessons in Servanthood

So the king returned, and came to Jordan. And Judah came to Gilgal, to go to meet the king, to conduct the king over Jordan.

And Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite, which was of Bahurim, hasted and came down with the men of Judah to meet king David. And there were a thousand men of Benjamin with him, and Ziba the servant of the house of Saul, and his fifteen sons and his twenty servants with him; and they went over Jordan before the king.

2 Samuel 19:15-20

Lessons in Servanthood

And there went over a ferry boat to carry over the king's household, and to do what he thought good. And Shimei the son of Gera fell down before the king, as he was come over Jordan; And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart. For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king.

2 Samuel 19:15-20

11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

3 John 1:11

12 Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

3 John 1:12

- See the contrast now with Demetrius who had a 'good report'
- This is a qualification of one in spiritual authority
 - 1 Timothy 3:7
- We all give a report by the way we live
 - It is either a good report or a bad report!
- By their fruits you will know them!

13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.

3 John 1:13

- *“Peace is the possession of adequate resources”*
- George Morrison
- The believer can enjoy peace because he has *adequate resources* in Jesus Christ! - Phil 4:6, 7, 13, 19



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