

3John – Week 1

I. Quick review of last class

A. 2John 1:9ff

- i. Those who run ahead of Christ's teachings do not have God
- ii. Do not receive such men into your homes:
 1. Many churches in the first century would meet in the homes of Christians
 2. Christians would also allow their homes to host missionaries
 3. John discourages Christians from using their homes as a teaching platform for these false teachers.
- iii. Anyone who welcomes or greets such teachers is partaking in their wicked deeds.

II. 3John

A. 3John 1:1-2, *"The elder. To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth. (2) Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well."*

i. Gaius:

1. We don't know too much about Gaius except the following:
 - a. He was well-known and well-loved by the apostle John (vs. 1)
 - b. He was a man faithful to the truth (vs. 3)
 - c. He was a loving man (vs. 6)
- ii. It is good to note how John "greeted" this brother:
 1. Apparently, Gaius was a good Christian brother!
 - a. His inner life (i.e., his soul) was healthy!
 - i. This implies that he was alive with God in his spirit!
 - ii. That he knew and loved the Lord! (cf. 1John 2:5-6)
 - iii. That he "talked the talk and walked the walk" (vs. 3)
 2. John prayed that this brother's physical body would be as healthy as his soul!
 - iii. Such "greetings" should be given to faithful men, but not to those who "go ahead" of the teaching of Christ (2John 1:9-11)

B. 3John 1:3-4, *"It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth. (4) I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth."*

- i. The brothers mentioned above were missionaries sent out (vs. 7) by John to, perhaps, give words of encouragement to other congregations.
 1. When they returned to John, they told him about Gaius.
 2. What they said made John very glad.
- ii. Unlike the Gnostics of John's day (or even the "progressive teachers" of today), Gaius was a man faithful to the truth.
 1. Such men were a great encouragement to the apostle John!
 2. In the like manner, faithful disciples are greatly encouraged by those who are faithful to the Word of God.
 3. Great sadness comes, however, when professing Christians cast a negative light on those who strive to be faithful to the Word, while commending those who, by flattery of speech, "run ahead" of the doctrine of Christ.
- iii. Not only was Gaius faithful to the truth, he lived it!
 1. Nothing gave John more pleasure than to see:
 - a. Members of other churches walking in the truth (2John 1:4)
 - b. And to see even his own children walking in the truth! (3John 1:4)
 - i. Perhaps Gaius was John's convert.
 - ii. I can relate to John here:
 1. I am always deeply encouraged when I learn that some of my gospel children continue to walk in the truth!

- C. **3John 1:5-7**, *“Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you. (6) They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. (7) It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans.”*
- i. John praises his friend, Gaius, for his hospitality:
 1. We see 1John 3:17-18 in action with Gaius
 - a. 1John 3:17-18, *“But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? (18) Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”*
 2. It is good to note that “hospitality” comes from the Greek word *“philoxenia,”* which means “entertain strangers; fond of guests”
 - a. From *“philos”* = fond; *“xenos”* = stranger)
 3. Gaius opened his home to these missionaries, though he didn’t know them.
 - a. He must have known that they were sent by John
 - b. Gaius’ hospitality went beyond food and lodging for these missionaries; he gave them whatever they needed to continue their ministry (financial, etc.), since they received *“no help from the pagans,”* that is, non-Christians.
 - i. Support of the Christian mission is not the responsibility or concern of *pagans* or unbelievers.
 - ii. But for the Christian it is both a Christian duty and an act of Christian love.
 4. Not only was Gaius hospitable, he was also a loving man!
 - a. Like his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Gaius was a man of truth and grace!
 - i. Today, many define “love” as being as being full of grace alone.
 - ii. The same see “speaking the truth” as being “graceless and unloving”
 - iii. But the faithful disciple is known for his love for God and for others!
 1. We love God by keeping His commandments (1John 5:3)
 2. We love others by doing no harm to them (Romans 13:10)
- D. **3John 1:8**, *“We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth.”*
- i. Missionaries that are faithful to the truth are to be welcomed into our homes.
 1. By doing so, we work, together with them, for the truth!
 - a. It is good to note that when disciples aid in missionary work, they become fellow-workers in the labor.
 - b. As a Church, when we support missionary work, like *“We Care Ministries,”* etc., we are being fellow-workers with them!
 - c. But showing hospitality to the false teachers would make one a fellow-worker of iniquity! (cf. 2John 1:11)