

May 03, 2015



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks
Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
God's truth stands any test

POEM FOR THE WEEK:
Faith is believing, the promise is true,
Trusting in Jesus your strength to renew;
Resting so sweetly, secure on His Word,
Shielded from danger with Jesus the Lord. —Teasley

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
Which of you convicts Me of sin?
And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?
(John 8:46 NKJV)

(From "Our Daily Bread", Nov 2, 2013)

Series: **THE SPIRIT COMES**

UNIT: One in the Bond
of Love

NEXT WEEK

Gifts of the Spirit
(1 Cor 12:1-11)

Work Together for the Truth 3 John 1:1-14

Aim and Application of the Lesson

The lesson helps us learn and apply why and how we should **Work Together for the Truth**. The **study's aim** is to learn how important godly fellowship is in God's work and to know that each of us can be an effective coworker in the ministry of God's Word. The **study's application** is to put into practical use the pertinent lessons about fellowship seen in 3 John.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Lesson Introduction and Background

In the workplace, employee team efforts have a better outcome when there is a common goal. In this week's lesson, this concept seems to have been apparent to John, Gaius, and Demetrius, as they shared not only love for one another but also the pursuit of the truth. Together they contributed to the edification of the saints and the spread of the gospel. How easy it is for us to think more highly of ourselves than we should, like Diotrefes! We must remember that only Christ is to be preeminent in our personal lives and in our church. Let us determine to imitate that which is good, follow godly examples, and share our loving fellowship with those who are faithfully serving our Lord.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

We do not know the order in which 1, 2, and 3 John were written; they are simply arranged in our Bibles by length. It is likely, though, that 2 John (lesson 9) and 3 John were written at approximately the same time because of similarity in content. Therefore the background for the two is the same, so that information from lesson 9 need not be repeated here. We can add that 3 John is the shortest book in the Bible, containing a mere 211 words in the Greek; by comparison, 2 John has 245 words and Philemon has 337. The little book of 3 John has many points of similarity with 2 John, but differs in being more specific regarding those addressed. Both 2 and 3 John deal with the issue of hospitality in the first-century church. Nothing like our modern network of motels, hotels, and bed-and-breakfast lodging existed at the time. Therefore itinerant teachers needed to be hosted by families within a congregation. In 2 John, the apostle forbade extending hospitality to false teachers; this included denial of room and board as well as not allowing them to attend congregational meetings, which likely took place within the homes of believers. The opposite issue is addressed in 3 John. If we are spiritually healthy, we will more easily bend our lives to the needs of others. This may result in extending hospitality to folks we barely know, with many applications in churches today. Churches live this out when they support field missionaries. I have always thought that a church should have at least one missionary family for whom it provides at least partial funding, so that a long-term, fulfilling relationship may be developed with these folks. When the member of a missionary family is home on furlough, he or she should be given proper hospitality while visiting the church. This is more than money. It is friendship, encouragement, and acceptance. That may be reciprocated if members of the church take the time and expense to visit the missionary family on the field, something that was unthinkable 30 or 40 years ago. Hospitality between Christians builds a bond that strengthens ministry and contributes to the mission of spreading the truth of the gospel to all. The need to extend hospitality endures, and the words of 3 John on this topic continue to be of great value for us.

(Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

LOVING, PRAYING AND REJOICING WITH FELLOW WORKERS (3 JOHN 1:1-4)

Loving in truth (1)

Loving one another through being imitators of God (Eph 5:1-2)

Loving one another through Jesus making love increase (1 Thess 3:12)

Loving one another because it is taught by God to do so (1 Thess 4:9)

Loving one another through obedience to the truth of God's word (1 Peter 1:22)

Praying for workers to prosper (2)

Prosper in righteousness (Ps 92:12-14)

Prosper through remaining in Jesus (John 15:3-5)

Prosper through the fear of the Lord (Ps 128:1-2)

Rejoicing because the truth is in workers (3-4)

The truth living in us will be with us forever (2 John 1:2)

The truth lives within us because God has hidden His Word in our hearts (Ps 119:11)

The truth lives within us because God anointed us (1 John 2:27)

The truth lives within us through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-15)

SUPPORT FOR FELLOW WORKERS (3 JOHN 1:5-8)

Support through faithfulness (5)

It is a requirement that we be faithful because we have been given a trust (1 Cor 4:2)

We are to be faithful to the truth to live a life worthy of God (Col 1:10)

We are to be faithful to the truth so that God will consider us a faithful servant (Matt 25:21)

Without faithfulness, we cannot please God (Heb 11:6)

Support through providing resources (6-8)

Provisions through God's supplying directly through us (2 Cor 9:10)

Provisions of faith (1 Thess 3:10)

Provisions that should evoke thanksgiving to God (2 Cor 9:12)

Provisions through God's glorious riches (Phil 4:19)

CONFRONTING ERRORING FELLOW WORKERS (3 JOHN 1:9-11)

Confronting by exposing evil (9-10)

We should expose evil because there is no fellowship with sin (Eph 5:11)

We should expose evil because by doing so we may win over a brother (Matt 18:15)

We should expose evil because others may take it as a warning (1 Tim 5:20)

Confront by being a good example (11)

Be an example of godly speech, life, love and purity (1 Tim 4:12)

Be an example of following the example of Jesus (1 Cor 11:1)

Be an example of God's patience and grace (1 Tim 1:16)

Be an example by doing good (Titus 2:7-8)

SHARING WITH FELLOW WORKERS (3 JOHN 1:12-14)

Share through good testimonies (12)

Good testimonies whose goal is to aid others to believe (John 19:35)

Good testimonies from things you know are true (John 21:24)

Good testimonies through living a godly life (1 Thess 4:11-12)

Share through visitations (13-14)

Visitations to spend time with one another (1 Cor 16:7)

Visitations to provide or gather financial aid (2 Cor 9:5)

Visitations to refresh (Rom 15:32)