

Chesswood Baptist Church

Where Everybody is Somebody

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MINISTRY OF THE WORD

BELOVED, FOLLOW NOT THAT WHICH IS EVIL, BUT THAT WHICH IS GOOD

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SUNDAY EVENING, MAY 3, 2020

SCRIPTURE READING: **3 JOHN 1:9-14**

3 John 1:11, **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.

1. BACKGROUND

- a. The **Book of 3 John** was written by the apostle John between AD 85 and AD 96.
- b. It is a small book containing only 14 verses.
- c. This book tends to center around three individuals.
 1. Gaius who was either the pastor or church leader who consistently walked in the truth.
 2. Diotrephes who was a disruptive and prideful leader in this local church.
 3. Demetrius who was a reputable layman and possibly took the letter from John to Gaius.
- d. During this time there was extensive travel by missionaries to spread the Gospel from church to church.
- e. These missionaries were supported by the church and the church members cared for them in their homes.
- f. As I was growing up, I remember very vividly, there was a time when people didn't have the accommodations they have today and church leaders, pastors, missionaries and traveling preachers were cared for in the homes of the saints.
- g. John uses this occasion to encourage the generosity of those servants of Christ.
- h. John's history tells us that he was the pastor of the church in Ephesus for many years.
- i. He moved to Ephesus from Jerusalem where he had cared for the mother of Jesus after Christ's crucifixion, which was his mandate from Jesus Christ Himself. **John 19:26**, *When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!*
- j. There is some indication that these three epistles might have been written after the **Book of Revelation**; however, regardless of when they were written, it is the Word of God directly from the Throne of God.
 1. In the first Epistle, John emphasizes the fact that **the family of God is held together by love**. **1 John 4:8**, *He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.*
 2. In the second Epistle, John puts out a tremendous warning for us to be careful

of the raging apostasy and the many anti-Christ's that are in the world with their deceptive practices. **2 John 1:10-11**, *if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: 11: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.*

- a. The basis of our fellowship should be what one believes about the miraculous conception of Christ; that He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin, suffered, died, went to the cross and paid the penalty for our sins with His shed blood, He was bodily resurrected the third day, and He is now seated at the right hand of God the Father making intercessions for us.
 - b. What is the proper perspective of Christ? Was He, in fact, in the beginning? Was He God in the flesh? **John 1:1**, ***In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. Revelation 22:13, I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.***
 - c. The Bible says in no uncertain terms that Jesus Christ, who is God, was manifest in the flesh. **1 Timothy 3:16**, ***And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. Hebrews 1:8, But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.***
 - d. John also tells us that the tabernacle of flesh was necessary to save you and me because someone had to die for our sin. **John 1:14**, ***And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. Hebrews 7:26, For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;***
 - e. Jesus Christ has taken care of the sin problem; He has taken care of past, present and future sins. **1 John 2:2**, ***And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.***
 - f. The basis of our fellowship all boils down to "what in the world are we going to do with the Lord Jesus Christ?"
 - g. Jesus Himself tells us He is the only way to the Father. **John 14:6**, ***Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.***
3. In his third epistle, John instructs us to walk in the truth. **3 John 1:3-4**, ***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.***
- k. This third epistle is very personal in character and carries the same truth that John has been emphasizing.
 - l. It differs a bit from the second epistle. **2 John 1:4**, ***I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.***
 - m. John emphasizes that the truth is worth receiving and makes us free. **John 8:32**, ***And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.***

- n. As someone puts it, "**My life in God - that is salvation; my life with God - that is communion and fellowship, but my life for God - that is service.**" **Ecclesiastes 12:13, Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.**
- o. **This Epistle deals with our life for God and has to do with walking in the truth.** This is extremely important in light of the many distortions and deceptive practices in existence today.
- p. There are several themes from the **Book of 3 John**.
 1. **The family of God should support other members who proclaim the Gospel.**
 2. **When we support a ministry, we become a partner of that ministry.**
 3. **A good reputation will follow a conscience walk with God.**
 4. **Believers should stand firm against hypocrisy, dilution of the mission of the church and those who teach false doctrine.**
 5. This does not mean we should take on every enemy of Christ, but to **stand firm in the Gospel. 1 Corinthians 15:58, Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.**

2. INTRODUCTION

Refer to the Morning message May 3, 2020

3. FIVE POINTS TO THE MESSAGE

- h. **But Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.**
 1. **3 John 1:9, I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.**
 2. Things have gone smoothly in the first century church until now we hit a roadblock.
 3. These roadblocks not only existed in the first century church, but they will also manifest themselves in the present-day New Testament church as well.
 4. We find that there are many choice saints but there are others who work behind scenes with hidden agendas in order to try to usurp authority and to derail some of the things God would have us to do. **2 Corinthians 2:17, For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. Proverbs 21:23, Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.**
 5. **We must be careful to not be a party of such action.**
 6. The Bible says where there are no vision people perish. **Proverbs 29:18, Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.**
 7. This means there needs to be a vision for the local church.
 8. **The pastor should be the one to cast that vision.**
 9. **Although no pastor, in any way, should become a dictator or a controller, but the direction must be moved forward by the individual that God has called to be the administrator of that local church.**
 10. The Bible says we are not to lord over God's heritage. **1 Peter 5:3, Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.**
 11. Diotrephes is a different kind of individual than Gaius.
 12. As a matter of fact, the Word of God says he loved to have "**preeminence.**"

A short definition of this word is supremacy, superiority or domination.

13. He wants to be in charge of something that he is not in charge of.
14. *This is what John is writing about; to indicate that we will also experience this same type of actions in our churches.* Activities such as this are very disruptive and do not allow the program of God to move forward smoothly. We are commanded to have no division among us. **1 Corinthians 1:10**, *Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*
15. This man was a man who put on airs; he was pretentious, displayed vain glory, and strutted around like a peacock. We must remember that Chesswood Baptist Church must display the attitude of restoration. **Galatians 6:1**, *Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. The scriptural method of dealing with conflicts in the local church is laid out in the book of Matthew 5:23-25, Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; 24: Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. 25: Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.* So, the aforementioned verse indicates we are to deal with the matter with a **sense of urgency**. In an addition **Matthew 18:15-17**, provides five additional bible steps. *Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16: But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17: And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.*
16. Let us recap these six steps in dealing with scriptural conflict resolution with respect to believers.
 1. Treat the matter with urgency. **Matthew 5:23**
 2. Agree with thy adversary quickly (avoid a hateful or a bitter spirit). **Matthew 5:24, Ephesians 4:31**, *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:*
 3. Go tell him his fault between him and thee alone. **Matthew 18:15**
 4. If step three does not work, take with thee one or two more, that every word may be established. **Matthew 18:16**
 5. If he neglects to hear them, tell it to the church. **Matthew 18:17**
 6. But if he neglects to hear the church let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. **Matthew 18:17**The aforementioned steps are to be used to avoid ill will in the local church and will work perfectly if we implement. **Ephesians 4:31**, *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:*

17. This man really did not want the responsibility, but he wanted to control and oversee it all.
18. The Bible does not say if this man was a pastor or just a layman.
19. John brings five charges against him.
 - a. He must occupy the leading place in the church.
 1. Either he did it or he tore it up.
 2. You might know people like this.
 - b. He refused to receive John. He made malicious statements against the apostles.
 - c. He refused to entertain the missionaries.
 - d. He excommunicated people from the church. He would run them away if he couldn't get his way.
 - e. Mrs. Diotrephes was also a problem.
 1. We need to learn to get out of ourselves and allow others to enter our circle.
 2. When we do so, it is amazing as to what God does.
 3. We know that God is the one who adds to the church, but men and women are the ones who send people away. **Acts 2:47, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.**
 - f. This man is excommunicating from the church by his attitude.
20. I question you; do you have the right attitude toward people that would desire to become members of Chesswood Baptist Church? What about those that visit our church for the first time? Will they come back because they felt loved and appreciated? Or will they not return because we failed to display the spirit of inclusion?
21. Do you embrace them; do you make room for their talents and abilities?
22. *There are many of us who need to be quiet in the church.*
1 Timothy 3:15, But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.
23. **1 Thessalonians 4:11,** tells us, **And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;**
24. I want to commend my wife for not trying to pastor Chesswood Baptist Church; I want to commend her for her role she plays.
25. She is incredibly supportive and is loved by an abundance of people here.
26. She has allowed my love to be extended to people in this body and I appreciate her for that.
27. We must be very careful to stay in the will of God.
 - i. **If I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth,**
 1. **3 John 1:10, 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.**
 2. We have already talked about the things that this man was doing.
 3. "*Prating against us with malicious words:*" - are you guilty of talking behind someone else back in a malicious way? **Proverbs 25:23, The north wind**

driveth away rain: so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.

4. Are you not content with the way things are going and instead of coming to the leadership you try to fix it yourself by sowing discord among the brethren? **Proverbs 6:16-19, These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18: An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19: A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.**
5. "Neither doth he himself receive the brethren," - We must widen our circles; we must open our arm because we cannot afford to run people away from the local church because of our attitude.
6. This man was excommunicating people from the church in a way that was not legal but was based on his own thoughts and false motives.
7. We cannot mold every personality to be like ours.
8. We must accept people as they are. **Galatians 6:2, Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.**
9. The way we change people is we change our self. **Matthew 7:5, Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.**
- j. **Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good.**
 1. **3 John 1:11, 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.
 2. John continues to encourage Gaius to continue doing that which is good.
 3. He also encourages us as Christians emphasizing, we need to practice righteousness and not get side-tracked and lose our focus on what God has called us to do. **Philippians 4:8-9, Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. 9: Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.**
 4. **We have no authority to belittle our brothers and sisters In Christ to elevate ourselves.** The Bible clearly tells us how to handle conflict with respect to our brother or sister who are overtaken in a fault. We dealt extensively with this issue earlier in this message as we set forth six biblical steps with respect to conflict resolution. **Galatians 6:1, Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.**
 5. Having gone over some of the bumps in the road in the local church, let us look at the next point.
- k. **Demetrius hath good report of all men,**
 1. **3 John 1:12, 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.
 2. Having had problems with several members in the church, there are others who were so faithful and willing to help get the Word of God out.
 3. Demetrius had a good report of all men and of the truth.
 4. He was a man who was sound in the faith.

5. He was an example for the local church.
6. Demetrius was obviously a faithful saint of whom Diotrefes wanted to shut out of the church.
7. However, Demetrius is never mentioned again. He was a godly man and then drops off the scene.
8. Demetrius is evidently among the group of men whom John mentions that Diotrefes was not receiving.
9. He was a shining light of the New Testament; a humble saint of which we have so many among us today.
10. I want to commend our workers, our leaders, our teachers, and supporters everyone who has a ministry at Chesswood Baptist Church.
11. This is not something that you have to do, and we thank you for considering yourself not working for the pastor.
12. You work for the glory of God; you are building rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ. **1 Corinthians 10:31**, *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*
13. We must always remember that our doctrine must be straight and on track. **Titus 2:1**, *But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:*
14. The real test of the Christian life is in the back of the arena where there are no cheerleaders or applause.
15. Although we try to recognize people here at Chesswood, there are times we have people working their fingers to the bone and they appear to get no recognition.
16. We must continue to work bringing glory to God. **1 Thessalonians 2:13**, *For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*
17. What a delightful passage from **3 John 1**
 - i. **But I trust I shall shortly see thee,**
 1. **3 John 1:13-14**, *I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: 14: 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.*
 2. John concludes that there was no need to write more because he was coming to see them shortly. This is a standard closing to John letters he speaks of peace which passes all understanding. **Philippians 4:7**, *And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*
 3. In his closing he speaks of all believers with respect to his greeting.

4. CONCLUSION

- a. Do you know Jesus as your personal Saviour?
- b. If you do not; today is your day of salvation. **2 Corinthians 6:2**, *(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)*
- c. Come to the side of the Crucified Christ.
- d. The Bible say in **Matthew 11:28-29**, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29: Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I*

am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

- e. **Romans 3:23**, *For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*
- f. **Romans 3:10**, *As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*
- g. **Romans 10:9-10**, *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10: For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*
- h. Would you please stand?

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