

"And This is Love"



The Second and Third Letters of John The Apostle

"And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love." —II John 1:6

"Getting Along Well" III John 1-8

"He who 'walks in truth' is an integrated Christian in whom there is no dichotomy between profession and practice. On the contrary, there is in him an exact correspondence between his creed and his conduct...To him truth mattered. He did not regard theological issues as unimportant trivialities."—John R. W. Stott



I. WELL-WISHING ADDRESS (III John 1, 2)

- A. The relationship dynamic—friendship and love in Divine truth (v. 1)
- B. Prayer for well-being in body, soul, and spirit

"Few delights can equal the mere presence of one whom we trust utterly."
—George Macdonald

II. WALKING IN TRUTH (vs. 3, 4)

- A. Encouraging testimony of faithfulness (v. 3)
- B. The joy of growth in grace (v. 4)

"To follow Christ is to walk with Him first then (in the life everlasting). Ultimately, we will be there a long, long time."
— Gordon MacDonald

III. WITNESS OF WORTHINESS (vs. 5, 6)

- A. The witness of selfless ministry (v. 5)
- B. The commission of worth (v. 6)

"Hospitality is a test for godliness because those who are selfish do not like strangers (especially needy ones) to intrude upon their private lives...Only the humble have the necessary resources to give of themselves to those who could never give of themselves in return." —Erwin W. Lutzer

IV. WORKING TOGETHER (vs. 7, 8)

- A. Deserving of support (v. 7)
- B. Deserved hospitality and harmony (v.8)

"It is too bad that anything so obvious should need to be said at this late date, but from all appearances, we Christians have about forgotten the lesson so carefully taught by Paul: God's servants are not to be competitors, but co-workers."
—A.W. Tozer

FOR THOUGHT, DISCUSSION and HOPEFUL APPLICATION...

1. In these very personal lines, the Apostle John reveals his value of *true friendship*. What is it anyway? Realistically, with whom can we truly have friendships? What about non-Christians? What are the risks of friendship?
2. With his address to his friend Gaius, John makes a radical shift regarding hospitality, compared to the text of II John. Discuss the obvious and necessary differences.
3. Another of the author's key phrases is "walking in truth". What are the implications of so living in regard to consistency, doctrine, and testimony? How does this walk compare to "walking in love"?
4. According to verse 5, faithful Gaius offered hospitality to traveling preachers that he didn't know. By what criteria should we judge as to whom we should extend help? What tests and standards should we use?
5. In the first century, hospitality (*Greek, philoxenia, love for strangers*) involved housing, food, and possibly money. What are your thoughts about responsible giving to the local church, missions, parachurch ministries and the Christian media? What should be our primary motive?