

3 John - Commentaries by Unknown Author

Montreal Conference: 2018, 3 John 1-8 (1:1-8)

Reading

All right, crashing 7 hour. Come right in thyself on your own, and our souls begin to die. Our Christmas Day for a while from our ceiling. No, it's been can come in thou art near. Uh, drinking umm, thyroid and stuff on your vitamin. Umm, I don't think it's, I don't want to stop. I agree with that. I want to learn, please. Umm, I have to see this, perhaps you know. And I can do it from the bottom of the community. I wonder if we could suggest to take up the third epistle of John. The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. 11 I wish about all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health even as I so prosperous. For I rejoice greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is, indeed, even as a Thou longest in the truth, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth, Beloved. Thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the President and to strangers. Which are for witness of thy charity before the Church, Whom if thou bring forward on the journey after a godly sword, thou shall do well. Because that for his namesake they went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such that we might be fellow helpers to the truth. I wrote under the Church, but the atrophy. Who love us, who have the preeminence among them, receive us not. Wherefore when I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth crafting against us with malicious words, and not content there with neither that he himself received the brethren, and forbidden them that would and have cast them out of the Church. You love it. Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good.

He that doeth good is of God, but he that doeth evil. Have not seen God Demetrius have good report of omen and of the truth itself. Yeah, and we also bear record, and you know that our record is true. I have 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. Greed thy friends by name. John had the privilege to write to. I'm going to say a relatively younger man than himself, although perhaps John was as old as 80 at this time or older. And, uh, one of the things that John appreciated that didn't go unnoticed and I think many of us appreciated this afternoon is that there's many young men whose souls are prospering. And he wrote it to encourage this young man to continue to prosper. I don't know whether Gaius. Had good health, but one thing he did is he had that first love that was referred to this morning and he carried it out in a remarkable way. And in contrast to another gentleman that we read in this chapter called Theatre Fees. This was written at the time when most of the apostles the Lord had taken home. Perhaps John was the only one left at this particular time and it would be nice as some others which maybe give a little more summary of the book. That was not my thoughts. But, uh, rather to consider, umm, how we are to function in the assembly with one another, with the dynamics and the excitement that first love brings, uh, brothers and sisters in Christ. And, uh, you know, John was writing the scriptures and the Word of God had quite a big impact in his life. He was a changed man. They didn't change, umm, when he was younger. Perhaps he was in his 30s when he came to value the Lord Jesus in a remarkable way. If you read in Marks Gospel Chapter 11, we'd read that John had a brother, James, the sons of Zebedee. And it was interesting that at that particular time, perhaps just before the Lord went to the cross, those two brothers decided to ask the Lord a question. And they said, Lord, do you have a place for us? Do you have a specific place? A place of prominence. But it's interesting, you know, John, when he wrote his five books that we have in the New Testament, we don't read of any of the prominence that he looked for for himself, but rather he enjoyed when gay people gave the preeminence to the Lord. And so I think that was the spirit in which John wrote to a young, prospering man in his school, Paul Gaius. I just wondered if it could be of some benefit for us to see how we can interact in the absence of our Lord. We have a spirit, but soon we'll be with him for all eternity. So what a joy to be able to act with the same spirit that Gaius had with one another. We have something corresponding to the first chapter of the book of Joshua, I believe here not in every aspect, but I was thinking about. The Commission that was given to Joshua and the first verse it says Now after the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, it came to pass that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun Moses minister saying. And we think of some of the expectations that are given, and these expectations are just as much needed now as they were in Joshua's time. We go to verse six. It says, Be strong and of good courage, For unto this people shall thou divide for an inheritance to land. Verse seven, only be thou strong and very courageous. And I was thinking of the latter part. Of that seven first, which links into the portion that we have, it goes on to say, that they may observe to do according to all the law which Moses my servant commanded thee. Turn not from it to the right hand, nor to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. And so we have sole prosperity brought before us.

And this third chapter of John, verse two especially beloved, I wish above all things. That thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prosper. So that was the desire of Joshua. Uh, and here is the desire of, uh, John here as he writes this to, uh, gas and it, it says that gas walked in the truth. One thing to say words, isn't it, But it's another when we have the reality. Uh, that comes forth in our walk before the Lord and before men. I wonder how we feel if the brethren, we're praying that our health will be as our soul. Verse two to trade we have a cow, he's here three that bought the health and it might be a problem to its prosperity to the soul. I've often wondered if the brother of friends in our house might be like our state of our souls absolutely very sick at times. I was thinking perhaps a little bit differently if if someone were to write a letter about you or perhaps me. What would they say? Because here is not what you want to hear that what people say. What do you think? Who do you think you truly are? But this is what John wrote about Gaius. Gaius. I believe it means I'm glad he said he was the beloved and we see the qualities that he mentioned here. So if someone were to write about me, not here and particularly about me. What about you? Would we see words as such in here? So as the beloved, as the one who walked through, and so on. Now the difference is 6. You can still do something about how someone thinks of you, at least on your walk. After you die, there's nothing you can do because you do have time to change. If you don't like what you think somebody. And you know, The funny thing is regardless of what you think, someone has an opinion on you. You know, sometimes we try to hide as if it were and don't want someone to say something. Well, whether you are very quiet, very, very local, very shy, we all know that. So we whisper over and someone whisper, oh, that brother is very quiet. Well, that brother or that sister, Oh yes, she laughed. Look nice. And regardless, we have a reputation. So what would yours be if someone provides for you? It can also depend who's writing about you. Someone who's really close to you, as opposed to someone who just shows you an acquaintance.

That our Lord Jesus is reading open and He's the one that we decide to please. He knows every credits of our life. And maybe if we bare our heart to Him. Understand what pleases Him. Thoughts on motives are exercises. Our goals is like. That he would be pleased and that he would meet us at the finish line and say well done. His first two would it not indicate to us that it is possible for somebody to be prospering in their souls and yet be in poor physical condition? And there's a gospel being preached today called the Health and Wealth gospel, and the thought behind it is that it one is spiritual. It's going to be reflected in the fact that they have great wealth and they have good health. I don't believe. There's any ground for that because you think of how the Lord Jesus himself, when he went about he had to ask for a penny. I don't think we have any place where we see that he carried money.

And as far as health is concerned, what about the Apostle Paul? You know, it speaks about him, is that? Well, his father's presence was weak, and he did have an infirmity in the flesh. And it was that which? He would have liked to live without. Messenger of Satan to Buffett him. But the Lord told Paul that he could serve him better with that infirmity, with that thorn in the flesh. We should serve better with it than without it. So I don't believe we need to find encouragement in the fact that I think generally speaking, God's desires that we might enjoy quick physical health. Just because somebody doesn't have it certainly does not mean. That they're in poor spiritual condition. And I think that's brought out here in the spirit, one of our early American presidents who was a believer, John Quincy Adams. And one time someone asked him how he was doing, and he said John Quincy Adams is doing fine, but the house in which he lives in is falling down. So I believe that that expressed his spiritual state. In contrast to that, the physical body that was breaking down very rapidly. It's interesting that John introduces himself as an elder. Wasn't he an apostle? Why does he introduce himself as an elder rather than an apostle? You know that Paul often begins his officials for the apostles, and as such, of course he was. Had his mind of God and the Spirit of God and that position as an apostle. And that gave the authority for that which he wrote. Here John diminishes himself. He's gonna speak to this brother, and there are some things that he commends about this brother. But there is a situation there that also needed some. Wisdom and guidance and help to deal with that to minister that need. John the Apostle diminishes himself. He says I'm just an elder. And so we we have to think true that if we want to minister to a situation, Can we do it if we're full of our own importance. We have to remember the Lord got down and watched his disciples speak. And then also, of course, I'd like to refer to Philippians 2. Philippians 2. Verse three. Let nothing be done through strife or Vainglory. And in loneliness and mine, let's each esteem other better than themselves. And of course, the fifth verse, let this mind be in you, which is also in Christ Jesus there, of course, we got here. The Lord Jesus Christ, the creation sustainer of the universe, diminished himself in becoming man, having obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And so the apostle Paul, the apostle John, in ministering to this situation, the first thing he does is dimension himself. He says, I'm just an elder, but I'd like to talk to you about something. That seems important. We see John introduces, uh, through his episodes there more about how we ought to walk. So we find in the first epistle of John, they told us to walk close to the Father. The fellowship is with the Father and with the Son. And then when we get to the second epistle, we find that you warn us that there are deceivers in this world and sometimes the deceivers of an enemy because they come at the subtle serpent to draw us away now. In the third epistle he commanded that this young man gave us that he walked into truth because he he sometimes to learn what the truth is. But it's difficult to walk in the good of it. So we find in the third verse of our chapter, it says for Ivy Joy freely when the brethren came and testified of the truth that it is, or what a commendation when someone else testified how he is walking the truth. Now I'd like to read in the new translation. Give us a little bit of different sense. Why rejoice exceedingly. When the brethren came and four testimony to thy holding fast the truth, even as our walkers in the truth, so he was holding fast onto the truth. What? We have told the whole fast too, aren't we? But wait a minute, you can't hold fast for something you don't have. So we need to buy the truth 1St and So what not once we buy the truth, then we can hold fast.

To the food and walk in the good of it. And when we do, our brethren, others will see that we walk in the team. We hold fast at which we value, don't we? I at one time used to collect postage stamps and I primarily collected stamps from the British Isles, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands. And I recall one specific issue that came out from the Isle of Man. It showed a post that was thinking and showed a man holding up a parchment. Above the waves and that stamp was issued in commemoration of the translation of the Manx Bible. He was rowing across, I believe from Ireland to the Isle of Man and the storm came up and he had labored for many years with that translation. And he wanted to protect that, even at any cost. So I was very impressed with that particular postage stamp. We're finding the seven churches that the Philadelphia church didn't have a lot of strength. The Lord said to them, for thou hast but little strength. But what he commanded them was that thou hast kept my word and has not denied my name. It sounds like very simple truth, but yet it's very important, isn't it? So sometimes for many of us who have grown up in the assembly and we use phrases like, well, I go to meeting or I don't like what the meeting stands for, or we make different kind of accusations of lights and dislikes. Instead of saying why are we here? This is not just a place to come because we have good friends, we need to understand why. Why are we gather the way we are gathered? If you don't understand the principle we are gathered to the Lord's name, then you are probably not in the right state of soul to be here. There are things that we do people with questions until you understand it. Do we hold fast through the word of God? Do we stand up to the apostles doctrines and fellowships? Do we follow what the word of God say or are we able to bend some of this? You know, it's interesting. Recently there was the news about China, China being trying to force religions out of the communist system. They were fighting for the Catholic Church, that they want Catholic priests and bishops to be sanctioned by the Communist Party. And the and the Catholic are saying that only the Pope can sanction those people. And recently they said. Good news, they came to a compromise that both can live with. Is that what we stand from the word of God? Do we compromise in order to make peace? Or do we hold fast to what it is that we would keep His word and not deny His name? There are so many admonitions in Scripture to hold fast and to stand fast. And I may have mentioned this before, in the book of Judges we see a king mentioned his name was Adonai Visak. And in verse six it says in the donut basic Plaid. And they pursued after them and fought him and cut off his sums and great toes. And Adonai Visak said three score and 10 kings having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table. So forth. At first I was used to puzzle me and I said what is that application? Oh, without a thumb to work in opposition. Through the fingers you can't hold fast. Without a great toe, your balance is affected and you can't stand fast. So we think of all the admonitions that are given in the Word of God to stand fast and hold fast. May we endeavor to do so with the Lord's health today. Just one comment about the elders, not to, uh, talk about them really, because we can go to Titus one and research that subject. Umm, But, uh, it's interesting that John, umm.

He didn't just want to write a letter to Gaius, but we read at the end of the book that he actually wanted to visit him and he wanted to share a lot more than could be ever put in a letter. And I think when it comes to real elders, I think we see that in the heart of John, that it's one thing to write, but it's possible. And John, I don't think it was on the Isle of Patmos at this time. He was free to go and visit, and he intended to visit. You know we read this morning in Revelation 2. The second Epistle to Ephesus. And, uh, how they had first lost their first love. It's interesting that Paul in Acts chapter 20, I believe it is, he made a point of speaking to the elders in Ephesus before he departed for perhaps the last time.

And, uh, elders are really important, but the whole purpose was to feed the flock of God. And, uh, that seemed to have, uh, somehow there was a, a mishap, wasn't there? Because when we read in Revelation chapter 2, we see that people weren't quite enjoying the freshness that Gaius has mentioned here. One other example I thought we could just refer to briefly, umm, with the generations that we see here between John and Gaius. As you go back to first Samuel 23, you know the story well, but Jonathan had a personal relationship with God and he was able to the use of God as a vessel to go and fight the Lord's battles. And as soon as he saw David come and meet Goliath, they had something in common. We call it truth, but really call it the power of God. And that's what I think that John saw here in gates. He saw him not just talking about it, but it says here in verse three, the brethren came and testified. They saw it first time John and Peter later after the Lord Rosemont said he could say those things that we have seen and heard and our hands of handle of the word of life. And you know when it came time for David in a discouragement, a young man that had a zeal to the Lord, the Lord could send someone like Jonathan without Agps, go into a wilderness of the woods and strengthen David's hand in the Lord. And I think that's what John was doing here with Diaz. Is to strengthen our beloved brethren in the Lord. John couldn't run like ayes anymore. It slowed down, but he could encourage gays his heart to continue and know that the Lord was faithful who would do it. We've been thinking a little bit about the relationships that exist. Between the elder and Gaius and there's a verse in Second Timothy chapter 2 That has a similar relationship. In Second Timothy chapter 2, verse one, you have Paul the apostle and Timothy, and this is what Paul says. Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men. Who shall be able to teach others? Also, I don't know whether there was a natural connection between the elder, who I think was John and Gaius, or whether it was a spiritual connection like Paul had Timothy. But I think there's some learning here in the relationship. The words that that brother George has just been mentioning, the idea of the well beloved, the concept of whom I love and the truth, the affection that existed between the older and the younger. I think it's important that we develop those relationships. And that there's a connection between the older generation and the generation falling because the scriptural model here in Second Timothy chapter 2, verse 2 is that one generation learns, it teaches it to the next generation, who passes it on to the generation after. And it's good that in learning something like that, you understand the emotion and the connection. Our brother Dave so has been talking about the value, for example, of being gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus. Why are we here? And for me, one of the things that was incredibly, incredibly educational to me was to see. The emotional meaning that had to our brother stand odds as he expressed that when somebody challenged whether the Lord was in the midst and he said well, if he's not here, then take me to where he is. I want to be where he is and that made a profound impression on me as a young brother to learn that and I hope that to some measure and me expressing that today. Maybe it passes on to a younger brother in in my circle in my connection, but I think that it's just interesting to see that it's not just head knowledge, but it's also.

A harp, And it's a relationship between the one who is teaching and the one who's learning. And I know naturally in our society we're taught. You associate with your peers, you'll learn from the experts. But what I see in the Word of God is the assembly is like a family. And there's the older, the elders, the father figures, and they have a responsibility to teach those who are younger. And even more importantly, those who are younger need to have the attitude that Gaius had to be willing to learn it, to walk in it, to have a desire to know it and have a love for the same things. So these are, uh, principles that I see in this, uh, third epistle of John. And I think it's a practical thing to keep in mind. There are brothers that I hadn't closed, umm, connections to me. I was in the assembly in Ottawa when their brother Gordon Hano was there. And as I look back on it, I realized I missed a lot of opportunities to learn and profit from what he had to teach. I'm thankful for what I did collect and gather from my brother Gordon, but. I feel like I missed a bit of an opportunity. I could have grown that relationship as a younger brother going to learn. And so I put that out, uh, for myself to be ready to teach younger brothers. If there's a younger brother that wants to spend time with me to learn something, to share something. And I put it out to those of you who are younger. And the same thing applied to sisters that, uh, there's an opportunity to learn, an opportunity to grow. And we need that relationship younger to older across the generations. We need to learn to value each other. Don't follow the path of the world. Follow the model of the scripture. The assembly is a place should be a place of love, caring, compassion. We're all part of the family of God. I think you would say. There look at the fourth verse he says I have no greater joy here that my children walking through. Where did John learn the truth? He learned like the Savior in Papa John is the apostle that in the gospel of John imports what is properly called the Lord's Prayer as you go over to the 17th of John. Lord's Prayer there. 1St Chapter 17 and verse 20 Either pray aye for these alone, or for them also the shall believe of me through their word, that they all may be one. Thou Father art in me, and I indeed that they also may be one enough, that the world may believe that. Drawing words of things that the seed of the Lord Jesus Christ himself. So now as an old man he has that desire. For those who earn his children in faith and no greater joy to hear and to hear my children. I was thinking also in the fossil pier, the 5th chapter of the. Comment was made that John referred to himself as an elder here in the chapter in Peter, in the 5th chapter of first Peter, the elders which are among you, I absorb you also. I'm an elder and a witness who was suffering a Christ and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed which is among you. Taking the oversight throughout, not like constraints, but willingly, not from filthy looper, but of a ready mind either, seeing Lords over God's period. Would be an example of what so Peter like John? One who had learned is to see the Jesus. In his hair and his love and his desire, that desire that he's seen in the Lord Jesus himself. His prayer to the Father. God now has that care for his children in the faith. It says you speak to them several walking at the anniversary even as I'll walk through the truth. And #4 My children walk in the truth. What is the truth? One of the names of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am the way. Truth and the light God had no greater joy than he strolled in the face, walked closely the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm pleased to refer to First Peter 5 because there we get the job description of an elder and.

As has been mentioned, it's feeding the flock of God. Notice what he says there, taking oversight thereof. Not by constraint. Don't. Not as a burden. Not as a burden. It's privilege. Not a burden, but willingly, not for filthy Lucas, don't. There may be a reward when we get to to heaven for that which we've done for the Lord down here, but that shouldn't be in the objective. But with a ready mind, neither has been Lords over God's heritage. We are not part of the flock. The slot belongs to the law and we have the privilege of helping to look after it. And so that's the, shall I say, the job description of the elder which we get there. And we find out that John in this epistle fulfills that. What does he do? He looks first, the things he can commend and he finds things he can commend in the life of gas and he commends that he, he, he, he gives that commendation. Likewise, John, of course, when he writes in respect of the. Seven churches. What does he look for first of all? To combine and he, he finds that which can be commended, you know, in every church, but uh, but perhaps one, but uh, we, uh, umm. It's easy to be critical. John Chioda, the one with the care for the flock. He looks at gas and he sees things. He can come in and that's nice. Walk into truth. There are often two sides to it. We often just look at get so easy to get on one side or the other in uh, the verses before us of how great it was to see him walk in the truth. But then now we see the practical side that the apostle exalted. To see that he says he loved thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren. What was that it? He's walking two things faithfully for his brethren. No, I think that's a stop with a comma. And then they said to strangers. So do we carry the love of God, the principle of the love of God, the truth that we have

learned from the Word of God? Is it just for the brethren? No, assist you up. It's the strangers as well, because they are our neighbors. By simply is about your love the Lord thy God, who all thy heart and all thy might and then if there were the other part is easy. Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself and then we often would raise the question just like they did oh Lord, who is my neighbor? And then we start to. Put it to our own favor. So here these to learn the truth, walk in the truth and then he is to serve his brethren and strangers. But that's only part of it because we often hear the phrase that we walk a very narrow path and we need to be careful how wide of a path that we go on. So that verse 6 go on, it says, which have borne witnesses of thy love before the church. Wow, isn't that nice that the church is a host. All the love that he exhibited whom if thou wilt forward on the journey after God is Lord. Thou shall uh do well and then to go on. And it's because that point mainstay. They went forward thinking nothing of the Gentiles. That's an interesting thought, isn't it, that though he serve his brethren and perhaps strangers, but it's a principle here that we will not take any correction. He will not take any money from outside his pleasure. That's a godly principle. We're not to do so. So we learned that not from the Gentiles. I believe here it referred to those. I'd like to back up just a moment. We were referring in verse three, uh, of the brethren that came and testified of the truth that was in gas. They were not asked particularly to come up. It was voluntary on their part, wasn't it? And I think of, uh, another scripture. And this is in connection with, uh, a sister that went home to be with the ward in Acts Chapter 9. In connection with Dorcas. Uh. We first serve verse 36 as a woman full of good works. And in verse 39 says, Then Peter rose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber, and all the widows stood by him weeping and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. While that was a practical.

Uh, way of showing. Fourth term love and our concern for those widows, wasn't it? So we have a sister commended here and in our chapter we have a brother commended. And again, those that came up and testified were not put under any pressure or duress to do so. They did it out of the abundance of their heart. So that's nice to see. And our brother George was referring to the fact that. Uh. John not only addressed the letter to Gaius, but he expressed a desire to see Gas and meet with him. And I was just thinking of another scripture that we have in Second Timothy. I know I'm digressing a little bit. I believe it's in the third chapter. No, it's in the first chapter. And verse 16 says the Lord give mercy unto the House of Vanessa Forest, for he often refreshed me. And was not ashamed of my change. But when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me. We don't know what's encompassed in those words. Very diligently. I'm sure Rome was a big city at that time. He perhaps didn't know where the Apostle Paul was being held, but it was his desire to see the Apostle Paul. To commune with him and. To encourage him. So that was part of the refreshing that was mentioned, wasn't it? I'd just like to make a comment to Robert House when he brought up about sharing the Word of God. I'm going back 45 years ago when I lived in Vancouver, BC. Was a young man who was no more higher than a grasshopper. And this young brother had a desire to look into the word, and he went through a number of our brothers. That man now is named Bruce Edson, which most of you know. Most of you have read a number of his literature. He was a young man 35 years ago. He was young. I desire to ask brethren about the Word of God. He had the desire to begin the Word. His name is always. Bush asked Vietnam. See the fruit of that? I think we can see here in John that he was thrilled to hear about Gaius and to know about him. And he says he writes here, he says he lists some things about about Gaius. He says your soul prospers. Verse three, you walk in the truth. Verse five, you do faithfully. He was faithfully hospitable. Verse six, your charity, your love before the church. And so these things, it thrilled the heart of John that this young man. With the words of God and enjoying Christ and and walking in the truth and it thrilled his heart and I know from working with so many of the the Saints in Malawi in Africa that. When I first went there, they hardly knew anything. They didn't know. They didn't know how to function as an assembly. Nothing. And they really knew nothing. But as you go back year after year, you see them learning and studying and practicing and walking in the truth that they do know. And it's a thrill to your heart. And in your assembly, there's some older brothers who are teaching in your assembly. And when they see that you as a young man or a young woman, you're taking an interest in the things of God. And you want to know what the word of God says and how you can live in it and walk in it. And they see you progressing and walking in the truth. It excites them. It encourages them. And, and it says here in verse verse four, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. Now you may think, well I can't walk in everything and maybe I try to force you to walk in more than you know, but just be faithful to the little bit you do know. Don't try to walk in something somebody else knows. Be faithful to what you know and and walk in it.

7 Second official to John. Good morning about those that bring false teaching. And they are not to be countenance, they have to be. Rejected because of the doctrine that they bring, it tells us in verse. Nine Second Epistle, verse 9. Whosoever transgressed it, and abides not in the doctrine of Christ. Death not God, He that abides in the doctrine of Christ, He hath both Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house. Neither did him. God, steep, thick. That means don't even say goodbye. Or he that sitteth in God's feet is a partaker of his evil deeds. So we don't want to give the impression in any way that. What these are bringing is false teaching is acceptable. And opposed to the person in the work of Christ. And it's not to be accepted, be rejected. Now I do believe that if somebody comes with false teaching. We can present to them the gospel if we can control the conversation and present the way of salvation and the value of the God of Christ. Perhaps that would be a benefit to one who brings full stop, but we just have to be careful that we don't give the impression that what is being taught by these false teachers anyway? Acceptable. But now when we come to the third epistle. I believe we have just the opposite, and that is if somebody is bringing the truth. We are to help them underway. And it might cost us a little bit to do this. We may need to show some hospitality and. Yet, uh, we see the topic for John says here. Concerning gated. Locked out who is basically whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers. I noticed that Mister Darby's translation. He says, love thou doest faithfully in whatever thou mayest have brought towards the brethren, and that strangers. In other words, it's possible that there are those that come with the truth of God that we've never met before. Are we going to reject him just because the fact that? They're a stranger to us. I don't believe we ought to do this. If they're bringing teaching that's consistent with the Word of God, we need to promote and help them on their way. I. I believe that's the thought here. Diwali you might suggest or ask if those coming in versus in the second of fiscal that brought the false doctrine recommended to not love them commanded not to receive them. So I think John's often called the the love apostle. I think because referred to love more often than any other apostle and yet he wasn't suggesting that love is demonstrated in every instance by receiving someone. There's a teaching in called mainstream Christianity Today that Christianity is all about love and success. The love is demonstrated by accepting everyone regardless of doctrine and lifestyle. But Apostle John in the second epistle talks about love. He talks about verse four of the second epistle is very close to verse four of the third epistle which foster walking in the truth. So in second Epistle we're told the importance of walking in the truth. We told those importance of loving one another. And yet the elect lady is instructed to not receive an individual into her home in the third epistle. Talking the the cost of talks with the importance of walking the truth, and then he tells chaos or commend chaos for receiving people into this. What's the difference between the categories of people? It's true. So the love that we show as Christians to one another is a love that needs to be demonstrated by our application of truth. It's and the value of a place on truth. Love anti all accepting love should be there for everyone should demonstrate it. But there's a difference between having love for someone

also respecting the truth, ensuring that we apply it appropriately so that those that aren't following correct doctrine or involving sin at the number of recognize that there's still love. That they have a responsibility to speak the truth. And we demonstrate our love by distinguishing between those that are perceived or not received.

That's a good point because we love the individual that we do not love to teaching. Say that's in what's in the word faithful when he says, well, that doesn't faithfully. One who is faithful with his brethren, there's something that I'm going on with that is not according to the mind of the Lord, is not pleasing to the Lord. A faithful brother. I think bring that out. Shove it down my throat but to encourage you belong with the Lord faithful for the things of the Lord unless I do faith I do it's basically what part I do to brethren and the strangers. I'd like to make an application there lawful, faithful, faithful with lawful. Sometimes we those we work with from school with those we associate with. So I know they're not the Lord. So let me pray we'll speak the word for the Lord. I'm going to seek to be faithful to the Lord and to be faithful to strangers or in this application, those who are. Sophalore's those who are unsafe and won't be faithful to them, give them a word and speak to them for the love of the state. Warning of judgment come and faithful to strangers giving that warning. And bring it another spin on Speaking of truth, we go back to. Back into during the war time, there's the same instant his name was. Entries like around he was one of the important citizens that built that big bomb. And in the end, it's like mentioned something that, you know, the scientists, they always believe in what they can prove and proving that they can make this atomic bomb. They realize that the atomic bomb was not the most dangerous weapon in the world. He actually claimed that the most dangerous weapon in the world was the truth because by discovering that sick bombs actually created something very different. Umm, and also in, in a, in a warping war frame warranty. I'm sorry, uh, in between the war, like what is the most valuable thing is the truth. That's why they cover it by all these bodies of life. They made all these tactics. So if you can turn into Ephesians 6. 11th until 20 we know that we have to be wearing the armor of God and. Beware that. Rent licenses and the desired residences proof, right? Umm, So it's very interesting to put that pin because it's by taking the truth and knowing that in this in the world, those scientists find out like that. The truth is what's most valuable for us. We can search into the word and actually cover myself of Jesus and actually speak what he has and realize that he's actually the truth. First, uh, three here, uh, we want to be found walking in the truth and, uh, having the truth is really important, especially when we live in a world of moral relativism and people having different ideas of what is white right and what is wrong. We need to have something that we can hold on to. We know that about Jesus. It says I'm the way, the truth and the light. We also know that in John 17 in, in the Lord's prayer, as mentioned, it says sanctify them to thyself. Thy word is truth, so we have something that we can hold on to. What is the opposite of truth? And I think it's worthwhile mentioning this because there's a cosmic battle going on if you look at John chapter 8 and verse 44. We read about the devil. He said that Jesus is talking as a Pharisee. She says here of your father the devil and the less of the father you will do of the devil. He was a murderer from the beginning and abode not in the truth. We want to abide in the truth, we want to walk in the truth, but the the devil does not. And we also see that he is the father of lies. Lies are the opposite of truth. So in this cosmic battle we need to hold on to to Jesus who is the truth, hold on to the Word who is the truth.

Yeah, so, umm, I would also like to mention that. In in scientists recognize, too, that having a standard for something is important. Uh, something we take for granted, even like the kilograms, uh, we use it in so many different scientific measurements. But even that, the official measurement for that is actually a, a metal, uh, uh, piece of metal that's sitting in, in France in, in a special laboratory. Umm, and they're, they're gonna come up with a more, something that has a better standard to even redefining what a kilogram really is. But for us, we do have a standard that we can rely on and, and that is survival. And that's, that's either who is the truth And we need to walk in that. And George Washington, chapter one and verse 3. Joshua chapter one and verse 3. We raise every place that the soul of your foot shall thread apart, that shall have given to you. I think it's important to realize that it's only to take them that we walk, and that we're really for that. For example, the fact that we are an ambassador for Christ. If I walk in it, if it's true in my life that I represent Christ out here, it will be mine. I can't talk about it. But if I live it in my day-to-day, it will be mine. The people of Israel at this promised land in front of them. But they have to put the foot off in order to protect. And the same thing with the truth of the assembly. You know, sometimes we need a Christian. And you would ask us, where do you go to church? Well, you know they got her to the Lord's name. Just want to challenge would be involved in our assembly. Are we going to be like smalls, like Sunday morning only? Are we involved? We go to prayer meeting. For brother, do we go through the brothers meeting and being involved into the process of the building up of the assembly? So, you know, we can, we can talk about these things, but it's good for us to walk and we can apply the same thing about the truth of the Lord's return. We can't believe it, but is it something that we think about in our everyday life? When I start my day, the Lord might come today. And the measure that I walk into it, it will be mine. So may the Lord give us grace to walk in these things so that we can possess for his glory. The connection with those that have been mentioned earlier, especially for prayer, the younger ones, we know that in the schools we're constantly being challenged as to what the truth is. There are no such standards. But. Uh, we have of course have mentioned relativism and pluralism and all of these isms that have come in, but there, there is a standard that we can go by if they're not. I recall a story being told of a a man who. Passed a watchmaker shop every morning and. He was always concerned that. His timepiece would be off by a little bit, so he detoured and looked in the watchmakers window and there was a clock that he knew was very very accurate and so if there was any deviation he would reset his clock by that standard. And even in measurements, standards are very important in navigation. I recall our story being told of, uh, Shackleton, who was in the process of trying to rescue his men from Elephant Island off the coast of Antarctica. And he set out with a few men in a, a rowboat that had a sail on it, uh, heading, uh, to South Georgia. And it was said that if they were off in terms of any navigation by 110th of a degree. They never would have made it to that island, so they had to make sure that they followed that standard that they had to follow that navigation instrument and thankful to say that they did follow it and landed there and eventually saved those, uh, that were left on that island. So God's word is the standard that we have and the only thing that we can rely on and knowing that standard is, is so important because.

It is the way in which we answer the lies that the devil suggests to us, as Sean was mentioning to us. If we look at Luke 4, which recounts the the time when Satan tempts Jesus, umm in the wilderness, we see that each time that a temptation, and they're all very unique temptations come. Jesus answers them with scripture. He uses the standard that we are given that we can use to answer the lies that are suggested to us on a daily basis. And so is that the way we approach the lies that the devil gives us is using. Our Bibles. Do we know our Bibles? We look at the answers that Jesus gives with Scripture. They're all from the book of Deuteronomy. It's not exactly the place I always turn when I am having a discussion about spiritual apologetics or something. But Jesus knew the Word of God. And so too do we need to know the Word of God so well that we can use Deuteronomy when the Satan suggests lies that come in conflict with what we're called to do in our lives. And we get back to our chapter here we find that there are only 13 verses in our chapter and the apostles John chose to spend eight of those 13 verses on the one group value and the pressures to command such a one because he walked for the truth and the way examples of the truth. But then the other practical side, what we said the practical side was to walk in it and then the other side is closed where to be follow helper. We commented earlier that. He knows he's not going to take collections of donations for the outside sources. So there's a practical

consideration too, don't we? Well, we know one who works for the Lord, that there is a fellowship that we ought to have. So we find here, it tells us that in verse eight we therefore ought to receive such that we might be fellow helpers. Christian walk is always twofold. There is a faith and then there is a work. I will walk now. Faith and works are not the same. Faith is God's word. Faith. We believe that God, and He's the one who gives us the faith to walk in the good of it for His glory and honor the work that we do. And so the world can see that God's Word is at hand. So it's like fire and smoke. When there is fire, we know there is smoke. However, they're not the same. The fire will give you warmth. They smoke, well, they just smoke. So we have to walk before God in truth. And then the rest of the chapter mentioned a few more people, two more to be exact. And the clock here that we have about 10-15 minutes left to go into the one who oppose this. That we digress, just for a quick second. Just about watching the truth, loving the truth. Jesus is the truth, the God of truth. The first and First Timothy chapter 3. Sounds like, but it doesn't matter. Let somebody believe, as long as it's according to truth. That there seems to be the thought that anybody can come in off the street and ask to break bread because the Christians allow them to break bread. Well, that's a dangerous precedent. But here we find in the First Tennessee 3. Controller and ground of the truth. But the truth is referring to. Killer Brown truth. The next verse is that you say as we're going to finish the hour. That is the truth filler, that truth. It's, it's important to, uh, for myself, I, I've been looking a lot of relapse to say two years into short, uh, towards, like, uh, what the Lord really means for this assembly and where you walk up. And, uh, I just wanted to, uh, provide ourselves is, if ever we are having questions and we're looking into the word, let's always remember that in the garden statement said to be.

Did God really say that? Then let's always think about that, because if the enemy of ourselves, when we're speaking the truth, always going to try and say that. Church of the Living God certainly is not the truth. The Lord Jesus Christ said I am the truth. But the Church of God is here in this world to be a testimony to Christ. And I think that's the thought connection is. Church of the Living God being the pillar and ground of support. Right. Support truth. We've had much to say about the truth. I want to repeat something that I read recently. An article was found in the possession of Brother Wigram after he died and it's attributed to him. The article on heresy and that article, he brought up the different aspects of piracy and he said something very significant that is. The worst form of heresy. Is a sect based on purity of doctrine. Not that a little bit. We insist that every single one of us hold perfectly pure doctrine and exclude all the others. We are the worst form of heresies, sectarianism. We must distinguish as as you're Speaking of truth, which is there is vital truth, fundamental truth and there's a whole lot of other things that we disagree upon and. If we. Refuse people to the table of the Lord for that which is not vital. Well, we put ourselves in the category. It doesn't say why, Demetrius. But we put ourselves in that category up to me, sorry, not to meet your theatrics. We put ourselves and his fellowship. The person says that the truth. 53 they'll be free. Of truth. It GI, it binds us. It binds us up. What happened here was that. Fellowship. And there was somebody there that had not the truth. Geographies. He was promoting himself, giving himself preeminence, shutting out Christ from the fellowship. And because of that. They were being bound by this man. It wasn't true. Wasn't true fellowship as God had provided for us in his Word when there's an enemy that comes in like this one? There were enemies that we read about earlier on and some of the epistles. There were other circumcision. And they were coming in, binding the Saints up. In the loss and deceiving them and putting them under ***** here, it's not the law so much, but it's a a system. It's a person that desiring that people follow him. And those that refuse to he was putting out of fellowship, out of the assembly. This is something that you read about here that started, but it had developed into a greater thing throughout Christianity up to the day when we find these kinds of things of professing Christianity, but it's not normal Christian fellowship. And so we need to know as it says here. In verse 11, we need to know what to follow. The glove is followed not that which is evil, but that which is good. And so we we find out what is good by reading what God's Word has to say for us. Most times we know what is evil when we look around. Even the world knows things that are evil because when man disobey God and ate of that fruit.

He knew good and evil, free of the knowledge of good and evil. So Mad knows when he's lying isn't right. He knows the ceiling's not right. He knows all sorts of things that are wrong. We're talking about spiritual things. And if we want to know what is right spiritually, we need to look in the Word of God, and we will then know how to refuse the evil. It's sad here when we read about this little fellowship, that this man. Theocracy was. I say deceiving the people. And he was doing it for his own exaltation. It's no different than Satan did when he wanted to have God's seat and have worship. We have that pride. Each one of us have that pride in US, and we need to be careful. I think this one we're speaking about here as it was brought out in Acts 21. The Apostle Paul. Gave an address, you might say to the elders that there be those that that would be without, that would come and scatter the flock, drawing disciples onto themselves. And then there were those that were within. I think this man was one of those that were without. Because it says just one person, Matthew. Matthew, Chapter 10. Verse 40. He says he that receiveth you receiveth me and. And he that receiveth being receiveth, he that receiveth thee receiveth him that sent me. So here was one that was presenting. That fellowship from receiving others. Into that fellowship. He was, he had set himself up and so he was actually an enemy of the Lord by doing what he was doing. And so we need to be careful, but the truth will set us free. And then we will be free indeed. Are seeking to guard us against this sort of a situation where some individual takes a prominent position a place of self importance. And the reason I'm saying that is because what I'm looking at on the wall can't help but see the scripture that in all things he might have the preeminence. Soocracy. He wanted to have it. And then I look over there, it says they saw no man save Jesus only. And these are beautiful prescriptions, and Christ is the center of the assembly. And we need to keep our focus on him. And what a privilege when we come together to exalt no other man, no other individual, but Christ. To magnify his name together. There is one other uh thought just to share. On receiving enrollment 15 and seven, there is much that could be said about receding. So I would like to really refer to, uh, verses 5:00 and 8:00 because I see this is the heart of the whole book of what John was writing to Gaius. Well, in Romans UH-15 and seven, it says receive you one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God. I think if we can carry that Scripture out. Of your wonderful, uh, victory that the Lord will be honored. But what I see here in the big part that Gaius did and the atrophy didn't, if we could have put it simple. Is. Gas is going to, as someone mentioned earlier, is going to be well done now, good and faithful servant, the atrophies will be at the judgment seat of Christ and he's going to see a lot of stuff get all burnt up. If you can come with them, it was left behind. And so from an examination, diatrophy has got enough. And Gaius gave something to the glory of God. That's what it really comes down to. And I think really what Gaius was exhorted and encouraged to do, we read in Romans chapter 12. Uh, if you could read Romans 12, just verses 9 to.

13 But really 9 to 16, you see in the book of Galatians, you're told how Gaius, first of all, he walked in the truth. But you know, we all have been given the spirit to live in, in Galatians 6 and or five. And 25 if we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit. Let us not be desirous of Vainglory, provoking one another, envying one another. You know the Lord has said in Ephesians 2 and 10 we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus on to good works that. So do we umm, deserve to be able to glorify God and ourselves by our own doing? No. Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. And I think Jesus was one that wasn't really living out something he learned from intelligence, but rather he was just walking in the joy of his salvation. I think that's what Ephesians 2 intent is telling us, that God has given us something that's joyful, something that's practical, something that reaches our wives, our fellow men, our families, and that's himself. And so he says

here. Inverse our Roman swallow nine that love be without hypocrisy or dissimulation. Verse when kindly affection 1 to another with brotherly love and honor, preferring one another. 11 fervent and spirit serving the Lord, continuing instant in prayer. Verse 12. Verse 13 given to hospitality to the necessity of the Saints, which is mentioned near the start of the meeting. And so we see, I think JS is through. Why? He was encouraged. Was because the Lord was in total control and the Lord was working in the hearts of these strangers or fellow brothers. And John, I know unspeaking term said carry out your Christianity practically. Throw your arms around them and help them whichever way you can and bring glory to the Lord. So I find it very encouraging that he wrote this to Gaius to encourage his heart. And you know, we need each other. The Lord didn't give us different generations. Uh, because one is old and one is new. Rhea Bone had that problem. We do need each other. And it's the word of God that has the light and the love. And to think that if there's one first place. And geographies missed it. Hey, it's got it. That meant to show love first. Have you? Are you gonna be the first one to be able to wrap your arms around someone and show your love? Are you gonna be the last one? Heaven's gonna declare that there's a lot of first places. First place finishes. Because someone not only was living in the spirit, but walking in the spirit, and they threw their arms around someone and loved them. That's what gays did. This question was that earlier about First Timothy 3 verse 15. It says there without controversy graded the mystery of godliness. God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit scene of angels, preached on the Gentiles, believed on the world, received up in glory. Jesus said I am the truth had the Bible put before us as the truth. And what's that book about? Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Yeah, we could pray.

Montreal Conference: 2018, 3 John 9-14 (1:9-14)

Reading

276. Hey Sir, Umm. Kind of wondering if we exhausted the third chapter third of Pistol of John or whether there is more to be developed from the latter part of the chapter. What you? Rather than feel about that. So often let me think it through. To the young people who observe comes out as sound and brass tinkling symbols. It'll be nice to finish to the Third Epistle of John, and from there go into First Corinthians 13, starting with verse four. Love and suffering long. The same time, we may not have sufficiently covered the question that was asked in the previous meeting about First Timothy 3:15, the Church of the Living God, the Pilgrim ground of the truth. Where would we read from 30 Pistol of John verse what? Did we start at verse 9? Shall we read first Printing 13 from verse four as well Sounds good. 3rd John. Verse nine I wrote on to the Church. But the atrophies love it to have the preeminence among them receiveth us not. Wherefore if I come, I will remember his deeds, which he do it praying against us with malicious words, and not content therewith. Neither dusting himself received the brethren, and forbideth them that would and casteth them out of the Church. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. Neither doeth good is of God, but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

Demetrius has good report of all men and of the truth itself. Today we also bear record that you know that our record is true. I had many things to write that I will not with ink and pen. Write on to thee. But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to thee, our friend. Salute thee. Greet the friends by name. 1st Corinthians 13. Starting from verse 4. Charity suffereth long and is kind. Charity envieth not. Charity bonneth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth. But whether there be prophecies, they shall fail, Whether there be tongues, they shall cease. Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. Where we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child. But when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we've seen through a glass darker. But then face to face. Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known. And now abide the faith, hope, charity, history. But the greatest of these is charity. We have in verse 9. That diatrophies love to have the preeminence amongst the president. There's a verse in 2nd Corinthians 11 That says. Stop. First Corinthians 11/20. You suffer from man bringing into *****. If a man devour you, if a man takes of you, a man exult himself. What a fuss, exalts himself above the others. We suffer. That's what biographies did. He exalted himself and the Assembly suffered. They're all they're all believers. I compose everything. But I think on you or the other way around, we all suffer when we speak of truth. Sometimes we speak of truth in an abstract way. We have an efficient expression. The truth was in Jesus. We have in the Second Thessalonians chapter 2. I guess that's millions of factors, two and the 10 first is an expression there. Connection with the truth it says that with all the capabilities of unrighteousness in them that perish because they receive not the love of the truth what they might be saved. Some people understand that they didn't they didn't love the truth. I don't think the thought there is that they didn't love the truth because that was the truth presents is love. When you hear the gospel, you hear something that's true, absolutely true. God so loved the world. That's what the truth does. It presents God in his love. To guilty sinners. And how can that be experienced outside of the person of the Lord Jesus? And I believe myself that whether the author features problem or difficulties among us, I believe oftentimes we can relate that to the fact that we have separated what we call. And the person who is truth and the love that comes with the truth is absent. And so we have doctrines and thoughts and understandings of this and that in the mind, but the heart is away from the Lord, and so we would press on things at the expense. Of the unity and the spirit of going on together in love and glorifying the Lord Jesus. And so it's important for us, I believe when we speak of truth, he says whom I love and the truth we have to run the first verse that was love connected with truth and that's because it comes from the Lord Jesus. Let's always remember that without a fellowship with the Lord, not enjoying His person, and not filled with the fruit of the Spirit that is the character of Jesus and His sentiment produced in our hearts. We're gonna cause trouble, aren't we? Yes, we have earlier in Ephesians force speaking the truth in love mentioned the the truth as it is in Jesus. Do we present it for in a way that the Lord Jesus himself would have presented it? Is there that love of our brethren that we would want to see their blessing in the presentation of the truth? It's not the truth that insults me because I know something that you don't.

Face the truth that desires to sing blessing for another, and to present Christ as I present the truth. Diatrophie said loved but with a love for himself having second attendance Chapter 3 Baltimore Kennedy those in the last days of the lovers at the moment their own selves. They actually wanted to make a name for himself. They didn't want to give place to others that were in the Lords work that we've seen here and in contrast to guys guys had love for the Lord and he received those in and gave them fellowship and hospitality. You're in the Lord's work. It may seem like a small thing that he was doing, but it really demonstrated his love for Christ and I was I was encouraged by looking into take it back but in verse eight of our chapters. The word fellow helpers. It says here we can be a fellow helper by receiving those that are in the

Lord's words, by giving them a place to lay their head in. A meal may seem like a simple thing and there may be many in this room that think, I know I'm not gifted as an evangelist, I'm not gifted as a teacher. What can I do for the Lord? Well, the word here that's translated as fellow helpers is found twelve times in the New Testament, once here by the apostle John has used 11 Times by the apostle Paul, and two of those 11 Times Paul's referring to a collection of folks as helpers that he was a part of. But if you look at the 9 references reviews Speaking of those that have helped him and every once in one of those instances he names those that were his helpers. We have. We're still in Aquila, Timothy Urbaneous. Aristarchus Markets. Justice Titus. Apparatus by these American Loop, these people that didn't look for a big place for themselves. They simply were fellow helpers. And yet they were so important, the Lord's work that they've been named and written down in God's word. We may think of no great thing to do to the Lord but hold water, his name, hold off the water. A simple gesture yet further in the work of the Lord. We're fellow helpers in that. So this is an encouragement to others. It's a small thing that you can do, but if it's furthering the work of the Lord, it's a big thing in the eyes of the Lord. SN. I was noticing too What Peter? Has to say concerning an elder in the Assembly, who, I take it, would be one who has a concern for the spiritual welfare of the Assembly. Which certainly wasn't the case with diatrophies, but in first Peter chapter 5. If it works here. That I think. Would be relevant to what we're thinking about here. And since in first Peter chapter 5. And 1St. Two, feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint, but willingly. Not for filthy lucre, But I've already mind. I was thinking of this neither as being. Lords over God's heritage by being in samples. The flock in sample. I think it would be an example. And so an elder ought to be an example of Christ. And of course, Lord Jesus, he said I am meek and holy in heart. And certainly that wasn't characteristic of diographies. And he goes on to stay here in first Peter 5 verse four. And when the chief shepherd shall appear, you shall receive a crown of glory that fate is not awake. Likewise the younger submit yourselves unto the elders. Gay for all of you. Now we're talking here simply about the younger ones, but all the believers. I believe this is the book. All of you. Be subject 1 to another and be clothed with humility. For God resisted the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourself, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. I believe the Lord can. You know, lead one into position of perhaps oversight, but it's not something that we should seek to exalt ourselves over one another. That Lord is over God's heritage.

God, you know he appreciates humility. 2006 Nine to those that are of a humble spirit and contrite mind. Sad to hear that in verse 9. So on. Doing exactly what Peter says not to do. As a Lord over awarding it over the local assembly. The Seminole local is separately in March, one person or even two or three times to dictate. What to the assembly? What should be done or not that? A local assembly is comprised of those who have been gathered to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ by the Spirit of God, and we are to At first they are to be subject to the leading of the Spirit of God and whenever decisions are made and if and as long as. That so a lot of tractors for Peter Paul. Or to be subject to each other. So if there is. Not one mind. Between all the brothers and the local assembly. Then there should be getting down on our knees. To pray that we would have a word in mind in any matter. It should not be. One group of brothers. Working over the rest of the assembly. It should be a desire to. Come to to rock together to one mind, and that can only be done by the Spirit of God going through each one of the same things. You wouldn't receive what the Apostle John had written. And so. He set himself up above what we have in Scripture, because what the Apostle Johns are written would have been on the authority of the Lord, wouldn't it? And as you were saying, Robert? Sometimes we look at Scripture and we want some black and white answers. We do this, we do that. But one thing is very important is things that we do for the Lord is the manner in which we do that and the character displayed of the actors in the action. So I can preach the gospel, beating somebody over the head with a Bible. I mean, I'm preaching the gospel, but I'm not manifesting the character of Christ. And so it's the same in the assembly. We're all brothers and sisters in the Lord, and if we're subject to him, we're not going to want to take his place like that biography here. We're going to humble ourselves and listen to each other and look for that oneness of mind and spirit that the Lord produces to fellowship with him and one another. And so it'd be something of a natural mind to have scripture to support a position. But when you say you see the spirit of how that position is held, you might have questions as to that really is the spirit of Christ. And I think we need to have the energy to to address that and grace to help each other out, to not let something like biography to spirit affect the sense. You know, when the Lord was with the disciples, they were arguing among themselves. It was going to be the greatest among them. And if you remember what our brother James presented to us in the open meeting, in the first meeting, and he presented to us the character of the Lord in his forgiveness. That would be in our hearts to be in a forgiving spirit. And if we realize as we had this morning, the glory of the Lord and when He had to pay to have you for His own as part of that assembly, that would produce in US a humble spirit, wouldn't it? And we wouldn't want to take His place. Wouldn't we ever ask, I believe, ready for a test that we can all use someone that's getting out of the ministry. Uh, true ministry will always, uh. Draw souls closer to Christ and glory, and we'll give glory to God through ministry. We'll always do that. Paul's ministry will draw souls away from Christ and give glory to men. That's what Demetrius was doing here. So we have that simple test. Someone's drawing souls away from Christ for themselves. We know that's not true ministry, but when someone's speaking and they're seeking to draw souls to Christ and glory, that is good ministry.

So as a simple test, someone speaking. In this case, the Apostle John appears to anticipate using his Apostolic authority to deal with the, uh, with the diaphragm. And just for reference, perhaps we should read refer to Matthew 16 where we get Apostolic authority, umm. We've really the latter part of the adverse 19 and it was the Lord speaking to Peter. Whatsoever they'll show blind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. And so the response the apostles were giving responsibility that the administration of the early church in binding and losing on behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we notice the similarity between that wording and the Matthew 18, where that responsibility is given to the assembly, the church. So we find that the apostles use that Apostolic authority. We find Peter uses it in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Paul uses it in First Corinthians 5, and here John anticipates using it in the case of theatrical. But it does take the question, and I'll kind of raise the question, how do we deal with the diatrophies in these days in our weakness? There seems to be no spiritual. Spiritual energy to deal with this area. Can you speak up, John, please? Deal with this character. Was she disciplined by the assembly? We had a similar case like this in Malawi when we first went there. There was a man who kind of set himself up as the Bishop over all the assemblies, and they were getting more and more assemblies and they were called themselves, gathered to the Lord's name and. The man wanted to have control and power over all these assemblies. But when we came there and we lived there and we started teaching about the priesthood of the believer and how there's not a pastor in the church and there's not a Bishop over everybody and there's not one man who has all this power and control. Then he, this man, he stopped showing up when we're having a meeting. He was my translator and he stopped coming to the meeting. So I have no translator and it became a problem. But the Lord has sent over his own house and. Things worked out and the Lords for the Lord's honor and glory. This man is no longer wasn't in power, if you might say for for very long before the assembly had to deal with him. But you as you say, brother John. Sometimes the assembly doesn't have the power to deal with that that situation, but the Lord his son over his own house and he has his own means and ways to work things out. If we're patient and waiting and we have in Matthew chapter 18. Umm, the the authority given to the local assembly for administration.

And let's read again verse 18:19 and 20. Verily I say unto you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, that shall be done for them of my Father, which is in heaven. And then in verse 20 it says, for where two or three are gathered together. In My name there am I in the midst of them, until verse 20 gives us the authority of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. His name is there and His authority is there, and He is the one who has the authority to work in the assembly for administration and dealing with such things as binding and losing. That authority does not belong to diatribes, does not belong to one or two brothers in the assembly who usurped the authority. Those the authority of the Lord is in the midst of the assembly. And the assembly is where things are done there. But as you say, sometimes there's not the moral character of the spiritual energy to be able to deal with a situation like diatribes in the assembly. And sometimes it's necessary to give the Lord time to work things out.

First Peter 5, what we heard before and verse 6. As we speak of, the responsibility that the Lord has could, say, transferred to us. Because we have this word in our hands and we have instruction from it. And here's the situation with biographies. And we say we don't have the energy of the power to deal with that. We have for six in first Year 5. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God. His hat is never too short and. And sometimes the things that come in among the things have been growing there for a while. We've been careless. Uh, we haven't addressed small things. Perhaps that would have been better to address and they just grew and perhaps diatribes, he just grew in that opposition to others that he would put himself up. So I believe we need to have that exhortation, humble ourselves before the Lord. What are, what are we doing, brothers? To divide in the name of the Lord. He died, the rest of you together. How come we were having an argument, raising our voices? How could that ever happen? We've been disconnected for a while, so we need to get back to the Lord and humble ourselves under His mighty hand and give him the place ourselves that He deserves of a rest. And then personally and then collectively we realize the need. How important is for us to. Remember the one who gave himself for us and offered himself up as a sacrifice for our sins and sweet smelling Savior to God the Father. And at the same time, what we've just learned now in the last two references mentioned is that we so often forget who is in the midst. There's a good person. Umm, Isaiah chapter 57. Isaiah chapter 57, verse 15. With us at the high and lucky one that inhabited eternity. Whose name has told me? I dwell in the high and Holy place. With him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the heart of the country. Maybe we should have referring to first Peter 5. Also have read verse 7. Where it says casting all your care upon him. 40 carats for you and that finishes the sentence in my Bible. We have tears, but the Lord wants to make our cares his care. And sometimes we are faced with difficulties in our family. Maybe it's at work, sometimes in the assembly that we just don't know exactly what to do. And perhaps we're burdened about situation. Well, how wonderful that the Lord is greater than all of our sins and is greater than all of our cares. And he's able to work things out like my brother finished and. Experiencing down there in Malawi. And we I think if each experience in our own lives how that sometimes impossible situations when we roll them off onto the Lord, it comes in in a wonderful way and. The mounting, you know, it breaks forth in the sea. And he can work things out in his own way, in his own time. Cares for you and for me and how he cares for his assembly. It's not. The Lord's church, and he's head over all things to the church. And there's no one who cares more about the assembly. And the Lord Jesus himself. I'm signed, Trevor. I think that's the other guilty. I want to be careful how I fitness, but I think we are guilty sometimes of.

What a person like psychography is. They have had a gift, we don't know, but putting that person up on a that is still so to speak. That we they, they really should not be put on. We cannot enjoy and and profit from a gift that the Lord has given to a brother. But we shouldn't be guilty of exulting that brother beyond. What the word is using him, we just look for a moment at a very familiar chapter in in 20. We know the story where Paul was speaking to the elders from Ephesus. He warned them that even. We've warned them that even from their own cells, with men arise. Says in verse 32. Acts 20 and 32. Now, brother and I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up to give you an inheritance on all them that are so tremendous down to the Lord. There's the power to meet that This is available to us to prevent what he has worn them about in 28:29 and 30. Now what's the result? Of that warning. We can see that in verse 30. Seven. They all wept through and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him. Sorry, most of all the words that he faked that they should see his face no more. They seem to be more concerned about their beloved brother Paul. She certainly was used as the Lord, no question about that. But they seem to be more concerned that they weren't going to see Paul's face anymore. Uh, how they were concerned about the warning that he had given that earlier? And I believe that's an example. And then the results. Might be the spirit of the in that brother, we are all subject to pride and orders. Whether I'm saying that drive was the last thing to join. We all have a, you know, in our own nature. Be careful, brethren. Look up to a brother more than. Drop it by what the word has given him. Speaks of opinions in the scriptures, you know, and uh. Can be of the opinion. We have our thoughts formed by our understanding from the Scriptures, what we've heard of ministry and perhaps our own life. You know this example that I talked to somebody that. Where do you go if you want warmer weather and anyway you have to go South? To our warmer weather, you gotta go north. Where are you from? I'm from the southern hemisphere, from South America. I want to go where it's warmer. I got to go more. Here's absolutely true. Two positions are absolutely true if they're on the equator. You don't have to go anywhere for the work that's already there. And I might be wrong, but I believe the equator is the position on the earth that's always at the same distance from the sun. And so I enjoyed that and in fellowship with the Lord, you know we can. Consider opinions and enjoy them, but we don't have to divide over them. We can we can appreciate them. We can see somebody thinks like that because he's such a culture in such a country he's had he's had such experiences in his life. And so I go South when I want to get warm weather and he goes N but we still are brothers and sisters in Christ doesn't have to divide us. If diastrophe had been guilty of moral evil when the instruction had been different, or I guess the assets in another way, is there a difference in how scripture tells us to address? An Assembly. Moral versus doctrinal evil.

First has a responsibility doesn't do judge evil any evil little Levin Lebanon whole up. So whether it's doctrinal evil or classical evil or moral evil, church has the responsibility to deal with it. One is not any better than the other. Some are harder to discern because her brother is a well versed in Scripture. If you're not, you might be able to justify, argue, persuade. And so if we've been talking together for with a brother for an hour over or over a period of time and we never talk about the Lord, we never enjoyed him, this person, his glory. We're talking about things side issues. Let's be careful brother. The truth is in Jesus. It's about him and then when it's about him that our hearts are set right when it's about things. It's dangerous. I was having that thought this morning when we were sitting enjoying remember remembering our Savior and his death and. And I was considering those verses that we read in Second Chronicles 5 and how the whole congregation, they all praised him, and it was when they all praised and worshipped him that the House of God was filled with his glory. And it may not be the only key, but I think it is a very important key here in this chapter that we consider that whatsoever we do, we do it for His glory, whether in the assembly or in our lives as believers, which is what we had in that verse in first Timothy 3 and 15, that we know how we ought to behave ourselves in the House of God, but in the assembly as well. And I think, Mr. Pat, you in your prayer, you mentioned this morning how? What we, what we give to Him is what he's already given to us. And I thought of these verses in First Chronicles 29. In verse 10 it says, Wherefore

David bless the Lord before all the congregation. And David said, Blessed be thou Lord God of Israel, our Father, forever and ever. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is dying. Thine is the Kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted his head above all. Both riches and honor come to thee, and thou reign us over all. And in thine hand is power and light. In thine hand it is to make great and to give strength unto all. Now therefore, our God, we thank thee. And praised thy glorious name. But who am I? What is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. I just thought that really put in perspective. What we should be while we're here in this world, waiting for him to come. And in the assembly, it doesn't say take up thy cross. And decide that you should do this for me or you should do that for me. It says take up thy cross and follow me. Gaius is the example of one that knew how he ought to behave himself. Atrophies is the example of one who did not. So as some of us spoke earlier, just on the side really, that's a picture of obedience, I believe, and the other is a picture of rebellion. And it made me consider we're talking about a man here, but it can be a woman too. It made me consider. That if these difficulties are going on amongst us. In our assemblies. What? What would it be? If it's you. And maybe you were to just take a real clear look at yourself in the mirror. And ask yourself. Is this thing that I have such a heart for, such a desire to push, that's causing such an issue in the assembly? Is it for the glory of God? And so I present to you, if that's the case in your assembly, and if it is, you do that very thing. And if it is not, for the glory of God. Then stop right away, it says, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in peace. And in Acts chapter one it says. And they all continued. I can't quote that of one 1/4.

And I believe that that is really the picture that we have here in this chapter. I miss Sorry. In respect to the question asked, and perhaps I'd just like to make a comment, I think in respect of doctrine, we have to be very careful that if we are going to take action against a person, it's a doctrine that directly effects the person, the work, the humanity, the divinity, and on the eternal sonship of Christ. Michelle. As mentioned. The, uh, having an opinion based on where we stand and so and so amongst us. There may be various opinions on various scriptures, but we either not, should not be things that divide us. What divides us is if somebody takes the scripture and perhaps a non conventional view of it and then push it and make causes of division over. When we look at the grand division and the Stewart division back in the year 1880s, it wasn't so much that the doctrine was. Should I say? Not conventional. It was it was unconventional doctrine. But in each case one happened here in Montreal where the brother says I'm going to set up a separate meeting and you that agree with me coming. And meet at this meeting there was a doctrine and made a division over and so we've got to be careful when it comes to doctrine that it's something to affect the person of the Lord Jesus. I know, for instance. I sat down and remembered the Lord with him a few weeks ago. A brother who thinks the world is 66000 years old. Who doesn't agree that there's a gap between the 1st and the 2nd verses of Genesis that is the same? Does he know the Lord is a Savior? Does he love the Lord? Can I sit down with you and remember the Lord? Of course I can. I know of another brother that believes the church will go through the tribulation. I'm quite happy to sit down and remember the Lord with him. He's in England and I've remembered the Lord with him and I'm very, very happy. So we have to be careful. I think we told the doctrine of issues with something that directly effects the person, the work, the divinity, and the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thinking of the verse there and uh. Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 31. Says that all bitterness brought anchor clamor, evil speaking, be put away from you with all mouths. See that malice is the last thing mentioned, and so these other things came before. Malice mentions bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and so on. Malice is really what I understand is it goes beyond what comes before that, and it's the intent to really hurt a brother or a sister in some way. That's malice. It's gone beyond just anger. Bitterness is the intent to hurt a brother or a sister. Diocracies. That's what he was doing. He wasn't content. Says he says here that. He's not content in the 10th verse. Neither does he himself receive the brother visit them that would be passed by the church. And so it says verse 10. Yeah. On the next page, OK. And so they say that he wasn't content. Just to do what he was doing, he wanted to take it a step further and we know this is serious thing here that the opposite was guilty of. And Brother Clem mentioned that. The doctrine is to be protected. In this case here it's a doctrine of headship, that Christ is our head of the church. He is the one that is to have preeminence in all things over our own lives. When we gather together, the Lord is in the midst. He is to have a preeminence. But here was one that was taken the preeminence instead of giving it to Christ. He was in a place of the deceiver. But we know that the enemy Satan is not going to be content until he has a man sitting in the temple. Pretending to be God himself at the end of the Tribulation period. So. So we can see where this goes. It's preeminence. It's a serious thing. It's a wicked doctrine. It's around us today. In the world we see it, but here it was in the primitive Church. We might say this wasn't relevant everywhere at this time, but we're reading about apostasy coming in.

And we know that that's around us where men have lifted themselves up and given them a place that is not theirs. They're taking the preeminence of being something they're not. And that was what he was guilty of. And we have to be careful about that, too. I'm very 9 and 10. You see the first, you get that quite strong and generally we don't like to make reviews public because in a sense it can be. Well, we can fall into the position of accusing the brother, but it was important that this review was done and those two characteristics and characteristics that it's not the preminent and that he was not receiving a brethren in this case where very serious things. I had a suggestion, if somewhat a burden on my heart, but here that means of an individual person. I'm wondering if it's possible that we spoke of the spirit of geography, but can this even apply through a system of thinking or a group of people? Is it possible that things should be done in in a way that there is this idea of preeminence or not receiving the brother. This is not something abstract, but it's very real to me. Even this morning I received an e-mail. From a friend who wanted to be with us, uh, but he felt that there was a principle of things that was contrary to scripture and this was directly in relation to reception. It's, it's a very tough thing to work through and we've talked a little bit about under what conditions can we receive, but. I just wanted to suggest that it was spiritual geography. It's not always an individual. I think it can apply sometimes in the system of thinking. And we need to be very careful to be before the Lord and to be humbled in in our reception. Very good question. You know, we have so many scriptures that speak to us about receiving one another. And this one it was not receiving we had in the second official not to receive such an one. There was motive not to receive. And so we should have receptive parts and be willing to receive, yet not compromising with the principles of scripture. I don't know someone. I think I might be careless if I received if we received someone we didn't know. And so I think that's the principles we we don't know someone, but I I speak of my of myself, what I what I believe if. Uh, somebody came who was a believer and, uh, didn't have an agenda. He was a member of the body of Christ and he was vouched for by someone have confidence in that knew him. And he said, no, he's, and he's away from home or, you know, pretty big friend with us. But on the ground of the one body, I think it's honoring for the Lord to allow that. And I know it's a difficult thing to, to practice, but you know, it's a lot easier to say no. And so we don't receive, but I, I think we are off what we have in the scripture in the heart of the Lord, if we have that attitude. Of not receiving, we should have the adjective receiving, but receiving according to divine wisdom and the principles of Scripture. So be disposed to, not disposed not to. Said that we shouldn't, uh, we shouldn't have an open fellowship or a close fellowship, but we should have a guarded fellowship that is somebody that would want to have fellowship with us. You would think they would want to know something about us, what we're about, what darkness that we hold, what truth we cherish and how we meet and what. And a lot more. But we would want also to know

something about them, what their beliefs are. And, uh, so on and so a little time should be given somebody that wants to commit to fellowship, give them some time to know about us and we would like to know a little bit about them, what they believe. I believe that's scriptural that we should do that. Mr. Darby writes a couple of letters on the issue of receiving as a question what what's notable. I think there's probably about 5 or 10 years between those two letters. And in the second letter, he says this confusion come in and we have to be careful. Now, if that happened during Mr. Toby's lifetime, you know, 100 years later, we have to be even more peaceful. I'd like to point out a version and 1st John 4.

It, uh, tells us on what basis we're going to receive somebody and there is some teaching that we are not receiving anybody unless it's two or three witnesses. Our, our early brethren did receive just as Brother Michelle spoke that somebody would testify for them and they would be received. I'd like to suggest this verse even goes beyond that. That is this. We're still here by know ye that oh, I guess we should be first one first love. I believe not every spirit that's there's a guarded testimony, but try the spirit, whether they're of God. How do we do How do we do that because many false and why because many false prophets are going out into the world. That's true. Then it's been pointed out probably worse, no doubt worse now, but now he has instruction how you do it. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God, every spirit that compasses, that Jesus Christ come into flesh. The car and it can go on, but that first gives me a party. If there's no other reason not to, to walk to not the authority of the assembly, authority to receive somebody on their own testimony, they confess that Jesus Christ. Is is, uh, is common to flesh? And of God they are making by their own profession. Their claim to have a place at that table that we partake of. Could I suggest or maybe ask for clarification, that that's why we have verses 11 and 12? Love it follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. Either do as good as of God. Usually the evidence is there to show that either doeth evil. Have not seen God Demetrius have good report of all. And of the truth itself. Yeah. And we also bear record, you know, that our record is true. Is that not an example of testifying? Might be received. Which we distinguished rather between someone being allowed to break bread with us on a vacation and someone being received scholarship at the word disabled. We have a distinguishing. Thought on that. Look at First Corinthians chapter 10 where the Lord tables mentioned. I believe we get the. The reason that we have a guard at fellowship, everyone is expected normal Christianity who want to be at the Lord's table to remember the Lord, but there is a truth of separation in the word of God in doing so. That is. We're to be separate from the tables of men. Anything that man is set up that's contrary to the principles of the word of God, we're to separate from it. One of the principles there that we get is. In verse 18, behold Israel after the flesh, are they not? They would eat of the sacrifices, partakers of the altar. Of course they were. When a sacrifice was offered up under Judaism, the priest had offered it up, had his portion. Of that sacrifice. And so they were partakers of it. And so whatever fellowship someone may be in, if it's not a fellowship, where the truth is, is being. Held, for instance, I'll give one example. The truth of the Lord being. God holy to not sin. Some fellowship will say, well yes, then you know the Lord Jesus was a man, but he he could have sinned, but he didn't and that's a bad doctrine. That's a bad doc, and that's a false doctrine. And so somebody was holding that kind of a doctrine before I broke bread with them. I would wanna know about them. And so that's why we have a bit of a guarded fellowship. We want to know about those that would ask to break grid with us, what they're in, what they're enjoying to, what they're going on with, and so on. And so we have first Corinthians 10. It gives us instructions that we're not to be associated with ecclesiastical evil, that which is contrary to the doctrine that we have in the Word of God.

The Apostle Paul's doctrine and all the word of God. Were to hold it and. And so we do have a garden fellowship. Nothing wrong with that. And if somebody come in and they wanted to break bread, well, I would ask them, don't you want to know anything about us? You know, when you like to know what truth we hold and all that. I would think it's strange if they wouldn't. And so in Corinthians 1st Corinthians 10, we have that we should want to. Honor the Lord in that way to. Keep separate from those things that would displease and dishonor him. That's really what First Corinthians about. And so it's receiving at the more stable there, but it's a separation from evil to do so. Not just ecclesiastical evil, but also moral evil and doctrinal evil as well. All three. I remember some 40 years ago when I first came to the meeting. I saw back and then, uh, I look at the things that was on comparing with the Scripture and I had a great respect for the brethren for the fact that they did not push me to break brethren. The honor of the Lord was there and it was important and I respected that. And, uh, I wanted to know also, as you said, brother, what they were teaching. Uh, but I wasn't stressed by the reverence for the Lord and the respectfully. I just had visited a couple of Christian group before and they were so happy to see me. They would present me the brand and you know, on the wine as if they would like maybe to make their church to grow bigger. But I really respected the fact that the brethren are in view the honor of the Lord Jesus. So that waiting time, it took me a couple of months to wait, but I was remembering the Lord anyway, even if I was not breaking with my brother. I believe that the Lord will believe me there and He confirmed it by when I saw according to the scripture. Referred to 27. A garden fellowship, and I'd like to illustrate it in this way. If you've heard the state of it before, you'll have to forgive me, but I feel illustrated like this. I, I trust earlier Wally. Well, forgive me, I've often been my wife, and I've often at the same time at Wally's house. And we've always enjoyed being there. But no matter how long we have stayed there, I. Cannot start calling it my house or my table that we need out there. And let us just suppose for a moment that way we are traveling and he knows that I'm going to be we're going to be down there near his place. He said come and use my house, stay in my house while we're away. And then somebody comes to the door and says, yeah, I know, Wally. He would. He would want me to be here too. Should I make a decision myself whether that person should be allowed to come in and enjoy well with house and eat and while we stay? No, I would want to. I would want to check with wallet. Well, you know brother. We believe, I believe, that the Word has gathered us to His name by His Spirit around at His table. And why we are at the Lord's table. It belongs to Him, not to us. We can't make decisions without the Lord's direction and approval. And I believe whenever there's a question of reception. We need to go to the water and ask. And he has the answer. You don't own the table of the Lord, the world. And he is the head that is already has already been said, the head of the body, the church. He's also the head of bookings, local assembly. And he's the one who has the answer.

And we need to. First Corinthians chapter 10 because it gives us good outline as to reception because it's talking about the Lord's Table. If you go to 1st Corinthians chapter 10, the beginning of the chapter, it talks about baptism. It's important that the believer is baptized to be identified with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. If he doesn't want to be baptized, it means he doesn't want to be identified with the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so if he doesn't want to be identified with him, why does he want to remember the Lord in his death? So the first and foremost thing that we find out about the person that says they are a believer and they want to remember the Lord and his death is, is he been baptized? And maybe the first thing we really want to know if he's saved first, but he's he's professing to be saved. Well, then you go on in the chapter and you see it in verse five that God was not pleased with many of the people. And 1st Corinthians 5 is referring back to Israel. And as we read another, another Scripture. That Israel. The Scriptures are meant for our learning in the New Testament as they apply. To the church and here we find that they lusted in verse six Israel lusted after evil things they were at verse seven their idolaters verse eight they were fornicators verse nine they attempted Christ first ten they murmured and and and so on. And so there's these things that if a person is guilty of these things they should not not be included in the remembrance of the Lord at the Lord's table. But then we get down to

verse. 16. And here's the introduction of the Lord's table here. And this is what is required for fellowship at the Lord's table, says verse 16, the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The first thing that's required is the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ because you cannot be part of the next thing is, is the bread which we break, Is it not the communion of the body of Christ? First is the blood, because without the blood we're not saved. We need to have our sins washed away so we can we can add it to the body of Christ. That's why at the Lord's table the blood is the cup is mentioned 1st and then then the bread. And so the blood is necessary for our eternal salvation before we're looked at as part of the body of Christ. And then we have the bread, which we break is not the communion of the body of Christ, for we being many are one bread and one body. So are you saved? Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior? Then you're part of the body of Christ, and as the at the Lord's table, the bread represents every member. Of the body of Christ, and so continue on here, for we are all partakers of that one bread. We all belong in in a picture in that one bread. And so. From the Scriptures up till now, we find that there must be baptism, there must be a godly life, there must be no immorality, and the person must be saved, there must be the application of the blood. And they're part of the body of Christ. They are, they are. There's a place for them at the Lord's table. And then you go on to verse 18. And I think Brother Enos was kind of mentioning referring to this verse as ecclesiastical evil. Now ecclesiastical evil is a misnomer and it's used for things that we probably should just be calling doctrinal people. But here in verse 18 it says, behold, Israel after the flesh. Are they not? Are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers? The altar and so when they partake of the sacrifices at an altar that is not what God recommended. They're they're they're identifying themselves with that altar. But what is this altar they're talking about here in verse 18. It goes on to explain perhaps a little more in verse 19. Let's say I then that the idol is anything or that that which is offered and sacrificed to idols is anything. This is talking about a sacrifice that is offered to idols. It's not talking about a believer who remembers or who who is involved in. Perhaps another church and he's remembering the Lord at that church and he's coming to visit and he wants to remember the Lord in his death with us. He doesn't understand all about these other things, but he loves the Lord. He knows who the Lord Jesus is. He knows the Lord Jesus died for him. He knows he belongs to the body of Christ and he wants to remember the Lord in his death. So when we say ecclesiastical evil, we try, we, we dump a lot of things in there that don't necessarily belong there. But these scriptures are saying that when you are identified with the worship of the devil. Worship of idols, the worship of the anatomism, you have a lot of spirit worship. And if anything that's connected with that, that has no place at the Lord's table. When we go to Africa and people are putting charms on their children to protect them from the from the demons and from the diseases. Just like a lot of people in America and in Canada, they put on, what do we call those little beads? They're, they're, they're little gold bead beads that they put on them.

The amber beads, Amber beads, they do the same thing. They're supposed to protect you from disease and sickness and help your teeth. To be in the baby's teeth to come in. It's the same idea as the charms and you should not be doing that. It's identifying you with the with the the table of demons. And so that should not have any part at the Lords table. And so these these things are very clear in Scripture. We we're not trying to keep people away from the Lord's Table, but we, as mentioned, we need to have a guarded table that we don't allow this the moral and the spiritual, the doctrinal wickedness to come in and we we. When a person person knows the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. And they have a godly life. They don't. They're not involved, as was mentioned, with the wicked doctrines about the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then they are permitted to remember the Lord in his death. It's important to distinguish between. Evil that would disqualify Thomas remembering the Lord and there perhaps were understanding of doctrine, not understanding something is not as late against the person. I think I have two of my fullest children by the grace of God and taking their place in the Lords Table and I know that at 11 years old my daughter may not have a complete grasp of the ground of the one body not have a grasp of all of those things that we may see as eat truth. If you simply want to remember the Lord your death as a simple Christian. So with depth of knowledge of doctrine, death of knowledge of truth is a. Something that's against us in terms of our ability to remember the Lord. I suggest that many of us would not be at the Lord's table. You know, if we went around this room and asked everybody about the Trinity and asked for them to describe the Trinity as I'd be fairly confident we get a large majority that we're describing modalism. Not because they're holding a hair seat because simply a lack of knowledge in the ability to explain things. So I think you need to be careful that we're extinguishing between those that you want to remember the Lord who made seek to be received at the Lord's table and those that are bringing active people in the assembly. Assembly not knowing something or being young in the face and simple. You're understanding it's not a disqualification. Like I just cringe a little bit, but I think that one of the qualifications is understanding all the fully what the principles that we're gathering on. Maybe I believe that simple in the state and the witness test. I in fact, what brother Hadley referred to her testing experience. One thing that we all had in common if we love the Lord is we recognize him as one that was sinless that died for us. That was the Son of God, God himself. Was Christians, Christians can understand that and it's the Lord's table and believer that's a place there. Now again there are evil. More legal doctrine. Legal that can prevent someone or keep someone from being at that table. There's certainly a lack of knowledge about one of those things. Every matter settled on the witness, two or three witnesses and so if the situation comes up and none of us would have a moral way to take that decision ourselves. We would consult with our brethren. Wouldn't we have whatever the mind of the Saints were in that connection, the DFP like that's how the Lord gives us. You would give spirit in acting in his name, in the right spirit. What I find encouraging. This chapter. This book, I should say, is the fact that in spite of this big problem in the Assembly. There are no that are as it tells us in verse 11. They're not following that which is evil, they're not being influenced by this individual and they're not giving in to the evil. And in fact, it says about Gaius that he was prospering in his soul in spite of this big issue. That was so contrary to Scripture, the despicable. Behavior of this man and also Demetrius it says Demetrius had good reports of all men so just because there's a problem in the assembly doesn't mean that we should just throw up our hands in despair and say well what's the use of going on for the Lord because. It's just so much difficult, you know, these ones, they continue on and that's how we're going to be a help to one another is by following that which is good, ceasing to do evil and doing the good. And it'll be for the Lord's glory and it's going to be the help of our brethren as well.

Mr. Colville, when he first introduced this chapter, he said that we would love one another in the assembly. And I know in First Corinthians 16 and verse 14 says let all your things be done with charity. And I know that we never got to 1st Corinthians chapter 13, but love is so important and I'm reminded of those ones that built the Tabernacle in Exodus and. Those ones that their hearts were stirred up within them, and their hearts were made willing, as was mentioned earlier, they came to do that work and they brought more than was necessary. And that's how the Lord would have us in our ascendance to bring more than is necessary to do the work. And at the end of that portion, and after this, Moses looked. Moses in verse chapter 39 and verse 42, according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so the children of Israel made all the work, and Moses did look upon all the work, and behold, they had done it as the Lord had commanded. Even so had they done it, and Moses blessed them. I believe we will be blessed, very happy in our assemblies. To help one another in love and in all things. In John 15 we get. This is my commandment I'm reading from verse 12. This is client from Almond. You love one another and then the standard is given as I have loved you. Do we love each other as Christ as love is something that's it's challenge to us, isn't it and when we come to. 1st Corinthians

13, of course, the significance is where it is. It's between chapter 12 where the gifts are mentioned and in chapter 14, the orderly use of those gifts in the assembly. What does it mean? It needs to find love, otherwise all ministry. And I say go all ministry. Everybody's got a gift, a cup of cold water and the Lord's name is a gift. But what is it without that divine love? It's it's tinkling bright, it's a sounding brass or simply simple, it's a load of noise and no benefit. #318. We still have a lot of young people here and I just wanted to make a comment about Demetrius. It says in that verse about Demetrius that he had a good report of them all. You know, we spoke about something that's precious in the Lord's sight this afternoon. He said this too, and remembered to me. I don't think there's one of us that we're worthy, but there's one thing that keeps us, and that's the remembrance of the Lord. And we need to remember that when we're receiving one another. It's precious in the sight of the Lord. And Demetrius, I would just like the young people to consider a teenager. He became significant later. To the point where the Lord could use that teenager to rule as the king of Israel. But if you read in the first in the 17th chapter of First Samuel, you'll see that a young man called David. When he was told by his father to go and share and encourage his brethren that were their legs were trembling after 40 days of watching delight, it says he behaved wisely. If you take a look a little later, it says he behaved very wisely in the next chapter when Saul sent him out. He was just wise in front of all the people. And I think that Demetrius is something that took a challenge of a daily challenge, and he was, he acted wisely when someone wanted a good heart player, someone to play in front of. Saul didn't find someone who's just a good heart play, but they found a man who was prudent in matters and loved the Lord. And young people, if you love the Lord, if you just simply do your simple toss, well then you're like Demetrius and you'll be a wonderful asset in your assembly. And the Lord will bless you. It's a wonderful privilege to serve the Lord in your capacity at your very age. And, uh, they'll be a real rich person. I'll just read 3 verses before we close First Corinthians 16:22. This is the asset test. If any man was not the Lord Jesus Christ. That can be anathema. Maranatha, John 13 verse 34 and 35. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have loved one to another. Very good.

Scranton Conference: 2023, 3 John 1-8 (1:1-8)

Reading

How strong? And I have a serious. And a friend where I love you. Thank you for having me on my way. Read from Deuteronomy 33. And verse 3. Yeah, he loved the people. All his Saints are in thy hand, and they said down at thy feet, everyone shall receive of thy words. Our God and our Father, we look to thee. Desire of our hearts this morning would be to set at the feet of our blessed Savior receive of his words that good part that Mary had. May it be ours this morning. And so we do pray that thou come in and in blessing this morning. Let us know our needs and that Needham encouragement refreshment for our souls as well as. Those things that perhaps may need correction in our lives as well. And so we pray that thou guide by the Spirit of God to a portion this morning that would meet the needs of thy people, Lord Jesus, that we might receive of Thy words. We think of thy love for us, and it is in the confidence. That love, we would come to thee and make this request. And our God and our Father, we would ask it in the precious and worthy name for our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

I wonder, brethren, if we can take up the third Epistle of John. I'm not pushing this, but if there's someone else who has something else, that's fine. But I just have been enjoying third John and the need for encouragement for each one of us to go on in the truth, but also to the exercise as to. The type of believer that we are. There's three brothers that are mentioned in this chapter and each one of them has different characteristics and I was just exercised myself about this, but I wondered if this epistle would be. A help to us each one, an encouragement to each one of us. So I just put that fourth, third John, third half of John. I think that'll be a nice chapter to take up. The third Epistle of John. The elder unto the well, beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoice greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers. Which have borne witness of thy charity before the Church, whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well, because that for His name's sake they went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such that we might be fellow helpers to the truth. I wrote unto the Church, But diotrophies, who love to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore if I come, I will I will remember his deeds which he doeth, praying against us with malicious words, and not content therewith. Neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbideth them that would and casteth them out of the Church. 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 Demetrius? Demetrius hath good report of all men and of the truth itself. Yeah, and we also bear record. And you know that our record is true. I had many things to write, but I will not. With inked pen right unto thee. But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be peace be peace be to thee. Our friends salutely greet the friends by name. Melissa Peso was. Written perhaps after some of the other epistles that we so enjoy in the scriptures, but. John's writings were really, I think you came after maybe some of the other epistles because he addressed specific things that were going on in the early church. And as an apostle he had special. God-given work to do among the early church. He was a gift given by the Holy Spirit, by God and by the Lord. And So what a privilege it is for us to take this up. And may it be an encouragement as we consider the joy that we can bring to the Lord Himself by going on in a way that would be crazy. It's interesting to see the way this annotation begins. This book is from the elder. We often don't look at the beginning of a chapter. So Paul, John, look at as if it was the elder. So we can look at this too. The elder one who perhaps older, but more so elder perhaps is one who care for the assembly of the flock and he's addressing to perhaps a younger person, Gaius. And I think it's so appropriate for us here that some of us perhaps. Take on the role as an elder and looking at this as an encouragement to some of you who are younger or a little younger. And we see the phrase there too. That is a joy to see our children walking in. Truth is, you know, sometimes you look at an older one and say, well, you just want to talk. You just want to say this and that and perhaps glorify yourself. Not so. It is a joy, isn't it? And as we look around sometimes I see.

And some of you know that you, we, we're involved when with young people and some we see some of the young people. Go on very well with the desire to serve the Lord and then there are times that we see some as it see in this chapter wander off into the world, but then this chapter tell us don't dwell on that, but look on for those who want to continue to serve the Lord. We see in the second verse is an interesting comment on that too. We often do that in our prayer that you think is selfish because we pray to the Lord that our brother and maybe well perhaps some is not in good health. So we see that here, even though the elders presenting it that he could use those phrase above all things. Doctor Mayers prosper and be in health. So it's not wrong to have that kind of natural feeling. Yes, we do know that when we pray.

Really, deep down it should be thy will be done is the Lord's will and understanding that when a brother is put into a certain circumstances, it is still the Lord's will, whatever that may be, and we have to learn from that. Prospering in the first chapter of Judges is connected with. Doing according. To all the law which Moses commanded, and we just read a verse, verse seven of Joshua one. I would read also verse six, Be strong and of good courage. For unto this people shalt thou, and vied for an inheritance the land which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong. And very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law. It's Moses thy servant commanded thee. Turn not from it to the right hand, or to the vast, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest. That may be one of the first times the word prosper is used in the word saw. I'm thinking of the verse in Hebrews chapter 10, where we are exhorted to. Consider one another. They're in chapter 10 of Hebrews. Verse 23 to let us hold fast the perfection of or confession of our faith without wavering for the He is faithful that promised and then we have verse 24. Let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. So by our example, as we have in gas here, he was promoting. Love and good works. He was walking in the truth. One thing to have the truth and there's another thing to walk in the truth. During the Second Timothy chapter 3, the exhortation of the apostle Paul to Timothy. Second Timothy 3 and verse 7. 14 Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned. That's one aspect, to learn the things. Of Christianity and the. And the Paul's doctrine that we have presented to us as. The heavenly people. But then it says, And then assured of knowing that, and be assured of knowing of whom thou hast learned that. So being assured of the truth is walking in it practically. Our day-to-day Christian experience in the beginning of the Church's history and acts.

Read The Beautiful. Situation of how they were of one heart, one soul had all things in common. And the the bounds and limits of fellowship included every single believer. But as time goes on and the dispensation really comes into a ruined state in the hands of responsible man, we find that the limits of fellowship have changed. And we come to Second Timothy and we find there is a fagellis and a homogeneous It turned away from Paul, really turned away from the truth that Paul brought. We find that. There are others as well, Alexander, the coppersmith, who did a much evil. You know, Paul doesn't name by names Gentiles, unbelieving Gentiles have persecuted him, or Jews. He named him because this was a known man had been at least once in practical fellowship with Paul. Demons have forsaken me, having loved this present world and on and on, and the limits of fellowship have changed. They are not at the extent that they were. In the beginning of the Church's history. And the third Epistle of John takes up the truth of fellowship, being guarded by the truth. In the first epistle we have that wonderful circle of fellowship that we have been brought into. Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. But as to its practical expression, when we come to this epistle, it's constricted in our ability to express it in its. Fullest extent with everyone, and so the truth has to come in to guard the expression of practical fellowship. See, the apostle told us that in the second epistle. Just trying to play the. You find that they are not to walk with just anyone. In fact, let's look at the 2nd epistle. Verse 9. Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ? He had both the Father and the Son, if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine. Receive them not into your houses, neither bid them Godspeed, for he that bideth him Godspeed is particular of his evil deeds. So we are reminded in that chapter that there are many that come, but they don't have the they're not bringing the gospel or the doctrine of Christ. And what are the position where to take? I remember years ago at the Gospel tent, these couple of men came up, really friendly people. They were the Archie hover witnesses and we as young people got intrigued by what they have to say and brother Norman Barry came up to us right away and told us to stay away and chase those people out. And he said Godspeed, you don't even say goodbye to them. And we thought at that time it was so harsh of an action, but now we see from the word of God. In fact, in the Derby translation, they give it even clear sweet from that. Is that greed him not that makes it even simpler, isn't it? He's not even agreed them for he who greet him. Partakes in his wicked works. So we have to not only we have to stay away from things that are not the doctrine of Christ. And as Steve used the phrase, now we've got to safeguard what we have. That's good, Brother Dave. I think it's really helpful to see that these two epistles, second John and 3rd John, go together and they're complementary to each other. In second John. It's also about those who walk in the truth, and it says that as you go through there. But the emphasis is received. Not third John, the emphasis is received. It's the positive side of it, and the difference is the ones that aren't to be received. Are those who don't bring the dot the doctrine of Christ? There is evil that would exclude from receiving some. There are others as we go down here, who are the brethren and at the end of verse 5 and so on. Strangers. They are to be received. They're not bringing that doctrine and they are to be received and brought in. And I think that's so important because we tend to maybe go wrong one way or the other on these points.

It's often been mentioned that it's significant even as to the detail as to who these two letters were written to. As sisters, perhaps? It might be easy to be very gentle. And not too careful and just receive and show love. And so 2 John's written to a sister. Showing that. A sister in that state doesn't matter with the love, the nurturing attitude still needs to be careful and not receive those who should not be received. As brothers, we tend to be harder. Maybe we don't want to receive so readily as the sisters. And so third John is written to a brother, isn't it? And he's told you need to receive. So I think it's important you put these two together and recognize that. Some years ago when we still had the store. One of our customers came in. And I think. I grew up in Florida and I came under the influence of the Jehovah's Witnesses. And. He said thankfully I was delivered. A friend of mine sat down and talked to me and presented the gospel to me. So there is this balance, isn't there? You can see some that are dyed in that doctrine. You can see perhaps some that are wavering. And in a measure I think we could try to be a hospital, but we have to be much before the Lord before we do so. I think one of the keys to the distinction is they become bringing. You've said died in the Doctor. When I was a young person, I found the line of things that Steven brought out a few minutes ago very perplexing. Because neighbors of mine really led me to the Lord. And yet I could quickly see that the collective Christianity that they were involved with was real confusion. And I said to myself, well, I don't know what the truth is. But I know that can't be. So I waited on the Lord, and the Lord sent somebody to come and put their arm around me and guide me into the wonderful. Truth of the Word of God. And yet still it was, it was, it was a challenge because. By being unwilling to go where my neighbors who led me to the Lord went, they said you're like, you're like a child that's born with a birth defect. We don't doubt that you're born again, but you don't love us. And and there's something wrong with you. Well, I didn't know but that they might not be right. I was just waiting on the Lord. That especially that first year I came down to visit relatives in this area. Bruce, your uncle stood up in an open meeting. I think it was him, Guilford, and what he said in his first sentence or two was immeasurable help to me we ought to have. A broad heart, but walk in a narrow path. And it's just like it clicked. And so we have a nature, as the first epistle of John develops, that loves. We love because he first loved us and we love our brethren. It's that's what that's the way we tick as believers. But this epistle, the 2nd and the 3rd, it's love in truth. And there's a channel, if I could put it that way, that God has carved. And we don't just stand back and admire the channel.

You can do that, but the channel that things flow through it and more truth flows through that that do. Channel and love flows through it. So it's beautiful to see this love and truth and how much we appreciate rather and our brothers and sisters when we see that divine balance. Of faithfulness. And if I could put it that way, belovedness. The end of Colossians. Paul's writing to the Colossians and he commends onissimus.

Think there's a brother in this room? That's his name, Onissimo, I learned last night. Onissimus. And it says of him, faithful and beloved. So let's not excuse ourselves, especially the men brothers. Harshness because we feel we're defending the truth. Let's hold to the truth. That's what Gaius was doing, but there's no excuse for harshness of doing it. And love does need to be constrained. Divine love will always flow in proper channel and in a seemingly way. But it's beautiful to see this epistle. I'm very glad it was suggested. The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth I. I take it that Gaius that John at this time, obviously he's an older, older man. He's a seasoned St. as well as an apostle. And I take it that Gaius was not only younger, but his child in the faith because he says there in verse four, I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walking through. He was so delighted when he heard news of how Gaius was getting on because it was one that he had brought to the Lord Jesus. Yes, I know we apply this to our own children and our own families and that is a joy. But it's wider than that. And John had that joy, no greater joy. What a statement than to hear that my children walk in truth. I believe this is a very practical example for the young people. We, we often as young person, we use the phrase say they are Christians. Why can't we do the same thing with them? Why can't we walk with them? They are Christians too. And these three chapters, as it already explained, yes, they are Christian. What does it mean to be a Christian or one who believe that they have been washed by the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ? Sure they're Christian, they are saved. In fact, the nice thing is if they truly are safe, we will see them in glory. But then as we develop into this, some doesn't do not follow all the doctrines of Christ, some more than others, but regardless of how much of A truth they follow is not the path you want to walk with them. I use this example of please bear with me or this story before I'm hoping you'll illustrate something here. There was a brother that used to be in fellowship with us and he left because of problems. And I think we all know what that means. When people are discontent in the assembly, they leave and they say, well, they're just going to go to another Christian group. And he gone to a church. I don't know what type it was, but he went there. And this brother normally not take much part in the assembly, but when he got to the church that he went to, they realized that his knowledge. About the word of God was much greater than the rest of the people there. I don't know how you want to pick that. Does that mean it was very knowledgeable or the rest of them didn't know much? They made him an elder right away that he didn't see that he knew from the word of God that we have no appointed elders. He was fine. In fact, the the glorious side of having so-called higher precision. It was very proud of that. And as an elder they have to take care of matters. Of course, inside churches they got problems too and they made a decision one day. On something what it is is not important. And then after they decided on that certain action, he said, hey, I don't think that's right. I can see from the word of God is said this is not right. So they agree with him, but on the way out they said to him, next time we have a meeting, don't bring your Bible with you. You spoil everything. Are they walking in truth if they deny the authority from the word of God? Do you need to depart from them? Maybe they're good people, maybe they're kind and friendly and however you want to see it, but they deny the power from the word of God. Are they Christians? I believe they are. So here we need to be careful. And parents, your children often, I hear that too. Oh, they're playing with other Christian children. Be careful because what do the other so-called Christian family believe? Are they walking in the same truth that you perceive and you walk as from the word of God?

You can't really crossover spiritually unless we have a firm foundation of scriptural doctrine, the doctrine of Christ that has been mentioned several times. Those fundamental truths of the person and work of Christ are foundational, and at this time of John's history there the Gnostics were propounding. Teachings that were subversive to the. Essential doctrines of of the Lord's deity and perfect manhood. So really doctrine and and walking rightly go together and this is what the the apostle was was pleased about here that. Gas was holding. Tenacious Lizzie the doctrines of of the of the official given by the apostle John, that in earlier chapters. You ought to hear about the importance of walking the talk and I believe. This is what really makes impact on those powers, because if we say one thing and do another. We lose the effectiveness and the truth is not accepted as it otherwise might be. And so, you know, we live. In a time where the truth of God is not popular, and the truth of being gathered simply to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, it's not popular and we might be tempted, because of the funess of numbers, to want to join up. And compromise the principles in the Word of God in order to be more acceptable to others. But. We don't do anybody a favor by associating with error and so I believe the important thing is with the Lords help that we might go on in the truth and walk the talk even though we might find ourselves few in number. This is how we're going to be a help to other believers. That are in the systems of men. And a verse that comes to mind. Silver in first John. Chapter 5 and verse two, first John five and two it says here by this we know that we love. The children of God. When we love God and keep his commandments. So to walk in subjection to the Lord Jesus and to his Word, is a demonstration of our love for the brethren, even though it might appear as they were rather awful, and we might be considered to be exclusive. And proud. Really. To walk in submission that a word of God is humility. It's not pride. And it's going to have the greatest impact on other believers. That are influenced by the thinking and the ways of men. So may the Lord just help us to go on. And submit to his word. It's a happy path.

The Lord Jesus said, if you know these things, happy are ye if you do them. Obedience brings happiness into our souls. And I believe that's one reason that. Find. Elder here, he says. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth, because if they're walking in truth, they're happy. That's what the Apostle Paul desired for the Saints. God decides to keep happy praising Christians. With respect to prospering, another verse comes to mind. It's in Proverbs 28. It says there he that covers his sins shall not prosper. But whoso confesses and forsakes them will find mercy. So if I think I can be effective in my testimony for Christ by trying to cover up sin. And deceive. But if that's the case, the best thing we can do? Confess to sin. We know that you don't have to ask forgiveness. Because he's faithful and just to forgive us our sin. Don't ask for forgiveness. We just confess to sin. And we're going to find, we get forgiveness and we're going to find mercy and we're going to find that we're going to begin to prosper in our souls and in our testimony and service. To the Lord. We've talked a lot generically about the truth. I'm wondering. How much of the truth do you have to agree on in order to have fellowship with somebody and. How do you define fellowship? We've used the term truth. There's a lot of truth in the Word of God. How much of that is included when we say that somebody's walking in the truth? Well, there's an expression that David alluded to a little earlier that might help in Second Timothy chapter 3. I'm not going to read all of this, but if you glance down. 1St 4 verses you get the character of those that we can't really company with even though they may be real Christians but. On the other hand. Fruits like this would lead you to wonder, but I'm thinking especially about the fifth verse having a form of godliness. They may know the right word. But when it says denying the power of it. I would suggest I could also be translating denying the authority of the Bible and it says from such to turn away. Well, how would you recognize them if they're not, as Wally was saying, walking the talk? We cannot judge motives as. And others said we are called to be prudent. I hope that helps a little. We might want to see the table in response to the question. Excuse me. We'll have Bruce. We might say in response to the question that we walk with another until we can't. And so we meet believers. I'm in an airport, large airport. I don't know, 5:45 AM driving a cup of coffee. And a person grabs their breakfast and bows their head and gives thanks. And your heart wells up because there's your brother and your sister. So. We need believers all the time, don't we? And. Even in Philippians 3. Which to me is one of the most exalted chapters in the Word of God from

the point of view of Christian experience. So much so that Paul says I not we, I. And yet after. He takes you up on that high place that he delights to walk and to run in. He comes back down and he says, but.

Nevertheless, whereunto, I'm sorry, the verse before Philippians 3:15. As many as be perfect, as many as be mature. Be thus minded, and if anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. He had confidence that the Spirit of God that was in him would be in them, leading them along in the same path. Notice the next verse. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, Let us walk by this same rule. Let us mind the same thing. So we're all at different stages of growth, but the babe in Christ who's LED of the Spirit walking along. As John could say to the babes, you have an unction from the Holy One, and you know all things you need not any man teach you. And then he kept teaching them. It's kind of interesting, but we're in the same path and we're all at different levels and some of us are left-handed and some are right-handed and all of that, but. I believe we should walk until we can't, until there's a. A path that takes us out of that Channel of truth and. And we'll know it, but love remains. But two can't walk together unless they be agreed. I hope that's a little helpful. I was thinking that the testimony that. That Gaius had here. Was from his own assembly he he had walked in the truth among the brethren that were closest to him, and it was evident. To his brethren they gave a report of His activity, and His faithfulness, and His value of the truth. It really is beautiful to see a commendation here, not by himself, but by his brethren who knew him, and our brethren in the Assemblies, who know us probably better than any others. And. The testimony that we bear in the home assembly is important. I might point out that the enemy of our souls would desire to divide brethren, wouldn't he? And basically there are certain matters that come up, for example. Baptism has divided some. I can recall a story that was told it was a sister that knew that Brother Darby had a certain view of baptism and Mr. Bellitt had a different view. And she wanted to get a discussion going that would cause them. To debate one another. And. She said to Brother Bella first Brother Bella, what do you hold on baptism? And he said I hold my tongue. Then he turned to Brother Darby. And he said, she said, Brother Darby, what do you hold on baptism? I love my brother Bella too much that I will not answer that question. And it was. Just left there and it wasn't a matter of division. It's an interesting observation, Brother Bruce, that in your example. That truth is not just knowledge. It's a beautiful thing when we look in Ephesians chapter 4 and we read in. In that 4th chapter of Ephesians. It says in verse 20, but you have not so learned Christ. Truth is not just about getting fox in your head about what is right and what is wrong. And the example that you just gave that it wasn't Mr. Ballot had to be right. It wasn't Mr. Darby had to be right. Both of them were willing, as is brought out in this chapter, to walk in love. And what did our Savior say?

About his commandments, this is my commandment that you love one another. And I think those two brothers understood the spirit of the vision that was trying to make a fight between them and to trying to cause division by making people two sides. And that's important. And there is a path that allows us to walk in grace having differences of opinion on subjects like baptism. And so when we come here a little further down in Ephesians chapter 4. You find the expression the truth is in Jesus and that's how we need to learn truth is in connection with our Lord and Savior as Brother Bruce is bringing out in the other Bruce in Philippians. That chapter is about having one mind in Christ and knowing and understanding his humility and holding the truth in that form the way the Lord Jesus did to be faithful and loving. At exactly the same time. And so it's, it's interesting to observe. Probably if we go on with this chapter, we'll be coming down to diotrophes. And I believe in diotrophes. You see a man who holds the truth for the sake of the truth. And it's probably not even the right truth. It might be the right truth, I don't know. But his behavior became evil. And that's part of the reason why the Apostle Paul in the last times, as we've been describing, brings this forward. And is giving encouragement to his younger brother Gaius to walk in the truth in spite of what people are doing around. And that truth is in Jesus. And it has to do with the love of Jesus, understanding who his person is, His Holiness and His grace. Think of what it says in contrast to Moses. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth. Came by Jesus Christ. And so when we're considering truth, we need to consider it in the context of the one who loves us and gave himself for us. We often think of truth as in how much of my knowledge, how much do I know so I can show you that I know more than you. Pride often comes in. We think of what's in it for me as the typical way of looking at knowledge. Eternal with each other verse in Proverbs Chapter 9 and for children, you learned this as Sunday school. I think that was one of the Sunday school verse two weeks ago. See if we could remember that Proverbs Chapter 9 verse 10 when it was read out, I think last or the week before last. It really struck me. It's not it's not a new verses. If it were is we know these verses, but let me just read that first. Proverbs 9 verse 10. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. You know when that was said, I got, I knew that we say that all the time, but I. Find for myself anyway, I stopped short right there thinking that that's the verse. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. And then we forget. Do we omit the little semi colon there? That means there's more to what you said. And I think the second part is important and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. Well, how much do we look at the whole list? What is the holy? Is it a holy place? Is it a holy one? I'm going to let you. Meditate on that, but we need to dwell on the knowledge of the Holy and once we start to think and talk like as if the language of Scripture, then we will look at things differently. And then I want to share one more portion. Some of you who are Kentucky with us would have this before you last week, John chapter 17 and there were just three times the word Father is used. Here is the precious chapter that the Lord Jesus is praying for you. He's praying for us, but I'm just taking it out perhaps. To suit our subject here in verse five he prayed and he said, oh father, have you noticed the word father under the reader from three different sections. So it start off by saying all father in verse 10. No longer old father, he was able to address him. Holy Father.

Then can I find the verse further down verse 25? Oh, righteous father, Christian know God is their father. The Jews of all Israel didn't know him as a father. They knew him as Jehovah God. Christian have that privilege, Father. And the question is for us as Christian, how do you know him as father, whole father? I think that's precious for someone. So when it comes to doctrine. To the work, the blood, the shed blood of Christ. You're going to find most. I wouldn't say all would agree with you. But then do they know him as the Holy Father as more doctrine as they were being introduced, you're going to start seeing the difference. John presented this. We find John and Peter have little bit different doctrine. They preach, they teach more of a godly living in this world. When you stop presenting Paul's doctrine to other Christian, I'm going to find difficulties because they may say how can you not let the woman speak in churches? You are so prejudice against women. Why do you have to have them head to head cover and so on. And we know the answer is simple. Scripture tells us that and that's separate. So that's just the beginning. Pause doctrine and when we go through Paul has many doctrines and it's not a thought here to go on to it. And then as we grow more in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, then we recognize Him as the righteous Father. I think it's important to see here, too, that none of us are at a standstill. We are either progressing in a. Our knowledge of the truth and the enjoyment of the of the truth and of the person of Christ or we are retrograding, we are not standing still and so the apostles really was encouraged by the progress there was in in gas. Look back at First John chapter 2. Verse 6 John chapter 2 and verse 27:28. And now little children abide in him, that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming. Well, the those that labor for the Lord amongst the. Brethren, and they see growth and and desire to. To walk in obedience to the word of God. It's an encouragement to them and. That there'll be a reward at the judgment seat of Christ. John's first epistle he makes the statement that he that loveth him, that begot loveth him that has

begotten of him. So John reasons there that they might have a firm grasp on the characteristics of the new life that we've now received. It's a life that loves, and it loves the one who begat. It loves those begotten of Him. All of us that are older have had the experience where we know brethren, that we've known 203040 almost 50 years. And then we see some. We need some Saints. Somewhere and we find out their names and we find out they're the children of someone that we've known and love for so many years. And it, there's a certain feeling with that. So it is even with strangers that we might meet, whether it's in the workplace or school or there there's the love, the response of love from our, from our life, from our nature. And so we see this in Gaius as we go on a little in the chapter. That Paul could, John could commend him that what he did in bringing the brethren forward in their journey, that we're seeking to serve and be amongst the Lord's people was something that was good. And these brethren were brethren apparently, that that they didn't know. They were not brethren and strangers, as I take it. They were brethren who were strangers to them in the sense that they had not known them, but the bond of fellowship.

In Christ, a person that loves the truth, loves others that love the truth, and they're happy. And it's natural to the Newman to just want to do what we can to help them along. And in the face of what we'll read, if the Lord leads us that way into the end of this little epistle, He commands that which is good and normal and wholesome in the Christian life. Bring the dear brethren along after a godly sword. Perhaps it's a practical. Exaltation. Sometimes we see perhaps one is not walking. And the truth that you mentioned, and we have to be careful because are they just growing? Are they new? Because we all learn. And I see one of my problem is I learned something new. And I look at you and say, how come you don't understand that? And then when I look deep down in my unto myself, I say, oh, I just learned that a few months ago. So we have to have the patience too for our brethren, especially the younger one, that it takes time. It took us sometimes fifty, 60-70 years to learn something. And it's the same. I'll tell you a story just to reinforce that. One of our grandson came to me, he's about 8, and he said to me, grandpa and I won't name the other grandson. The other grandson is 4. He said I explained to him the chess game three times already and he won't listen to me. Well, in his mind that the younger one should have listened, but he didn't have the capacity a four year old to understand the rule of the chess. By the way, this one sort of learned the chess game, but I don't think you know what that well. So that's an example for us to be patient too with our younger brethren. What is your younger younger perhaps in faith. And there are many truths that we learn. I'm we're still learning, aren't we? It's a question perhaps of. Seeing somebody part way into the ditch. And the question is, is the person going down into the ditch or are they coming up out of the ditch? You know, it takes discernment to know where souls are. And if somebody is walking contrary to the word of God, they know it. They've got a bad conscience, you might say they're going down into the ditch. We're going to treat them different. And somebody that's learning the truth. And you're making progress and they're coming up out of the ditch. So we have to look at each situation and. See. Where's this person coming from? Where this person going? And I would say we're not going to help somebody by going down into the ditch with the purse. I know years ago. You're walking down the road. And my daughter, she stepped off the road. And the next thing is she's actually sinking down. I don't know if it was quicksand or not. But she was sinking. And our first impulse is, well, let's jump in and get her out of here. But then we thought that would not be a smart move. So what did we do? We stayed on a solid ground and we reached out as far as we could reach. We actually were able to get. A grip on her and he pulled her out. But you can imagine if we thought, well, we're going in there to help her. People that in fake trouble, they're going to help somebody by staying out the ditch, I believe. Even that depends on the situation though, doesn't it, Brother Wally? The Good Samaritan got down in the ditch. It really depends on what the situation is. And galatians 6:1 you are spiritual. Restore such a one considering thyself there is a way to get right down where our brethren are when that's needed, and be a help to them. And it's in the spirit of meekness too, isn't it? Thank you. That's a good point. Most faithfulness is so important, isn't it? Rather than that you look at? First Timothy chapter.

The Second Timothy, chapter 2. Where the obstacle? Therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and the things that thou hast heard of many of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. So it's not a question of giftedness. Having a great knowledge of the word, but faithful men, you see that in the book of Nehemiah through certain ones are spoken of as being faithful above many. So this is something that God values faithfulness equals. Ask that the Lord has marked out in the Word for us. Is something that is is an example to others like we have here? Verse 5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers. God values faithfulness in the day of ruin. Is that right? Now that we've considered the context of these verses 3-4 and five, I'd just like to go back to two just for a minute and point out something with regard to prayer. We often pray for people that they would do well in their jobs and be recovered in their health and all of these things, and we forget sometimes to pray for that which is most important. I think you get a right emphasis in these verses. The whole emphasis really is no greater joy than that. My children walk in the truth. And that's exactly what it says in verse. True too. I wish above all things, or that in all things thou mayest prosper and be in health. That's that's something that we can wish for for one another and pray for. That's really the point. But he doesn't end there, even as I soul prospered. That is the most important thing, and you go through the New Testament prayers, Ephesians chapter one, Ephesians chapter 3, you see the emphasis there is that for one another. Paul's praying that we would be. Increasing our knowledge and our understanding of the love and that we would come into that which is spiritual. And I just, I don't want to belabor this, but just make that point that we need to remember to pray for one another spiritually. That's actually more important than the health and the welfare. Is that we do well in our souls. And if someone prayed for me, that my soul would prosper. Or my health would prosper as well as my soul. Would my health go downhill? Just wonder one verse in regard to your comment, Tim, in Colossians chapter four we see a prayer of that professor Colossians 4 verse 12. He said a profess who is one of you, a servant of Christ, salute you. Always laboring fervent for you in prayers. Again, I find for myself that I stopped there. That ends with a comma. There's more to it. What was his prayer? He said He sets here that that he may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Let me just read it from the new translation to save some confusion that that he may stand. Perfect and complete in the full will of God. Just like to make one comment. We could turn to Hebrews Chapter 11, verse five. So we've enjoyed about Gaius the first part of this meeting and how he had a tremendous testimony. I've just been enjoying this little phrase at the end of verse 5, Hebrews 11, the end of verse five, Speaking of Enoch who lived. Thousands of years ago. But God in his word has reminded us this little expression he had, this testimony that he pleased God. And so I just want to make a comment for the children that are here and young people.

Each one of you has a testimony, whether you both you know it or not. Those of us who are a little older, we've watched you as you were a little kid, and we've watched you grow up. And we are delighted to see the Spirit of Christ in each one of these, and may it grow. May you grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ like we've had this morning. But Enoch, in his whole life, he had this testimony. That he please God and that's really what's important for each one of us to be to go on to please God in this world to live for him to give our lives for him on a daily basis and we're all we all have a testimony and. May it be that we all have this testimony that Enoch had that he pleased God. And if there's somebody here today and you don't know the Lord Jesus as your Savior. That's one of the purposes of these conferences is to have the gospel and then if we are believers that we might live in a way that we're a testimony leaves the. Hey, Cortana.

What I want to say? I. Understand revolution. Let's turn to one verse before we pray in Second Timothy chapter 2. Verse 22. We also youthful lusts, but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. Prayer.

Scranton Conference: 2023, 3 John 9-14 (1:9-14)

Reading

Happy. Hey, Cortana. Why is this friend? The describe a sense give some shame by life that you can have the night. Joey Break. We have a suggestion where to start. 3rd John, verse 9. I wrote unto the Church, but diotrophies, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, praying against us with malicious words, and not content therewith. Neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbideth them that would and cast them out of the Church. 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 Demetrius hath good report of all men. And of the truth itself. Yeah. And we also bear record. And ye know that our record is true. 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. We read here the name Diatrophies. We talk about what he did or the evil things that he have done, but I'm thinking more. But the time being, just the meaning of his name, and perhaps it can serve as an encouragement or discouragement, depending on how we look at it. I believe that.

I believe that his name means nourish nourishment from the Lord. And I'm thinking that his name being nourishment from the Lord, do we find similarities with a lot of us here, that we have been nourished by the Lord and from the Lord? Many of us here are raised in the assembly under the sound of the ministry since we were a little child. That's not a guarantee that will go on faithfully, is it? So here's one. That was nourished as if he was given the best possible, but yet the result is different than what it ought to be. So I thought that perhaps could be a warning, but also a lesson for us here. That he that receiveth you. Receiver. Receive it. And it says, He that receiveth the prophets in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward. Either receiveth the righteous man in the name of righteousness shall receive a righteous man's reward. Whosoever shall give. To drink until one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple. Verily I say unto you, we shall know Wise lose his reward. And we missed the blessing, didn't it, by refusing to receive some of God's own. On contrast to this character here, the entropies I was thinking of, verse seven and eight didn't comment on. And the latter part of verse 6. Whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well. Does that for his namesake. They went forth taking nothing of the Gentiles. He chose us. The value that God puts upon Christian hospitality. In uh uh. Taking the Lord's servants on their journey, providing for them in a temporal way and perhaps a financial way, it says we are felt. And that's a privilege that some of us have benefited from for many years. The prayers and the help of our brethren and the little service that the Lord has commended to us. You know, there are very few homes where the Lord Jesus was welcomed. He was a stranger here and a homeless in a world that had no room for God. But there was one place that he found consolation and and encouragement, as we well know, the House of Bethany. There was the Lord with that family he loved so well, Mary and Martha, and perhaps he spent some hours there and. And they ministered to him. We know that Mary poured out that alabaster box upon his feet. But there was a home that was open to the Son of God. Who the stranger in this world. And so he's not here now, but when we minister to the Lord's people, remember it is as if we were doing it to the Lord, and He has recorded it in the annals of eternity. As our brother read, even a cup of cold water will not lose its reward. So we think of the many sisters who labor faithfully and. Persistently for the Lord's people in the assembly, all is reported there in the record that someday will be opened and. Rewarded. By our temporal help and.

And by encouraging those that step out in the service of the Lord, that right, dear brother. There's somewhat of a parallel scripture in Acts chapter 15. We see that whole and part of us and others were to go to Jerusalem. And you have an encouraging word in verse three. And being brought on their way by the church. So they were encouraged by those that brought them on their way. As they passed through Venus and Samaria. Querying the conversion of the Gentiles, they could cause great joy unto all the brethren. So there was mutual encouragement, wasn't there? And then it's nice to see what it says in contrast to what we have in our chapter in verse four. And when they were come to Jerusalem. They were received of the church. Not thrust out as we read in our chapter. We can we can go on and look at the problem with a diatrophie, but The thing is more profitable as we look further down because we see that the focus is not on the back bat doctrines that atrophy brought in, but the encouragement comes in verse 11. It reminds us that we have to overlook some of that. It tells us in verse 11 is that beloved follow, not that which is evil. You know, it's so easy to look at problems and dwell on the problems. But there are so much other things we have to do when we have to follow the Lord. So here we are encouraged to follow. And we find in the end of Romans, it tells us too, that in regard to things that are evil, what does it say is just to keep simple to the things that are evil. We don't need to know all the problems and difficulties. I'll share with you a little story. A few years ago in the city of Toronto. There was a man that murder 5 people and he buried them in a flower pot. It happened to be in one of my clients backyard. She they were very kind to him. They loaned him some space and that's how he repaid the kindness by showing them great beautiful flower pots with bodies in it. So I get to know my client and one day I said, yeah, maybe I should, you should share the story with me and this man. Look at me. He said, David, you are simple. He said, before I tell you the real story, he said you have to understand that you cannot undo what you heard. Do you still want to know the story? And I knew immediately that no, I don't want to know the details. Knowing that little bit was bad enough. Don't dwell on things that are evil, follow that which is good. So it tells us that here. But that which is good, he that doeth good is of God. But that we do what evil hath not seen God. There's a little bit of value in considering the character of diotrepes. The first thing that is of note about him is that he was characterized by pride. Wouldn't necessarily have been an obvious pride, but it was something that the apostle John is an apostle detected and knew was there. He loved to have the preeminence. And you and I both know who it is that should have the preeminence. So our Lord Jesus Christ, that in all things He might have the preeminence. And yet it's in each one of our hearts to try and seek attention. And this had become the character of Diotrepes that he wanted to have the 1st place. He wanted to say what was going to happen. He wanted to be the decider. He wanted to have control. And those are things that we need to judge in ourselves and let the Lord Jesus have control, first of my life, then of the assembly that I'm in, and then of the whole fellowship. He's the head of the church. Not my job to take over control from him. You see in Acts chapter 20.

When the Lord, when Paul wrote to the OR spoke to the Ephesian elders, he spoke of the Church of God, amongst whom God has set you. I didn't quote that exactly. In the King James it says over you, but in in the Darby translation it's amongst you. And so oversight is local and only local. And if you are part of a large assembly or grew up in one, it's helpful that there are local brothers who who know you and know your family and know your situation, know the context of the place where you live and all the rest. And so it's God's wisdom that it be that way. There is no such thing in Scripture of oversight that is beyond the local assembly. And in the denominational world of Christianity, they've gotten that mixed up and backwards. And there are men that are placed over a churches and regions of churches and all the rest. But there is the striking absence of that in Scripture. The other thing that sad to say is dominant in in evangelical Christianity is a person they call a pastor and depending on the situation, he is supposed to be the gospel preacher, the teacher, the visitor, the pastor, and all those other gifts. The 1st is a function of an oversight, but in Ephesians 4, and I thought someone had read that already today. We see that the ascended Christ has given gifts and pastors and teachers, evangelists and so on, and that those are never given to a local assembly. Those are given to the church at large. And so the sphere of their ministry is not necessarily to be local. And so it's normal Christianity. If, if Wally is a teacher in in Vanceboro, he goes to cross the border to Palmyra, he's a teacher there. If he's an evangelist in in Vanceboro, he's what he is one. Where where he is, that's normal Christianity. So the love of first place that the atrophies expressed as you say, brother God in the way of the Spirit of God's normal working in the Church of God that these brothers who visited the apostle John who wrote to them by way of ministering to them. He got in the way of all that and stopped it. And this is an aberration and not the way the Spirit of God. Purposes to work in the Church of God. God's appointed leader in all the affairs of the assembly and in worship and ministry in. Assembly, the leader is the Holy Spirit, and so the Lord Jesus Christ we know is the center, but he works through his Spirit. And what is the activity of the Spirit of God? It's to exalt Christ, to glorify Christ, not man. But here we find diatribes, as you say, you search the place that belongs to the Spirit of God. You know what's been said too? That anybody. That's wrapped up with themselves. Makes a very small package. That was diatribe, but what encourages my heart? As I look at this portion, in spite of the dead atrophies in the assembly. We find that the apostle John speaks about Gaius and how his soul was prospering. So how does this happen? You know, in an environment like this, he says. Thy soul is prosperous, and you're walking in the truth. So on. And then you have later on Demetrius, he has good report of all men. Of the truth itself, so. We see that in spite of this. This negative situation. It does not mean that there cannot be growth. Individual in the assembly now. Am I right about that? And you see what this diatribes was doing. I'm just noticing the. Mr. Darby's translation.

He says here. That. Against us with malicious words. Mr. Darby has it badly against us with wicked words. What a terrible occupation. And I'm content with these those that we're receiving. True servants of Christ, neither does he himself receive the brethren. Those who would receive the brethren he prevents and cast them out of the assembly. So doesn't seem like getting much worse than attitude. But the atrophies display. But it's not all negative because we see how God is working even in this situation, that which is positive. They didn't seem to be the power to deal with this man in the assembly. Would wonder why the apostle does not. Shall we say Commander? The excommunication of this man, but. You did not do so, but. The assembly didn't seem to have the spiritual power to deal with them. Is that right? The next chapter 5 we have several men spoken up there that. Sort of following and one of the preeminence and. We look at verse 36, it says before these days rose up 30th boasting himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about 400 joined themselves with slaying, and all as many as obeyed him or scattered and brought the knot, and we see that there was another. That rose up as well, and we see the Council of Familial verse 39. But if it be of God, he cannot overthrow. It must happily be found, even to fight against God. So here was another case where there were two that wanted the following people to follow him, which was probably the same spirit found in diotropy. But God came in. In all these cases. I take it that we still had something special here in terms of. Power. You were saying, Brother Bruce, that we don't have someone today. Over assemblies in any way other than the Lord, He is certainly the one revelation. Chapters 1-2 and three show that, don't they? That has that place and authority in the assembly, but the apostles initially had authority to deal with matters like this. The word of God wasn't completed yet and so they didn't have everything perhaps that was needed such as we have today to be able to maybe deal with these matters with the complete word of God. So we have in our our hands. So the apostles had this authority where they could go beyond. Paul even speaks of that in first Corinthians 5, you know, with. They were to take that action with His spirit. And he had judged and so on. But. Somebody correct me if I'm wrong but I think this is what the Lord spoke to them about in John chapter 20 when he rose from the dead. They said there in verse 23 who sins? Whosoever sins, you remit. They are remitted unto them, and whosoever sins you retain, they are retained. And that was said to the apostles. So they seem to have that Apostolic authority to do it at that time. And Paul is speaking about that here, if I understand it correctly, in verse 10, that he was going to remember what he did. And perhaps they didn't have the strength or power or authority to do it. But this was actually in some ways a higher matter because if you look at verse 9.

John says I wrote something unto the assembly, but the atrophies who loves to have the preeminence among them? Receives us not, and then it goes on. He doesn't receive the brethren either. It was a very serious thing that he had refused John and said those things and I connect that with. First on four. In this state of things that existed before the word of God was complete. Apostle John says there in verse 6. We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us. He that is not a God here, if it's not hereby know, we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. And so they always knew what was the word of God because it had come from the apostles. This wasn't a matter of a council coming together and deciding what the Bible was. The Christians always knew. And if they were going to refuse what the apostles had said, then they were refusing the authority that the Lord had given at that time. And that's what the atrophies did. That was his first error. To translate that into to today. The apostles are gone and we are in the state of things that Bruce is speaking about. And what we do have is the complete word of God. And if someone's going to refuse the word of God, then it goes on to every other error such as we see the atrophy's doing. And that's what we have rampant among Christians today, whether those who take this place and refuse others who the Lord is giving gifts to, that they are not permitted to come unless they're specifically invited or maybe not at all. And we're in that state of things. To me, the first error here was that the apostle himself was refused. In other words, the word of God was refused. It's interesting to think a little bit about how the Word of God does get refused. How does a man like Diotrefes get an edge? Well, there's a verse in Proverbs that tells us how that works. Warns us not to add to the word of God. Warns that warns us not to take away from the word of God and those two things are the primary methods whereby people do that. And you can see how the Pharisees, for example, did it. They had their traditions and by their traditions they made the word of God of none effect. And that's exactly what a man like the atrophies would have worked towards bringing something up out of their culture or whatever it might have been, introducing it in and in addition to the word of God. And then making an issue of it, he would have presented it as a holy thing such that it was something important to be grasped on to and how, and he would have built a following behind himself. So you have the power to resist the apostle in our day, what it looks like is switching something around and making something deviate and pushing something forward. That is a extension by human reasoning or otherwise, of the Word of God or it. May make it look like. You're following the word of God, but then that result is you don't actually follow the word of God. And so you change

the meaning of words in order to have an an. Common behavior that is not what God intended. And as you go through and you look at at these things and how a man like geographies works, that's the first thing that he works is to undermine the effect of the word of God, either by adding or taking away. And then the next thing that comes after it is how does he treat the people of God and based on his doctrines? Whether it's how somebody dresses, maybe it's they came from the wrong country, maybe they talked in the wrong way, maybe their clothes were a little bit too dirty. They weren't showing him the right kind of respect. All of these things he would use as a reason in a holy way to say we don't allow that person in our assembly. And it's very challenging to think about that because when I we were talking this morning. About somebody down in the ditch. You know, it's a really humbling thing when you try and help somebody out of the ditch by reaching out and taking their hand. You find out that they're not the person in the ditch. You're the person in the ditch. And even though you had the knowledge, even though you had what you learned from other people and you thought you bought the truth that you needed to step out from what you thought you bought that was true and recognized it back on the road.

You had to take the hand of somebody else and humble yourself in order to be able to walk with the Lord in truth. And so the time was coming. The Apostle John said it that he would remember Diotrefes deeds and remember no matter how somebody takes over control whatever means and methods that they use. The Lord is still ahead of the Church. And that's exactly how the blessing happens that Brother Wally was talking about. The Lord Jesus by His Holy Spirit can still bring blessing in spite of the impediment that man brings in the way. Praise God for His mercy and His grace. There's a sense in which people, persons, are very complicated. We've I've often said in my. Work life amongst other people. It would be helpful if people came with with a crane chart. In other words, if. If you have a crane, you can look on a chart and you can see pretty much exactly what it's capable of doing, how much load and at what radius and etcetera. And it can handle this much over this side, this much over the front, this much over the back, etcetera. And we sometimes joke you get people and you wish they came with a crane chart because you you gain confidence in a person and and then a situation comes up and you and, and they. They fall apart and you say, wow, I didn't expect that it wasn't on the chart. And we we kind of say that a little tongue in cheek because, you know, we're raising up young people in, in in the work world. And so it's interesting to me in this chapter that. The Apostle John assessed Diatroph's deeds. Wherefore verse 10? Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds. And he let he. Lists out, you know, praying against us with wicked words. He doesn't receive the brethren. He forbids them that would and cast them out of the church. These are actions and it doesn't require us often times, and we're wrong to get too complicated about people. Because people are complex in a certain sense and each, each human is unique, but the word of God is the word of God, as you were saying, and even a child is known by his doings. And so without getting all complicated about it, a person that the apostle John essentially says, correct me if I'm wrong. He's doing evil deeds. It's clear and he lists what they are and then he says in simplicity, beloved, verse 11. Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God. He that doeth evil have not seen God. This is a very serious indictment of daughter fees. But it's not like sometimes brothers not to tell tales out of school, but sometimes brothers can be in brothers meetings, AKA care meetings and get into people's personalities and what you think about their whole situation, you know? It's better to be simpler about it and to assess the deeds because God manifests what people are sooner or later, and when he manifests something that is egregious, that is very serious, then the Word of God makes the decision for us and we just have to follow the Word. It's not for us to decide whether fornication is evil and should be put away. Our only responsibility is, is it fornication? The word of God decides what to do about it. And so here I, I in a certain sense admire, I very much admire the simplicity of the apostle John's reasoning here. And he assesses the deeds, calls the spade a spade, if we could put it that way. It's this is the fruit that comes from that kind of tree. When I come, it will be dealt with. There's no panic here. We not not to his panic in the assembly. When we're young, maybe I'm the only one who thought this, we think the assembly is made, the local assembly is made out of China and we don't. Fix it by next Lord's Day, or at least by the next brothers meeting. What's going to happen here? Everything's going to go upside. And as the years go on, we learn to not to be slack. We need to be diligent in the Lord's business. But on the other hand, be patient. Wait on the Lord so that we're clear if it's a decision that the assembly has to make. And we need to wait on our brethren so that the consciences of the brethren in the assembly.

Are clear in it as well, because that's where the power of the authority is. That is the practical expression to acknowledge that the Lords in our midst, because it is dependent on you and I to come up with a with the right decision, then that will be our decision. We need to acknowledge that the Lord's in the midst, and I think we've already mentioned the Spirit is in the midst of the assembly guiding with this decision. A servant of the Lord is responsible to the Lord for the exercise of that gift, not responsible to the assembly. The Lord has given a gift to a brother. He is to minister as of the ability that the Lord gives him. However, if he steps out of line and we have in Diotrefes, he is a source of. Of discord and trouble in the assembly. Then he would have to be dealt with because every one of us are either a hindrance or a help in the assembly and. We we are responsible to the Lord for the exercise of our gift and. And that our brethren will recognize that. But this, this man here was, was really a troublemaker. And he was. He was spoiling, devastating the unity and the assembly wherever it was here. It could not be tolerated, is that right? Did the apostle mentions that he was going to deal with it? Find a very interesting just following up with what brother Tim said. Add to it first John 2. Little Children Verse 18 Little children, it is the last time. And as you have heard, that Antichrist shall come, even now there are many antichrists, whereby we know that it is the last time. Of the last I think it might read our They went out from us, but they were not of us. That's the apostles. They went out from us. They were not of us, or if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us, but they went out. That they might be made manifest. That they were not all of us. By the time we come to the third epistle, there's a further decline. Dr. Please didn't go out. He's still there. And having refused to receive what John had wrote, I would class him in with those who confess not that Jesus Christ was coming flesh. Or confessed that he was the Son of God. Or confess that he was the Christ. And he refuses what the apostle wrote and what he taught. And so the apostle doesn't speak just of himself, but he had written personally. But. Doctor, please receive with not us the apostles, because they were the witnesses we find in first John 11. They had seen him which was from the beginning that which we have seen, that which we have heard that which we have seen and so on. They bore witness to that. Doctor Fees refuses that but in the exhortations and the the parentheses that takes up growth in the family of God, the apostle says in verse 20 of chapter 2. But you have an unction from the Holy One, and know all things. And then he says in verse 27, Or let me read verse 26. But these things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, And ye need not that any man teach you, but there's the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and His truth, and there's no lie, even as as it hath taught you, you shall abide in Him.

I believe doctor fees and refusing the apostles and seeking the preeminence, very likely one of those teachers of Gnostic doctrine that set himself up as to be a guru. And if you want to know the truth, you have to come to me. And he rejects what the apostle had written, He rejects what the witness of the apostles had brought. And he said, you need to come to me and I will show you the way to our elevated spiritual state. I will show you the way to true light. But he refuses. The apostles, the other thing that is manifest in his life, he doesn't love his

brethren. It's a manifestation of eternal life. Is love for your brethren? And so the epistles of John, the Gospel of John, takes up the manifestation of eternal life and the person of the Son of God. But the epistles in the Saints. Geographies did not manifest eternal life. He didn't have a love for his brother. And so I think he would be classed among those that the apostle addresses in the first epistle. But there's a decline. He hasn't gone out, he's still there. Well, the Third Epistle of John doesn't take up church truth. This isn't 1st Corinthians 5. With instructions to deal with a wicked person and so on. That's not the subject. Subject is eternal life manifested in the Saints. Well, Gaius, you go on in the manifestation of eternal life yourself. I'll take care of the atrophies when I come. We're in a day of breakdown and weakness. What is our responsibility? And again, if we wanted to turn to Paul's doctrine, we take up another line of things, right? But that's not Paul's doctrine. What is our responsibility in this day of ruin where it's gotten so bad they haven't even gone out? You go on in the manifestation of eternal life. You go on and be a fellow helper to the truth of God. You'll find companions that also manifest that same life, that have that life in the sun, and you go on with them. And you leave the rest to me, really in our day, leaving the rest of the Lord. Does that mean we go on in fellowship with evil? Well, we can go to Paul's doctrine and take up that line of things, but that's not right here. Here is the positive encouragement. You go on. There's another brother over here. He has a good report. He is the manifestation of eternal life. You go on with him. And so it's that positive exhortation. So they have to sort of keep Paul's doctrine separate from John's in that way. It's really not taking up assembly truth, though he speaks of the assembly. But it's John's doctor. That's very nice, Steve. There's a problem I see though, is with us. We looked at this and we sometimes use this phrase. Everybody is doing it. Everyone seems to be a diatrophy and I'm alone. We have a few of that now. First of all, when we use the phrase everybody, I don't believe every single individual that you're referring to. There are always some that are not the everybody that we think so in this chapter it tells us right away. There's a guy named Demetrius. So we keep dwelling on the bad, forgetting that the Lord throughout Scripture tells us that he always reserved for himself a testimony. We have to remember that now how many there are that are like Demetrius. It doesn't matter. It's not we're not told from what I understand. Demetrius, as you like the mysterious, would you like to walk with him? Verse 12, the mysterious path. Good report of all men. What a commendation. And of the truth itself, What is truth? You know, early on we said, well, what doctrines? Well, it's like, what is truth? Well, simple answers, thy word is true. So we need to know the word of God and of the truth. Yeah, we also bear record, and ye know that our record is true.

So here's the testimony, not just saying his name. So the Lord said, some testimonies aside for us, are you willing to be, perhaps you may be the Demetrius in that assembly? That is 4 witnesses there isn't it Brother David? It's all men in the beginning. Then the truth itself is really interesting because it seems to personify the truth there. Might wonder what does that mean. Well, if you take the truth of God and compare it to Demetrius, they grieve. So the truth is a witnessing to what he was doing and then it says and we also bear record. That's the third one. The apostle John says so and you know our record is true. They knew it was true. He had a witness in four ways here as to his testimony that it was right. He was walking in the truth. And I think that's really important because. It's easy sometimes to start thinking, well, I don't care. What other people think of how I'm living my life. It only matters what the Lord thinks. But Scripture doesn't speak that way, does it? Our testimony matters. And how? How we represent the truth of God before man and the world itself matters and you always see that. And just one verse going to mention Second Corinthians. Paul speaks of it there in chapter 8. He says in verse 21, providing for honest things. Not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of man. It is really important that we look at this wonderful example of Demetrius and realize that that's set out for us too, that we have a testimony and it isn't trying to make ourselves appear a certain way, but it's living our lives for the Lord in such a way that that testimony is evident in every sphere around us. That goes back to first John I will walk in light to this world with to bear witness this just read a verse quick briefly in first John chapter one. Five, Then this is the message which we have heard of Him, and declare unto you that God is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not do the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son planteth us from our sin. Of course, John's A ministry has often been noted is he speaks absolutely. He speaks of what a believer is characteristically. He doesn't take in the. The thought of failure. As we read in the first epistle, he would commit a sin is of the devil. So you have to see in John's writing he is speaking characteristically. He got. In first John chapter 3 there he refers to the the two natures but. We have to see the the way in which he presents the truth and. And and the the error that if a person is not manifesting the character of Christ, righteousness, love, light and the other characteristics, we have no assurance that he is truly a believer. And this was this, we're not sure whether biotrophies. Was a believer or not? To what? What do you think? Do you think he he probably was a believer, but he certainly wasn't manifesting the the character of Christ. I've wondered the same question John, but I just think verse 11 is so plain. He that doeth good is of God. There's Demetrius. He that doeth evil hath not seen gone. And so really we're not entitled, I don't think, to look at doctor fees and say he was a believer. The Lord knoweth them that are his. But I don't think we're entitled to look at him and say he was a believer because of what we see manifested there. There's not the manifestation of eternal life.

Just of darkness. Very strange. Some time ago I was reading an article in the National Geographic about Ethiopia. And they were talking about the Coptic Christians there, and I was surprised to learn that they have. Elevated Pontius Pilate as one of their Saints. I'm really surprised me when I read that. And I don't know whether they take it on the basis of have nothing to do with this righteous man, but it was in his power to release the Lord Jesus and he failed in that, didn't He? I was thinking too in John's writing he have this theme in common that he's not telling us what to do or in this case, was I atrophy a Christian or not? I was thinking. At the end of John's Gospel, a similar question was raised. Let's turn to John, chapter 21. Peter raised the question when he saw. John or the disciple laying the Lord's bosom. I'm just going to read that verse 20. Then Peter turning about see at the disciple whom Jesus. Love and I'm going to skip to verse 21 Peter seeing him said to Jesus Lord, and what shall this man do referring to Judas Iscariot and the answer that he rode as he has seen from the Lord. He said and Jesus said unto him, if I will that he tarry till I come. What is that to thee then the answer follow thou me. What an example for us when we look at problems or when we look at problem with certain brother or sisters. Sometimes we have to learn to leave it in the Lord's hand. And the answer is right here. What is it to thee? And don't just stop there. He encourage us. Follow thou, me. And you. See him say that again, or the further down with a slightly different example. You made reference. Here too. What John delighted to say about himself, that he was the disciple whom Jesus loved. I believe five times he spoke in those terms. So. Don't in the enjoyment of. The love of God, the love of the Father, the love of the Lord Jesus Christ. And you know, we're faced with trials and difficulties and our families at work, at school, in the assembly, we need to keep ourselves in enjoyment of God's love. Because sometimes the troubles are so tremendous. We succumb to Satans. While he tries to show in our hearts suspicion. As to the love of God, what I see in this epistle of John three times. At least that's what stands out to me here. He refers to Gaius as beloved. Hello, hello. And so in spite of the very distressing circumstance, the apostle, he is still thinking about. Believe the love of God. Now you know that KS is full of of. The apostle John, when he says beloved, I'm sure he had in mind to the fact that Jesus is beloved of the Lord. And that's the case with each one of us. We're beloved of God and you know, perfect love casts out fear. And even in a circumstance like this I'm reading about, you can have peace. You know, somebody said that peace.

It's not the absence of trouble, but it is the absence of fear. And it brings to mind what the apostle John says. Perfect love casts out fear. So I believe. You know, it gives relief, you know. You know that, even though the troubles are assailing. God loves you and me. Don't have to fear. The exercise and concern about what's happening. And we pray. You know that the Lord would have His way. And if he wants us to do something about it, we trust it's going to show what we should do in the circumstance. Because we really want to be part. Of the solution. And not part of the problem. A true wrote. I hold the truth to be definite unchangeable. Perfectly revealed in the scriptures which is regarding man. Are the only depository and fountain of truth. It's living embodiment is found alone in him. Who said I am the truth? And the way in the life also. Thankfully for us, if others do not hold this, it is their loss. Let's look at John's gospel. And chapter 18. Verse 35. Well, let's read verse 33. Pilot entered into the judgment hall again and called Jesus and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? Pilot answered, Am I a Jew thine own nation, and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me. What has thou done? Jesus answered, My Kingdom is not of this world. If my Kingdom are of this world, then would my servants fight? That I should not be delivered to the Jews, but now is my Kingdom, not from hence. Really, that would have satisfied any anxieties that Pilot might have had as to any challenge that the Lord Jesus would have presented to Caesar, who he stood there as Caesar's representative and responsible to guard Caesar's interests. That's settled, but now there's something else that's bothering him about this man that's standing in front of him. Pilate said unto him, Art thou a king then? Is this really what you are? That's this Jesus answered that says that I am King. To this end was I born. That's his humanity, his incarnation. To this end was I born. He was born king of the Jews. And for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice. It's as if Pilot comes very close. It's all settled. There's any concerns about Caesar, But he says, what is it about you? You almost you seem like a king to me. But when the Lord tells him that he came to bear witness of the truth. And everyone that heard his voice was of the truth, Young Pilot says. What is truth? And he turns his back on that. If others do not hold this, it is their loss, and it was his eternal loss if he never came to Christ. Think of that mission of the Lord that he came to bear witness of the truth. This was what Paul calls the good confession. And he had enjoined Timothy in the first epistle of Timothy, and he gave him a commandment and he spoke of it. Verse three of chapter one. As I besought thee to abide still at emphasis when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine. Then he speaks of that mandate in verse 5. Now the end of the commandment or that mandate to Timothy is love out of a pure heart. So on.

When you come to the end of First Timothy, he speaks of that commandment again. And he says verse 12 fight the good fight of faith. Chapter 6 they hold on eternal life, looking at eternal life as a future thing. Bruno, thou art also called and has professed a good or the good profession or confession before many witnesses. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed the good confession. That thou keep this commandment, that mandate he had given to Timothy to stand for the truth, That thou keep this commandment without spot on rebukeable until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. To support. To seek to maintain the truth is to really stand with the Lord in that good confession that He witnessed before Pilate. He came to bear witness to the truth, and all that hear His voice are of the truth. And here, in a certain sense, Gaius comes into that place along with Demetrius, fellow helpers of the truth. Part of that good confession and you and I, if we want to be stand with the Lord and have part in that good confession that He witnessed before Pilate, then we need to be fellow helpers to the truth too. We need to be here to seek to in our practical walk and ways and in our interaction with our brethren, to go on in the truth of God and manifest it in our lives and in our ways. Be fellow helpers to the truth and will be part of that good confession that he witnessed before Pilate. I was just thinking by way of contrast the verse that we have in John chapter 8 in connection with. The devil or Satan in the middle of verse 44 says he was a murderer from the beginning and a vote not in the truth because there is no truth. So that's completely opposite to what we've been speaking about, isn't it? And let me just say a little word concerning what is being taught in the schools today. We have something that has been introduced that is referred to as relativism. In other words, truth is not absolute, it's relative. It changes. But this is a lie of the devil, the one who has no truth abiding in him. These epistles are maybe at first glance, the second official and 3rd epistle of John may seem very. I mean, they're very short and almost. And limited in their content. So you would ask yourself, well, to both the lady and to Gaius, he said, I'm on, I'm going to see you soon. So on that basis you would say, well, then why did he bother even to write? If he was going to see them soon, he would have just said, it's serious what's going on here. It's serious what's going on there. But I'll be there soon and we'll fix it, We'll address it. But. He felt it important enough to write, even though he was going to be there soon. So that lends a whole, it is, of course, the word of God, but it lends a, a, a special value to these, to the content of these epistles. Because of that, it seems to me, and one of the things that that is so that stands out at me in the third epistle is that he's reinforcing to the Saints. What do you think is bad? It's bad. What you see and know is good. It's good. So just be assured of that. I'll be there soon. Now you say, well, why do you have to say something like that? It's because of religion. It's because of religion. You've probably spoken to souls in your travels as I have in mind, and oftentimes you'll get I'm not into religion, buddy. Look at what religion is done in the world and you have to. And you we all say, yeah, I'm not speaking about a religion, I'm speaking about a person.

But yes, you have to be honest and say, yes, a religion has sprung up around a person, but religion is one of the few things in in, in life on earth amongst men that can enable people to do horribly wicked things and feel that they're good in doing them. Look at just what's happened in the last 20 years. People cut off people's heads and things. People make half of the society walk around with the black sheep in hot weather with a little slit and all kinds of other things more horrible than that, and they do it because they think it's good. This is the power of religion in man's minds, and it can happen amongst the Saints of God. It happened historically in professing Christianity. Where the true Saints of God were put on the stake and persecuted not by secular people necessarily always, but by the religious people who had adopted the name of Christ. And so whether it's severely wicked things or just plain bad things, we are capable us here gather to the Lord's name in North America of of conducting ourselves in a bad way under the guise of being quote. Faithful, we need to watch out for this. Because the apostle just just reduces it down to brass tacks, as we say. No, you think you're being, you think you're being faithful. Doctor Fees has got all this sophisticated doctrine, as you were saying, no if you're doing bad. Towards your brethren, towards the truth, guys, it's bad. And if it's good, it's good and it's, it's amazing. But we, we need that confirmation sometimes. Because we have it in the Word of God, and that's why we know we need it. And so I just say that because otherwise you would wonder why, right, when he was going to be there so soon, but he felt it was important to reinforce goodness and to reinforce the fact that, yes, you think it looks evil, it is evil. Don't be, don't be deceived by that. Just want to reiterate a remark that I made at the Kentucky conference is a very challenging remark. It was made by Mahatma Gandhi. And his statement was. Was not for Christians. I would be a Christian. In other words. He was looking at people who professed to know the Lord Jesus Christ and it didn't go along with their with their practice. He understood the doctrine, but here were all these people professing that doctrine, ignoring it or just going in the opposite direction. And so that should be a challenge to us in our everyday life. Greet the friends by name. Kind of comes back to the maybe what we had at the beginning, the the extent of fellowship in this day of ruin is not what it was in the beginning of the church's history. Not all who professed to be Christians are friends. Friends to other Christians or friends to the truth. And

so we need to walk circumspectly and connection with who we have fellowship with. But he's positive here. Greet the friends and you know who they are. Greet the friends by name. In 330. 330. What race? The one response? Over here. We are. Most the Lord in the name of the red crying sunlight.

Des Moines Conference: 2003, 3 John 1 (1:1)

Reading

Lord, we can see. Where? I'm at the peace and the peace and life of the peace and life of the end of life tomorrow to my heart, to my heart and strength to life. Lord. The fizzle of John. Well, there be something lacking if we didn't, wouldn't it? The third Epistle of John. The elder unto the well beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper, and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee. Even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers which have borne witness of thy charity before the Church, whom, if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well, because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles, We therefore ought to receive such. That we might be fellow helpers to the truth. I wrote unto the church, but diatrophies who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, praying against us with malicious words.

And not content therewith, neither does he himself receive the Brethren, and forbiddeth them that would and casteth them out of the Church. 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. Demetrius has good report of all men, and of the truth itself. Yeah, and we also bear record. And ye know that our record is true. 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. I'd like to just make a short comment. In general on this. Wonderful little epistle that we have before us. And the 2nd Epistle there was a warning of receiving those who came bearing wicked doctrine into the home. And I suggest again that as we even heard in the gospel last night, in a different application, the light of the truth of God held in love was to shine on those. And that would give the ability to to not receive that which was going to bring error, blasphemous doctrine, things that would bring real hurt, and not to receive that into the home now in this epistle. We have what's to be received, or those rather who are to be received in the assembly, even though there are those in the assembly, or in this case one particular, we might just say a spirit, perhaps acted in the assembly, that would deny receiving that which should be received. And, brethren, there's testimony given to Gaius Love charity. Diotrophes love, too. But it's a different Greek word. It's based. I don't know the Greek well enough, but it's based on. Diatrophies love loveth to have the 1st place is not the love our brother Dave spoke of in our open meeting. Charity, divine love, agape love. That was the love that Gaius used in receiving these that came diatrophies. Loving is a word that's based on phileo, and I would leave others who are more expert in Greek if they want to carry that on. But it's not that kind of love but brethren. My thought is this. Today Satan is as he always has been, but incredibly active to bring sorrow and contention and confusion and every conceivable sort of difficulty. Among the Saints of God. And if we're not careful, we're going to miss. Blessings that the Lord would have us to have because of the confusion and the active work of the enemy. And we need to while we need the light, the love of the truth of God, the light of God. To give us wisdom for what not to receive into our homes, Brethren, I've never personally known a time when we more need to know, practically, agape, love, charity, to know how to receive in a day of confusion when Satan is active. That which would be for the blessing of the people of God in the assembly, and may we be a very, very tender. In our hearts today and seek in love. That true divine love. To know and to be willing to receive that which the Lord is sending for our blessing in spite of. Acknowledged weakness sorrows confusions and difficulties among the Saints of God. Love does still receive and there's still blessing. May that be so with us. I think I know the answer to this, but you mentioned a diatrophy spirit. He was an actual man though, wasn't he? There was a man in that assembly. Who acted in that way and.

It's interesting that the apostle doesn't. Tell you how exactly to deal with it, except to overcome his evil with good, and he says I'll take care of him when I get there. So. I've wondered sometimes how you deal with the person who has that diatrophy spirit and maybe that could be addressed. I just will quickly say this and leave it to others, but. To me, it's very important to see these things. There's an Absalom spirit. There was a real Absalom. There's an Absalom spirit that's out to steal our hearts from our David. There's a diatrophy spirit. There was a real diatrophies. There's a diatrophy spirit that would seek to usurp and deny that which ought to be received. And I think we have to look at it both ways. If we're going to get good. We have to see these were real people. They really did their. Work of. Of hurtful things. But brethren, for us today, it's the spirit of those things that's going to bring in problems. Although there are literally men, I think, **** perhaps you were saying this that can usurp that kind of a position in assembly even today, and perhaps others can help us with. Dealing with that. The apostle does not tell Demetrius and Gaius to leave. Very interesting. Don't, don't leave. The Lord is able to strengthen you, keep you. This man was so wicked, and I don't hesitate using that word, that he probably had thrown Gaius out of the assembly also, and anyone that didn't agree with him and didn't follow in his way of thinking, he just tossed them up. That's what we get in the 10th, 1st and but it's very interesting he didn't tell guys leave him. Just just leave him go away. And it makes me think of Hannah in the days of Samuel, how she took Hannah to the most wicked place. I believe in all of Israel. Why? Because that's where the Lord had placed his name. That's an amazing thing. You couldn't find anything worse than Shiloh in the days of Samuel. I don't believe in Israel. But that's where she took Samuel, because the Lord was there and he could keep Samuel. And the apostle here tells Gaius the same thing. Go back. My teacher Mrs. George told us antecedents need when you use the word we us, who is it talking about? We get into difficulty if it says receiveth not us who is a talk? Who's the US? And that's important question here. When it says receiveth not us that we understand this epistle because he's talking, we kind of jumped great I guess to what the sore spot was to the 9th and 10th 1st here. But he's talking about walking in the truth. And what is the truth? the US is the apostles. I once asked a brother would the apostle Paul be free to preach in your church? And he bowed his head and thought for a minute thoughtfully and he said no, it would bust it up if he did. Paul wasn't welcome there. His doctrine wasn't welcome there. That's what Geotrophies were shutting out. He was shutting out the apostles doctrine and those who sought to maintain it, because it challenged the place that rightly only belonged to Christ. And geographies wanted that place and ministry will always exalt Christ, not man. And where you see man exalted, it's because Christ is a practically displaced. When the Lord spoke to Peter, he said, Get thee behind me, Satan. And what did he say? Thou savers the things that be of men and not of God. And what is going to practically displace the Lord Jesus Christ in the midst

of us is the exaltation of man. Absalom craved that place. Geographies crave that place. But the apostles ministry is always going to exalt Christ and there are also those that came along that. Thought the apostles doctrine that taught Paul's I I'm just. Talking with some believers. And they got exercised about the truth and the pastor prayed that they would leave the church.

Why? Because I believe they wanted Paul's doctrine. They wanted John's doctrine. the US in this epistle is the apostles. And So what? John's longing heart for these dear ones was. Was that they would not talk about the truth but walk in the truth. And the unique character of the assembly is that we're in the truth. Where there's authority. You go into the world and they say you can't say. But in the assembly the Lord's authority is there. And so the assembly says, yes, we can tell you what immorality is. We can tell you what marriage is and what it isn't. We can tell you what fornication is. The world says you can't say. You can't judge. Judge not that she be not judged, but we are in a place where the Lord is in the midst, and we can open up the word of God with the Spirit of God and with the Lord's authority and say, yes, this is this and this isn't that, and people don't like to be there. We like to talk about the truth, but to walk in the truth and to walk in it collectively so suddenly we can say, yes, this is a scriptural marriage that is not a scriptural marriage, that suddenly that's where the rubber meets the road, if you may put it that way. And so John longed to see because the truth, these truths have real. As we see the breakdown in the truth, we see the tragic effect in the lives of individuals, we see the breakdown in the truth in these so-called Christian lands is to marriage. And as to these things, what is as to the home and so on. These are the truths that the assembly supports and we see the breakdown in it and the effects have been just absolutely heartbreaking and tragic. And so. John delighted in the truth, and we delight in the truth. And so he desired that they would walk in the truth because he God wants us to be happy and we're not going to be happy. People think they're going to be happy by just shedding the truth like it's too much weight in their backpack. But in fact, the more truth we get, the happier we're going to be. And that's what he desired. I'm going to just thank my brother for we use words and it says in Corinthians we're not to speak in an unknown tongue. And I can speak in French and maybe about 5% could understand me and I used a word abstract. And if 90% didn't understand it, I think I should interpret it and tell you what it means. Because I think most people believe that abstract means ugly art in an art gallery that somebody paid too much money for. But John, what we got in Sunday school yesterday was abstract truth and it's helpful to the children that even the four year old can understand that. I was, we were having some young people at our home, and I asked one of the young people who was 18 years old, what's sin and he kind of grinned at me and he says taking a cookie out of the cookie jar. When your mom says no and, you know, many Christians, their notion of sin does not rise above that. But what we got in Sunday School yesterday was abstract truth as to what sin is. Every sin can be described. Sin is lawlessness. It's been a wild little donkey. It's not having a rope around your neck tied to a tree that was the law. But it's being constrained by the love of Christ and having Christ ruin my life. And so if you ask Christians, is it wrong to steal? Is it wrong to rob banks? They'd say yes, that's sin. But if you said is it wrong to attend the Church of your choice, they say, well that's not sin. But where did I ever get a choice? The disciples said, Where wilt thou that we prepare it's sin not to look to the Lord and not to want to know what the Lord's will is to do it, To prepare myself to do the will of God. That's sin. It's lawlessness. And so that's what we mean by abstract truth, I think if you say, what is a chair? And we could, each one of us could have 10 images in our mind of what a chair is. But a chair is a movable seat with a back that describes every chair that you ever saw. And when you say sin is lawlessness, it describes every sin that you ever saw. And what we heard in Sunday School yesterday describes what the character of sin is. It's being a wild little donkey that wouldn't be controlled. And so that is why it's very helpful and it's practical even to the little children sitting here in the front row, they can understand that. But I thank my brother for pointing that out because there's no point in speaking using words that people don't understand. And I I'm guilty of that and I I appreciate that. And that's the benefit of being where there's liberty to to, to bring these things out. I think it's very beautiful to see in this epistle that it begins and ends with a man, Two men, one is Gaius, the other is Demetrius, 2 men who amidst the.

Spirit of things that was going on in the assembly, they were seeking to go on and walk in the truth and to hold the truth in love. And I think as I thought of this as our brother Dave was speaking, because. We might say, well we're going back to an assembly and there's a lot of things wanting. Maybe there's a bad spirit in the assembly you come from. Maybe there's someone who does like to take the preeminence, someone who's who doesn't appreciate the apostles doctrine, and so on, but we can never give the Lord a good reason for leaving the Lord's table. We might have all kinds of excuses, but what are we going to say, brethren, when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ? Are we going to say things were too bad there? What about those? When the Lord came, things were wanting. At Jerusalem, things were wanting. In the temple. There was a lot going on that wasn't according to the mind of God and according to the truth. But there were those who were going on faithful. There was Anna and Simeon and others who are named. Small remnant, no doubt. But they were seeking to go on faithfully amidst all that was taking place that was not according to the truth. And brethren, we can go home, and we never want to condone or be indifferent to evil. These ones here weren't indifferent to what was going on in the assembly. They were exercised about it, no doubt, but they were seeking to go on in the truth, despite the situations that they were facing. When Paul wrote to Timothy, he wrote of the breakdown of everything, not just in the world, but even amongst the people of God. And what did he say to Timothy? He said, continue. Thou, in other words, Timothy don't give up. And what was Timothy to continue in? He was to continue in the things that he had learned and been assured of, knowing of whom he had learned them. He was to continue in the apostles doctrine. And so again, Jude tells us to earnestly contend for the faith. And so I just say that as an encouragement. Maybe you say, I just hate to go home this afternoon. I hate to go back to meeting next Lord State, where I come from, but God knows the situation. He knows the end from the beginning. He's in full control of the situation. Remember one time there was a difficulty in our area and I went to see an older brother and he said these words to me, said Jim. Just remember, sometimes things might seem out of hand, but they're never out of the Lord's hand. He's in full control. And John recognized that there were problems here. And that he warns us to this man and speaks very strongly as to diotrophies. But he also is thankful that there were those who were seeking to go on even amidst this difficulty. Brethren, we can do that too. That this little, this little letter. That's only a few sentences. And it's really not only written to gas, but really it's it really focuses on gas. It's about gas. And I think of August as a little stream in an obscure part of the forest and and it's a little stream that that we've stumbled across and we've kind of sat there and enjoyed it. But then we take a little hike upstream and a little ways up we see that there's some some dams across that street, some obstacles and perhaps in the context here of third John. There was an obstacle of his health. There was an obstacle of. Meeting problems, there was perhaps also the obstacle that he had been put out of the meeting. And yet the nature of a stream is that as it flows along, and if it comes to a dam, you know. It just rises up and and it keeps going and it flows right on over and it flows in the downstream. It'll be in the same course, the same natural course, the same volume, the same everything about that street. And that's what we really need to be like and that's what gas was like. We might ask what part of that stream do is shown. What part of that stream does my family see or my brethren see or my coworkers see? Do they see the obstacle part or they do they see the downstream free flowing part?

You might ask am I a victim or am I a victor? And if I'm pointing at the obstacles? And focusing on that, I've really made myself a victim. But if I see that walking in the truth and the love of God, and it can flow downstream in its natural free flowing course. Then I'm a victor. Because

there's been overcoming. Difficulty. It tends to constrict the affections, and I think that's what you're saying, and I it tends to narrow the affections. But Paul said to the Corinthians, you're straightening up, you're not straightening us, but you're straightening your own bowels. And Paul went through great anguish of heart as to how to write to the Corinthians, because his heart was very large to them. Their hearts were very narrow towards fall, and sometimes we get things backwards. False. The apostles hearts is very large to us. We desire the blessing. That the apostles desired their blessing and the truth of God desires the blessings of Saints. And sometimes we just scratch our heads and say. How do I show love in this situation? It's difficult sometimes, and so he doesn't want to constrict the affections of the heart. And that's what he says. What thou doest to the brethren. A beloved thou doest faithfully, whatsoever thou doest to the brethren. Can I say that the way that I act towards my brethren is faithful to the Lord? If you can't, if I have to act in a way that compromises the truth of God in acting towards a brother that I'm not acting faithfully, If I have to surrender a principle of the word of God to act towards my brother that I'm not acting faithfully, and so he could commend this one, that he acted whatever he did, it was faithful. And so we need to be faithful to the Lord, and then we'll act faithfully towards each other. Isn't that interesting that? He says. His beloved brother. I wish above all things. That thou mayest prosper and being felt even as thy soul prospers. What an amazing comment. Here was a brother. That soul was in tune with his Lord and master, and we get evidence of that in the fifth verse. Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever. Thou doest to the brethren and the strangers, a man that walked with his heart set on the person of Christ, and to follow in his footsteps. Did everything. If we have in First Peter chapter 2, the end of the chapter, that he left us an example, Gaius was following that example, and how beautiful to hear from in the fourth person, since I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth. Well how did he hear it? He he heard it from other brethren that had visited, and they said Gaius is a man in that assembly that's walking for the Lord. How nice that is, if that could be true of each of us. Set. On him, on Christ. And as the Psalmist said. My heart will not be moved. Psalm 16 If I set my mind and heart on him, therefore I will not be moved. And this was gay as the spirit of Gaius. Undoubtedly he rose above the problems and overcame, and was the victor. As our brother mentioned, there was a brother, a wonderful brother, who came into the. Fullerton meeting, perhaps 30 years ago. I think it was a Buena Park meeting at that time and he said, Who has a preeminence here or who presides here? And so he was answered, of course, very faithfully by our brethren. And he said, well, we don't have a paid minister, if that's what you mean, or a pastor who presides over the Saints here. But there is one. And the Scripture says that in all things he might have the preeminence, he is the head of the body, his church. And who is that? He asked. And the brother said, well, I know who you mean.

But doesn't anyone preside here that is a pastor that you can sit? And he said, no, the Lord Jesus Christ is in the midst, brother. He has the preeminent place here. And he spoke to him humbly, not as any contest, but humbly. Well, the brother didn't remain. He left because the flesh isn't a true brethren always desires to have a place. And even with the apostles there were there was a contest among them. They were seeking to have the 1st place Peter, James and John. And even the mother supported her sons, and having that first place of preeminence. And as a brother, Ron and I were speaking before the meeting, even Peter on the Mount. Said Well, we'll make 3 tabernacles, one for thee Lord, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. But how much? We have been instructed by grace in the truth, brethren, and it's not to find fault with our brethren in other places. A beloved brother among us. Perhaps some know this story and I'll mention his name. He is with the Lord now. His name is Clarence Mayo. A brother who had his beginning in the ministry from a theological seminary and very well informed and a very gifted man who loved the flock, loved the Saints. And he was perhaps in a very preeminent place or church in Placentia, CA. And that day, perhaps 4050 years ago, it was a very popular place to go to attend church. And some very, some very prominent personalities were behind the pulpit in that church. And he was one. But he saw the need of meeting simply, very informally, with some of the fellow believers in the church. In the basement of that building to have reading meetings. And as they had reading meetings together. He saw the wonderful flow of the Spirit of God working in other believers to bring out things that he had never heard before, and saw that he wasn't the preeminent one in a certain sense, but others were gifted in that place to have a part in the ministry. Well, it came to this conclusion. The organization, the Baptist organization, said a brother Mayo. Either you leave this building or we will have to ask you to leave. And he left. Not knowing where he was going to go. And several others followed with him beloved Saints, And the Lord showed them where to go, and they came into fellowship in the Fullerton Assembly many, many years ago, and had been a great blessing and help to the Saints, and not only brother Mayo, but many who came with him. Sadly, his mother never forgave him. Now, I'm not saying, brethren, that every minister behind the pulpit has a spirit of Diotrephes. I don't mean that at all. But to show the place that the assembly puts us as believers not to love, to have that place of preeminence, is a spirit that we need, and it is a spirit of Christ. And if there is that spirit among us, we will not be content in the assembly. We will perhaps leave, because there is no place for the flesh in the assembly. Man once asked me, I was having a little reading with a friend and his two pastors came and they sat down, two of them to return at one cake pan. And they said, do you have pastors in your assembly? And I said yes, I can see some of them here. I said there's been men that have gone long out of their way, care for my soul to follow me, to write me, to encourage me in the things of God, he said, you don't get my question. He said you have one man to run things in your church. I said yes, I we do. Do you have one man to run things in your church? I said yes, we do. And he sits on the throne of God. And he's a good song leader, too. If I read this 22nd song and the 2nd Hebrews and he said I got to go play hockey, he's beat up a little bit. Brother Neil, I can't play. I'm sorry. He said.

He said, do you have a pastor in your church, pastors in your church? And I said yes. And I can see some of them here. Ones that have cared for my soul and taught me and phoned me and written to me and. He said you're not getting my questions. You have one man to run things in your church and I said yes. And he sits on the throne of God. Talk to this brother instead of them. I. He sits on the throne of God, and he's a good song leader. We do have pastors and we're thank God for them. And we should never say you don't have pastors. We do. But we have a man to run things and we're in the very place where he's in the midst and to crave the place that Christ has is that spirit. But you know, they bore witness to the love. They said it borne witness verse six of thy charity before the church and men, as our brother was Speaking of love. Men know what love is. And I got red hair and I met a brother who had red hair and we had a bit of a discussion about things and we argued about things a little bit too much. But he came to me afterwards and he said to me his brother was in the hospital and he greatly criticized the assembly in that place. Had lots of bad things to say about it, but he came to me and he said, Neil, I want to tell you something, he said. Those brethren know how to laugh. Those Brethren know how to love. I've never seen such love anywhere. Said I might disagree with you on doctrine, But he said those Brethren know how to love. He bore testimony to the love of the Brethren in that particular assembly and that speaks to the conscience of man. And I believe that they bore testimony to the fact that there's love and we've experienced it here. We came here and it didn't matter how much money we did or didn't have. We were loved and we were cared for and. And we've experienced that love, and it's true of every St. of God that we know. We've passed from death unto life because we love the Brethren, but we enjoy a special privilege in the assembly to experience that love and to share that love in a freeway. Of Jonathan in the 9th chapter of Judges really brings out a beautiful point that here they want somebody to reign over the trees and so they go to the fig tree. And the fig tree says well should I

leave my sweetness to to reign over the trees and and the vine says the same thing and and so does the olive tree and we might say, well can't you do both? Well, you know, we can't do both. And so here's the Bramble. And he's willing to take the responsibility while he doesn't have any fruit. So he's got nothing to lose. But if we want to have the preeminence, we've got a lot to lose. And so I think of Gaius, I don't know if it's the same one, but in Romans 16, Paul speaks of Gaius Mind host. And, you know, it's wonderful to have those brethren. A man and his wife. Posting and in their home and have Holstein in the assembly. And to think that Gaius could go on hosting, he could raise a family in the assembly that would go on with the Lord. Now what is this matter about the Lord allowing diatrophies in the assembly under these circumstances? Is the wisdom of God involved in this? Please save Brother Dave. Isn't it? Things cost a sacrifice to be made. That's the value of Christianity. It isn't the South wind blowing softly that makes quality and character and gift and sweetness. And so the Lord knows how He needs to preserve us in the assembly in which we are in. The circumstances are difficult. Does that mean that I can't function in the capacity that the Lord has given me? And so if these things are lacking in the assembly, we know what's going to happen, why go there? Now I say the Lord is there and we don't, but I'm just saying in a practical way, but we want to be there for the nourishment that every joint is privileged to supply for the body.

Chapters. I think that's most useful in considering this is the very one you referred to in Judges. I had an experience years ago, I was traveling from Lima, Peru to Bolivia for to leave the Bolivia Lima conference and go to. Go over to Montero, Bolivia. And the brethren came to the airport with me. We spend quite a bit of time fellowship being together. The brother Raul Chavez, who is a brother who is very devoted to the Lord and evangelism. Has one lung and he carries on going up in the mountains. There was one of the brethren that were waiting with me in the airport. Brother, Raul said. Tell me a little bit about this ninth chapter of judges. Well, I hadn't really considered it before, and all the way over on the plane I considered it. And the more I considered it, the more I enjoyed the light that the Lord seemed to give out of it. But I noticed something interesting about that Bramble. He says if you want me to, I'm here. I'm your candidate. But if not, what does he say? Let fire come out and devour the Cedars. And so often that happens that we have one Who? Has nothing really to offer and yet wants preeminence. It's interesting that in the Lima meeting room when you come in, there's a little sign up there that in all things you might have to preeminent. It's nice to have that. I think every meeting room should have that reference somewhere, but. He said. Come rest under my shadow, my influence. But if not, let fire come out from the Bramble. And devour the Cedars of Lebanon, how many tall? Cedars of Lebanon have been destroyed by a Bramble that once preeminence and I I so indebted to brother Ralph Chavez for calling my attention to that and challenging me with that chapter and I think it it's exactly an antidote to what we have here. Because that spirit of Doug mentioned spirit of diatrophies earlier and I I think that's exactly what we can see in ourselves if we're honest. We'd like preeminence. We like to run things. We're a lot of us do. There's there's the occasional person who doesn't, but I think most of us like to have a a preeminent place and if we can't have it. Then we'll destroy what? Whatever there is for the Lord, so I'm grateful you've referred to that chapter and. I commend it to everyone here to meditate on it, because you leave in each case, each one of those things that is special. You might say ministry. So I leave my good fruit. Shall I leave my fatness? Ministry and the power of the Holy Spirit and and each one of them had something. To minister. Fake, I suppose, would speak of healing, wouldn't it? Each one had a little something to offer. And yet. If they went to be king. Over the trees. They were going to be. They were going to lose whatever they did. That and how wonderful it is to picture the assembly working together, each one with his special. Thing that the Lord has given him to do. We don't need kings. We don't need kings. Jim, you were talking to us down in Carolina about is it the locust that goes worth? And they don't have any king, do they?

And it's something to be instructed by. Did you have a model of the locust, too? I I thought you did. Yeah. Jim had some interesting models down there. He even had hands and he was talking to the Sunday school in North Carolina about it. And we we don't need kings. We don't need king makers either. And there there's where brethren I think fall into difficulty is they like to make kings. Because whose fault is it? When someone steps out of the role that God has given them for preeminence. Who is to blame? Often it's the ones who. Are sitting under that ministry. May the Lord preserve us from that. And I appreciate very much Brother Ron that you brought that out. It just brought back that whole conversation with Raul Chavez there and and Lima. Interesting that we have 14 verses in this little book and only two are involved with the atrophies. I think we ought to remember that the rest of it is encouragement. It brings you out from under that burden and turns your heart to Christ. I think that's very good. I was trying to make earlier that yes, we want to see that there is a faithful warning given by the apostle concerning this one. And you know there are faithful warnings given. I've often said there's a fine line between gossip and godly concern, and sometimes perhaps we do give a warning. I've been thankful for brethren who've come to me and said, well, just be careful of brother so and so. Thus and so is that gossip godly concern? Well, I don't say I always discern the fine line between the two. But sometimes we have to give warnings. If we didn't give warnings, what if we didn't give a warning and a brother was swept away with something? We hadn't delivered our soul on the matter. Faithful are the wounds of a friend. But I would like to just say this in connection with what has been said, Brother Ron and **** that love desires to serve. True love never desires the preeminence. And you know, God teaches us by contrast, Brethren, and I believe there's a contrast in this epistle. It opens with one who whom John could confirm his love to in the truth, and one who loved the Saints and desired to serve them, in contrast with one who really, shall I dare to say, loved himself. He wanted to have the preeminence, but it wasn't really true love, true love for the people of God desires to serve and the Lord Jesus it says he made himself of no reputation. And took upon him the form of a servant who exhibited who was love, the Lord Jesus himself, who exhibited that love in a practical way more than himself, because he came to serve even at the end of His pathway. When the disciples were gathered around him in the upper room, he lays aside his garment that which would speak of what a person is. Are we willing to lay aside our garments, brethren, to just forget ourselves? Not try to make something of ourselves, or put a person, or put ourselves forward, but are we willing to lay aside our garments and to gird ourselves in humility and love, and to seek the blessing and refreshment of the people of God? I believe Gaius was one who desired this. Desired the blessing and refreshment of the people of God. He desired to have them in their home. And I'd like to just say a word about that, if you'll bear with me. Because you know, when I was growing up, I'm thankful for parents who were exercised to receive into our home those that they loved in the truth and those that were a real blessing and encouragement. I knew a side of brother London when I was growing up that you didn't get when you saw him in a setting like this. We he played with us, children had little tricks he do with us, and he'd give us little hints as to the truth as he he went along. I value a picture of myself sitting on Brother Lundin's knee when I was a young boy and others who were in our home. And I just want to say to those of us who are parents, it's a tremendous blessing to receive those that we love in the truth and those that are faithful in the truth. And your children and young people will benefit and profit. Yes, we need the ministry in the assembly. We need to be at the assembly meetings, and I value that too in my upbringing. But I say I look back and I realize that I received a great blessing because of those that were received into our home and administered the truth to us in that setting as well.

I grew up in a gym and I know that Jim and I would both testify. My brother Jim and I would both testify of the blessing that came from that. Now, we were not gathered at the time, but I recall a very dear brother who stayed with us regularly and he always was late coming down in the morning and we wondered what he was doing and so. My brother and I did a terrible thing. My brother Jack. Not, not Jim. We. We eavesdropped on him. We put our ear to his door to see what he was doing, and his brother Rudolph Nehring and brother Nehring was crying out to the Lord for blessing on us boys. That made a profound impression on me. A profound impression, He could say they're all day as far as we were concerned. After that we were very ashamed. And I just like to point out here that it says not only the brethren, but that strangers, they were not people well known, my favorite brother and that are coming around. I think the new translation makes that very clear that it was strangers, people previously not known. And maybe some of you don't experience that because we live in a little kind of a well known community that we're all together, but I've so much enjoyed that going into places like. Peru and Bolivia and Argentina people have never saw me before but received me. In the name of the Lord, what a blessed thing that is, Lemoyne. Isn't that precious? It's a precious experience. Brother Le Moines has done a fair amount of that too, and we we enjoy that so much. You don't have to be people you well know. It's easy to receive. Brother Jim in the house, and we know him. We've known him for many years. But what about a brother that's a stranger, but who has gone forth for the Lord's sake? And that's what it says. There, isn't it? In verse, in verse. Six. It's they they are proud of verse five, They What he did was toward the brethren, and that strangers and what he did was to set them forth. Now what does that mean, to set them forth? I think it's important to understand that to set them forth. Somebody told me a terrible story about a brother in Canada that overstayed. His time in an assembly and somebody finally spoke to him about it, he said. They said, have you any thought of moving on? He said yes, I'm going to have the money for a train ticket. Who's? That's a reproach as it does. That he wasn't being set forth on his journey. Well, we may talk about the. Steve, in which we rightly should hold those that serve the Lord and Hebrews 13 gives us very clear direction on that. But I noticed a few words here in the eighth verse where it says fellow helpers to the truth and sometimes we our our our sights are settled a little bit too high to certain individuals and I don't want to run them down. But in this group here. There are very important people, and let me just refer for a moment to a very few verses in Acts chapter 18 where it mentions Apollos verse 25. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue, whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. Now the last part of that 26 verse might well have been taken away, because Apollos was eloquent. He was qualified, but there was a brother and a sister who quietly took him aside in their home and showed them a better way.

Beloved brethren, there are those of our beloved sisters in the home that have done a tremendous task as fellow helpers. There are young people around who have done a tremendous task as fellow helpers. Can we recognize it? Can we show them the interest and the support that is needed? There was Eli Hugh in Jolt who took on some of the brethren whom he said they weren't very wise. Well, maybe he wasn't either. But at the same time, the spirit of God saw fit to put it there. And so I just say to you that there are fellow laborers. Everyone in this room is a fellow laborer, and if it's only Brother **** or Brother Doug or whoever, it might be that our fellow laborers were missing something very valuable. There are many laborers around it, and it's so nice to have. Some young person or some older person come up to you and just give you a word of encouragement. Those are fellow laborers. There are sisters that have come forward, their fellow laborers, and do we recognize them? Now, I want to quickly add that I'm not taking away from those whom we esteem highly that minister to us and are our teachers. And I just refer you to Hebrews 13 where it clearly tells us what we want to do. But I just want to say this. Helpers out to the truth that could be baking a cake or making a glass of of of kool-aid let's Washington brothers underwear that may not be easy to do some sisters are very wonderful in that way and but I think setting forth is is all those little things that are necessary isn't it to help them on their journey and there are those that the Lord values. Thank you Norm for that point. It's such an important point and we need to keep it in mind that we not deteriorate into a clergy idea, because the work of the Lord is done by those who are the Lorde people, isn't it? Every member of the body of grace functioning together the sisters kennel. Getting them on a journey with two eggs for breakfast. But it is in the truth, and that's the point just. Just tell another little incident in my childhood that impressed me to follow up what we've said earlier. I remember one time a brother did come to our home and he stayed a couple of days, but it was very evident by Saturday afternoon that he held that which was error. And I still remember as a young boy and it rather impressed me, my father taking him to the train station by Saturday evening, you know, that stuck with me. And so there were those in our home that we had happy fellowship with. That my parents loved in the truth and they were a help to us. But immediately on my father detecting that there was error being held by this brother, and I believe he was a brother in the Lord, but there was error. It's love governed by truth, brethren and brethren. That's the point of John's ministry. We've had this expression several times. We've kind of passed over it. We've skirted around it, but it's love in the truth. And later on the apostle John when he sees the vision of the Lord Jesus. Walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, 7 literal assemblies that existed on Earth at that time. In Revelation chapter 2 and chapter three, we find that the Lord Jesus walking there is gird about the paps with a golden girdle. What is that? The paps speak of love. The golden girdle speaks of righteousness and it's love governed by truth. Just take a minute and go over to a verse in two Timothy. I just want to apply in this connection. Second Timothy, chapter 2 and verse 22. Flee also, youthful lusts, but follow. Now I want to notice the order of this list. Follow righteousness, faith, love, peace with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. And I just want to say this about this list here. If I had been writing the list, I probably would have put love and peace at the beginning of the list. And that's what people want to do. They say, well, we're all Christians.

We're all believers. We're all on our way to heaven, brethren, that's true. We are all Christians. We are all members of the body of Christ. We're all on our way to heaven, and we ought to have a largeness of heart to embrace all the people of God in our hearts. But again, I say it's love governed by truth. And the Spirit of God hasn't put love and peace at the beginning of this list. He's put righteousness and faith and faith. Because, brethren, if we have love. At the expense of righteousness and truth. That's compromise. And again, who showed more love in a practical way than the Lord Jesus? But did he ever compromise the truth? Did he ever compromise a principle of Scripture? I've enjoyed it in connection with Hezekiah. You know, because there are two things that characterize King Hezekiah that I think are very precious in this connection. One was a large heart he did, in his heart, embrace. All the people of God Hezekiah came to the throne of Israel when Israel was in a very divided state, and 10 tribes were meeting at Dan and Bethel where they ought not to have been meeting. And Hezekiah comes to the throne, and he comes to the throne in Jerusalem, and he's thankful to be there where God had placed his name. But his heart embraced all the people of God. And he writes letters to them, inviting them to come up to the House of the Lord at Jerusalem. And to keep the Passover. But wouldn't you think it would have been broad minded of Hezekiah to have gone up to Dan on one Sabbath and Bethel on another Sabbath and then invite and hope that some of the people of God would come up to Jerusalem on the third Sabbath? That would have been broad minded but it would not have been faithful. And the point I want to make is Hezekiah had a large heart. He loved the people of God. He recognized that they were the people of God. But he had the exercise to walk in a narrow path. It was love governed by truth. And

what was the result? Well, the result was that many laughed and laughed them to scorn and moth the letters. But there was also another result that sometimes, perhaps, we missed. There were those that came up. There were those that were exercised because they saw that Hezekiah loved them, but they also saw that he was faithful. That it was love governed by truth. And brethren, if we are wishy washy with people in our relationship to people and we think, well, if we go along so far it'll exercise them. We're never going to help somebody if we're wishy washy when it comes to the truth. But if we're faithful in the truth and they see that we hold the truth in love, then I believe the spirit of God can exercise souls so that they see those two things love in the truth. Well, I believe, brethren, this is very important. Do we love all the people of God? I trust we do. Are there certain of the people of God we can't practically manifest that love to? Yes, there are, because they're not walking in the truth. They're holding that which is not according to Scripture. They're walking in a wrong path. And it's interesting that Gay is here. He confirms his. I'm sorry, John. He confirms his love to Gaius. Does he confirm his love to Diotrophies? No. Did he love Diotrophies any less? No. I'm sure he did love Diotrophes. He didn't want to see Diotrophes acting in the flesh and wanting the preeminence. But he restrained in confirming his love to him because of the spirit and the conduct of this man. But how wonderful, Gaius, he could confirm his love, because he was going on in the truth for the blessing of the people of God. Should look at the last four verses, really. And then the next verse that comes before us here is the 11th verse. And beloved, follow not that which is evil and that's just been given to us. But that which is good, he that doeth good, is of God, but he that doeth evil has not seen solemn. But then the next verse. And this man, Demetrius, every single one of us has already been said, can be a Demetrius. Every single one of us. Here's a man that I don't know if any of us ever have been in a situation as bad as what Demetrius was in. I don't know, maybe some of us have, but he.

Held forth he followed the dictates of the person of Christ, and that we can do every one of us. The truth. He had a good report of the truth. And so that's really the brother **** spoke last night on God is love, and God is light and God is love. That's what he is in his essence. And if it's not according to the truth, it's not love. We say, well, he loves them, but it's not according to the truth. Then it's not love. It's love is not some kind of feeling. It's not people have all kinds of ideas of what love is in the world, but if it's not according to the truth, and this is a wonderful thing about Demetrius in the ninth verse, he said. I wrote on to the church that. Deus received those who John could commend, who the truth could command. And so it says here of Demetrius was a good report of all men, and of the truth itself. And so. This is, I believe, the the essential part here. And you know that our record is true. And so fellowship is a real thing. It's a real thing. We know the strangers come, they come not just recommended to us, but they come commended to us. Maybe somebody comes from an assembly from South America. We don't know them. They don't come recommended to us. They come commended to us. And it, fellowship becomes a known thing and that's why we can receive a stranger. Because we know our brethren in South America walk in the truth. I've never been there. Know if somebody comes from Japan with a letter of commendation, they're not recommending them to us. We know that they walk in the truth and they're commending us, them to us and they have a report. And so fellowship is a known thing and Demetrius was of that character and that's what the devil wants to do. He just wants as our brother was saying in his address yesterday, he just wants to lower and lower and lower fellowship so that it's nothing more than playing mini golf. And it's fine to play mini golf, but. It is, but fellowship is in the truth. Brethren, before we get too far beyond this 11th verse, I'd like to remind our hearts that we tend to follow what we focus on. So often. We are occupied with what's wrong. If we're occupied with what's wrong, are we really following what is good? We tend to follow what we focus on. So let's not read this verse casually. Follow that. Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. And we've got a book full. We've had three days full of what's good. Let's focus on it. Let's concentrate on it. Like to make this comment about verse 12. We're very quick to sit down and write letters sometimes. And letters are necessary sometimes, but they're cold. Letters are cold, they don't convey. The tears or the smile or the. They're just not the same. So there are some things that John says. I have many things to say. But I'm not going to write it with pen and ink. I want it mouth to mouth, face to face. But the coward in US always says be nice to write. I'm scared to talk to him face to face. I'll write him a letter and that's not God's way to do it in my opinion. I think what we have here is an exhortation or an encouragement that we. Defer the letter writings. Sometimes I have files at home that I. Have burned recently of letters back and forth, back and forth on matters. And I don't detect any of the real heart, many of the real. Feeling that is there, but sit down and talk to a brother, mouth to mouth, face to face, makes a big difference, doesn't it? And it may be hard to do, but we ought to be courageous enough to do it, and we might have a lot less difficulty between us if we do that. I'd like to make a final comment.

From myself, the rest of you, you've got all day but. Where do we, each and everyone of us really fit into our home assembly? And do we run into a situation that makes us maybe angry? What about this man? If we get into that problem, let's turn to the scriptures where we can find men that have gone through far, far worse and what they did. And this man Demetrius is a beautiful example. I don't know. As I said earlier, any of us ever have been in the situation this man's in and look what he does. He just goes on and we can do the same. The person of Christ is our example. And again I quote first Peter 2. The very last 3-4 verses he left us and example, He's our example. Sin, Matthew 15. Cried out. Have mercy on me, thou son of David. And he doesn't pay any attention to her. The disciples say send her away. And she comes and falls at his feet, and says Lord. And he says it's not meat to take the children's bread and cast it to the dogs. And she says. Truth, Lord. But the puppies eat to come from the table. Truth, Lord, but the puffies eat the crumbs from the table. If I just could have the crumb I. I'd have the blessing. You know the word of God says Remember the pit from which you were digged? There is a depth of suffering the blessed Son of God has gone to. However deep that pit was I was in, he went deeper still to get under me and bring me out of it. He says remember the pit. He doesn't say remember the sins you committed. You're entitled. Forget them. There's a reason why she says truth. Lord, we've had truth much before us in these meetings. Let's look at 2 Thessalonians Chapter 2 just one more time. We touched upon it a little bit yesterday. We know our time is gone, but just these two verses. Verse 10. There's a reason why after the Rapture, as was mentioned last night, there will not be a second chance for those who have rejected the grace of God. And it's given in the end of verse 10 because they received not the love of the truth. That they might be saved. Then look at verse 13. Or verse 12. That they might, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Now that's those who are left after the rapture. But look at verse 13. But we are bound to give thanks all the way to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. Wonderful, isn't it? That truth empowers the soul to be. For God in fellowship with God in this world, Gaius had it. Demetrius, perhaps, was one of those not received by Diotrophes. But the love of the truth. As a preserving effect, it has the salvation of your soul at its very state. Truth is an uncreated thing. God is true, every man a liar. Truth is what is.

And we get in Psalm 119, verse 89 forever. O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven. Dear soul, God empowers you with truth from His Word, that you may walk through this world in fellowship with Him and in fellowship with them who call upon Him out of a dear heart. What a wonderful privilege.

The Remembrancer: 1907, "Love in the Truth" (1:1)

The semblance of love which does not maintain the truth, but accommodates itself to that which is not the truth, is not love according to God; it is taking advantage of the name of love in order to help on the seductions of Satan. In the last days the test of true love is the maintenance of the truth. God would have us love one another; but the Holy Ghost, by whose power we receive the divine nature, and who pours the love of God into our hearts, is the Spirit of truth, and His office is to glorify Christ. Therefore it is impassible that a love which can put up with a doctrine that falsifies Christ, or which is indifferent to anything that concerns His glory, can be of the Holy Ghost-still less so, if such indifference be set up as the proof of that love. Compare also 1 John 5:2, 3, and 2 John 6.

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