

Sunday May 3, 2015
3 John

¹The elder, To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

²Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.

³It gave me great joy when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth, telling how you continue to walk in it.

⁴I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

⁵Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you.

⁶They have told the church about your love. Please send them on their way in a manner that honors God.

⁷It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans.

⁸We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.

⁹I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will not welcome us.

¹⁰So when I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, spreading malicious nonsense about us. Not satisfied with that, he even refuses to welcome other believers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.

¹¹Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.

¹²Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone—and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.

¹³I have much to write you, but I do not want to do so with pen and ink.

¹⁴I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face.

Peace to you. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.

Good Morning First Baptist Members, Friends and Guest. I greet you this morning with the words of King David. "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord." Is there anyone who is glad to be here? Is there someone that had to fight the devil to get here this morning? Is there anybody that knows that if it had not been for the Lord on their side they would not be here? Not only am I glad to be here, but I have come to praise the Lord. If you feel **like** I feel then I invite you to praise Him.

*Our Lord is worthy of all praise, from the rising of the sun,
until the going down of the same. (Psa 113)*

This morning we consider the 3rd letter of John. There are some interesting parallels and contrasts that could be made between this letter and 2nd John that we studied last week. 2nd John written to a woman and perhaps the only letter in the canon addressed to a woman, 3rd John, written to a man. 2nd John written to answer questions and 3rd John written to provide insight into a problem that perhaps the church had not even recognized. Each letter providing insight into the problems of the 1st century church, problems that still exist today. 2nd John wrestled with those who came from the outside and 3rd John wrestles with those on the inside, those who called themselves Christians and followers of Christ.

As I was doing my research I read an article in which one preacher said after he had finished preaching a sermon on 3rd John half the deacon board resigned, because they believe he was speaking to and about them. While on the one hand that is amusing the reality is

¹⁶ All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷ so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3)

So this morning if I am on your toes, walking on your street, or is some other way making you uncomfortable would you do two things for me – take good notes and say ouch. On the other hand if you know, that you know, I am

speaking the truth I would appreciate an AMEN. An affirmation that you know I am speaking the truth.

One way to look at this 3rd letter of John is to consider the three individuals that he references. The first is Gaius, whom he calls a friend. The second is Diotrephes, who although a member of a church is not welcoming and always wants to be first. The last is Demetrius who is well spoken of by everyone. These three individuals are reflected of each of us at various points on our Christian journey. I think we would be safe in saying they represent different types of hearts:

The Servants Heart – The Unteachable Heart – The Evangelist's Heart
So this morning I invite you to pray with me and for me as we consider this theme:

WHAT KIND OF HEART DO WE HAVE?

SHALL WE PRAY

Father God we thank you for the opportunity to be in your presence this morning. We know it is **not** because of our good deeds, our great faith, or our shining examples. We are here because of your grace and mercy. Father, I asked that you help us to hear the word today in ways that changes hearts. For we know that when hearts are changed, changed behavior follows. Abba, I ask you to overlook my weaknesses and shortcomings and use me to preach your Word. It is my desire to have a heart that can be used by you. In the name of your Son Jesus the Christ we pray. Amen and Amen.

WHAT KIND OF HEART DO WE HAVE?

Now, **it might** make sense to you, for me to talk about the Servants Heart first, because that is how John presents it to us. But I want to give you the bad

news first and end with the Good News. Let us look at the traits of an Unteachable Heart. What does John say?

- loves to be first
- will not welcome us (others)
- spreading malicious nonsense about us (others)
- refuses to welcome other believers
- stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.

Jesus had so much to say about those who desire to be first that Matthew, Mark and Luke all recorded it! Being first is not what we are called to do and or be. For when we desire to be first we may become guilty of **my way of the highway; wanting to be large and in charge; believing our way is the right and only way.** We can't see what others are doing because we are too busy looking for ways to push our plan/idea/agenda to the front.

• [Matthew](#) [20:16](#)

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

[Mark](#) [10:31](#)

But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

[Luke](#) [13:30](#)

Indeed there are those who are last who will be first, and first who will be last."¹

We are called to have the heart and mind of Christ. Listen to what Paul says to the church at Philippi.

*Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ **Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.***

⁵ *In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:²*

¹ <http://biblehub.com/matthew/19-30.htm>

² <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians+2&version=NIV>

Not only does the **Unteachable** heart have the wrong spirit. The **Unteachable** heart has a mean mouth. Someone has said that a mean mouth, an evil tongue is a window to the heart. James writes a lot about the power of the tongue.

⁵Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. (James 3)

Just think for a moment about some of the sins of our tongues;

- profanity and vulgarity (look it up this week)
- deceit and lying (misrepresenting the truth and speaking an untruth)
- slander (speaking and spreading things you know are not true)
- gossip (spreading information you think might be true)

A couple of things to think about before we pass on the latest gossip.

- if a dog will carry a bone – he will bring one home
- for our younger folks – anyone who gossips **with you** will gossip **about you**.
- we don't pray for those we gossip about and we don't gossip about the folks we pray about

However, we don't have to remember these saying we can fill our hearts with the Word of God. What does our bible teach?

²⁹Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4)

The third thing we will note about the **Unteachable** heart is that it opposes missionaries. Well Pastor, we don't get many missionaries here so this is not a problem for us. Mission is not just **foreign** it is also **home**. Remember we are asked to support ABC Home Mission Society. Enlarge your box and your thinking.

- Are you guilty of wanting only a certain kind of person in God's church?
- Are you doing what you can to feed the hungry and clothe the naked?
- Are you spreading the gospel and helping others to do the same?
- Are you giving to help the people in Nepal or are you preaching "charity begins at home"?
- Are you willing to be inconvenience to reach others³?

1. Opposes Missionaries

2. Mean Mouth

3. Wrong Spirit

WHAT KIND OF HEART DO WE HAVE?

As Baptist we believe in the priesthood of all believers. In other words we believe that God calls and gifts each of us for the work of the church. Therefore the traits outlined in 3rd John are not just traits for the pastor and the Leadership Council, they are traits we are each called to have. This section could be a sermon in and of itself, so just let me speak about one trait **FAITHFULNESS**.

The greatest trait that any Christian can have is faithfulness! If God is going to be able to use us for the work of His Kingdom, we must first prove ourselves as faithful and loyal to Him and to one another.

*²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, **faithfulness**, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (Galatians 5)*

What does faithfulness look like?

- ✓ **church attendance**
- ✓ **being on time, every time, all the time**

not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another

- ✓ **obeying God's Word**
- ✓ **living a sanctified and holy life**

And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.

³ http://www.sermoncentral.com/print_friendly.asp?SermonID=93173 accessed 05.02.2015

✓ **studying and learning the Word of God**

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

✓ **giving of our time, tithe, talents to the Work of the Lord**

Those in positions of ministry- as Baptist that means all of us - must have a Servant's Heart. We must love people enough to be inconvenienced often, if the need arises to serve others. We must have a love for serving other people. We must desire to see the souls and lives of the people around us prosper and be satisfied over and above their own desires.

WHAT KIND OF HEART DO WE HAVE?

The third type of heart that we want to examine is that of the person who is called to do an outreach ministry. That person has an **Evangelist's Heart**. The person that is called into the work of evangelism has a love for the lost like no other. Their focus is not entirely upon the House of God, even though they love the church and the people of the church greatly. Their focus is upon reaching the lost and showing them the way. We should each have an Evangelist's Heart.

I have a portion of a poem that says it better than I can.

Sermons We See*Edgar Guest*

**I'd rather see a sermon
than hear one any day;
I'd rather one should walk with me
than merely tell the way.**

**The eye's a better pupil
and more willing than the ear,
Fine counsel is confusing,
but example's always clear;**

**And the best of all the preachers
are the men who live their creeds,
For to see good put in action
is what everybody needs.**

**I soon can learn to do it
if you'll let me see it done;
I can watch your hands in action,
but your tongue too fast may run.**

**And the lecture you deliver
may be very wise and true,
But I'd rather get my lessons
by observing what you do;**

**For I might misunderstand you
and the high advice you give,
But there's no misunderstanding
how you act and how you live.**

**When I see a deed of kindness,
I am eager to be kind.
When a weaker brother stumbles
and a strong man stays behind**

**Just to see if he can help him,
then the wish grows strong in me
To become as big and thoughtful
as I know that friend to be.**

**And all travelers can witness
that the best of guides today**

**Is not the one who tells them,
but the one who shows the way.**

**One good man teaches many,
men believe what they behold;
One deed of kindness noticed
is worth forty that are told.**

**Who stands with men of honor
learns to hold his honor dear,
For right living speaks a language
which to every one is clear.**

**Though an able speaker charms me
with his eloquence, I say,
I'd rather see a sermon
than to hear one, any day.⁴**

CLOSING PRAYER

God help us to have a Teachable Heart that He can make us into the church that He desires us to be. Help us not to get so caught up in our own beliefs that we don't allow room for those who are different to come to Christ. Lord help us not you put you in a box but help us take the lid off and allow your Spirit to move the way you want to move.

⁴ <http://www.jknirp.com/guest.htm>