III John
1:1-8

Overview of III John…

- **Introduction…**
  - Having finished **II John -** we pick up our study through the Bible today in **III John**
  - **III John** is the 25th book of the NEW Testament – the FINAL of his THREE letters…
  - It has ONE chapter – and ONLY has 14 verses – it will take us TWO weeks to finish…
  - There are SIX things we want to look as an INTRODUCTION to the Book!
- **1st – The Author…**
  - 1st – John the APOSTLE…
    - Not the same as John the Baptist – wrote MANY books in the NT…
    - He wrote the Gospel of **John** – as well as **I – II - III John** – and the book of **Revelation**!
  - 2nd – ELDER…
    - **III John 1:1** – "The Elder…"
    - ELDER [πρεσβύτερος] – speaking of someone who is OLDER – spiritually WISE…
    - Not just any ELDER – John was THE [Ὁ] ELDER…
    - As the LAST surviving APOSTLE of Jesus [the other TEN had been martyred]
    - John had become the ELDER in the church – establishing his ATHORITY!
- **2nd – The Audience…**
  - GAIUS [Γάϊος] – the name means Lord…
  - There are FOUR men in the NT whose name was GAIUS…
  - Gaius from Macedonian – a traveling companion of Paul – **Acts 19:29**
  - Gaius from the city of Derbe – who traveled to Jerusalem with Paul – **Acts 20:4**
  - Gaius from Corinth – where Paul stated when he was in that city – **Romans 16:23**
  - Gaius – the friend of John – who is ONLY mentioned here!
- **3rd – The Theme…**
  - 1st - LOVE…
    - The word LOVE – is 62 time in – **I** – **II** – and **III John**
    - LOVE [ἀγαπάω] - verb – to give unconditional LOVE…
    - LOVE [ἀγάπη] - noun – to have unconditional LOVE…
    - BELOVED [ἀγαπητός] - adjective – to receive unconditional LOVE!
  - 2nd – Contrasts…
    - John LOVED to teach in CONTRASTS – in the Books of I and II John…
      - He contrasted – LIGHT and DARKNESS – **I John 1:5**
      - He contrasted – TRUTH and LIES – **I John 2:4**
      - He contrasted – JESUS and the ANTICHRIST – **I John 2:22**
      - He contrasted – RIGHTEOUSNESS and SIN – **I John 3:6-10**
      - He contrasted the way of TRUTH and DECEPTION – **II John 1:6-7**
    - John will CONTRAST again in the Book of III John…

- He will contrast HOSPITALITY with those who are HURTFUL…
- **III John 1:5** – "You do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers."
- The key THEME of the book – is we are to show HOSPITALITY to other BELIEVERS…
- But not just to those we KNOW – even to those who are STRANGERS!

- **4TH – THE LOCATION…**
  - 1st – EPHESUS…
    - As with the other two LETTERS from John – there are TWO possibilities…

- FIRST is the city of EPHESUS – in what is now modern day Turkey…
- A commonly held church tradition states John was the PASTOR there in his later years…
- The assumption is he would have written FOUR of the FIVE books there!

o 2nd – PATMOS…

- We do KNOW – John wrote the book of Revelation from Patmos – **Revelation 1:9**
- Again church tradition states John was exiled here by the Romans…
- While on the Island he received the VISION that is the final book of the Bible…
- It is possible he also wrote the GOSPEL and THREE letters while he was there!

- **5TH – THE TIME…**
  - o Although we do NOT know the time – the best guess is between 95-100 A.D.
  - o The fact John calls himself OLD in his letters – **II John 1:1** – **III John 1:1**
  - o ELDER [πρεσβύτερος] – speaking both of being MATURE in the LORD and OLD in years!
- **6TH– THE DIVISION…**
  - o The Book if divided by addressing THREE people…
  - o **III John 1:1-8** – The encouragement for Gaius
  - o **III John 1:9-11** – The warning for Diotrephes
  - o **III John 1:12-14** – The testimony of Demetrius

GOOD TESTIMONY…

- **1ST – PROSPERITY… VS. 1-4**
  - o 1st – LOVED… vs. 1
    - The Elder - to the beloved Gaius - whom I love in truth!
    - It was TRUE [ἀλήθεια] - John LOVED [ἀγαπάω] Gaius…
    - John did not LOVE [present] Gaius because of anything he had done…
    - He LOVED him because of who he was – he was BELOVED…
    - BELOVED [ἀγαπητός] – someone who has received the unconditional LOVE of God!
    - We LOVE our FAMILY – not because of what they done – but because of WHO they are…
    - They are FAMILY – and that means to unconditionally LOVE them!
    - We are likewise called to LOVE each other in the Church…
    - Not because of what they do for us – it is not dependent on their actions…
    - We love them because of WHO they are – they are BELOVED – they are the FAMILY of God!
  - o 2nd – Key to PROSPERITY… vs. 2
    - Beloved - I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health!
      - John CONTINYALLY [present] PRAYER for GAIUS…
      - PRAY [εὔχομαι] – to have a DESIRE and ask God to ANSWER it…
      - The DESIRE of John was for GAIUS to PROSPER in ALL [πᾶς] things…
      - PROSER [εὐοδόω] to be SUCCESSFUL – in LIFE – and in HEALTH [ὑγιαίνω]!
      - John is NOT praying for what we would call today - the PROSPERITY Gospel…
      - Teaching that if we have enough FAITH – God will make us WEALTHY and HEALTH!
      - The Gospel is NOT about getting rich – having a better life here and now...
      - Following Jesus means we will face TRIALS in life – **John 16:33**
      - The reward for serving Jesus is eternal – it is about heaven!
    - Just as your soul prospers!

- JUST [καθώς] - ties the SUCCESS of things in this life – to our SPIRITUAL life [soul]
- If we are BELOVED [ἀγαπητός] – connected to Jesus…
- Then we have the CONFIDENCE He will take care of ALL [πᾶς] our needs – **Luke 12:31**
- Often - we get caught up in the CHOICES and CONCERNS of this life…

- Places where we have to make decisions – and we do NOT know what to do...
- We want to know which way we should go – BUT does that really matter!
- **Psalm 1:2-3** – "[Blessed is the man whose] delight is in the law of the LORD - and in His law he meditates day and night… whatever he does shall prosper."
- When we are connected to Jesus – BELVOED – everything [כֹּל] we do will PROSPER…
- Do not MISS this – being SUCCESSFUL is NOT about what we do…
- Being SUCCESSFUL – is about WHO we are connected to…
- Rather than worry about decisions – all that matters is who we are trusting in…
- When we are ABIDING in Jesus – in His WORD – whatever we do will PROSPER…

o 3rd – Good TESTIMONY… vs. 3

■ For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you!

- John was overflowing [λίαν] with JOY [χαίρω] when he heard about GAIUS…
- He may NOT have known GAIUS personally – other BROTHERS told John about him…
- Their TESTIMONY [μαρτυρέω] – was that THE [ὁ] TRUTH [ἀλήθεια] was in Him…
- Who was in GAIUS - Jesus Christ – who is the TRUTH!
- **John 14:6** – "Jesus said… I am the way - the truth [ἀλήθεια] - and the life."

■ Just as you walk in *the* truth!

- JUST [καθώς] - ties our TESTIMONY for Jesus to our WALK with Jesus…
- The BRETEHEN did not tell John what Gaius SAID…
- They told John about his WALK – it was TRUE that he WALKED daily [present] with Jesus!
- If people were to MEET us – what would they say about us…
- Just from observing how we live our lives – how we WALK…
- If we NEVER said a WORD – would they know we have Jesus in us!
- Having a good TESTIMONY is far more than being able to quote Bible verses…
- If what people see in our WALK – does not show them Jesus – they are NOT going to listen…
- We want to make sure our WORDS line up with our ACTIONS – live what we preach…
- Then people are going to what the HEAR about the TRUTH that is in us!

o 4th – Great JOY… vs. 4

■ I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth!

- Because Gaius was PROSPEROUS and had a good TESTIMONY – John had JOY [χαρά]
- For him – there could be no GREATER [from the root μέγας] JOY…
- Then to HEAR [subjunctive] about CHILDREN [τέκνον] – other Christians…
- Who were truly [ἀλήθεια] WALKING daily [present] with Jesus!

■ No guarantees…

- John lived to be an OLD [πρεσβύτερος] man…
- No doubt in his many years – he saw EVERYTHING…
- He saw people get saved – and be excited to WALK with Jesus…
- But no doubt he also saw people get DISTRACTED – and WALK away!
- The hardest things to see in church – is when people STOP walking…
- Perhaps they get caught up in trying to be PROSPEROUS…
- Forgetting that true PROSPERITY is NOT physical – but spiritual…
- Or they have the right WORDS – but no longer the right ACTIONS…
- Forgetting that it is not about what we SAY – but how we LIVE…
- Which is why when we see someone who continues to WALK in TRUTH…
- It brings such great JOY to our hearts – there is NOTHING better…

- Because LIFE has just one purpose – to WALK with Jesus!

- **2ND – HOSPITALITY… VS. 5-6**
  - 1st – WHAT is hospitality…
    - Having given Gaius the key to PROSPERITY and a good TESTIMONY…
    - John goes on to encourage him to be HOSPITABLE…
    - HOSPITALITY – is the desire to care for the NEEDS of others…
    - Not being SELF centered – but OTHERS centered!
    - Because a self-centered life – is an EMPTY life – that will MISS what God is doing…
    - If are only focused on our NEEDS and WANTS – we are going to be miserable…
    - Because all we will see is OUR problems – and quickly become overwhelmed…
    - But when live to SERVE others - our perspective changes…
    - The LORD uses us to be a SOLUTION – rather than focus on the PROBLEM…
    - The LORD wants to REMIND us to care of OTHERS!
    - **Philippians 2:4** – "Do not look out only for your own interests - take an interest in others…"
  - 2nd – WHERE does it come from… vs. 5
    - Beloved!
    - BELOVED [ἀγαπητός] – the one who has the unconditional LOVE [ἀγάπη] of God…
    - Do NOT miss this – John is not given a TITLE – he is giving the SOURCE…
    - HOSPITALITY comes from – being connected to the LOVE of God!
    - It is NOT in our NATURE to put others FIRST…
    - The only way we can be truly HOSPITABLE – is when we are filled with the LOVE of God!
  - 3rd – HOW to do it… vs. 5
    - You do faithfully whatever you do!
    - We DAILY [present] WORK [ἐργάζομαι] to be HOSPITABLE – by FAITH [πιστός]
    - If this LIFE is all there is – then it does NOT make sense to be HOSPITABLE to others…
    - We should be looking out for number ONE – live for ourselves!
    - But when we by FAITH [cannot see heaven] – believe there is MORE than this life…
    - When we ACCEPT that one day we will be accountable for our actions…
    - Then it makes a LOT of sense to be HOSPITABLE to others…
    - Because we are investing in an ETERNAL reward – living for Heaven!
  - 4th – Hospitable to WHO… vs. 5
    - For the brethren!
      - We are to be HOSPITABLE to other BELIEVERS [ἀδελφός] in Jesus!
      - When we come to church – do we look for others to MINISTRY to us…
      - Then there is a GOOD chance – we will leave DISAPPOINTED [expectation not met]
      - Or do we come to church – so we can MINISTER to others…
      - Then there is a GOOD chance – we will leave BLESSED [because God uses us]
      - **Romans 12:10** – "With brotherly love [φιλαδελφία] and kindly affection [φιλόστοργος] to one another - in honor giving preference to one another."
    - And for strangers!
      - We are to be HOSPITABLE to people we do NOT know!
      - **I Peter 4:9** – "Be HOSPITABLE to one another – without grumbling."
      - HOSPITABLE [φιλόξενος] – we must LOVE [φίλος] even STRANGERS…
      - STRANGERS [ξένος] – meaning those who are NOT part of the CHURCH – unbelievers…
      - Without GRUMBLING - to COMPLAIN under our breath!
      - We must be HOSPITABLE – practically showing LOVE - even to STRANGERS…
      - Not out of OBLIGATION – no GRUMBLING [I have to do this] – but out of genuine LOVE!

- 5th – WHY we are Hospitable… vs. 6
  - Who have borne witness of your love before the church!
  - These [strangers] bear WITNESS of our LOVE [ἀγάπη] in the CHURCH [ἐκκλησία]

- When we take the time to give food the hungry and drink to the thirsty…
- By doing so we show the LOVE of God to others – the goodness of God – **John 13:35**
- Through which we now have the opportunity to tell them about Jesus – **Romans 2:4**
- More than that - we when we care for strangers we are actually ministering to Jesus!
- **Matthew 25:40** - "[Jesus] will answer and say to them – Assuredly I say to you - inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren you did it to Me."

- **3RD – HELPING IN MINISTRY… VS. 6-8**
  - 1st – Who to HELP… vs. 6
    - Traveling PREACHERS…
      - Having given the importance of HOSPITALITY – including to STRANGERS…
      - John goes on to encourage Gaius – on helping others in MINISTRY!
      - It was common in the early church for PREACHERS to go from town to town…
      - They were STRANGERS to the church – in the sense they were not local…
      - But they were SERVING Jesus – and were worth HELPING!
    - Send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God - you will do well!
      - These PREACHERS would not STAY in one city…
      - They would come and share the WORD – then move on to the next place…
      - Gaius was to do GOOD – by SENDING them on in a WORTHY [ἀξίως] way…
      - GOOD [καλῶς] - emphasizes the outward appearance…
      - HELPING these PREACHERS would bring a GOOD witness for the CHURCH!
      - There is a tendency to be very TRIBAL within the church…
      - If someone is NOT from OUR church – then we want NOTHING to do with it…
      - But the CHURCH is not just congregation – is MANY – and they are DIVERSE…
      - And we are STRONGER when we are UNITED – and support one another…
      - Our differences – are nothing compared to what unites us in Jesus!
      - **I Corinthians 12:25** – "There should be no [division] in the body… the members should have the same care one for another."
  - 2nd – How to HELP… vs. 7
    - Because they went forth for His name sake - taking nothing from the Gentiles!
    - We are to HELP out FINANCIALLY – if TWO things are true…
    - FIRST – the PREACHER goes out for the sake of the NAME of the Lord…
      - We live in an AGE that is obsessed with the cult of personality…
      - People tend to GIVE to those who are FAMOUS – who have a NAME…
      - But we are only to GIVE to those who bring glory to the NAME of Jesus…
      - Because that is the ONLY name that has the POWER to SAVE!
      - **Acts 4:12** – "There is no other name under heaven.. by which we must be saved."
    - SECOND – they take NOTHING from the gentiles [ἔθνος]
      - A PASTOR is supported by the church – **I Timothy 5:18 / Matthew 10:10**
      - But an EVANGELIST – who is reaching out to the LOST [ἔθνος]
      - They are NOT to ask for anything – because the GOSPEL is FREE…
      - Jesus already paid the PRICE for our salvation – there is NOTHING we need to add!
      - Any PREACHER – televangelist – who ASKS for money is NOT to be supported…
      - Because they are mispresenting the message of the GOSPEL!
      - How then does the PREACHER then provide for his daily needs…
      - We get to come along side and HELP – when we see them glorifying the name of Jesus!

- **I Corinthians 9:18** – "That when [they] preach the gospel – [they] may present the gospel of Christ without charge."

- 3rd – Why we HELP… vs. 8
  - We therefore ought to receive such - that we may become fellow workers for the truth!
    - This kind of PREACHER – we should HELP [receive]
    - If we do - we become [subjunctive] fellows WORKERS with THE [ὁ] TRUTH [ἀλήθεια]
    - Fellow WORKERS [συνεργός] – we can speak right into English…
    - SYNERGY – the cooperation of two things to produce a greater combined effect!
  - Working together…
    - King David returned from a battle with the Amalekites [flesh]
    - 200 of his men had not gone out into the fight – they had not gone to war…
    - Some of his men argued – those who stayed should not share in the reward…
    - But David rebuked them – do not be selfish – they would share equally…
    - Those who stayed behind to guard the things – shared with those who went to war!
    - **I Samuel 30:24** – "We share alike - those who go to battle and those who guard the [stuff]."
    - In the same way not all of us are called into full time MINISTRY…
    - That does not mean we are not part of the work – we get to encourage those who go…
    - We stay back and guard the stuff – so that others can go to fight the battle…
    - Those who help send share in the reward [eternal] with those who go…
    - God does not overlook the tiniest. act of service – small or great He remembers!
    - **Mark 9:41**- "If anyone gives you even a cup of water… that person will be rewarded."