

Humble Yourselves Together

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[0 : 00] As we prepare to hear God's word to us this morning from the book of 3rd John, let me begin with prayer, asking for his help. God, as you know, I so often pray, give us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand.

I know that I'm an imperfect speaker, communicating in an imperfect way. And yet, I know your spirit has been so faithful, so good in taking the words that I preach, the words that BK has preached, the words that so many men have preached from this place, from this pulpit, and use them effectively in our lives to transform us, to draw us after Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Oh God, we ask for help this morning. May you make these words clear and faithful. And would you prepare our own hearts, all of our hearts, to hear these words, to receive them, and they may find a home in us, and they may transform us.

Lord, we are longing to be made like Jesus Christ, our Lord, to learn to love as he is loved. And so, Lord, as we learn more about that today, as we learn more about how we can walk in the footsteps of our Savior, how we can humble ourselves together, just as he has humbled himself.

Lord God, give us a heart, a longing, a desire to humble ourselves, even when it feels like death, so that the world may know and see what a beautiful Savior we have.

[1 : 48] Amen. One of the most fascinating things that I enjoy watching sometimes is, you know, sitting and watching ants at work.

These little insects often working together as a whole colony to accomplish just a wide variety of tasks. And it's just amazing how it feels like wherever I go, you can always find ants somewhere. Unfortunately, sometimes you find them in your own home. But even you can find them up on tops of mountains all over the world. And it's so interesting watching a colony of ants at work.

Have you ever watched and wondered, as you've seen ants coming up to each other, interacting with each other, have you ever wondered how they can tell friend from foe?

You might have two ants that, to you, they look almost identical, but they come from different colonies, and somehow they know that. But somehow they know it.

[2 : 47] And if one ant tries to enter the other ant's colony, they're going to get into a fight. And it'll look very strange to you why two ants that look identical are fighting with one another.

And then two ants from the same colony, they'll pass right by each other, they'll welcome each other, they'll give each other no trouble at all. Well, how do ants do it? And the answer is that ants have maybe not the best eyesight, but they have an amazing sense of smell.

One of the best in the insect kingdom. One ant can smell another ant with her antennae on her head. And if the other ant doesn't smell the way that her colony smells, she knows this is not a friend, this is a foe.

But if she senses, hey, this other ant does smell like her, it does smell like my colony, then she will not only allow the other ant to pass, she may even feed the other ant.

She may even help the other ant with a task, may help it carry back to the nest that big juicy cricket that the ant just found. So she will not only recognize her fellow worker, she will receive her fellow worker.

[4 : 00] Ants are a model of humility. No ant ever acts out of selfish ambition or self-importance. Ants know how to humble themselves, that is their whole way of life.

So, what about us? How do we recognize and receive one another? How do we live in humility? How do we live for the good of the family that God has given us, the church?

How do you love one another in truth? How do you humble yourselves together? How do we live in humility?

And so today, I'm going to read this letter, 3 John, in its entirety. And then we're going to see John showing us how to humble ourselves together.

We're going to learn from John how to humble ourselves together. The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

[5 : 28] Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health as it goes well with your soul. For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth.

Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church.

You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.

Therefore, we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

Beloved, do not imitate evil.

But imitate good. Whoever does good is from God. Whoever does evil has not seen God.

[7 : 04] Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony. And you know that our testimony is true.

I had much to write to you. But I would rather not write with pen and ink. I hope to see you soon.

And we will talk face to face. Peace be to you.

The friends greet you. Greet the friends, every one of them. This is the word of the Lord. Now, in this letter of 3 John, you can see two ways that you are called to love one another in accordance with the truth of the gospel.

You learn two ways to humble yourselves together. First, humble yourselves by receiving your fellow workers.

Humble yourselves by receiving your fellow workers. That is the first way to love in truth. You're like that worker ant, eager to receive your fellow workers.

[8 : 11] So how do we do this work of receiving a fellow worker? Well, if you're just like that ant, the first thing you have to do is you have to do the work of recognizing them.

And sadly, you know, we are not equipped with an antenna growing out of our foreheads to detect our fellow workers to sniff them out. So who do you receive in the absence of sniffer organs?

Well, here's what you can look for. First, in verse 5, John calls these fellow workers brothers. In verse 5, as you look at it, you'll see that he calls them brothers.

Now, in this letter, John is writing to his friend Gaius. He is encouraging Gaius to continue accepting some of the itinerant teachers whom John approves of.

These itinerant Christian teachers and missionaries who are traveling around from town to town.

Now, later on, John will identify one of these teachers by name, a man named Demetrius.

[9 : 10] These people, Demetrius included, they are people who belong to the same family as you. They're people who belong to the same family as you.

They smell like you. They share the same God and Father. The same older brother in his son, Jesus Christ. They've been given the same Holy Spirit of God.

We talked a lot about this last week. Those who are like you and sharing the same good news of Jesus Christ. And in verse 7, John identifies them as people who have gone out for the sake of the name.

They have gone out for the sake of the name. So, in other words, these people are not working for their own name. They are not working for their own ambition. They are not working for their own reputation.

These people are rather working for the name of Jesus Christ. They are working to promote his name, his reputation, his honor.

[10 : 12] That is what they are consumed with. They are proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. Not only crucified, but risen again, who now reigns as Lord.

Who is coming again to claim the whole world as his kingdom. To judge the living and the dead.

That is the name that they are promoting.

In verse 8, John adds that these brothers are workers for the truth. They're workers for the truth.

This means that it is the truth of the gospel that they are promoting.

We learned last week that this is the good news. This gospel is the good news that the Son of God has become a man. He is fully God and fully man. Forever and ever.

So, he can now identify not only with God the Father. But he can identify now with every human being who believes in his name. Who is called by his name.

[11:13] Jesus died on a cross as a sacrifice. Jesus paid the penalty for the sins that we have committed against God. He died so that we would be forgiven.

And then reconciled with God forever and ever with him. Jesus rose again. And now he remains both God and man forever.

Reigning at the right hand of God. And all who are called by his name belong there too. And we will belong with him in the new heavens and the new earth. When Christ returns.

That is the truth that we are meant to work for. That is the truth that our fellow workers are promoting. So, who do you receive?

You receive our brothers and sisters. Who live for the sake of the name of Jesus. Who work for the truth of who Jesus is. And what God sent him to do on earth.

[12:15] You humble yourselves by receiving these fellow workers. So then, how do you receive them? How do you receive them?

Well, John talks about a couple of ways his friend Gaius can receive his fellow workers. Verse 6. John says that they testified to your love before the church.

They testified to your love before the church. And what he is almost certainly referring to. Is that Gaius showed hospitality toward these fellow workers.

Strangers as they are. Gaius would have acted towards them as an excellent Mediterranean host. He would have welcomed them into his home.

He would have treated them as honored guests. Provided food and drink in abundance. A place to rest for as long as they were in town. Hospitality towards a newcomer.

[13:18] Welcoming them into your home. It's a wonderful thing to be received in this way by brothers and sisters in Christ. Especially when you've never met them before. I know some of you by name and by experience who are just exemplary in doing this for others.

And I myself, I've benefited greatly from fellow workers from out of town too. I remember once about, this was about 10 years ago, when I was attending a conference in Hamilton in Ontario. And while I was there, I had previously corresponded briefly with a pastor from Toronto. And I met him on the last day of the conference in person. And after a short conversation, this pastor heard that I was staying at a hotel overnight there in Hamilton.

And he absolutely insisted that that wasn't acceptable. He insisted that I come over to Toronto, stay with a member of his church. He gave me the address. He invited me to join them for worship service the next morning.

And it ended up just absolutely making my entire weekend. Because after a couple of days at that conference where I was sort of feeling a bit like an anonymous nobody. All of a sudden I was welcomed.

[14:29] I was included in part of the family. I was shown value by their hospitality. And as for John's friend Gaius, John also encourages him in verse 6.

You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. So Gaius can not only host them. John is suggesting you can supply further provisions for their journey as they prepare to travel to the next place.

You know, I think in a way John is almost encouraging Gaius, you know, to sort of do that mom thing. You know, to hand them all sorts of food and snacks and other goodies. They're just loaded down with before they go out the door.

In a nutshell, what John is doing is he is encouraging Gaius to continue treating these fellow workers like they are family.

Like they are family. Why? Because they are family. They truly are brothers in an even more deep sense of the word than your own biological families.

[15:34] To be a part of the family of God, that runs deep. That runs deep. Deeper than blood. Thicker than blood. So how do you receive your fellow workers, your fellow Christians?

You don't receive them as fellow members of a social club. You don't receive them merely as acquaintances. Not even merely as friends. You receive them as family. Family. As part of the same extended family in Christ.

So then, why do you receive them? Why do you receive them? Why make these efforts towards welcome and hospitality? Well, John gives us two reasons.

First, receiving these brothers, it benefits them. It benefits the brothers. John says in 3 John verse 7, For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.

Because of this Christian hospitality that Gaius has shown, these fellow workers, they are not obligated in any way toward Gentiles who do not believe.

[16:48] And so, because they are not financially obligated to those who don't believe, that means there are no strings attached to their ministry. There is no fear that someone who does not know Christ, who does not value the name of Christ, there is no fear that that person may try to manipulate them by withholding hospitality from them, by withdrawing financial support from them.

No one will be able to keep these people silent about the good news of Jesus Christ. Showing hospitality, finding other ways to greet and welcome your fellow workers.

It frees them up from being obligated to unbelievers for their needs. It benefits them. And then John gives a second reason to receive them. It's this.

It benefits us. It actually benefits us too. He tells us in verse 8, Therefore, we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

When we support others, when we show hospitality to them, when we greet them, when we welcome them, when we encourage them, pray for them, provide financial support and assistance to them, when we support them in all these ways, we have become partners with them.

[18:09] We've become partners with them in the work that they are doing. John says that we become fellow workers for the truth. Fellow workers for the truth.

We are actually taking part in the Lord's command to go and make disciples of all nations. We too are promoting the truth of the gospel when we do this.

We too are promoting the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so John is telling us that when we receive, when you receive your fellow workers, that will benefit them and it will also benefit you.

And then I would add a third reason as well, on top of what John says. And this reason I mentioned is because it is given by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. When you receive your fellow workers, you benefit Jesus Christ.

You benefit Jesus himself. Jesus has told us in Matthew chapter 25, for in speaking to faithful servants, he says, I was hungry and you gave me food.

[19:15] I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me.

Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me. What he's saying is that Jesus identifies himself so strongly, so tightly with our fellow workers for the gospel. He calls them my brothers. And Jesus identifies himself so strongly with them that whatever we do for them to receive them, we do the same thing for Jesus himself.

So when you receive your fellow workers, you benefit them, you benefit yourself, and you benefit Christ. You bless him.

You honor him. For all these reasons, humble yourselves by receiving your fellow workers. This is how we love in truth.

[20:27] There is another side to humility in the family of God, however. The other side of humility is the rejection of any selfish ambition that leads to division in the family.

So you humble yourselves by avoiding division. Humble yourselves by avoiding division. An ant colony is not going to last very long if its worker ants are unable to recognize one another.

If its worker ants are convinced that another ant that smells just a little bit different must not be from my colony. If these worker ants are continually battling with one another.

So it is in the church. The church will collapse. If we are not very, very careful about how we divide. Humble yourselves by avoiding division.

I say this on the heels of last week's sermon where I warned that sometimes you do have to divide. Sometimes you do have to separate yourselves from others. But by and large, that should not be our heart.

[21:45] We long to avoid division. John warns Gaius that there is a man in his church who is causing division. Here's what he says in verses 9 and 10.

I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us.

And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church. What a guy. This fellow, this Diotrephes, he has what we might call a divisive spirit.

A divisive spirit. In this political age, maybe you'd prefer to call it a partisan spirit. He is a real partisan. Everywhere that Diotrephes goes, quarrels and arguments seem to follow.

I'll note that a person with a divisive spirit, by the way, almost always claims that they hate quarrels and arguments, and yet they seem to follow them wherever they go. Perhaps he's the kind of guy who, he overreacts to perceived slights.

[23 : 03] He picks fights with other people. Perhaps he's the kind of guy who, he runs a church ministry his way, and he just can't seem to bear to give it up or to surrender control.

Perhaps he's the kind of guy who, he seems to just love to quarrel about every last point of theology and politics. Everything is high stakes. In Diotrephes' world, maybe.

He's always looking at you with suspicion. If you don't side with him fully, it's only a matter of time before he's going to start perceiving you as the enemy.

Sadly, I do know professing Christians like this. When I was living in Langley several years ago, I once met a man who started attending our church for a little bit, and in conversation with him, I learned, after he uttered a few criticisms of our church, that this man had visited 50 different churches in the Langley area, and he couldn't remain at any of them because all of them were unfaithful in one way or another.

At some point in every church he was at, he got into a dispute, a disagreement with the church leadership about some small point of doctrine or some small practice that they were not doing correctly in his mind.

[24 : 31] And when the leadership wouldn't do it his way, he left and went to the next church. And it wasn't long before he left ours as well. That's a Diotrephes sort of guy. That's a divisive spirit taken to its ultimate end, and the ultimate end of a divisive spirit is isolation.

So what's going on here? What is behind a divisive spirit? Well, John helps us a lot. He identifies the problem very, very simply and very neatly in verse 9.

John identifies this divisive man as Diotrephes who likes to put himself first. What a great nickname. Diotrephes who likes to put himself first.

Behind a divisive spirit is someone who puts themselves first. Everything is about status.

And by the way, the divisive spirit probably doesn't realize they're doing this. But it soon becomes obvious to everyone around them. It's all about making yourself great. It's all about being in charge.

[25 : 38] It's all about winning. It's all about being right all the time. It's all about using others to elevate yourself. That's exactly what Jesus warns against in Mark chapter 9.

Jesus intervenes when he senses divisive spirits in his disciples, divisive spirits that are threatening his little family. Listen to how Jesus speaks in Mark chapter 9.

They came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house, he asked them, What were you discussing on the way?

But they kept silent, for on the way, they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.

And he took a child and put him in the midst of them. And taking him in his arms, he said to them, Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me.

[26 : 50] And whoever receives me receives not me, but him who sent me. Notice here that Jesus is calling his disciples to surrender their status, to let go of it, to humble themselves by avoiding division.

And they replace that status seeking by receiving those of lesser status, even receiving little ones that the world brushes aside as insignificant, as unworthy.

Once Jesus finishes speaking, our friend, the Apostle John, speaks up. And in Mark chapter 9, John is a much, much younger man.

This is many years before he is going to write 3rd John. He's changed a lot in those years. Because at this time, John is what Jesus calls a son of thunder. He is a brash and arrogant man.

He has not yet been softened by the Holy Spirit into a gentle and wise father whom he will later become. Here's what John says to Jesus. John said to him, Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him because he was not following us.

[28 : 05] But Jesus said, Do not stop him. For no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. For the one who is not against us is for us.

For truly, I say to you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ will by no means lose his reward.

Notice here, Jesus, what he is doing is he is challenging John. He's challenging John that just because someone isn't part of his little in-group, someone isn't part of his little tribe, that doesn't mean that that person is his enemy.

Jesus is challenging John about his default attitude of suspicion and division. There are many faithful believers. There are many faithful churches beyond our own.

The divisive spirit needs to be told that he has many more brothers and sisters than he is willing to recognize. This is so, so important.

[29 : 16] Jesus hammers on this point because if you have a divisive spirit, if you are looking at the church to provide a platform for you, you will inevitably warp the church to suit your own purposes.

you will inevitably drive away those little ones who are your fellow workers for the truth. You will no longer receive them. What is behind a divisive spirit?

It is a desire to put oneself first. This is contrary to the spirit of Jesus Christ who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

So if that's what's behind a divisive spirit, how do you recognize one? How do you recognize a divisive spirit? Well, it's so very hard to see in yourself, by the way.

Something about, that's one of the effects of sin is that it tends to blind us to ourselves. We don't perceive ourselves rightly. It's also hard to see in one another sometimes.

[30 : 25] John, what he doesn't do is he doesn't give us an exhaustive list of things to look for. You can find more of these in the New Testament in the writings of the Apostle Paul in particular.

But John does offer us a few clues that reveal a divisive spirit. So what I'm going to give you is not an exhaustive list. There are more ways to, more clues towards a divisive spirit but here are a few to get you started.

First, John says in verse 9 that Diotrephes does not acknowledge our authority. He does not acknowledge our authority. So the first clue suggesting a divisive spirit is someone who, who quickly dismisses the authority that God has placed over them.

They dismiss the authority that God has placed over them. In our particular context, that's the authority of the elders of our church. I recognize that, you know, it might be a bit of a conflict of interest since I'm one of those elders, but I certainly have been at churches that have mature, that have elders who are faithful to the Lord and that is something that I had to take very seriously too.

I'm speaking of a church, by the way, with mature elders who are sound in their teaching and doctrine. A divisive spirit does not consult these elders of the church.

[31 : 46] they tend to make decisions that affect the church in significant ways and they tend to make such decisions without even letting the elders know, without consulting and asking and sorting through these things.

They tend to trust themselves in their own judgment. A divisive spirit listens to and gets carried off by random pundits and teachers and conspiracy theorists on YouTube.

A divisive spirit doesn't ask for help from the elders in discerning truth from error. They believe everything they read on social media. A divisive spirit thinks she knows better than the elders of the church.

Those are just some clues to look for. Second, a second clue, John says in verse 10 that Diotrephes is talking wicked nonsense against us.

He is talking wicked nonsense against us. He is slandering other Christians. faithful believers in Christ. Brothers, sisters, let us be slow, slow, slow to accommodate rumors and gossip that we have not verified.

[33 : 02] Let us be slow to share fake stories and statistics and quotes on social media. Let us be slow to believe one person's side of the story when we have not yet heard the other.

Let us be slow to critique people based on sound bites without context. our culture is quick to do all these things.

Our culture is awash in slander. A slander and slander is a grievous, grievous sin. This divisive spirit and all these symptoms and attitudes of it, by the way, are usually when Paul lists off lists of

sins and things corrupting the church.

It's usually ranked right up there with sexual immorality as so destructive and so evil. A divisive spirit in our culture is like a pig in the mud.

A divisive spirit is quick to slander his fellow worker. A third clue. John adds in verse 10 that Diotrephes refuses to welcome the brothers.

[34 : 21] He refuses to welcome the brothers. Diotrephes is not only dismissive of authority and slandering the brothers, but he's refusing to welcome them. He's decided that they are a threat to his church.

John doesn't elaborate on why. Perhaps he sees them as a threat to his own platform for teaching and leadership. Perhaps they are a threat to his control over the church.

Perhaps he has minor differences in doctrine with them. There are different tiers of doctrine. There are different levels of importance in our doctrines. Not all things are of first importance.

There are matters that we can disagree on, that they're important and we disagree on and we'll talk with each other and try to convince each other, but at the end of the day, hey, we're both brothers, okay? And we can stand right side by side with each other in worship, even as we disagree.

But to a divisive spirit, they have met no matter that is not of first importance. There is no point of doctrine too small to quibble about, to quarrel about, to just never seem to let go of, to endlessly try to harangue you about, to separate over.

[35 : 42] A divisive spirit refuses to welcome his fellow worker. brother. The fourth and final clue that John gives us is in verse 10. Diotrephes not only refuses to welcome the brothers, he does one better.

He also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church. Diotrephes, his divisive spirit has gone so far that he punishes those who do welcome the brothers.

It isn't enough for him to insist that the church separate from these brothers. Diotrephes, he loves the doctrine of what you might call secondary separation. He insists that the church must separate from anyone who doesn't separate from them.

You know, this is pretty crazy, but that's where the divisive spirit will take you if you let it. You just never stop separating until you're left all alone on an island in a church of just you.

a divisive spirit punishes those who do welcome their fellow workers. Those are four clues, those are four ways you can recognize a divisive spirit, just for starters.

[36 : 57] So then, how do you engage a divisive spirit? How do you engage a divisive spirit? How do you respond? Well, this, there's no one-size-fits-all answer to that question.

It calls for a lot of wisdom. I'd encourage you if you encounter someone that you're concerned has a divisive spirit, that's something and you're like, I'm not sure how to engage this person. It's okay to come and consult with the elders for help on how to approach them yourself.

It might depend on the person. It might depend on the circumstances, on your relationship, on, it might depend on their background. Sometimes that divisive spirit emerges out of issues in their own lives.

one potential response is to confront the divisive spirit. And I encourage you to do it gently. That's actually what John plans to do in verse 10.

John says, if I come, I will bring up what he is doing. John is going to come and he is going to confront diatrophies and he is going to set the record straight.

[38 : 07] Sometimes this is necessary when a divisive person has begun to lead others astray. It is necessary not only for the sake of the person who is dividing, but it's necessary for the sake of all the people he's influencing.

This gentle confrontation and correction may also be possible when you think, you know, this divisive person, I sense that they may still be teachable. They may still be open to gentle correction. In Proverbs 26, verse 5, we read, answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes. There are some fools that you can reason with and you can correct.

Right before that proverb, though, immediately before it is another one, which warns that there are some fools who are just unteachable, they're past the point of being teachable, and you shouldn't engage with them at all.

Verse 4, answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself. Sometimes that device's spirit is so entrenched, you're just wasting your time trying to correct them.

[39 : 14] In fact, all that's going to happen is you will get pulled into their quarreling and folly yourself. You'll get dragged into the mud with them. In this case, the only winning move is not to play their game.

You have to withdraw. Loving them looks like withdrawing from them in this case. that's why Paul warns in Titus chapter 3, as for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, that's the gentle confrontation, the warning, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful, he is self-condemned.

So it's best, if possible, to confront a divisive spirit, but if such a person doesn't repent, don't just keep engaging and engaging and engaging and engaging.

Sometimes it's finally best to just withdraw. Don't get pulled into the mud with them. Instead of fixing your eyes in frustration and obsessing over a divisive person, fix your eyes, and this is very important, because when you focus and fixate on that divisive person, you will become like them. You become what you behold. Instead, fix your eyes on those who are doing good for Christ. Fix your eyes on those who model humility.

[40 : 39] Consider them, dwell on them, imitate them. John tells us in 3 John verses 11 and 12, Beloved, do not imitate evil, but imitate good.

Whoever does good is from God. Whoever does evil has not seen God. Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone and from the truth itself.

We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true. John not only encourages Gaius to receive his friend Demetrius as a fellow worker, John holds up Demetrius as here's a good man, here's a good example to imitate, here's someone who has been transformed by God, he is someone who has seen God.

Look for people like that. Look for bright beacons of loving humility, imitating those who are doing good for Christ. And do you know how Demetrius got to be the kind of man that he is?

John says that whoever does good is from God. Such a person knows God personally because he knows and he understands his son, Jesus Christ.

[42 : 03] He knows what God is like because he knows his son. So when you engage with a divisive person, there may come a point where you have to make the decision to look away and then look instead toward good and noble examples of humble love and to look through them and see Jesus Christ.

To look further beyond them and to look towards Jesus Christ and you see Jesus and you imitate him in the way that he received everyone who came to him in faith.

Remember that passage from John chapter 13 when Jesus washed his disciples feet and then he said to them, do you understand what I have done to you?

You call me teacher and Lord and you are right for so I am. If I then, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

for I have given you an example that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

[43 : 28] If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. And then Jesus added, truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me.

And whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. So do as Jesus has called you.

Walk in his footsteps, follow his example, go where he has gone. Humble yourselves by receiving your fellow workers. Humble yourselves by avoiding division.

That's how you humble yourselves together in the family of God. That's how you love in truth. Our Father, we marvel.

I just marvel the more that I read of Jesus, the more that I carefully weigh every word he says. Oh, how humble he is, how gentle he is, how willing he is to lay down his life and to love his disciples to the end.

[44 : 47] Lord, he knew how to receive people. In the name of his Father, show us how to do the same. Make us wise. Make us discerning in receiving others.

Give us a gracious, humble, hospitable, generous, overflowing heart that just delights in welcoming those who are our fellow workers for the sake of the name, for the sake of the truth.

Let us love them in truth. Amen.