

Worthy Manner

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 03 September 2023

- [0 : 0 0] Book of 3 John, I'm going to talk to you about a man named Gaius here for a moment. God gives us a profile of just a man in the church, a brother in the church that lived a life that was just filled with joy.
- It was filled with wonderful relationships one to another. Something that we all desire to have as meaningful and real relationships and friendships. And in this little booklet, when's the last time you sent a postcard?
- Anybody sent a postcard in the last six months in here? All right. All right. How many of you know how much stamps are worth? How many of you know how much a stamp is worth? Same group of people. Okay. And I remember it's been the first postcard ever sent.
- I was going to Pensacola where the Whitton daughters just went to. And I was visiting there. And I didn't want to waste time on my trip. So I wrote postcards to my grandmother on the airplane down there pretending like I'd already been there.
- And I'm like, it was such a great time, Grandma. I just wrote generically so that when I got there, I dropped it in the mail. I didn't consider how many of you ever thought that was such a sad story. Y'all look into me and be like, that is horrible.
- [1 : 0 1] All right. Just trying to be efficient with my time. And so here, this morning, I wrote out the book of 3 John. It's on this card right here. Written the whole book of 3 John.
- I read it for you. And you probably noticed I have a slide in the back of postcard. It was just showing how small that it is. And it's an epistle, but it's a small epistle here of 3 John.
- I believe smaller than 2 John. Even though, let's see here, 2 John has one less verse. 3 John has less words. And so I wrote it right here, getting ready.
- And I do this every time that I go to the book of 3 John. And just looking at it and reminding. Though it's small, it is powerful. I believe it's super practical. And it's precious.
- I'm glad that I wasn't left to write the book of 3 John. Or I wasn't left to write it down. I was preaching at a church in South Side of Atlanta a couple weeks ago. And I thought I was being funny. You know, if you don't know, I'm from Kentucky.
- [1 : 5 8] And in Kentucky, they're known for being their snake handling churches. That's not what we do here. We never will, never have. All right? And so I was talking to the pastor. And I thought I was being funny. And I said, I was meaning to say, will you bring the snakes?
- Or do you want me to bring the snakes? Will there be any snakes? And so I thought my text messages were really funny. However, every time I went to write snakes, I wrote snacks. So I said, do you have snacks?
- Should I bring snacks? Do you think we have enough snacks? And he just wrote me back and he said, I understand what you're saying. I will take you to dinner after the service. And I'm like, look at it.
- I'm like, what do you mean take me to dinner? And I realized that's a big difference. All right? That one word makes the difference. This is wholly inspired words. More than a text message.
- More than a postcard. Yes, a letter here from John to a friend. But inspired of God in every word. I think you see this in all of the Bible. But I definitely see it in 3 John.

- [2 : 57] No phrase, no statement is wasted. It's all driving home a point. So the first thing that I want to see here is that it is sending is joyful labor.
- A stature will put up a picture of Gaius that I have. I want to draw your attention to what we said in your booklet here. About joyful labor. This. It would be foolish to deny the laborious nature of care.
- It requires energy, time, and attention. Though it is labor, it is a worthy investment that is both joyful and refreshing to the recipients and givers.
- The care for other people, it is work. But it is a worthy work that we are called to do. I just want to highlight here about the profile of this man named Gaius and the work that he did.
- I just love this picture here. It's really him. Don't ask me how I got it. But this is the guy from 3 John. Google had it available. Who knew? All right? I wanted somebody that looked happy. I wanted somebody that looked like he was good.
- [3 : 59] He was as older in life as the Bible would say here. It just says a picture. But it's a postcard, if you will, of a fellow helper of the truth. His relationship with John was based in the gospel.
- He has a vibrant Christian life. His soul is prospering. He has a testimony of people that love missionaries. And his love for missionaries was rooted in his identity that is found in loving Jesus and loving the truth.
- And so first off, verse 6, he says, I've read it to you here. It's a story that starts off where John is saying, he gives his greeting and he says, I wish you were physically as well as you were doing spiritually.
- And your testimony has come back to me about how you have shown love to those that were visiting, the brethren, those that we know, and the strangers, anybody that's carrying the gospel, you have helped.
- And verse number 6 says this, Alright, that's not it.
- [5 : 05] Alright. But verse number 6, the 3rd John, it says, Thou shalt do well. And so, there it is. Thou shalt do well. And so that grabs my attention. As people in life, you're reading the Bible, and if it says, thou shalt do well, you ought to stop and pause for a moment.
- That's the kind of life we want to live. There's a beauty in this doing well. There's a beauty in the way in which it was spoken. You're following, you're walking after the Lord in a way that is honoring to Him.
- It's beautiful. The Bible speaks about this, this idea of carrying the gospel and other people carrying it. Isaiah chapter number 52, verse 7. It's the verse that we get the song, Go Tell It on the Mountain.
- How many of you know that song? You may know it by Simon and Garfunkel, or maybe you learned it in your church, but Go Tell It on the Mountain. When I was a little kid, I was in a church, and they would ask, does anybody want to sing today? Alright.
- And I'm the reason they stopped doing that in churches. And they asked anybody who was singing. I don't know what happened, but I just put my hand up, and I said, I do. And about 12 years old, I went up there, and it's as nervous as I could be.
- [6 : 11] I sung, Go Tell It on the Mountain. And no, Stephen, don't put me on the orders for next month. Alright. I can already see the text message. It was a one-hit wonder. Alright. And that song.
- But I just thought, I remember as a kid thinking it was such a cool thought. Isaiah 52, 7. How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publishes peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publishes salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth.

So if the feet of those who carry the gospel are considered to be lovely by God, it should be no surprise that God views the people who would wash their feet as doing something that was lovely and well.

It is the God of heaven that says, What you're doing is good. It's worthy endeavor. I considered today maybe bringing some missionaries up here and washing their feet.

You on board? Anybody in here? Jeff, you want to come up here for a moment? But I don't know that it would serve the purpose as well. But there are ways that are very practical in which we can assist them on their journey.

[7 : 20] And that's what Gaius found. He found opportunity. He found an abundance in his life of opportunity to care for those that were coming through his town, near his home, by the church there, and they were carrying something.

Not just anything. They were carrying the truth, the gospel. And because they were carrying that message, it created this wonderful relationship and friendship that he had with them.

That's why John, who's called the beloved, right? The one who lays his head upon the chest of Christ, he refers to Gaius here as a beloved person. So first of all, I want you to see that sending the gospel is living life well, which is what every one of us as a Christian want to do.

We want to live a life in a way that is pleasing. And sending the gospel is a worthy endeavor. Also, I want you to see in verse 3 that, The prospering soul is the soul that is walking in the truth.

For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. Brother Ken and I were just talking a little bit ago before the service about living healthy and making good decisions and the things that we know that we need physically in our lives.

[8 : 32] But we also know that the Bible outlines things that we should be involved in, and that is living according to his word, and it's walking in truth. Gaius may have been having some physical ailments here when John prays for him, and he says, I wish that you were as physically healthy as you were spiritually.

He was doing well in all the ways that really mattered. And we must pause for a second today and ask ourselves, How are we doing? Are we walking in truth?

I love Sunday mornings. I love it, as I've said to you before, that throughout the week I may have a plan, and I may have a schedule, and I may not follow it at all, and there'll be times that I'm wondering, am I doing the right thing at the right time?

Am I helping the right people doing the right things? But on Sunday morning, I know that I'm doing the right thing. I know that I'm with the right group of people and at the right place, and it's so encouraging to start my week.

When I see this, I know that helping to get the gospel around the world is a worthy investment. That whatever I give to my time, energy, or money towards it is time and money that is well spent.

[9 : 38] Next thing I want you to see about being at a joyful laborer is that it's a laborer that we should not expect to be assisted by this world. That's verse 7. Because that for his namesake, they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.

In that culture, as it would be the day, there were many people that would have been as door-to-door salesmen. They would go out and they would live off of the provision that people would have. They might beg or they might ask, or they would raise money of people that were not followers of what they were teaching, and many people might contribute to it.

But God's people will carry God's message supported by His church. And that's wonderful. Famous quote you may know by William Temple says this, The church is the only institution that exists primarily for the benefit of those who are not its members.

Around the world, they're not inviting missionaries. They're not saying, hey, send them over here. We'll take care of them. We'll provide housing. In this community, they're not funding the expansion of the gospel.

But we as God's people have that privilege and that responsibility. No other group has the responsibility. And that's what he's saying here. I'm going to help those that I can help, because I know that the responsibility doesn't lie on any other group of people, but it relies upon me and our church to help those that God sends by on their way.

[11 : 03] So sending, it is a joyful labor. Verse number one, The elder unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love, in the truth. In these short 14 verses, if you're underlining, you will find that there are six references to the truth.

That's a lot in such a short amount of time. Because the church is built by that message that we have first received, and we also share it with other people.

Tonight, when there's baptisms, there'll be, we have about 15 minutes of video, so many different people sharing their testimony, and people joining about this common confession that Jesus Christ is Lord.

That message that we send with our missionaries that are pictured on the back wall, on short-term trips, in different ways, and we send it far, and we send it short. That gospel message is what is building this church, and every New Testament church.

It is that message. The elder whom I love, in the truth. There's many reasons to be friends in here. There's many good reasons. There's none that are greater than the fact that you and I are made brothers and sisters in truth.

[12 : 10] That you and I are given a common mission in this world. We share an identity as fellow helpers. So verse number 8 reminds us, We therefore ought to receive such that we might be fellow helpers of the truth.

The picture here is there's a church and a location where there's people coming through. The book of Acts gives you tons of pictures of this, like Acts 19. There's a school and people are coming to know Christ, and they're going out all over Asia Minor.

They're hearing the gospel, and they say, I've got to get back to my hometown. Jeff is saying, I've got to get back to Missouri. He heard the gospel in one place. He says, I've got to get back. I've got to tell my family about this.

And as they're heading, they're meeting other Christians along the way. And those Christians are praying with them, and they're meeting their needs, and they're finding ways to help these people.

And it says in verse number 8, that when you have that opportunity, you receive them so that you and I are fellow helpers of the truth. Those that sin, called fellow helpers.

[13 : 14] Those that go, are fellow helpers. We're both working together. Said it a million times, but this story already has a hero, and it's Jesus. It isn't you.

It isn't me. But every one of us have an opportunity to make much of Him with our lives. And so we look for opportunities to help people that are carrying that message wherever they're going.

We don't own the truth, but we give our lives the helping see this message spread. Both are equally valuable before God. The lives of both of them are equally significant in God's view here, which is the only view that matters.

I read something recently that just really made me pause and consider this and just meditate on it. It's this thought here. If you knew how quickly that people would forget you after your death, you would not seek in your life to please anyone but God.

If you knew how quickly people would forget you after your death, you would not seek in your life to please anyone but God. That doesn't take away from the fact that your life has influence that helps people in real time and that you will be loved and forgotten.

[14 : 27] But 100 years or 200 years, then your name just becomes a fact that a kid is going to learn in a history book at best, but most of us won't even be a fill in the blank in a history book someday.

It's just the name and the only person's opinion that will matter for all eternity is the God of heaven. So as followers of him, we say, Father, what is it you want?

And in this short time I have here on earth, I want to live in a way that pleases you. And he says to us that you and I have this joyful duty of one another, of one anothering, that you and I have all these opportunities in this short time to help and to serve one another.

It says in verse 6 that the testimony happened among them inside of the church, 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.

His ministry, Gaius, he ministered together with those that were inside of his church, and the testimony came. And he speaks about this great desire to be together that I referenced earlier.

[15 : 34] He says, I want to write to you more, but I'm going to stop right here, because I can't wait to be together again and to speak to you face to face. Peace be unto you.

Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name. Such meaningful friendships happen when our lives are centered around getting this message out.

That we do not give, but we simply gain. That it is joyful here, not only refreshing to the people that receive the gospel, but our friendships one another. And even though we don't speak like this, I think we know what it's like.

Caleb, how weird would it be if me and you were going to meet at Waffle House, and I said, I can't wait to see you face to face tomorrow as we eat hash browns. You're like, slow down, bro. All right? It's a little bit weird. Can't wait to see your beautiful face tomorrow.

But what do we say? It's like, can't wait to see you guys. Look forward to seeing you. See you on Sunday. See you on Thursday. We communicate that all the time. I can't wait to spend time with you. That God has created something that is so real and so meaningful.

[16 : 35] Something that all the world is looking for. Something that every TV show and every movie tries to sell. The idea that there'd be a group of people that just spend time together.

They don't have a job. They just hang out at a coffee shop all day long because they're just such great friends. And that looks wonderful. They're always there for each other. How do they do that? How do they live in this big apartment in New York and nobody really has a job?

You know? Or whatever it is, that version of that story gets told time and time again because we know that when we see meaningful friendships, we all want that.

And we say, how do they get that? God is showing us here just an incredible relationship. People that cared for one another. And they didn't do it by fighting for their own rights.

They didn't do it by seeking their own. They did it by saying, let's just get the gospel to anybody who doesn't have it. And in the process, God built incredible relationships.

[17 : 34] The Bible is filled with these one another commands. Over 150 of them. I'll tell you what I mean. Got a couple different categories here. Three different categories. I see about 15 different categories. I'm going to give you three this morning.

One is welcoming one another into our lives. Romans 12, 16. It says, Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend the men of low state.

Be not wise in your own conceits. It says, having the same mind. That we say that you're not right or I'm not right. That we both have met at the word of God. And we say, we want the mind of God to lead and to guide us.

It says in Romans 15, 7. Wherefore, receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. Now that is a high standard there.

When we talk about hospitality and caring for one another, there's many countries in the world that just show hospitality. I've mentioned before in my time in India how hospitality was unlike anything I'd ever experienced before.

[18 : 34] But that isn't given our standard. That God says, receive ye one another, as Christ received us to the glory of God. 1 Peter 4, 9. Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

It speaks about the way our lives ought to look together. How we ought to be inviting one another into our lives. A whole category of these one another commands are around this idea of we welcome one another into our lives.

It's not enough that we show up at the same place for a little bit of time. That I care about you and you're supposed to care about me on Monday and on Tuesday and on Wednesday. And the prayer request that we give on Sunday morning, we're supposed to follow up on Wednesday morning.

That we are supposed to be involved in each other's lives. That's one category. Another one is that we're supposed to serve one another. Bible speaks a great deal about this.

Serving one another. Even this morning in our morning announcements, I expect... Sorry, Greg. I wasn't paying as much attention, all right? I used to give announcements and nobody listened to me. Now I'm the one not listening to announcements, all right?

[19 : 35] But I'll follow the planning center, Bo. I know what's going on. But we use the word, and it's a good word. It's volunteering. And we say that because we all seem to understand what it is. The Bible doesn't use that type of terminology about volunteering.

The Bible uses different words. It speaks to those who freely serve and who recognize that we have a joyful obligation to serve others in whatever manner that we are capable or gifted of.

I have a obligation, a moral one. That means it's right or wrong if I don't do it. I have a moral obligation to serve those in the church.

Large portion of Scripture. Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4 would speak about these. And in these passages, we learn that Christ has given us gifts to the church, the various members, and that you have a responsibility to use your talents and your training and your resources and your opportunities to serve one another.

1 Peter 4, verse 10 and 11. It just lays it out here for us very clearly. As every man and woman, speaking of mankind, I mean every man and woman in the church has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

[20 : 50] And if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. And if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, the whom be praised and dominion forever and ever.

Amen. That God, in His knowledge of us, in His creating of us, He gave us various gifts to be used one to another.

This means, and I don't believe that I'm going too far in saying this, is that when God gifted me, He took in consideration the way in which He was going to gift you.

And when He gifted you, He took in consideration how He was going to gift somebody else in here, that He is building something and we're fitly joined together. And so your gifts and your talents, they matter.

That God gave them to you to be used inside of this family together, among this group of people, among this body together, that God has given us gifts. And so, yes, we can say volunteer, but we can also say that we have a joyful obligation to use what He has given us for the good of one another.

[22 : 00] So that's in serving one another. The last category that I look at in these one another's is to show the love of God. 1 Thessalonians 5.15, Seeing that, None render evil for evil unto man, but everyone that follows what's good among yourselves and to all men.

So among yourselves, among this house of God, among God's people, we don't do evil one to another, but we do that which is good, and we bear one another's burdens. It says in Galatians 6.2, that we are to care for one another in this manner, and walking out our lives, carrying one another's burdens together.

150 commands in the Bible, and they take place as we meet together around this getting the gospel to the world. And so we said that as a joyful laborer, as a church that develops sin and care for the covenant members in a worthy manner.

Covenant means that we have made a commitment one to another. It's this wonderful privilege and responsibility to belong to a church. You see, the world has all kinds of other one another's.

We live in a world that has another set of one another's. There's one another brokenness. There's one another enmity or manipulation or one another selflessness. But the church exists to show a different way of life, a different Lord of life, this Lord that reconciles us not only to him, self, but to one another.

[23 : 21] The gospel builds a community of people that care for one another in a way that honors him. And that group of people take that message to the other side of the world, to the other side of the county, and when that message is planted, it begins to do the same thing that it did here.

So we're speaking about doing this in a worthy manner. The Holy Spirit, through John, exalts the importance of how we sin as high as you could imagine.

Verse 6, Which hath borne witness of thy charity before the church, whom if thou bring forward on their journey, after a godly sort, thou shalt do well. And that's what we're speaking of here, after a worthy manner.

If you put that green slide up here, I want us to focus in here on this statement. Sin in a manner that is worthy of God, after a godly manner. I want you to notice the logic that is used here.

Because for their namesake, before his namesake, they went forth. You could have no greater definition of a missionary than it's people who go out for his namesake.

[24 : 28] They go out to make much of Jesus and to make him known. Because of that reason, because they don't go out on their own dreams and their own ambitions, they don't go out on their own personal mission, because they go out, we ought to do this in a manner.

So sending a missionary is one of those oughts or shoulds in the Bible. Something that we are given to do. And we're provided with a good example in this man named Gaius.

So practically speaking, they won't be sent out unless we send them. They won't be cared for and sent and developed unless we do it. Because this isn't for the unbelieving people. They don't take anything from those people.

It is God's people that are given the message to share. And they go out for their name. And because of that, we ought to do it in a worthy manner, in a way that shows the importance of the gospel.

And so how we send matters to God and it matters to us. Nine times in the New Testament, we see this type of sending. In Titus chapter 3 verse 13, if you'll look there, as I've been studying Titus, this popped out to me.

[25 : 33] It says here in Titus 3 verse 13, it says, bringing Zenos, the lawyer, and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them. It's speaking about sending as a church.

And it says, provide the needs that they would have so that all that they would need would be provided for them to accomplish what they've been sent out to do. The way that it says it in verse 5 of 3 John, it says, Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and to strangers.

Whatsoever thou doest to the brethren and the strangers. Whatsoever. There's an incredible breadth to that, incredible size to this, if you consider it.

Pastor Bo and I, we were at a conference at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church about sending a couple months ago. And there was a lady, who was a missionary in Spain, and she just asked for a moment, she said, what does it mean to care for somebody?

And she just sat there for a moment. And many different questions came. And many people gave different answers. And there were so many different answers that were given. And they were all right. It's such a big thing that it couldn't have been summed up in one statement.

[26 : 46] But something that somebody said that stuck with me, a man said, it means that they took a rock out of their bag, and they put it in the my bag. He was speaking about maybe if you're hiking.

If you're hiking, don't put rocks in your bag, all right? But if you're hiking, and if somebody takes some of your equipment out of your bag, and they put it on their back, it means they remove a burden. And the things that they're expressing are these one another commands.

There's not one one another command in the Bible. There's 150 one another commands. Because we're people that need one another. And in the same manner, we have these obligations.

There's a couple named Aquila and Priscilla in the Bible. One of my favorite couples in the book of Acts, which is just action-packed, right? There's so much happening. People come in. They lie about the offering.

They get struck dead. There's another time where there's snakes. There's just all kinds of things going on in the book of Acts, right? It's action-packed. It's the kind of story that I would like to watch, all right? It's the kind of story that Stephanie would skip over, all right?

[27 : 45] It's more action, all right? It isn't the Psalms. It isn't how we feel. It's like a historical account of movement that is happening. And it's exciting. In the middle of all that, God gives almost an entire chapter about this story of a couple named Aquila and Priscilla.

And they were just people. They were just fellow helpers of the truth. They were just people that they took a journey one time with Paul. Another time, Paul needed some work. They provided some work for him so that he could have the freedom to do his job while working there and making tents with them.

They had training center students that were involved in the area. A guy named Apollos comes over to their house and they provide lunch for him and they teach a Bible study. And you read this story and you look at it and you think, I know that couple.

I've been blessed by that couple in my life. Churches are made up of those types of couples and that's how the gospel moves forward. And you look at it and you said, they do well. Just like 3 John says, they're living life well, helping people get the gospel out, having relationships that are centered around the truth.

I remember when I found this in Romans chapter 16, verse 4, kind of a eulogy, if you will, about Priscilla and Aquila. And it says this, who have for my life laid down their own necks unto whom not only I give thanks, but also the churches of the Gentiles.

[29 : 08] We don't read in the Bible where there's a chance where they're about to be martyred. And it's reasonable to believe here is that they just live their lives with daily decisions, helping people get the gospel around the world.

And it says they were in it with them. They laid their lives down to be a bridge. Hey, you're trying to get the gospel to somebody, somebody that you know and love? Doesn't it mean, I know that it does when we're taking prayer requests and we're sharing and somebody says, would you pray for my family member?

Would you be a fellow helper of the truth? Would you pray with me that the gospel would get to my family member? Hey, would you help me? I'm going back to this place. I need to go.

Can you help me do that? I'm trying to buy some tracts. I'm trying to buy some Bibles. I'm trying to do this. Would you help me? That's the way Gaius saw people. Not as a person that just saw a program of a church, not as some type of trend.

He saw missionaries and those that were carrying the gospel as people that were carrying the most wonderful message in all of the world and he wanted to do it in a worthy manner.

[30 : 15] John Horvat, I've told this story about you so many times I want to do it today. I can't think about worthy manner without telling about how that time in the old building, there's a bunch of gospel tracts that were just spread out all over the floor and I walked by and you were picking them up and a better friend would have stopped and helped, but I didn't stop.

I went about my day. I thought it was only going to take him a couple minutes and I come back an hour later and he is finishing. He has taken all those gospel tracts and lined them up and rubber banded them and treated them as they were wonderful and I said, John, why didn't you just pile them all up?

You know, just put them there. They're going to fall over again and he held it up and he says, do you know what this is? This is the gospel. Inside of here, people hear about Jesus who died and rose again for him, that this tract could be put in the hands of a family that's broken right now and the gospel could bring healing.

This could be put in the life of someone, in the hands of somebody who thinks there's no hope and they could have it. And I just remember being so humbled and saying, is there any greater faith, you know, as they would say in the Bible, than just recognizing that the message matters and so those that carry it, they matter to us as they matter to the Lord.

And so we have a contrasting example here and a guy named Diotrophes that David spoke about this morning in offering devotion. That's verse number 9.

[31 : 39] And so here that eulogy, be a quill and Priscilla or a Gaius who would lay down your life to help get the gospel. There's some people who aren't bridges, but there are roadblocks. And it says, and I wrote unto the church but Diotrophes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.

But as I read about Diotrephes and I was just looking and as I was driving, I listened to things to listen to and I found this article that was about, it says, every church has Diotrephes.

Pastors, you just need to get used to and I thought, no sir, I am not going to accept that, all right? A church doesn't have to have a Diotrephes. It isn't necessary for us to have a Diotrephes here.

A Diotrephes is one that loves to have the preeminence. There's always been, there always will be opposition to the mission of a church. Sometimes it sounds like this, God is going to save the people that he will save whether I participate or not.

I'm not called to participate in missions. We have no business taking the gospel overseas when there are plenty of people to reach in our own city. Evangelism is for those who have the gift of evangelism.

[32 : 46] It makes people feel uncomfortable when you're constantly talking about missionaries and missions. You talk about missions too much. Those are the words of Diotrephes. Those are the words of a person who does not want to be a fellow helper of the truth.

But typically, our opposition doesn't come loud and vocal. It just comes in the form of apathy. It comes being found in things that matter more to us. And though it may sound different through the years, it always looks the same.

It looks like a life that loves itself more than its desire to get the gospel around the world. And so we must be always aware that there's those of us that we could be, as Diotrephes, selfishly self-seeking rather than selfishly serving other people.

We should expect as God's people that we don't live for the preeminence. It is not about us. And so at the end, we should let the call of Christ go and the cry of the lost be louder than the sound of Diotrephes.

By God's grace and glory, the history of this church has been the story of people like Gaius and others who have wanted to get the gospel to a world.

[33 : 58] And as David said in verse number 10, it says, he prating against with malicious words, kind of like the words that I just read to you, but not content therewith. Neither does he himself receive the brethren and forbid of them that they would and cast them out of the church.

This lack of contentment was costing him involvement and the greatest work in all of the world. Oh, Gaius is just having a great time. People are coming through. He's finding a place for them.

He's helping. When they come back, they hear the story. But Diotrephes, he's just too caught on himself. He's too busy to notice what's going on around him and it cost him so, so much.

But Gaius wasn't by himself. Demetrius, verse 12, he had a good report of all men and the truth itself, yea, and also bear record and you know that our record is true. Not just the church testified, but the truth testified about Demetrius.

And so church today, before we pray, I just want to encourage us. Let us do well. Beloved, follow not that which is evil, verse 11, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God, but he that doeth evil has not seen God.

[35 : 08] We are people that have seen the grace of God. So let's do good. Let it motivate us. The seeing of God in our lives is what creates that overflow and the caring for other people.

My last passage today, 2 Corinthians, chapter number 8, verses 1 through 5. This passage is often used in reference to giving financially and it's wonderful, but what I want to emphasize today in verse number 1 is what creates that generosity, that abundance.

Verse 1, Moreover, brethren, we do to wit, which means to witness, of the grace of God bestowed upon the churches of Macedonia, how that in a great trowel of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality.

It was meaning that they were liberal and generous in their giving, not because they had an abundance. They were in poverty. They didn't have much to give. What they had an abundance of is that they had witnessed the grace of God and that was overflowing.

And for their power I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves, praying with us much entreating that we should receive the gift and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

[36 : 23] And this they did, not as we hope, but gave their own selves to the Lord and to us by the will of God. Do you see that in verse number 4 where it said that in verse number 4 that it says they wanted here praying with much entreating that we should receive the gift and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

That is a joyful obligation that every one of us in here have one to another. There's a man named Gaius and he is just so overwhelmed about what God has done in his life.

He is just walking in the truth. It is overflowing to the point that when somebody came through town he always had some way to get involved. He made a bologna sandwich, he gave some tomatoes, he had a place to stay, he came out there and he met them at the church for a moment and he prayed with them whatsoever, the Bible said, in whatsoever way it was given to him.

He had some gifts and he had abilities that were supposed to be used among that church and the way in which it was supposed to be used was the minister went to another. Locally, we should care for one for another.

Our children, I have said, should have an unfair advantage in life because they grew up at this church having so many people that care for them that they were part of a church where people would say, I'm going to use my talents and abilities, do all that I can for the fellow members and families of this church.

[37 : 52] But do you know that it doesn't stop if you live on the north side of this county or if you live on the other side of this country or if you live a thousand miles away because the union that we have one to another is in the truth.

The gospel has changed our lives. It's changing our church and we want it to see it change more lives. So that verse there before I pray is the words that I would like for you to make your prayer of the day.

I'll ask those in the back to leave that on the screen as we pray. Pray scriptures today. Say this, praying with much entreaty that we will receive the gift and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.

I'm going to ask you that you would renew your commitment of caring one for another. That you would renew your commitment to using your God-given gifts to joyfully care for other people and especially those, the brothers and the strangers that God sends by our church either for a few years or even a short time and when we meet them we say, where are you going and what are you going to do?

And they say, I'm taking the gospel to this place and they don't have it and we say that's exactly what we want to be part of. On Thursday night the presentation will be by Josh Barton.

[39 : 11] He's the only one that's not a member of our church that will be with us. He grew up in Knoxville, Tennessee. He's out of Southside. God worked in his heart. That's somebody's son. That's somebody's daughter that he's married to.

That's somebody that grew up in a church and he's going to come by our church and he's going to say, hey, I want to take the gospel to Mozambique. It's not his idea. It wasn't his plan and it's not even his mission.

It belongs to the church and we have an opportunity on the way to say, hey, we love that. We're all about that. Let me pray with you. Let me get your prayer card. Let me follow up.

That should be the natural response of those that love the gospel is to love those that take the gospel around the world. Would you pray that with me today? Would you pray and say, Father, I want to renew my commitment to every member of this church.

I want to renew my commitment to those that are not with us today because they have taken an assignment to take the gospel around the world and that you would take upon you this fellowship of ministering and serving one another.

[40 : 15] Heavenly Father, I thank you for the clarity of your word. I thank you for how clear that it is that we have this privilege to care for one another.

With every head bowed and every eye closed, I would like to take a moment right now and we've spoken about carrying the gospel which is the greatest story in all of the world. Those of you in this church that you've given to keep these doors open and the lights on and you've served, you've served so that when people come here, they hear about Jesus.

I want to tell you in here that Jesus Christ loves you and that he died for you and that burden of sin and guilt and shame that we all have in our lives can be taken away from him and we call that good news.

And so today, I want you to know that there is good news for you today and you can put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ. That message is life-changing but more important, it will change your eternity.

You'll spend eternity worshiping the God of heaven and I want to encourage you now to call upon him and to pray. Let us help you. You say, I want to study some more, I want to get into Bible study, I want to believe, I need, would you help me, would you pray with me, allow us the opportunity to show you from God's word.

[41 : 31] We have resources at the next step table, we have people. But now I speak to my brothers and sisters in this room. I pray that more than just believing it's a program in this church, that you will have a conviction that we are to care for those that are carrying the gospel from this place.

That we have a responsibility to them and make it more than an idea, make it more than something this church does, but make it a guiding conviction of your life that when you meet people that are carrying the gospel, you will partner with them as a fellow helper of the truth.

Heavenly Father, I thank you for this opportunity. I thank you for your plan and your wisdom. You could have chose many different ways for this good news to be distributed, but you allow us the privilege to be the ones that share it locally.

You allow us the privilege to be the one that send families around this world. Father, I pray today that all my brothers and sisters will renew in their hearts a commitment to love and the care for those that carry this message.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.