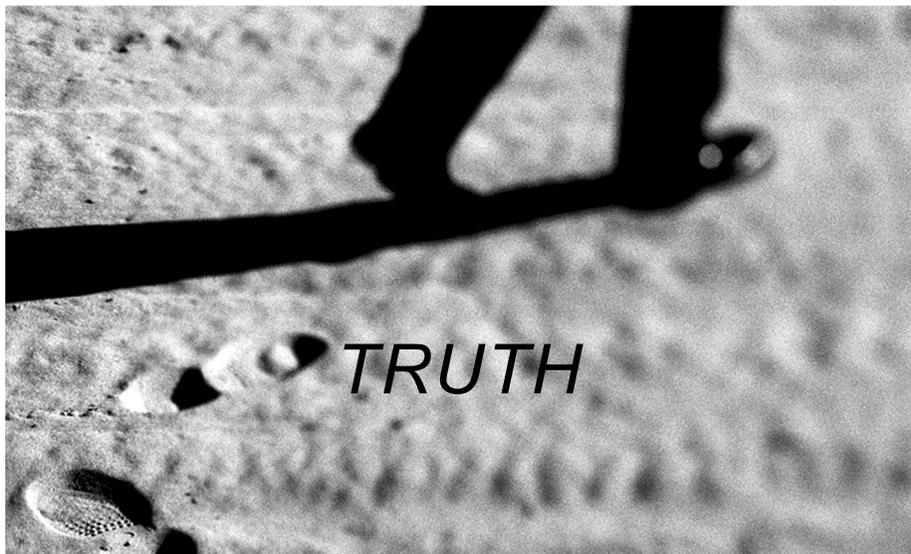


3 JOHN

No Greater Joy



“An astronomer was once exploring, on a clear night, the surface of the moon. His telescope, as he thought, was in perfect order. A new lens had recently been inserted in the tube. With his splendid lens he hoped to make discoveries not seen by any astronomer before him. He was not at first disappointed. He distinctly saw living inhabitants in the moon. He rubbed his eyes with astonishment, and again gazed, and gazed again, with trembling rapture. He certainly saw moving creatures walking with gigantic strides over the valleys and mountains. At last the mystery was solved. One side of his new lens had not been cleansed. Upon it were a few infinitesimal insects, which, magnified, looked like strange animals, unlike any known to earth. When the lens was rubbed clean, the strange animals vanished.

The principle holds good in the study of the Word of God. Grave errors are foisted into the sacred pages, and hidden truths remain hidden, for the want of undistorted vision in the looker-on.”

(Hints on Bible Study, by John Wattles & Co. 1897)

3 John No Greater Joy

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NO GREATER JOY

An inductive Bible study guide for the book of 3 JOHN

*"Make me know your ways, O Lord;
Teach me your paths.
Lead me in Your truth and teach me,
For You are the God of my salvation;
For You I wait all the day."*

Psalm 25:4-5

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STUDY FOR YOURSELF SERIES

THE STUDY FOR YOURSELF SERIES is a series of Bible studies that use a personal study method called Inductive Bible Study:

- it is **PERSONALLY** examining Scripture to discover God’s wonderful life-changing truths
- it is a first-hand **ENCOUNTER** with God’s Word instead of just second-hand knowledge
- it is looking at the whole text in **CONTEXT**, pulling out facts, interpreting them, then applying them
- it is starting with the **WORD** of God; not books, commentaries, or opinions about the Word of God

By following the simple steps and using the questions as a guide you will spend your time learning God’s Word directly from Him with the help of the Holy Spirit. As you grapple with the living Word, trust God to open your eyes to His life-changing truths. You will be amazed by how much you learn and how those truths that are born in your heart and mind through your own careful study will impact your life in such deep and powerful ways.

Always remember to complete your own study before you consult any commentaries or outside sources such as sermon notes, your pastor, the internet, your buddy, your sister, etc. You don’t want to spoil the joy and excitement of all that awaits you as you discover on your own.

The focus of each study is on the particular book you are studying, but as you study you will also have wonderful opportunities to explore other Scriptures, referred to as cross-references, that will support, explain, expand upon, or help you understand what is written there.

If you are new to inductive study you can look forward to being amazed at how much you will discover and discern for yourself and how radically transformed your personal Bible study and reading will become. And whether this is your 1st or 51st inductive study you can look forward to reaching new depths in your walk and intimacy with the Lord as you mine life-changing truths from His Word.

For more information about Inductive Bible Study you can download the Inductive Study Help pages and watch a short tutorial at our website. <http://www.lampstandrm.org/events.html> events tab.

3 JOHN

I have no greater joy than this...

A beloved friend, an arrogant antagonist, and a band of traveling preachers...oh my!! What do they have in common, what do they mean to us, and what does love have to do with it? Well, get ready and get excited, because you are about to find out as you begin this transforming journey into the book of 3 John.

GET READY TO STUDY

Always begin your study times with prayer. Ask God to give you understanding and insight as you study His Word.

Read Psalm 119:18 and make this verse your prayer. Be sure to pray for perseverance, because it is so easy to get distracted or feel too busy to take the time to study. Satan, the father of lies and the enemy of your soul, wants you to get discouraged and give up, but *“greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4)*. He will give you victory if you keep your eyes fixed on Him!

MEMORIZE GOD’S WORD

During this study you are encouraged to memorize 3 John 1:11. Look up the verse in your Bible and write it out on an index card, then say it out loud. *Memory tip: Take it with you, and say it out loud three times a day.*

STUDY IT

To do your study of 3 John you can use your own Bible or you can turn to the back of this study and use [the 3 John study worksheet](#), which is the text of 3 John typed out and double-spaced. This will make it easy for you to underline, circle, and write notes as you study. When you look up cross-reference verses simply use your own Bible, but for additional insights we suggest you look them up in several versions. (The worksheet provided in this study is the New American Standard version – You can make your own worksheet in the version you prefer by typing it out or you can use Bible software that allows you to print out the text for study.)

Each day, simply read the instructions one by one and do what they say. You will find the questions to be very factual and the answers easy to find right from the text. No need to read ahead, just follow the questions step by step and you will unearth the rich depths of God’s powerful Word as you go.

The highlighted **Go Deeper** sections are **optional** – but well worth your time and effort; so try it- you’ll like it. ☺ And most important: Always remember: Just do the best you can, you don’t have to “get it all” right away. Set your timer for 15-20 minutes each day, pray, think, and study hard. Then praise God for all He has shown you!!

APPLY IT

God’s living Word always has a work to do in you so the goal of Bible study is never to fill your paper with facts, but to allow His truths to strengthen, convict, encourage or equip you for His purposes. The questions and comments listed at the end of each of each lesson in the APPLY IT section are to be a catalyst for you to allow God to speak to your heart and make real, practical applications to your life in light of what you have learned. Read through them, pray over them, and develop a personal action plan based on what God shows you.

Finally, don’t forget to really enjoy spending time at your Lord’s feet and listening to Him through His Word. Oh beloved child of the King, He has so much to say to you, and to do in you. Listen intently, hear willingly, and obey quickly.

Now **GET EXCITED!!** – The Lord has great things in store for you, and you will never be the same!

LESSON ONE: Authorship

1. Begin by reading through the book of 3 John to become familiar with its contents. You do not have to understand it all right now, simply read through it as if you just received a letter in the mail.
2. In the Bible there are several types of literature:
 - Letters (written from one person to another person or group of people, such as Romans)
 - Historical Narratives (someone giving a narrative of events that took place such as Exodus)
 - Prophecy (such as the books of Isaiah or Revelation)
 - Poetic/Wisdom Books (such as Psalms and Proverbs)

What type of book is 3 John?

3. When studying a letter it is important to begin with an overview of the book, which gives you a broad general understanding of the book as a whole. When you do an overview you will learn all you can about the author, the audience, the purpose and main theme. The easiest place to start is with the author:

Read 3 John verse 1 again to see what you learn about the author of the book. How does he refer to himself in verse 1?

4. Read through the book of 3 John and underline, or circle every reference to the author. (You may want to use a distinctive color to differentiate it from other words you underline or circle as you study.) Look for the words “I” or “my” where he is referring to himself.

When you have finished look back at these verses: 1, 3, 4, 9, 13, 14, and make a list of all the plain and simple facts that you learn about him such as who he is, where he is, what he did, what he plans to do etc. Use the **Overview & Summary Chart** to record the facts you learned.

THINK ABOUT IT: What made the author glad? What gave him great joy? Does this give you great joy as well? Is there anything that gives you greater joy? What things in your life are competing for your joy?

GO DEEPER: Look up the word “elder” as used in 3 John 1:1 in your Greek word study tools and record what you learn.

5. Does the author ever identify himself by name in this book?
6. According to the title of this book, who is the author?
7. In the Bible there are several books with the name John: The Gospel of John, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John.

Look up and compare the following verses in 1 John, 2 John and 3 John:

Read: 2 John 1:1, 4, 12 and compare these verses with 3 John 1:1, 3, 13-14.

Also read: 2 John 1:5-7 and compare these verses with 1 John 5:3 and 4:1-3.

What similarities do you notice? What does this tell you about the author of these three books?

GO DEEPER:

- a. *John is also believed to be the author of the Gospel of John and Revelation. Look up the following passages and note how they confirm this: John 1:1; 1 John 1:1; Revelation 19:13.*
- b. *Turn to the gospel of John and look up the following passages and record what you learn about the author from these verses: John 13:21-26 and John 21:20-24*

8. Conclude your study by spending time in prayer and personal reflection so that you will know how to apply what you have learned.

“But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers ...” James 1:22

APPLY IT

What about you? What brings you the greatest joy? Is it the pursuit and attainment of temporal pleasures, things, positions, circumstances, relationships or dreams? Or is it the spiritual well-being and growth of those around you? How does your life bring great joy to your brothers and sisters in Christ? Do they clearly see you living out your faith as they observe your behavior, words and attitudes?

LESSON TWO: Overview

1. Begin your study time by reading through the book of 3 John again and reviewing all you have learned about the author.
2. Now we will learn all we can about the recipient of this letter. According to 3 John verse 1 who was this letter written to?
3. Read through 3 John again and underline, or circle every reference to the recipient. (You may want to use a distinctive color to differentiate it from other words you underline or circle as you study.) Make sure to look for and underline the pronouns “you” and “your” that refer to him.

When you have finished look back at these verses: 1, 3, 5, 6, and make a list of the plain and simple facts you learn about the recipient and record them on the **Overview & Summary Chart**.

4. How did the author, John, refer to Gaius in verses 1, 2, 5, and 11?
5. Next we will take a brief look at the other key personalities in this letter
 - What group of people does the author first mention in verse 3? Circle the name he uses for them. Then read verses 3-7 and list what you learn about them:

 - What other people are mentioned in the book of 3 John? Write down their names and note whether something good is said about them, or something bad

 - Consider all you have seen so far with all these people. Briefly describe what is going on that will help you understand why John wrote this letter:

6. An important step in an overview is to discover the main topics and theme/s and then to determine why the author was writing and what his main purpose was. Use the steps below to help:
 - To discover the main points it is helpful to look for repeated words or phrases, often referred to as key words. These reveal the subjects and themes of the book and will help you discern the author's purpose by noticing what he talks about the most (i.e. if he keeps mentioning holiness you know he is trying to get a point across about holiness).
 - Check verses 1,3,4,8, 12 for a key repeated word/phrase in this book. What is it? What does the main point or theme of the book seem to be about?

 - Read through 3 John one more time and see if you notice 1 or 2 other words that he repeats the most.

7. Now going back and reviewing all you have learned about the author, the recipient, and the main theme re-read verses 1-8 and write out a simple purpose statement or theme for the book. Then write a short title. Keep it simple, use words right from the text as much as possible, and try to keep it 7 words or less. Record this on the **Overview & Summary Chart**

8. Conclude your study by spending time in prayer and personal reflection so that you will know how to apply what you have learned.
"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers ..." James 1:22

APPLY IT

What about you? What have you done lately to encourage those around you to walk in truth? Have you sent an encouraging note, email or text message? Are you always too busy? Or are you willing to give of your time and energy to meet face to face to support and inspire someone's heart and life for their eternal good? How do you allow God to use you as His instrument of encouragement to strengthen your weary co-laborers in the kingdom when they are facing ridicule and opposition to His ways and purposes?

3 JOHN

Overview /Summary Chart

Book Theme/Title:

Purpose:

About the Author	About the Recipient

Key people:

Key Words:

LESSON THREE: All about Truth

1. Begin by reading through 3 John again to put yourself into context. As you study keep in mind that you are looking to gather objective facts. Therefore, ask yourself “what does it say?” and answer the questions using words right from the text as much as possible.

Now read 3 John 1:1-4 once again and answer the following questions:

2. Look back at verse 2. What does John pray for Gaius and what does he say about Gaius’ soul?

THINK ABOUT IT: Is it ok to pray for someone’s well-being, prosperity and health? Is this the same as health and wealth promises promoted by false prosperity preachers? (Look up Nehemiah 1:11 for additional insight) When you encourage and pray for your friends do you consider the condition of their souls?

3. According to verse 1 how does John, the elder, love Gaius?
4. According to verse 3 how is Gaius walking, and how does John know?

THINK ABOUT IT: If others were to come and give testimony about your life, what would it be?

5. What is “truth” according to God’s Word? Look up the following verses and record what you learn. Be sure to check the context, stick to the facts, and use words right from the text as much as possible:
 - a. John 14:6
 - b. John 17:17
 - c. Ephesians 1:13

THINK ABOUT IT: When did you first hear the truth- the gospel of your salvation? When you think about truth do you think about Jesus, the gospel and His Word?

6. What is the opposite of truth according to Romans 2:8 and 1 Corinthians 13:6?
7. What do you learn about truth from 1 Timothy 3:15?

Now read 3 John 1:5-8 again and answer the following questions:

8. How was Gaius acting in his work for the brethren, and what was his relationship to them, and what did they testify about him? (Verse 5-6)
9. What does John, the elder, exhort Gaius to do? (Verse 6)
10. According to verses 7-8 why should they support the brethren? What would Gaius be a fellow worker with?
11. What does the phrase “for the sake of the Name” refer to? (Look up Acts 5:41, Philippians 2:9-10, and James 2:7 for additional insight.)
12. What does love have to do with truth? Look up 1 Peter 1:22-23 and 1 John 4:7-8 then briefly record your insights
13. Learn more about truth by looking up the following Scriptures and briefly noting what they teach:
 - a. John 18:37
 - b. Ephesians 4:21
 - c. Romans 1:18
 - d. Romans 1:25
14. What is the condition of a man’s mind if it is deprived of the truth according to 1 Timothy 6:5 and Ephesians 4:17-18?
15. What is the solution according to John 8:32?

APPLY IT

What about you? The world says that truth is relative and there is no absolute truth. Are you willing to tell the truth about truth? Are you ready and able to share the good news- the gospel-with others? Are you willing to say what God says about sin and unrighteousness? Jesus said “I am the truth”- have you admitted that you are a sinner, that there is nothing you can do to pay for your own sins, that you can never be good enough to earn God’s favor, and that you need Jesus? Have you confessed your sin, and believed in the work of Jesus for your salvation? If not will you believe now? Are you a fellow worker with the truth by supporting the work of God and His people with your time, money, hospitality, talents, resources, etc?

LESSON FOUR: Good vs Evil

1. Begin by reading through 3 John again to put yourself into context. Then spend a few minutes reviewing all you have learned so far.
2. Previously you saw how Gaius had received a testimony of faithful service and love from the brethren. Why was this so important that John was led to write about it? To find out carefully reread verses 5-10. Who else is mentioned by name in this section besides Gaius and the brethren? Write out his name in the space below and then make a list of all the facts you learn about him.

THINK ABOUT IT: Would it be easy to support the brethren in the face of such opposition and threats? Is it always easy to stand for those that serve God? Will you stand in support of God's servants even if you face threats, and rejection? What if it costs you your reputation, position, or favor with men? What if it comes from within the church?

Now reread 3 John 1:11-12 and answer the following questions:

3. Who is being addressed in these verses?
4. What contrast is brought up in verse 11?

THINK ABOUT IT: Why did John give this exhortation? How did you see this contrast played out in verses 5-10?

5. From verse 11 what do you learn about: The one who does good? The one who does evil?
6. What did John mean? Look up the following cross references to gain additional insight. Briefly note what you learn from each passage that helps explain or expand on his teaching:
 - a. John 1:4; 3:19-21
 - b. Matthew 7:16-18
 - c. Titus 1:16
 - d. 1 John 1:6-7

e. 1 John 2:4

f. 1 John 3:6-10

GO DEEPER: Learn more about what John was saying by reading Ephesians 4:17-32. Pay special attention to verse 24. Briefly record what you learn that corresponds to 3 John 1:11.

7. Who is mentioned in 3 John 1:12? What do you learn about him and how does he tie in with what John was saying in the previous verses?

THINK ABOUT IT: Why is it important to give and receive good testimonies about the faithfulness of believers?

8. Reread 3John 1:13-15. What was John not willing to do and what was he hoping to do?
9. Conclude your study of 3 John by reading through the whole book one final time. What does he wish Gaius at the end of his letter, and how is he to greet the friends?

THINK ABOUT IT: How would that be a blessing in light of all Gaius is dealing with and facing?

APPLY IT

Will you walk in truth and act in love even when you are being opposed by others, even if the opposition comes from within the church? Will you put the will of God before the will of man? Will you do what is right even if it is not expedient? Will you put God's purposes before popularity? Are you willing to expose those who speak against God's purposes, stir up trouble and cause dissension for their own sordid gain? Will you call attention to their deeds, and warn others? Are you an example for others to follow? By imitating your life will they be doing what is good? Can it be said of you that you have received a good testimony from everyone? Is there anyone who would give a bad testimony about you? Is it justified and true? Will you give a good testimony to those around you that labor for the Lord? Will you encourage them to stand strong and keep working for the Lord?

Do you encourage others to walk in the peace of the Lord no matter what their circumstances are like? Are you a good encourager? Is there anything you need to change? Ask God to give you an open and teachable heart and a willingness to live according to what He shows you.

Well done beloved sons and daughters of the King– you have come to the end of your study in 3 John. You have been encouraged to walk in truth, imitate what is good, and expose what is evil. May our precious Lord and Savior fill you with His love, boldness, and strength to accomplish the seemingly impossible tasks that He calls you to for His kingdom and Great Name. May you keep your eyes fixed on Him alone and boldly speak His truths until He comes for you. Greet the friends by name!!....And now there is only one more question to answer: Which book of the Bible will you study next? ☺

3 JOHN

1. The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.
2. Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.
3. For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth.
4. I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.
5. Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers;
6. and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.
7. For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.
8. Therefore we ought to support such men, that we may be fellow workers with the truth.
9. I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.
10. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.
11. Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.
12. Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself; and we add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.
13. I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink;
14. but I hope to see you shortly and we shall speak face to face.
15. Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.