

Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 1:43 PM  
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study

Last nite we discussed the second of two short and very personal letters John, the "elder," wrote, in the late stages of his life, to address what Warren Wiersbe referred to as, "the battle for truth and against apostasy," which was being fought not only in the home (as in 2 John), but especially in the "church" (as in 3 John)! It's no less of an issue in our day!

John, best known as, "the beloved apostle," made no attempt to spare the great joy he felt in hearing, "that his children were walking in the truth." He was particularly excited about the reports he had received, apparently unsolicited ones, from "brethren," about two men in the church - Gaius and Demetrius - who were living exemplary lives, including through their practice of the teaching of the Word! John noted, for example, how Gaius, "acted faithfully in whatever he did accomplished for the brethren," and especially for "strangers" (perhaps itinerant pastors) who had, "gone out for the sake of the Name" (of the Lord)! In fact, John even called him a "fellow worker," who had a "share" in the ministry!

John, never one to spare the truth, didn't have the same good report for the third one! He had apparently written to Diotrophes earlier to clear up issues - all to no avail! Diotrophes is described as self-seeking and controlling and one who even dared attack the "beloved" John with "wicked words." And yet, he must have wielded special "power" since he was able to "put out of the church" some who "received" John! John leaves it all with an admonition: "Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God." (He later writes that he hopes to visit the church shortly and speak "face to face"! Should have been interesting!)

Well, John's third epistle is a reminder not only of the battle for truth and against apostasy in our homes and churches, but also of the importance of linking it all with Christ-like love, including a special brand of "hospitality" - especially for those "strangers" seeking to serve the Lord, in accordance with the truth of the Gospel. There's lots of other Scripture along these same lines!

Peter writes in 1 Peter 4:8-10, "Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint."

Paul writes in Hebrews 13:1-2, "Let love of the brethren continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

Paul also writes in Romans 12:9-13, "Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil, cling to what is good! Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality!" Wow!

And, Paul leaves us with this final challenge: "And let us consider how to stimulate one another with love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day drawing near!"

Well, there's a battle raging in our homes and in our churches! The battle for truth and against apostasy! We need to know the truth, based on God's Word and we need to practice it with love and action! Maybe even through "hospitality for strangers"! And by encouraging each other in the Word!

On to Jude!

Have a great week, men!

Lowell