

Wednesday in the Word
Digging Deeper
June 22, 2022
Encouragement

3 John 1:1-8 KJVS

[1] The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth. [2] Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. [3] For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. [4] I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. [5] Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; [6] 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: [7] Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. [8] We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

A little encouragement can go a long way. These days our society seems to be so negative, angry and hostile. Happy, relaxed people are becoming increasingly rare. Stress rules the day and many are the reasons. Some will say politics are to blame or social media or Covid-19 or gas prices or name any of a dozen other current ills. How about this? We Christians know that the end times are upon us. 1 Timothy 4:1, 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Something in the air, indiscernible to the unsaved, is literally driving folks crazy. We of the faith living in the peace of Christ are able to look beyond the mayhem and find supernatural rest in Him. Matthew 11:28, Hebrews 4:1-3. Peace in Him. John 16:33, Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:7. What is it about simple encouragement that we seem to have lost that gives us peace? Joshua 1:9, Psalm 37:4, Psalm 34:4, Proverbs 30:5, Psalm 55:22. Our peace and rest and comfort do not come from within ourselves. We are incapable of calming our own souls. A knowledge of a Love and Grace larger than self, found only through Christ is the only pure and sure deep-seated joy available to humanity. Romans 15:13, Philippians 4:4, Psalm 16:11. We in the community of believers must offer encouragement to others so there can be a collective calm; a pervasive stream of unity that results in a common level of spiritual health. Let's look to the Apostle John and find his sequence of encouragement to His "wellbeloved Gaius". He first declares his love for his brother in the truth. V1. There is only one truth and that in Jesus Christ. True love for others can only exist in this context. John next wishes prosperity and health on his friend while acknowledging to him that his very soul is already prospering due to his relationship with his Savior. V2. John speaks of rejoicing over Gaius because fellow believers gave him report of the inner Truth walked out in his life. V3. He reassures him that his greatest joy is such a report of the Truth found in a son in the faith. V4. He lifts up praise to such a one who does well to believers as well as unbelievers. V5. He tells of these works done faithfully, meaning this man was dependable and consistent in his charity. Proverbs 20:6, Ecclesiastes 9:10, Colossians 3:23. The Church took note of such faithfulness. V6. Notice this charity is described as selfless giving. John next encourages Gaius to aid his fellow believers to grow in faith and in their walk with Christ. He speaks in verse 7 of keeping the cost and responsibility of missionary work in house. The church should support the church, not the world. Finally in verse 8 John suggests that "we" in

the home churches ought to follow the example of this faithful brother. Love the family of God. Pray for their health and prosperity. Encourage others who are growing in Christ. Acknowledge their walking in God's Truth. Let folks know when they bring you joy. Take note of those who bless God and the world. Honor dependable people. Thank those who give with no thought of receiving. Help the weak. Support new believers. Support the work of the church and follow the example of hard working Christians. A little encouragement can go a long way. Leave others a little better off than when you first meet them. That's how we grow.