

Team Players in God's Mission

3 John

Introduction:

1. "I love football." When is the last time you watched a game? "Ten years ago."
"I love to grill out." How often do you grill? "Once every five years."
"I love my local church." Do you go every week? "No, I go on Easter every-other year."
2. Something just doesn't add up in those statements, does it?
3. There is a battle raging on this earth between God and Satan. God desires to see His truth proclaimed throughout the earth (1 Timothy 2:4). Satan desires to blind people from God's truth. 2 Corinthians 4:4
4. If God's truth is to be proclaimed throughout the earth, it will be through people. It will take a united effort on the part of God's people. Satanic barriers and strongholds must be brought down, and God's light has to be shined in the darkness.
5. Do you remember the ridiculous statements I made a few minutes ago? How about this one: Do you love the truth of God and believe that others would greatly benefit in hearing it? "Yes I do." What are you doing to help God's truth get out to others?
6. Unfortunately, so many of God's people in the church today in America are consumers (children's programs, music, teen camps, Bible teaching), but aren't contributors.
7. In this little book, John writes a letter to a man named Gaius. This man Gaius was simply a member of a local church, yet this man was having a huge impact on the cause of Christ. He was a team player in God's mission here on earth. vs. 5-8
8. When we talk about getting out the truth of God to this world, the "T" in TRUTH stands for "teamwork." It will take teamwork. How can we be team players, and do our part?

First, we must believe in and love truth. vs. 3-4

1. It is hard for me to be a contributing team player when I either don't understand, or don't believe in, the particular cause that my team is playing for.
2. Team players believe in the cause. If you don't believe in God's truth, love God's truth, and embrace it, you won't be passionate about getting it out to others.
3. But if God's truth has changed your life, you should be passionate about doing whatever you can to help others to hear it. This is where it all started with Gaius (vs. 3-4). Gaius had embraced the truth of God, and it had impacted his daily life. 1 Corinthians 13:6
4. Has God's truth impacted your life? Has it made changes in your life? Did you know that it will do the same thing for people in Mexico, China, Japan, etc.?
John 8:32

5. But, how will people hear God's truth unless God's people believe in it, and put their time and money where their mouths are? When the average American spends more money on pet food or cable TV than they give to missions outreach, this can only mean one of two things. Either...
 - ...the church is full of people who really have never even believed in the truth, therefore, Christ doesn't live in them. Ephesians 1:13
 - Or, the church is full of believers who love themselves more than they love God's truth – *"lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."* 2 Timothy 3:4
6. This, of course, is a heart problem, and God has to bring conviction to our hearts so that we will become the team players for God's cause that we need to be.
7. This man Gaius loved and embraced God's truth. It meant something to him.

Second, our love for truth should lead to tangible action. vs. 5-6

1. If people are passionate about a certain cause, what will those people most likely do? (Spend time helping, give money, talk to others about it, etc.) Their love and passion very naturally leads to tangible action. They don't have to be coerced or strong-armed.
2. Gaius was very passionate about God's truth. Do you know what this resulted in? The man was tangibly involved in helping to get that truth out to others. vs. 5-6
3. Gaius was a hospitable and generous man who constantly helped missionaries to get where they needed to go. This wasn't something he did occasionally. This was something he did faithfully (vs. 5). He was tangibly involved in helping the cause.
4. These itinerate preachers (obviously Jewish) would not take money from the Gentiles, but totally trusted God to meet their needs through their Jewish brethren who loved God's truth.
5. This reminds me of missionaries today. They are trusting God to meet their needs through like-minded believers who love the truth. They aren't out there trying to get secular businesses or organizations to support their cause.
6. Gaius was a man who stood in the gap, and did all that he could do to help these missionaries. Gaius wasn't all talk; he was action. He was a charitable man who obviously would open his home to these missionaries, and help them financially.
 - He wanted to help them to get where they needed to go, and do what they needed to do.
7. How applicable this is to today. This is why we have a Mission's Emphasis Month, and bring these families before you. We hope your love for truth will lead to tangible action, and you'll say, "I need to help Brother _____ get to _____" I have to do my part.

Third, your action equals worldwide impact.

1. Imagine, for a moment, a missionary standing before a group of people in his mission field, and telling them about the people of CrossRoads, and how we helped him to get there?

2. This is what was going on here in our text. John was far away geographically from Gaius, yet these missionaries had testified of Gaius and his part in helping them. vs. 6
3. Notice what John writes in vs. 8 – “*We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.*” Did you notice the plural pronoun “we?”
4. Every believer can be a fellowhelper to the truth. It is a team effort.
 - “*Fellowhelper*” is from the Greek word from which we get the English word “synergy.” It means “two things working together that accomplish more than if they were working individually.”
5. In receiving and helping those who went forth to preach the truth, Gaius was helping the truth itself. When you help a missionary to get out God’s truth, you are literally helping the truth itself. You are a co-worker with it.
6. What are you doing to be a fellowhelper to the truth? What are you doing to contribute to the maintenance of, and spreading of the gospel of Christ? Eternity will reveal what we have done.
7. Your action not only has worldwide impact now, but heavenly impact throughout all eternity! Colossians 1:5-7