

## Missions Made Possible: Fulfilling Our Assigned Duties

Text: 1 John 3:1-8

### Introduction:

Tracing history, doing missions and church planting is like mission assignments given by the chief officer of the secret agency.

### Background:

The letter is written by John dedicated to Gaius—who is an elder of an uncertain church. Probably, a church at Corinth or Ephesus, or another place. Again, since this is an epistle, this is designed to be read out loud to the entire church. Hence, the address is to everyone.

John designed his letter by commending his brother Gaius to what they have been doing regarding their support to ministerial workers, missionaries, and church planters—in a word, Gospel-proclaimers.

### Main Idea:

In verse 1, John addressed Gaius as his beloved brother in Christ. Furthermore, he said that this love is grounded in truth. It states, “whom I love in truth.” Others would say, “whom I truly love.” But the word order here seems logical as well. Why? Because I believe, love is not grounded only in feelings or emotions.

Human emotions falter. If we get mad, offended, unappreciated, or hurt, then our love towards the person is also affected. It may be reduced in a sense of quality, or even shatter into pieces like broken glass. Most of us are struggling in controlling ourselves.

That is why, for John, he grounded his love towards his brother in Christ in Truth. The gospel is our surety and the wellspring of our love towards one another. If we love one another on how Christ loved the person, then we can love one another truly. Think in this manner. “I will love this person not because he or she is good but because Christ loves him or her.” Remember, that we are all Christians; all Christians are called to conform to Christ. Hence, when Christ loves someone, then we are also driven toward loving whom Christ has loved. That is what it means by loving someone in truth.

Since Jesus is the Truth as stated in John 14:6, then we ought to love our beloved brothers and sisters in Christ in the truth of Jesus—a gospel-shaped love.

This love is even manifested in the next verse. In verse 2, we pray that everything is well with you. We pray that their soul-spiritual health—is well too. Wow. Do we have the same attitude in loving our brothers and sisters in Christ? Or are we that kind of Christian that shows one thing and another?

Now listen, our mission as Christians is made possible because of this—the truth. The Gospel-truth of Christ motivates and empowers us to love others which should lead us to fulfill our mission assignments. Listen to verses 3 and 4 (read; emphasize verse 4). Wow. Such sweet words to hear.

Grounding from the truth of the gospel which brings ultimate joy, what then is our duty or assignment from our chief commanding officer in heaven? Studying the rest of the verses, I will list 3 important duties as Christians to fulfill our assigned tasks.

### **Duty to Build Relationship**

Verses 5-6, these strangers were treated as if they are not. Meaning, they were able to build relationships with these people. Knowing them, understanding, and loving them in Christ.

### **Duty to Give**

Verse 7 indicates that these preachers, missionaries do not ask for money in exchange for the gospel of Christ. Unlike the ancient philosophers, sophists, Christian missionaries are not motivated by money.

However, in verse 8, John said a strong imperative—a command—“Therefore, we ought to support people like these.” WE OUGHT TO SUPPORT! There is a duty to give. Remember, last Sunday, in Titus 3:12-15, we learned that “missionaries” are ought to be supported and taken care of. Making sure that “they lack nothing.” Help—or support—means hospitality. These ministers travel from far places going to different unreached people groups just to preach the gospel of Christ.

We should be grateful that we have people who are willing to sacrifice their entire desire for the desire to fulfill the Great Commission. Therefore, we that “only” sit comfortably on our couches, watching Netflix, eating Chic-fil-A once a week, and sleep six to eight hours, we “ought” to fulfill our duty to GIVE. Giving for the kingdom expansion is not an expense, it is an investment.

The early church were generous givers, in Acts 2:45, they were selling their possessions to give to those who are in need. Even though this was in the context of a local community. We are also aware that our brothers and sisters in Christ are not limited to our local circle, but it extends even to the other side of the world. When we give, may we have the same attitude of the churches at Corinth and Philippi.

Give your tithes and offerings to God faithfully. We learned months ago that we are even called to go beyond tithing. The ten percent is the flooring when it comes to our giving. How are we doing with our giving? (the labandera)

### **Duty to be Fellow Workers**

Given that we can be fellow workers through prayers. However, we should be careful about the so-called “false spirituality.” Illustration: If you saw a ragamuffin—a boy beggar—asking for food because he is hungry, then you stopped and stretch out your hands and prayed for that boy then left. That is not wrong. Yet, if you are capable to help and give that boy food but you didn’t then you have failed from the true spirituality. When Christ heard the five thousand people that they were all hungry, Jesus did not just raise His hand and pray that God will vanish their hunger. Instead, Jesus took care and fed them all.

True spirituality in Christ is that character. If you can, yet you suppress it, then there is something wrong in your heart.

John is a great preacher. He gave a comparative case to Gaius. He compared Diotrephes (v 9) from Demetrius (v 12). The former, Diotrephes, does not submit, is self-centered, divisive and tells bad things about other people, is not content, and does not welcome any missionaries and church planters. The latter, Demetrius, bears the truth of Christ and has a good testimony.

Now, what did John say? "Do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God." (v 11) Let us imitate good.

#### Practical Directions:

1. Put up a bulletin board where we can see our missionary updates, so we can post pictures, and their names so we are all aware of them. We are not just supporting for the sake of support, but we are intentional and willingly devoted to supporting them both in finances and in the gospel-truth.
2. Send teams to visit them and help for specific purposes. Short-term missions nowadays have become a vacation-kind of trip. What we can do is, ask them personally and ask how we can help. Let us go there not us experts or entitled people who act as if we are the CEOs, rather humble ourselves to do the work they will give us.
3. Get to know our missionaries. That will be our assignment. Add them on their social media. Like their posts, comment, and pray for them. Occasionally, I will randomly ask anyone from you, how is Ptr. Di Leonardo? How about Ptr. Ben-Hur? We do not want this sermon to be just another sermon that entered our left ear then exits on the other.
  - a. Check the last verse, I hope this will really move you. "Greet our friends, EACH BY NAME!" A month ago, we cannot even name the names of our missionaries. This is not guilt-tripping, I am stating the reality. Let us be serious about this matter.

#### Conclusion:

When we follow these things, what did John say? "I have no greater joy than these..." meaning, may this also be our ultimate joy in Christ. Doing and supporting missions and church planters.

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October 31, 2021