

Remnant Life Church
Intervention Teaching Series
Servanthood
Week 5

“The Blessing of Hospitality”

We are in the middle of a series focused on servanthood and serving others

- Why is that something we need to spend this amount of time looking at?
- Because it is the visible expression of Jesus Christ in your life and the change that has been made
- It is also what Jesus lived as an example for us
- (Matt 20:28) - ...*the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

The second and third epistles of John are two of the shortest books in the Bible, yet they speak a great deal regarding hospitality which is an act of service

- Two weeks ago we looked at 2nd John and the heart of hospitality
- Our actions are born out of the love in our hearts

READ – 3 John

At the time of the writing of these letters, John is the last surviving original disciple of Jesus

- This brief letter is one of only a few written to an individual
- It is addressed to Gaius who was likely part of, or perhaps a leader, of one of the new community churches that had begun to meet throughout Asia Minor
- Written from Ephesus between 85 and 95 in the latter part of John’s life

Like his second letter, John is writing because the kindness, care, and servant’s heart of Gaius has been brought to his attention

- Just as the “chosen lady and her children” from the second letter are commended, Gaius has become well known among the traveling ministers for his abundance of kindness
 - How are you known?
 - If those who knew you were told to write one word, one sentence, one paragraph to describe you – what do you think they would say?
 - “If you were to be put on trial for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?”
 - The same for serving and loving the people around you
 - Or would you be known as someone who is aloof, distant, or detached?
 - There are fathers who may be described that way
 - Is the act of hospitality more difficult for men due to wrongly set expectations of our behavior?
 - Thinking that hospitality is for women to provide
 - Gaius was known to the people as being a man of generosity, service, and kindness
 - Are you? Am I?

- And so, while second John warns against supporting untrustworthy ministers in their work, third John commends those who had shown them hospitality

Let's look at how John approaches Gaius and the circumstances of that church –

V 5 – Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers even though they are strangers to you.

- A serving heart that offers hospitality is faithful to the command that, as followers of Christ, we love one another (**John 13:35**)
 - Serving others is a physical demonstration of the love of Jesus Christ
 - Serving within the church is to work for the furthering of God's Kingdom
 - What we do here at RLC, great or small, is for the Kingdom of God
 - That means that the size or presentation of an event or activity is not what matters most

V 6 – They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

- Serving God well and consistently needs to be seen and heard by others
 - Servanthood is desperately needed in a time when “me first” is most prevalent
 - Seeing that God's people serve one another demonstrates to the world the difference of the heart in a Christian
- Following your time of ministry and service to others
 - Bless them when you are done
 - Let me ask an important question
 - Is blessing someone when you are done more difficult if you feel that you have been properly thanked or recognized?
 - Does the need to be appreciated rob us of what we should be doing?
 - Why is it important to send them on their way with blessing?
 - So that they can then carry their blessing with them to share with others in the same way
 - Pay it Forward was not developed by Hollywood to make a movie, it is a biblical concept

Vv 7-8 – It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought, therefore, to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth.

- We all serve the Name of Jesus Christ
- Those that worked in that time to spread the word had to rely on fellow Christians to provide for them
 - This, once again, demonstrates the love of a follower of Jesus in a tangible way
 - It is also why unity and not division in the church is so important
 - Can you do you still love those you disagree with?
 - Is the volatile political climate of today dividing the church?
 - Christians must differentiate themselves from the ungodly and the worldly
 - If we act no differently, can we claim that we are different?

- Just as in John's day, to support and participate in the work of the church today is to work for and spread the truth of the Kingdom of God

What prevents us from having a heart that loves to serve?

- The vast majority of the time, it is pride
- John makes this clear as he writes of Diotrephes a man in the church who "loves to be first"
 - Pride prevents a heart from desiring to serve because it is preoccupied with self
 - This same pride also breeds division
 - Diotrephes came against John's authority and refused to receive fellow brothers in the Lord
- A church filled with people who are only looking to enjoy the fruits of the church's labor rather than participating in the act of serving, is a church filled with or struggling with division
 - It becomes like a house filled with children bickering over whose turn it is to wash the dishes
 - "I did them last time"
 - "I helped at the last event we had"

John summarizes the actions of both Gaius and Diotrephes

- **V 11** - *Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.*
- To serve one another through a heart of love is from God
- To refuse to serve others out of pride or selfishness is not from God

We all have a responsibility to serve God through His church

- But is it an obligation?
- Or is it a joy, a privilege, and an honor?
- That is answered by the outpouring of what is in your heart

Serving God and His church, through any opportunity you are given, is an act of love and service to God

And it is what others will see in you – the presence of Jesus Christ and the love given freely to us.