

RECOGNIZE AND IMITATE GOOD

3 John

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- How do you define hospitality? Does it relate to your faith? If so, how? If not, why not?
- What do you think it means and looks like to “walk in the truth”?

In a church, leaders gain authority in various ways. Often the head pastor or consistory hire or assign people to leadership position. And often, those placements are made based on experience and a proven track record. But that doesn’t mean we blindly follow anyone with an authoritative title. In 3 John, the author makes that point clearly as he describes two very different leaders in the early church. As he does so, he once again reminds us that abiding rigidly to the letter of the law isn’t enough; we must also allow the heart of the law to transform our actions, once again finding the delicate balance of defending truth and showing love as we live into our faith.

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- Who in your life or faith community demonstrates the spiritual gift of hospitality? What observations or experiences lead you to this conclusion?
- Think about the relationship between hospitality and sacrificial love, hospitality and pride, hospitality and humility? How is hospitality hindered and helped by each?
- Why is orthopraxis (right practice) just as important as orthodoxy (right teaching)? Why are truth and love important for BOTH orthopraxis and orthodoxy?
- What are you doing to ensure you continue to mature in your faith according to the truth? In what ways are you going deeper in the truth of the gospel and staying in step with the Holy Spirit?

Related Passages

- **1 Peter 4:8-11**
- **Romans 12:9-13**
- **John 13:34-35**
- **Mark 10:35-45**
- **John 16:12-14**

Conclusion

In his commentary *The Early Christian Letters for Everyone*, N.T. Wright offers this reflection on truth in 3 John:

“Truth, as always in John, is not simply a fact or a quality. It is an energy, a power, the living and dynamic quality that transforms people, communities and ultimately the world. We are privileged to be caught up in the work of Truth, turning our misguided and often wicked world into a place where once again the creator God is honoured and glorified.”

Write down where you see evidence of this dynamic, transforming truth around you. Offer prayers of thanksgiving and ask God for his wisdom and for guidance in the opportunities where he’s calling you to be caught up in the work of truth through service.

<https://groundworkonline.com/episodes/recognize-and-imitate-good>

Printed on April 25, 2024