

**No
Greater
Joy**

4-10-22

3 John 4 (ESV) O/H

I have **no greater joy** than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

No greater joy! This statement is concerning a Pastor and his congregation. To get the full impact let us put this in a family sense. We might think parents have “no greater joy” than their son made the football team, their girl made the soccer team, and they both made straight A’s on their report card, etc., etc., but **No!** The parents greatest joy should be that their children are walking in the truth. Look at the first verse and see how the Apostle John addresses his disciple.

3 John 1 (ESV) O/H

The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

John addresses Gaius as “my dear friend,” and his warm affection for Gaius permeates this entire letter. John loves Gaius in the truth. Truth and love are the two most prominent themes in the John’s message. **This reflects the importance for right belief with true love.** Love is God’s nature. This self-giving love should be seen among Jesus’ disciples. Like Gaius, who are loved within the sphere of this truth, The truth about Jesus, his life, death, and teaching.

Now, John makes a fascinating statement.

3 John 2 (ESV) O/H

Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.

John prays that things will be well for Gaius' physical health consistent with his strong spiritual health. Here we see a clear connection of one's physical health to their spiritual health. Everyone gets sick in this fallen world. However, Christians should take notice that their physical health can often be equated with their spiritual health? John continues with his expression of joy.

3 John 3 (NIV) O/H

It gave me great joy when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth, telling how you continue to walk in it.

Again, John says he has no greater joy than his children are walking in the truth. Even other believers are telling John about Gaius's faithfulness to the truth and the sincerity in his daily living. Walking in the truth is so important because otherwise we would be walking in a "different" truth which would be in fact proclaiming a "different" Jesus and a "different" way of living together as God's people. Only one truth. Anyone with a different truth, let him be accursed.

Galatians 1:8–9 (ESV)

⁸ But even if we or an *angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. ⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

*Mormons - Angel Moroni

Like today with all the world's demonic lies with all the politically correct language that proclaims inclusiveness and perverted love which often is Satan's tool for paving the way to Hell for all its followers. Therefore, John and other Pastors have "No Greater Joy" than their children/disciples are walking in the truth! **John and other Pastors have a heartfelt concern and recognize their God given responsibility to their congregations.** Therefore:

3 John 4 (ESV) O/H

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

Now we can understand why there is "no greater joy" we can experience, than that our own "children" (natural or converts to the faith) are walking in the truth. The word "children" could of course designate "all" for whom one feels pastoral responsibility. The sense of intimacy among Christians is evident. The Pastor calls the congregation "my children". These are those for whom he feels a fatherly compassion and responsibility. *The use of these terms like "my children" directly reflects Jesus' use of the same terms for his disciples.* The church community should continue the same intimacy which was experienced among Jesus' loyal eleven apostles. This is God's command and God's goal. Therefore, with our heart and eyes set on God's love and through the power of the Holy Spirit we take on God's nature and through the Lord Jesus Christ love one another. **For such a difficult humanly task, we need to look at Scripture trusting God to change our heart and empower us.**

Therefore, listen to the reading of the Word of God.

Matthew 22:36–40 (ESV)

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

1 Corinthians 13:1–3 (ESV)

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:13 (ESV) O/H

So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; **but the greatest of these is love.**

Our ability to love comes first from understanding how much God loves us.

1 John 4:19 (ESV)

We love because he first loved us.

Love is important because the church is fulfilling Jesus' purpose!

John 15:9 (ESV) O/H

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.

With Love we carry the message.

1 Corinthians 2:2 (ESV)

For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.