

Building Strong Families Through Faith–Fitness–Finance

Introduction

“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” 3 John 2.

Remember there is always a spiritual principle and a natural reality. First the spiritual, then the natural, then the supernatural.

John was aged both in years and experience when he wrote this letter in conjunction with II John near the end of his life, about A. D. 90.

He is writing it to Gaius “the beloved”. Gaius was a common name in the Roman world, and the New Testament mentions a Gaius in Corinth (Romans 16: 23; I Corinthians 1: 14), in Macedonia (Acts 19: 29), and in Derbe (Acts 20: 4).

There is no evidence for associating the Gaius of 3 John with any of these men. Evidently he was a leader in some church in Asia.

Whereas in II John itinerant heretics were disturbing the faith of Christians, in this epistle genuine teachers of truth are making a circuit of the churches.

Why Does John Write This Letter?

In the previous epistle John forbade hospitality toward the false teachers; (II John 1: 10) **“If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him, for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.”**

here he encourages hospitality. (III John 5 – 8) **“5. Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, (v. 6) who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God you will do well. (V. 7) because they went forth for His name’s sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. (V.8) We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.**

However, Diotrephes, a domineering person in one of the churches, opposed the authority of John. In addition, he refused hospitality to the traveling missionaries and prohibited others from entertaining them, excommunicating them when they did. John wrote to encourage Gaius in his generosity and to rebuke Diotrephes for his uncharitable conduct.

In fulfilling the purpose John describes three personalities.

- 1). Gaius who has demonstrated his Christian faith by his generous hospitality, even to strangers.
- 2). Diotrephes, whose selfish pride was disrupting the harmony of the fellowship.
- 3). Is Demetrius whose life exemplified Christian fidelity and was worthy of imitation. These three men bear positive and negative witness to proper relationships among Christian people.

This letter portrays the church as a family united by bonds of love, with its members extending gracious hospitality toward one another. However, selfish ambition and factious jealousy imperil the church's fellowship, and its members must guard against such attitudes and strive to maintain a loving relationship with each other.

Verse 1 The Elder

He was suggesting that he was older than the other Christians and that his personal knowledge of the faith went back much further than theirs. He was appealing to his relationship with Christ as a means to challenge the pride of Diotrephes.

John prays that the temporal prosperity and physical health of Gaius will be commensurate with his spiritual status, which his generosity and conduct reveal to be in a healthy and prosperous condition.

Wishing the reader good **health** at the beginning of a letter was a common practice in ancient times, but John's prayer was sincere, not a matter of social convention. As such it gives a warrant for praying for the physical, the material and the spiritual well-being of others, and it provides a model for intercession.

Therein lye's the beginning of a concept that the Lord has given me for this season of our lives.

Faith Fitness and Finance

The word health in the Greek: hugiaino (hoog-ee-ahee-no) Compare it to hygiene and hygienic.

To be sound in body, in good health.

I). Spiritual Health

1. Sound Doctrine

Metaphorically, the word refers to doctrine (I Timothy 1: 3) **(v. 3) As I urged you when I went into Macedonia—remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine. (V. 4) nor give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which cause disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith. (V. 5) Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from sincere faith.”**

The issue here were those teachers who were trying to mix law and grace.

II Timothy 4: 3 **“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers:**

The issue here is people will prefer fables over truth.

Titus 2: 1 **“But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine.**

2. Sound Words

I Timothy 6: 3 **“If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness.**

The issue here is honoring widows, honoring Elders, and Honor Masters (the people you work for).

II Timothy 1: 13 **“Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.**

Paul is about to die, and has been deserted by a few false friends, and urges Timothy to fidelity by the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit.

3. Sound Faith

Titus 1: 13 **“This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.”**

The issue here was Cretans were known liars.

Titus 2: 1 **But for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine.**

So then what is our Goal? Prosperity.

A. Prosperity is a result of God’s Abundance.

It is clear that God wants His children to prosper. How can anyone deny that? However, prosperity should not be the end in itself. It ought to be the result of a quality of life, commitment, dedication, and action that is in line with God’s Word.

In this text the word “propser” (Greek eudoo) literally means “to help on the road” or “succeed in reaching.” It clearly implies that divine prosperity is not a momentary, passing phenomenon, but rather an ongoing, progressing state of success and well-being.

It is intended for every area of our lives: the spiritual, the physical and emotional, and the material. However, God does not want us to unduly emphasize any one area. We must maintain a balance.

Two Scriptures I want You to read because they will become powerful principles in our journey toward living prosperous lives. Successful lives. Lives full of expectation and results.

Luke 6: 38: **“Give and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.**

Mark 10: 21: **“Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: God your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.”**

But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Somebody say Balance.

I want to give you three definitions”

- 1). **Faith:** (1). **Confident belief in the truth, value, or trustworthiness of a person, idea or a thing.** (2). **Belief that does not rest on logical proof or material evidence.** (3). **Loyalty to a person or thing; allegiance.** (4) **The body of dogma of a religion.** (5) **A set of principles or belief’s.**
- 2). **Fitness:** (1). **The state or condition of being physically sound and healthy, especially as the result of exercise and proper nutrition.** (2). **A state of general mental or physical well-being.** (3). **The state of being suitably adapted to an environment.**
- 3). **Finance:** **The science that describes the management, creation and study of money, banking, credit, investments, assets and liabilities. Finance consists of financial systems, which include the public private and government spaces, and the study of finance and financial instruments, which can relate to countless assets and liabilities. Some prefer to divide finance into three categories.**
 - 1). **Public Finance**
 - 2). **Corporate Finance**
 - 3). **Personal Finance**

One of the dilemma’s we face is that we have heard the definition of faith so many times that we think we understand it. I am not saying that I have anything new to tell you. But I do want to share with you more than the traditional hearing of what faith is. As well as how you can begin to operate in faith in a way that will change your life and your perspective on your reality.

Hebrews 11: 1 - 3

(V. 1) “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (V.2) “For by it the Elders obtained a good testimony.” (V3). By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of thing which are visible.

Exnilih: Out of nothing God created everything.

The Key Principle here is the word Framed

Framed: (Greek: katartizo) kat-ar-tid-zoe: To arrange, set in order, equip, adjust, complete what is lacking, make fully ready, repair, prepare.

The word is a combination of kata, “down” and artios, “complete” “fitted.” It is used for the disciples’ mending their nets (Matthew 4: 12).

Paul says to Timothy in II Timothy 1: 12 For this reason I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.

II). The Focus of Faith

The focus of faith is knowing in whom we believe, not merely what we believe. Faith is more than understanding a particular promise—faith is knowing Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12: 2);

Focusing on the Person behind the Promise more than on the promise itself. This text notes a faith that centers in whom we believe.

Vital faith number

1. Rests in Him– II Timothy 4: 9 - 10
2. It abides in Him John 15: 4 – 7
3. It cannot be separated from Him. Romans 8: 38 – 39