

## WALKING IN THE TRUTH, THE SEQUEL

### I. 3 John 1:1-15 & Colossians 1:3-20

A. Back in the winter we spent a few months studying the book of 1 John. Last Sunday we did a whole sermon series on 2 John. Today we'll do a sermon series on 3 John. Many scholars consider 1 John something like a circulatory sermon or pamphlet. 2 John reads more like an actual letter. 3 John is more akin to a pastoral letter. It's written to a faithful believer named Gaius and was carried by a courier named, Demetrius. John commends both brothers for their faithfulness.

B. John also addresses a heavy handed church leader named Diotrephes, a controlling figure who's wielding excessive authority over his people. He rejects those legitimately sent by God to help the church. The man's orthodoxy may not be an issue but his orthopraxy, with regards to leadership, certainly is.

C. Once we glean good things from 3 John, we'll make our way to Colossians 1 and then to our Lord's Table. Today's title is, "*Walking in the Truth, the Sequel.*"

D. 3 John 1:1-15 (ESV) is written to a faithful servant Gaius and to all of us...

1) **V1-2: 1** The elder (a.k.a. pastor) to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. **2** 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. (It's good to pray for one another to be well, in body and soul. That's how and why we pray together on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. May God bless you all with *sozo*, with His shalom!)

2) **V3-4: 3** For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers (**Gk. Adelphoi, brothers & sisters**) came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. **4** I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. (Gaius is a solid believer, a good and faithful servant, a man who walks his talk, a man who is walking in the truth.)

3) **V5-6: 5** Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, **6** who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. (Gaius has extended hospitality and support to those who've been ordained and sent forth to encourage the church.)

4) **V7: 7** For they have gone out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. (In 2 John the issue was false teachers who John discouraged from inviting into their homes. Here John praises Gaius for extending hospitality to those who've been genuinely sent by God. It matters who you choose to let in your door.)

5) **V8-11: 8** Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth. **9** I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. (Even the Amish won't name one of their kids, Diotrephes!) **10** So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. (This former *son-of-thunder* is not afraid to have a face-to-face with Diotrephes!) And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church. **11** Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. ("**You will know them by their fruits!**" - Jesus...)

6) **V12-15: 12** Demetrius (**John's trust-worthy letter carrier.**) has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true. **13** I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink. **14** I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. **15** Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, each by name. (**I suspect Gaius kept that letter!**)

E. Jesus on the night He was betrayed, the night He shared the Bread & Cup, said to His disciples, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life, no one comes to the Father but by Me.*" Jesus not only was full of grace and truth. He not only spoke the truth, He was the truth. And He is the truth. Every ounce of love He ever showed never lacked the truth. And every syllable of truth He ever spoke was rooted in love.

F. The Gospel is more than a message about Jesus. The prize of the Gospel is greater than being forgiven, reconciled, redeemed, and adopted, greater than eternal life, the prize of the Gospel is God Himself in Christ Jesus our Lord! John Piper said: "The prize of the gospel is the Person who paid the price, God in Christ. In other words, the gospel is the good news that God in Christ paid the price of suffering, so that we could have the prize of enjoying Him forever. God paid the price of His Son to give us the prize of Himself." Therefore, to walk in this Truth with a spring in

our step is to know Him, love Him, and serve Him in joyful obedience, grace-instilled humility, and heartfelt thanksgiving and praise. And all that forevermore in the bliss of His holy and glorious presence!

**G. Colossians 1:3-20 (ESV) tells us all about the Prize...**

**1) V3-8: 3** We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, **4** since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, **5** because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, **6** which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, **7** just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf **8** and has made known to us your love in the Spirit. **(Another good and faithful servant and the founding pastor of the church in Colossae. Epaphras planted this church in his home town...)**

**2) V9-12: 9** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **11** being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

**3) V13-14: (What has God done through Jesus?) 13** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **(The Bread & Cup remind us.)**

**4) V15-17: (And who is Jesus?) 15** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. **16** For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. **17** And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. **(John 1:1-3 (ESV) echoes the same: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.")**

**5) V18-20: 18** And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. **19** For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through Him to reconcile to Himself **(turn from enmity to friendship)** all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross. **This is the truth of who Jesus is! (The Bread & Cup remind us.)**

**II. Communion**

**A. Share the story of Garlin Murl Conner, Medal of Honor Recipient...**

This past Tuesday The President of the U.S. posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor to Army First Lieutenant, Garlin Murl Conner. The President presented the medal to Garlin's 89 year old widow, Pauline, at the White House ceremony. This made Lt. Conner the second most decorated soldier of WW II, adding to his Distinguished Service Cross, 4 Silver Stars, 1 Bronze Star, French Awards for Valor, and 3 Purple Hearts, to name a few. On a snowy day in France, January 24, 1945, hundreds of Germans threatened to overrun the left flank of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. Wounded just weeks before and recently back with his unit, Lt. Conner immediately saw the gravity of this potentially perilous assault. Grabbing his telephone with spools of wire, he dashed straight towards the oncoming Germans. Gaining a foxhole position within a few yards of the advancing enemy, Lt. Conner called in his position to US Army artillery, instructing them to target his very own location. While friendly artillery fire rained down all around him, the enemy was eviscerated. Lt. Conner miraculously survived and his courageous actions spared the lives of countless brothers in arms.

**B. Jesus Christ, who was willingly raised up on a cross, likewise became the target of friendly fire as His Father's wrath came raining down on Him. That wrath was originally aimed at us but Jesus chose to absorb it in our place. As A.W. Tozer said:** "The cross is the lightning rod of grace that short-circuits God's wrath to Christ so that only the light of His love remains for believers." **As Galatians 3:13 (NLT) puts it:** "But Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law. When He was hung on the cross, He took upon Himself the curse for our wrongdoing. For it is written in the Scriptures, "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." **As 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV) declares it:** "God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." **This is the truth of who Jesus is and truth about what He has done for us! (The Bread & Cup reminds us.)**

**\* Pray & Serve Communion...**

**\* Benediction Verse: John 14:1-6 (ESV) will take us home: 1** Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. **2** In My Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?

**3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also. **4** And you know the way to where I am going.” **5** Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going. How can we know the way?” **6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

### **Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff**

#### **3 John 1:1-15 (ESV)**

**1** The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth. **2** 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. **3** For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. **4** I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. **5** Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, **6** who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. **7** For they have gone out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. **8** Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth. **9** I have written something to the church, but Diotrefes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. **10** So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church. **11** Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. **12** Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true. **13** I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink. **14** I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. **15** Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, each by name.

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**3** We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, **4** since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love that you have for all the saints, **5** because of the hope laid up for you in heaven. Of this you have heard before in the word of the truth, the gospel, **6** which has come to you, as indeed in the whole world it is bearing fruit and increasing—as it also does among you, since the day you heard it and understood the grace of God in truth, **7** just as you learned it from Epaphras our beloved fellow servant. He is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf **8** and has made known to us your love in the Spirit. **9** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to Him: bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; **11** being strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy; **12** giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. **13** He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, **14** in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. **15** He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. **16** For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through Him and for Him. **17** And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. **18** And He is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything He might be preeminent. **19** For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.

#### **John 14:1-6 (ESV)**

**1** Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. **2** In My Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? **3** And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also. **4** And you know the way to where I am going.” **5** Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going. How can we know the way?” **6** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

#### **Quote by John Piper**

"The prize of the gospel is the Person who paid the price, God in Christ. In other words, the gospel is the good news that God in Christ paid the price of suffering, so that we could have the prize of enjoying Him forever. God paid the price of His Son to give us the prize of Himself."

- John Piper, sermon titled, "The Price and the Prize of the Gospel" November 10, 2012. To check out the full sermon, go to: <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/god-in-christ-the-price-and-the-prize-of-the-gospel>

## **First Lieutenant Garlin Conner, Not Just Another Good Ole Boy From Kentucky**

by Pastor Steven A. Bush

On Tuesday, June 26, 2018, President Donald Trump posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor to Army First Lieutenant, Garlin Murl Conner. The President presented the medal to Garlin's 89 year old widow, Pauline, at a White House ceremony. This made Lt. Conner the second most decorated soldier of WW II, adding to his Distinguished Service Cross, 4 Silver Stars, 1 Bronze Star, French Awards for Valor, and 3 Purple Hearts, to name a few.

On a snowy day in France, January 24, 1945, hundreds of Germans threatened to overrun the left flank of Company K, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division of the U.S. Army. Wounded just weeks before and recently back with his unit, Lt. Conner immediately saw the gravity of this potentially perilous assault. Grabbing his telephone with spools of wire, he dashed straight towards the oncoming Germans. Gaining a foxhole position within a few yards of the advancing enemy, Lt. Conner called in his position to US Army artillery, instructing them to target his very location in order to repel the heavily armored attack. While friendly artillery fire rained down all around him, the enemy was eviscerated. Lt. Conner miraculously survived and his courageous actions spared the lives of countless brothers in arms. His gallantry, beyond the call of duty, is beyond inspiring.

Garlin Conner grew up as a humble farm boy in Kentucky and now he's among the favorite sons of the Bluegrass State. His actions are akin to the story of a shepherd boy named David, who was used by God to take down the Philistine giant, Goliath. That young man later become Israel's most famous warrior king. But an even greater story casts shade upon all the others. The Scriptures all converge on a hill in Jerusalem where a Roman cross is raised to crucify an innocent Man. Upon that shameful tree of execution, a Galilean Carpenter, God the Son, Jesus the Christ, was impaled. There, motivated but a love few can comprehend, He absorbed God's holy wrath against mankind. He became the target in order to save us all from sin and death. This Suffering Servant, this Sacrificial Lamb, Whom God raised from the dead, now sits enthroned as the King of kings and Lord of lords forevermore. This He did for you.

- PSB, June 26, 2018

### **Film Clips & Article Links**

**The Supremacy of Christ - John Piper**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VeKqfUGtcl0>

**The Truth Divides - R.C. Sproul**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UXafiauD8MM>

**What is the Truth? - Greg Laurie**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bndI3FIPFaM>

**Believing Jesus is Following Him - Matt Chandler**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehp5OAYILbk>

**President Trump Posthumously Awards Medal of Honor to Army First Lt. Garlin Conner.**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YaesX\\_ZrIQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YaesX_ZrIQ)

### **Bonus Stuff**

#### **John 1:1-14 (ESV)**

**1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made. **4** In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. **5** The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. **6** There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. **7** He came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, that all might believe through him. **8** He was not the Light, but came to bear witness about the Light. **9** The true Light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. **10** He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. **11** He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. **12** But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, **13** who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. **14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

### **John 8:31-32 (ESV)**

**31** So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are truly My disciples, **32** and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

### **John 16:12-15 (ESV)**

**12** I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. **13** When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come. **14** He will glorify Me, for He will take what is Mine and declare it to you. **15** All that the Father has is Mine; therefore I said that He will take what is Mine and declare it to you.

### **2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV)**

**15** Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

### **Communion - Westminster Confession of Faith**

Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein He was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of His body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in His church, unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of Himself in His death; the sealing of all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in Him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto Him; and, to be a bond and pledge of their communion with Him, and with each other, as members of His mystical body.

- WCF, Paragraph I, Chapter Chapter XXIX.

### **Quote by A.W. Pink**

"An honest heart loves the Truth."

### **Quote by Charles Spurgeon**

"Nothing makes a man so virtuous as belief of the truth. A lying doctrine will soon beget a lying practice. A man cannot have an erroneous belief without by-and-by having an erroneous life. I believe the one thing naturally begets the other."

### **Quote by Frederick W. Robertson (English Clergyman 1816 - 1853)**

"Truth lies in character. Christ did not simply speak the truth; He was truth; truth, through and through; for truth is a thing not of words, but of life and being."

### **Quote by Henry Ironside**

"Great truths that are stumbling blocks to the natural man are nevertheless the very foundations upon which the confidence of the spiritual man is built."

### **Quote by John MacArthur**

"Love and truth must be maintained in perfect balance. Truth is never to be abandoned in the name of love. But love is not to be deposited in the name of truth... Truth without love has no decency; it's just brutality. On the other hand, love without truth has no character; it's just hypocrisy."

### **Quote by Augustine**

"A thing is not necessarily true because badly uttered, nor false because spoken magnificently."