

**Acts 17:6**, The Jews in Thessalonica accuse the disciples of Jesus saying...

"These men ... have turned the world upside down."

We are in Luke 6 and we are studying these 12 men who turned the world upside down. These are...

### **Title: The 12 that Jesus Picked**

So far we have covered two sets of brothers... **Peter and Andrew**, and, **James and John**. We didn't finish with James and John, so we'll do that today.

So, after 2 weeks of practice... **Can you name the 12 Apostles?**

I shared with you a little trick. Remember that? - **5J - 2 P - BASTM**

- 5J: **John**, James, James, Judas, Judas
- 2P: **Peter**, Philip
- BASTM: **Bartholomew**, Andrew, Simon, Thomas, Matthew

We covered last time: **James and John**

- **Sons** of Zebedee and Salome
- **Salome** is disciple of Jesus. **She asks Jesus** to give honored positions to her sons. And, she is there at the crucifixion and the resurrection.
- Salome is the **sister of Mary**... which would make her the aunt of Jesus. And, that would make James and John first cousins of Jesus.
- Commercial **fishermen** and they have a partnership with Peter
- Probably pretty **well off**: They have hired servants and their family is known to the high priest.
- These are **passionate**, radical men ... so much so that Jesus calls them the **"Sons of Thunder"**

In Luke 9, Jesus is rejected in a Samaritan village. And, the sons of thunder are angry.

### **Luke 9:54**

When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, "Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"

Despite how impulsive and trigger happy these men are, Jesus had a special place for them.

James and John, along with Peter, were in **Jesus' inner circle**.

These 3 were singled out at the raising of Jairus's daughter, at the transfiguration, at private meeting about eschatology and at the Garden of Gethsemane.

### **Raising of Jairus's Daughter**

Mark and Luke say that he wouldn't let anyone go with him except for...

Mark 5:37 and Luke 8:51

And he allowed no one to follow him except **Peter and James and John** the brother of James.

### Similarly, at the **Transfiguration**

Matthew, Mark and Luke all mention that Jesus specifically took **these 3** up the mountain to pray. Up where they would see Jesus in his glory at the transfiguration.

Matthew 17:1, Mark 9:2, Luke 9:28

Then, there was...

### **The Eschatology Meeting**

In Mark 13, it mentions **Peter, James, John and Andrew** coming to Jesus in a private meeting. Jesus has spoken about end times, or future things, and they inquire...

#### **Mark 13:3**

<sup>3</sup>And as he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, **Peter and James and John and Andrew** asked him privately, <sup>4</sup>**"Tell us, when will these things be,** and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?"

These 3 are the leaders amongst the apostles. They are the curious ones. It's not surprising that they are the ones asking the questions. That they are the ones having private meetings with Jesus.

Jesus has singled them out, and in this case they single him out and ask for a meeting.

### **Garden of Gethsemane**

Jesus tells all the disciples to stop. He says, "Sit here while I pray." Then, it says...

#### **Mark 14:33**

He took with him **Peter and James and John**, and began to be greatly distressed and troubled.

It is these 3 who are the most intimate with Jesus. They are with him when he raises Jairus's dead daughter back to life. They are with him when he displays his glory at the transfiguration. And, they are with him when he has a breakdown at the garden of Gethsemane.

They see him **greatly distressed and troubled**.

Literally, they see him thoroughly terrorized. They see him in anguish. They see him depressed.

The strongest of 3 Greek words for depression is used here to describe Jesus.

Jesus doesn't hide that from them. He lets them see him in one of his weakest, most challenging moments.

Jesus had truly chosen these **3** for something special.

**Galatians 2:9** – We see that it is these 3 who **commission the Apostle Paul**.

When **James and Cephas and John**, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given to me, they gave the right hand of fellowship to Barnabas and me, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

He says they **seemed to be pillars** in the church. Jesus had chosen them for a distinct leadership role. And, the people in the church recognized that. People looked up to them in a special way probably because of their closeness to Jesus, their wisdom and their leadership abilities.

They gave Paul the **right hand of fellowship**. They welcomed him and acknowledged that God was doing an important work in Paul and **through** the ministry of Paul.

This is no small thing. It was critical for the **health** and **vitality** of the church that these 4 men are united. All of the Pauline epistles in the NT would be suspect if this **stamp of approval** was not given to Paul by the Apostles, especially by the BIG 3, Jesus's inner circle of disciples.

It is hard to talk about James and John separately because so often they do everything together.

But this starts to change in the book of Acts.

## **James**

In Acts 12, **James** becomes the first Apostle to be executed. **Stephen** was the first martyr, but James was the first Apostle to be killed.

## **Acts 12:1-2**

About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. He killed James the brother of John with the sword.

The death of James comes quickly in the book of Acts so it's easy to think that James died only months after the ascension.

But James wasn't killed until around 44 AD – which was 11 – 18 years after the cross depending where you place the crucifixion. So James spent 11+ years in fruitful ministry before he died.

James preached in Jerusalem and Judea. Some Catholics have argued that James also preached in Spain, but this seems **highly unlikely**. Even Catholic scholars will argue with this point.

Why?

Because of what the Apostle **Paul says in Romans 15**. Paul said he hoped to visit Rome **on his way to Spain**...arguing that he did **not want to build on someone else's foundation** but rather preach the gospel where it had not been preached...implying that James didn't go to Spain and the gospel had not yet been preached in Spain.

Herod **arrested James** and had him killed with the sword. **Clemens Alexandrinus**, as recorded in Foxes Book of Martyrs, shares a few more details to the story.

As the executioner of James led him away to die, James, bold to the very end, looked upon his accuser who had betrayed him, and James commanded him to repent of his conduct and place his faith in Christ.

The accuser fell at the feet of James begging for pardon. After some deliberation, James said, "Peace be with you" and he kissed him. That man, proclaiming himself to be a Christian, he resolved that James would not receive the crown of martyrdom alone. They were beheaded together.

James was the first apostle to be martyred, and **ironically**, his brother, **John**, was the only apostle not to die a martyr's death.

## **John**

Many scholars argue that John was the closest to Jesus.

John never mentions his own name in the book of John, but every time he refers to himself as the "**Disciple whom Jesus loved**". (**John 19:26**)

In **John 13:1**, we see that **Jesus loved all of his disciples**.

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, **he loved them** to the end.

But it seems like there was a way in which John embraced this love and identified with this love more than any of the other disciples.

Salome's desire was that her son be as close to Jesus as he possible could be, and John's desire was the same.

**John deeply loved Jesus, and he was confident that Jesus deeply loved him.**

If there was any gift in the world that I could give you as your pastor, it would be that. I want you to know the **joy** of deeply loving Jesus, and I want you to know the happiness that comes from being confident that **Jesus deeply loves you**.

John was likely the **youngest** of the disciples. He may have been only around 17 years of age.

At the last supper, it is John who sits next to Jesus and lays his head on Jesus' chest.

John was young, bold and full of passion for Jesus and the kingdom of God. He too was one of the sons of thunder. Likely, his passion was slightly muted at times because he operated in a world where most of the people around him were **OLDER** than him.

Yet, he with James was ready to call fire down from heaven. And, he with his brother proclaimed his willingness to suffer and die with Jesus.

**John was loyal.**

**Mark 9:38-39** – John, presumably with passion and excitement, runs up to Jesus and he says:

“Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.”

**John is thinking:** Jesus is not going to like this. That man does not have permission from Jesus to do what he’s doing. That man is violating copyright.

So John tells him off. “**You’re not** one of Jesus’ disciples. What are you doing using his name!?”

Despite John’s right motives and enthusiasm, Jesus corrects him.

But Jesus said [to John], “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.”

**John was trusted.**

**Luke 22:8**

So Jesus sent Peter and **John**, saying, “Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat it.”

Jesus trusts Peter and John to get the job done.

Jesus relied on John. Peter did as well.

At the Lord’s Supper

**John 13:22-24** – **Jesus speaks of his betrayer.**

<sup>22</sup>The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke.<sup>23</sup>One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved [that’s John], was reclining at table at Jesus’ side, <sup>24</sup>so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking.

Peter may have relied on John to ask just because John was sitting next to Jesus, but I sense that Peter feels he can trust John as well. John will get the job done. John will give me the straight scoop.

I imagine Peter could relate well to this son of thunder.

After Judas betrayed Jesus in the garden, **ALL** the disciples fled. However, **2** of the disciples stopped. They turned around and went with the crowd to see what would happen to Jesus. Those 2 were Peter and John.

John followed Jesus all the way to the cross. John was the only disciple present at the cross.

**John 19:25-27** – We see how much confidence Jesus has in John.

<sup>25</sup> Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" <sup>27</sup> Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

Jesus says to John: **Take care of my mother.**

When Jesus makes that statement, I can't imagine there's a dry eye in earshot of Jesus.

This has to be one of the greatest honors given to man. Jesus says, "**John, I trust you.** I trust you with my own mother. I know you will take good care of her."

Many have questioned why Jesus would do this: **Jesus had other brothers.** **Why not just let them take care of Mary?**

It's difficult to say. Mary was most likely a widow at this time. Jesus' brothers were **not present at the cross**, and most scholars think that they were **not yet believers**.

As Mary's **oldest son**, Jesus had a cultural obligation to take care of his mother. At his death, he passed that responsibility on to John.

Also, because **John was younger** and **John would live** into his older years that may have made him the most reliable person to take care of Mary.

Jesus knew what great troubles would befall the other apostles as well as his own brothers. Perhaps, that's why he chose John.

According to **Hyppolitus** of Thebes, **Mary** lived for 11 years after the death of her son **Jesus, dying** in 41 AD. Mary probably stayed with John in Jerusalem until her death.

Now, don't forget that **Salome is standing there**. She hears Jesus say to John, **"Woman, behold your son!"** and she knows that Jesus is not speaking to her.

Salome hears Jesus say to John, **"Behold your mother."** and she knows Jesus is not referring to her.

**Salome could easily take offense at this.**

"Son, don't listen to him. She ain't your mama. I'm your mama. I'm the one that brought you into this world. How about you taking care of me?"

But I don't think that's how it was. I think Salome's buttons were busting. She was so proud of her boys.

She wanted greatness for her sons. And, the messiah had called upon one **HER BOY** to take care of his OWN mother. What an honor! What an honor for John and what an honor for Salome, the birth mother of John.

Salome wanted to give her everything for the kingdom of God, and part of her everything was giving her sons. Since that day, many **proud mothers of martyrs** have followed in the steps of Salome.

When she **lost James**, amidst the sorrow and grief, I'm sure there was some joy ... as this godly mother rejoiced that her son was chosen to be the first Apostle martyred in the church.

**John** dearly loves Jesus.

He is the apostle that goes running to the tomb and beats Peter. John is the first apostle to believe that Jesus did what he said he would do. John is the first apostle to believe that Jesus rose from the dead.

**Unlike Thomas**, he didn't need to see the wounds on his hands and feet. He heard the testimony of Mary Madgalene and saw the empty tomb, and he smiled. "**It's all true!**" He did it. He really did it!

After the resurrection, when Jesus visits the **disciples** who are **fishing**, they don't realize it's him until they catch a huge net full of fish.

### **John 21:7**

That disciple whom **Jesus loved** therefore said to Peter, "It is the Lord!"

John is the first one to recognize that it's Jesus.

John wrote **5 books of the Bible**: gospel of John, 3 epistles and the book of Revelation

He **founded the churches** of Smyrna, Pergamos, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea and Thyatira, which are 6 of the 7 churches that are mentioned in the book of Revelation.

John was not martyred, but that wasn't because the devil didn't try.

While in Ephesus, he was sentenced to be executed in Rome. There, according to Tertullian, John was thrown into a cauldron of **boiling oil**, but he miraculously survived. Foxes book of martyrs says, "He escaped by miracle, without injury."

John was sentenced to be poisoned to death. He did take the **poison**, but he didn't die.

Roman emperor, Domitian, exiled John to the **island of Patmos**. There he wrote the book of the Revelation.

Later John returned to Ephesus, and he died of natural causes around 98 AD.

## Resurrection

### **John 20:1-10**

Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. <sup>2</sup>So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." <sup>3</sup>So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. <sup>4</sup>Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. <sup>5</sup>And stooping to look in, he



saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. <sup>6</sup>Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, <sup>7</sup>and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.<sup>8</sup>Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; <sup>9</sup>for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. <sup>10</sup>Then the disciples went back to their homes.

## John 20

<sup>15</sup>When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." <sup>16</sup>He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." <sup>17</sup>He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. <sup>18</sup>Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." <sup>19</sup>(This he said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, "Follow me."

## Jesus and the Beloved Apostle

<sup>20</sup>Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" <sup>21</sup>When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!" <sup>23</sup>So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"

<sup>24</sup>This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

<sup>25</sup> Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

Beloved, closest to Jesus

- NT writer
- Patmos
- Poison
- Boiling

*The Lame Beggar Healed*

### **Acts 3:1**

[ *The Lame Beggar Healed* ] Now Peter and **John** were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour.

### **Acts 3:3**

Seeing Peter and **John** about to go into the temple, he asked to receive alms.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

### **Acts 3:4**

And Peter directed his gaze at him, as did **John**, and said, "Look at us."

### **Acts 3:11**

[ *Peter Speaks in Solomon's Portico* ] While he clung to Peter and **John**, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them in the portico called Solomon's.

### **Acts 4:1**

[ *Peter and John Before the Council* ] And as they were speaking to the people, the priests and the captain of the temple and the Sadducees came upon them,

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

### **Acts 4:6**

with Annas the high priest and Caiaphas and **John** and Alexander, and all who were of the high-priestly family.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

### **Acts 4:13**

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and **John**, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

### **Acts 4:19**

But Peter and **John** answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge,

### **Acts 8:14**

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and **John**,

### **Acts 12:2**

He killed James the brother of **John** with the sword,

The Epistles

1 John

# 1 John: how to recognize the children of God



False teachers had arisen from among the church. Now some people were teaching that Jesus wasn't human, denying that He was the true Messiah. It was probably easier to get away with than it ever had been: the apostles were growing older, and churches were springing up all over the Roman Empire.

Plus these teachers claimed to be Christians, which would have been very troubling for the young churches to hear. Whom can they believe, and how can they evaluate new teachers as they come? The author of 1 John has the answers. He knows the truth, and so he writes a letter to help the church know how to tell the children of God from the impostors. (Who is this author? The church has debated this for centuries, but traditionally it's attributed to [John, the son of Zebedee](#). We'll call the author "John" for this article.)

John combats false teaching with absolutes: truth and lies, light and darkness, love and hate, sin and righteousness, Christ and antichrist. He shows the church how to tell if they are children of God and how to tell if a teacher is trying to deceive them.

This is a letter written from a wise and loving father to a troubled church. John writes to older men ("fathers"), young men, and children, but he addresses all of them as his "little children"—a term of endearment that a loving father would use for his child.

John's letter moves around from theme to theme, but he makes three things very clear to the church:

1. The children of God believe in Jesus Christ
2. The children of God keep His commandments
3. The children of God love one another

And John as far as John is concerned, the people he writes to are children of God ([1 Jn 5:13](#)).

Theme verse in 1 John

This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. ([1 Jn 3:23](#))

2 John

## 2 John: walking in truth, love, and obedience



The author of [1 John](#) set several things straight in his first epistle. He'd told the churches how to know if they were of the faith, he'd dressed down the false teachings that were making their rounds, and he'd strongly urged the Christians to love one another.

He'd told them about truth, love, and obedience—now he writes to tell them what to do about it. In Second John, the elder ([2 Jn 1](#)) briefly explains the relationship between the three:

- Love and truth. John loves those who know the truth, because the truth “abides” in them ([2 Jn 1–2](#)). When two parties know the truth, love comes naturally.
- Truth and obedience. God the Father commanded that His children walk in truth ([2 Jn 4](#)). When you know the truth, obedience comes naturally.
- Obedience and love. The commandment that God gave isn't anything new: “love one another” ([2 Jn 5](#)). A sure sign of obedience to God is love for His church, and a sure sign of love is obedience to God ([2 Jn 6](#)).

He then warns that “many deceivers have gone out into the world” ([2 Jn 7](#)), and that the Christians should watch themselves. They should beware of teachers who do not acknowledge Jesus' human life and who deviate from the things He taught ([2 Jn 8–9](#)). Such people are dangerous: the church

shouldn't side with them, shouldn't invite them in, and shouldn't participate in their actions ([2 Jn 10-11](#)).

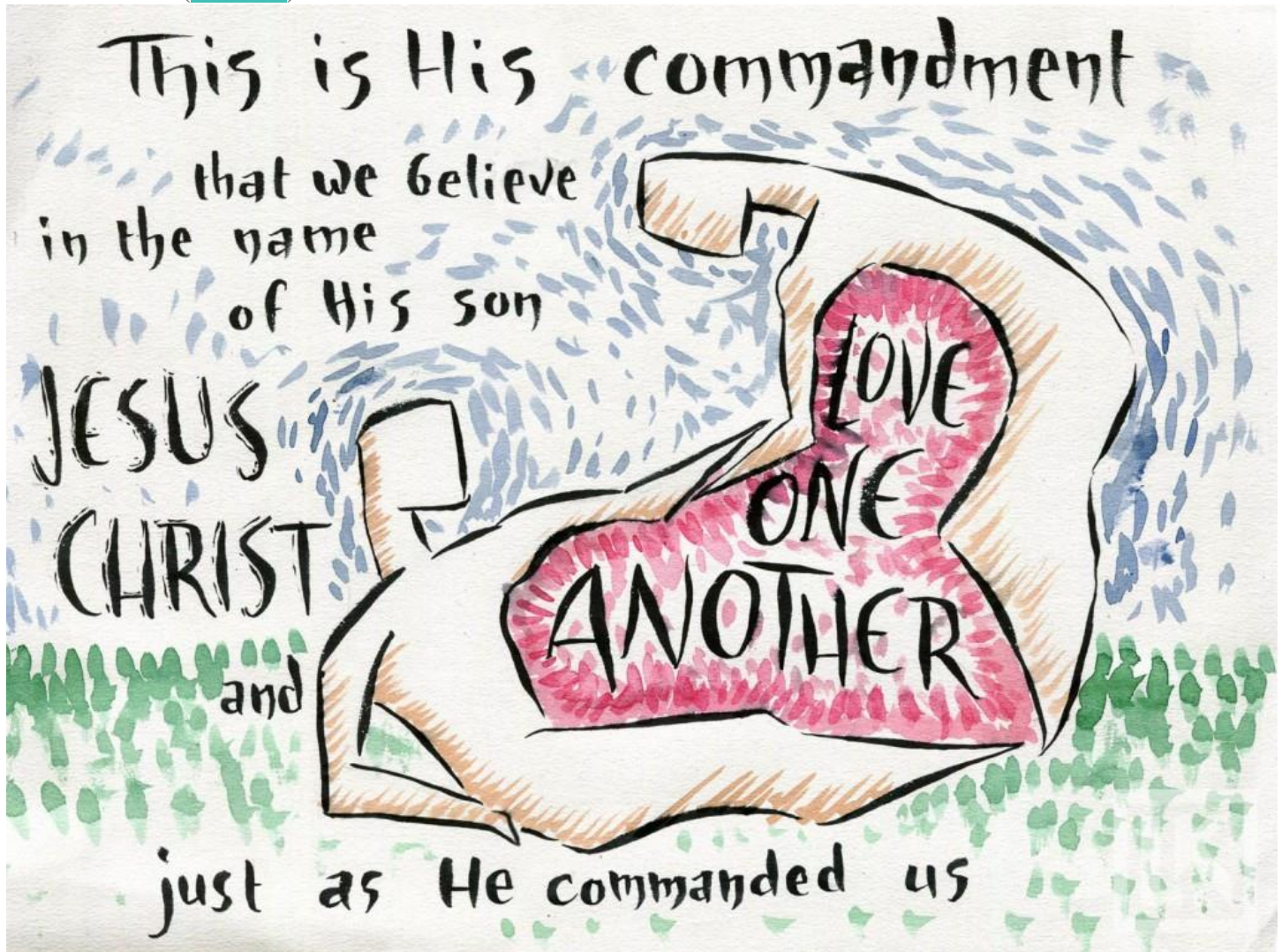
(Who is this elder? The church has debated this for centuries, but traditionally it's attributed to [John, the son of Zebedee](#). We'll call the author "John" for this article.)

John is a bit cryptic in this letter, but he seems well aware of this. He would rather discuss this and more in person, so he lets the audience know that he hopes to visit soon ([2 Jn 12](#)).

Because truth, love, and obedience should be a part of everyday life, and the church needs to understand how.

Theme verse in 2 John

And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it. ([2 Jn 6](#))



# 3 John: the fellowship of truth



Gaius knows the truth. He was [baptized](#) by Paul and traveled with him ([1 Co 1:14](#); [Acts 19:29](#)). Later, he hosted Paul and a local church ([Ro 16:23](#)). Now he's earned a reputation for his hospitality among the Christians ([3 Jn 5-6](#)). And hospitality is a good, powerful thing: [the apostle John](#) says that by supporting these men, we join them in their work for the truth.

Sadly, not everyone is like Gaius.

The power-hungry Diotrephes is stirring up strife in Gaius' church. He's rejecting John's earlier letter, babbling accusations against the apostle, and even excommunicating church members who welcome other Christians into their homes ([3 Jn 9-10](#)).

**WHEN TRUTH  
IS REJECTED,**

**FELLOWSHIP IS  
FRACTURED.**

OverviewBible.com

When truth is rejected, fellowship is fractured.

This won't do. Jesus has commanded Christians to love one another ([Jn 13:34](#)), and now the elder writes to Gaius to let him know three things:

1. Gaius is doing the right thing, even though Diotrephes is condemning hospitality.
2. Gaius should not imitate what is evil, but instead imitate what is good ([3 Jn 11](#)).

3. John is coming to straighten things out.

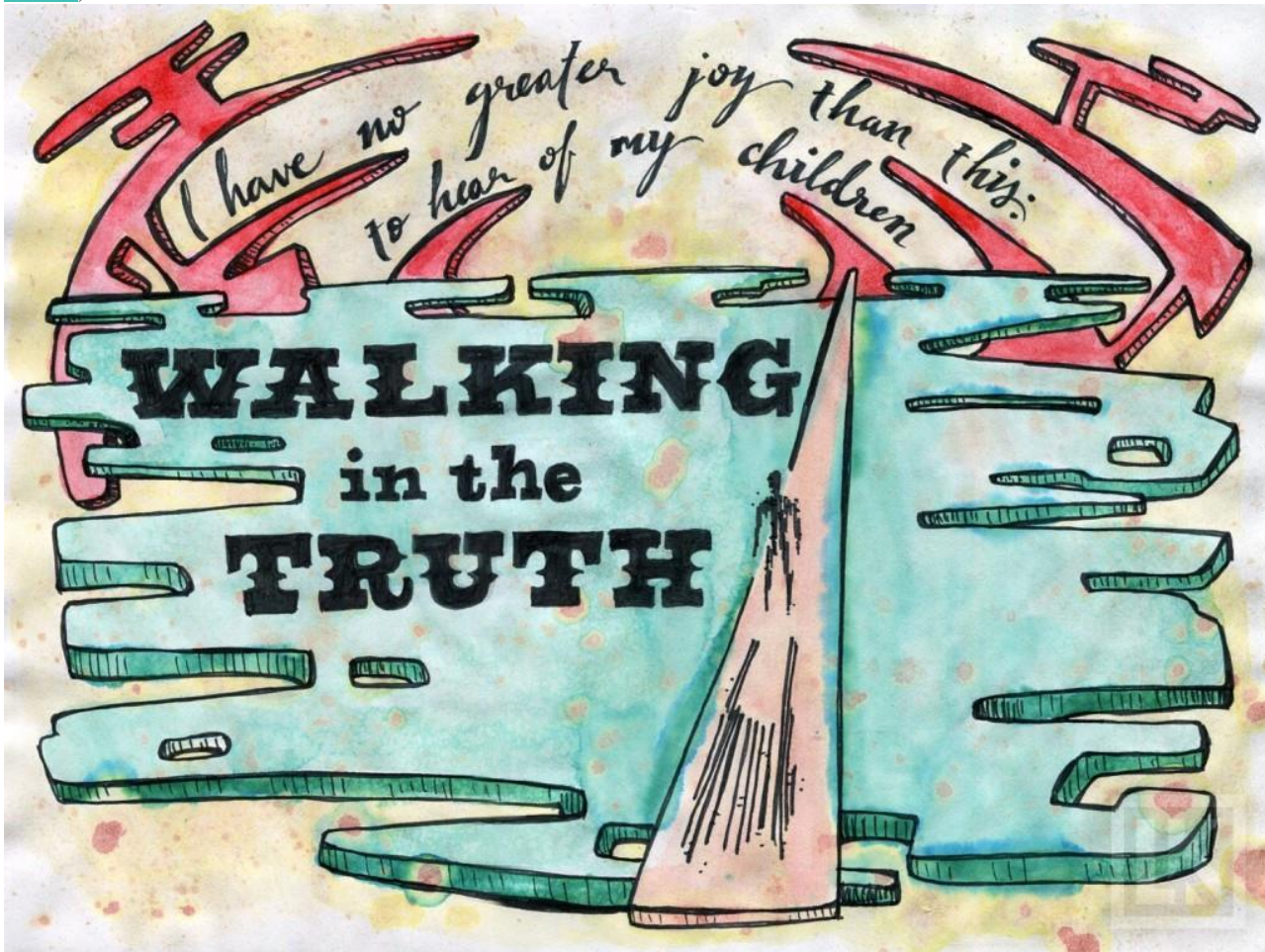
(Who is this elder? The church has debated this for centuries, but traditionally it's attributed to John, the son of Zebedee. We'll call the author "John" for this article.)

John will soon arrive to put things right in person ([3 Jn 14](#)). He'll hold Diotrephes accountable for his words and deeds ([3 Jn 10](#)). Soon, John will arrive.

And there will be peace in truth ([3 Jn 15](#)).

Theme verse of 3 John

I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth. ([3 Jn 4](#))



The Revelation

### **Revelation 1:1**

[ *Prologue* ] The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant **John**,

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

### **Revelation 1:4**



[ *Greeting to the Seven Churches* ] **John** to the seven churches that are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne,

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

### **Revelation 1:9**

[ *Vision of the Son of Man* ] I, **John**, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in Jesus, was on the island called Patmos on account of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus.

[In Context](#) | [Full Chapter](#) | [Other Translations](#)

### **Revelation 22:8**

I, **John**, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me,