

Life-Sharing—"How To Kill A Church" 3 John 1:9-12

1. If you had to give one piece of advice to Satan on how to kill a church what advice would you give?
2. What are some of the motives that people have for coming to church other than getting to know Jesus Christ?
3. Who was the John who wrote 3 John.

⁹ I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us. ¹⁰ So when I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, spreading malicious nonsense about us. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome other believers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.

¹¹ Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God. ¹² Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone—and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.

4. What was at the root of Diotrephes' problem?

How does his problem conflict with Jesus' statement Mark 9:35 Today's New International Version (TNIV) ³⁵ Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all."

5. What are ways in which we find ourselves like Diotrephes in which we insist things be done in the church the way we want them to be done?

6. What was a change that took place in the church that you fought against or resisted, but it actually helped the church.

7. One of the problems that kills a church is the amount of negative feedback that members share with each other about the church or other members or ministries of the church. Why do you think people put up with the negative gossip that Diotrephes was spreading about John and the other leaders in the church?

8. Almost all churches suffer from a negative feedback loop. What do you do when people who are members of our church attack our church verbally in your presence?

9. Why do you think Diotrophes refused to welcome other believers and put out of the church those that wanted to welcome in new people?

10. How guilty are you of not wanting to welcome in new people? How do we unintentionally make new people feel unwelcomed?

11. When was the last time you spent at least 2 minutes talking to a new person after church?

12. What made Demetrius radically different from Diotrephes?

13. What will you do in the final three months of this year to make our guest feel welcomed?

Life-Sharing Lesson 2 “How To Heal The Church” Philippians 2:1-5

1. What happens to you when you get an infection?

2. What kind of things will infect a church?

Philippians 2:1-5 Imitating Christ's Humility ¹ Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ² then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³ Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴ not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. ⁵ In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had:

3. What does it mean for the members of the ministries of the church to be like-minded?

4. What is it to be one in Spirit and in mind?

5. How do we curb selfish ambition or vain conceit in the church? Whose responsibility is it to keep these things in check?

6. What are the practical steps involved in valuing others above yourself? What does this look like in a church?

7. What are some of our own personal interests that we must let go of in order to make the church healthier?

8. What are some of the interests of others that we need to become more aware of in the life of the church?

9. Should we come to church with an attitude of receiving something from God or an attitude of service to others for God? Why?

10. How would our church change if 90% of those arriving came with an expectation on Sunday that God would use them today to make a positive difference in someone else's life?

11. What is it to have the mind of Christ? Matthew 20:26-28 ²⁶ Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— ²⁸ just as the

Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Life-Sharing Lesson 3 “How To Build The Church” John 17:20-26

1. Other than the Spirit, what do you think is the most powerful weapon the church has at its disposal in changing the mind of the world?
2. When Jesus prays that we might be one, what do you think Jesus is actually praying for?
3. What does being one look like in a family of believers?
4. What does being one look like in a family of mixed believers and unbelievers?
5. What does it mean for us to be in Christ in order for the world to believe that Jesus was sent by the Father?
6. Why does Jesus pray for us to be in Him for the world to believe, instead of praying that we would have great evangelism program for the world to believe?

7. How important do you think it is for believers to love other believers and what do you mean by the word love in this context?

8. Why is speaking encouraging words to one another a great way to build the church?

9. What do you think Jesus means by praying for us to be brought to complete unity?

10. Why is church growth important based on verse 24?

11. What happens to us when Jesus is in us in the way He prays to be in us in verses 25 and 26?

12. Where do you think evangelism begins to take place?

13. How should you practice evangelism inside the church?

Life-Sharing Lesson 4 "Changing The World"

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the phrase, "the church is changing the world."

Acts 17 In Thessalonica ¹ When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue. ² As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, ³ explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah," he said. ⁴ Some of the Jews were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a large number of God-fearing Greeks and not a few prominent women. ⁵ But other Jews were jealous; so they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas in order to bring them out to the crowd. ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting: "These men who have caused trouble all over the world have now come here, ⁷ and Jason has welcomed them into his house. They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus." ⁸ When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil. ⁹ Then they made Jason and the others post bond and let them go.

2. What is Paul's message about Jesus Christ?

3. Why do you think Paul's message would be appealing to a large number of God fearing Greeks and prominent women?

4. How is Jesus Christ a liberating force that will change the world?

5. How does people reaching people for Christ cause jealousy and anger today?

6. How would you have felt if you were Jason being dragged out of your house for the cause of Christ?

7. How would you feel if our church was accused of having caused trouble all over the world?

8. Where should the church be causing trouble in our society today?

9. Is the church more effective when it is protesting against something or when it's doing something behind the scenes to minister to people who are being affected by the problem? Which should come first?

10. Why is insisting that Jesus is the king to whom we owe allegiance such a threat to the world today?

11. Do you think Jason's experience made him a stronger believer or a believer willing to be content staying out on the fringe? Why?

12. What's the cost that we are not willing to pay to change the world today?

13. Of the following, what is it that you are most resistant to give up for the cause of Christ? Your time, your talents, your wealth, your sin, your comfort, your pride or your fear.

Life-Sharing Lesson 5 “Did God Change His Standards” I Corinthians 6:9-11

1. If somebody points and says, “now there’s a wicked person,” what image comes to your mind about the person being called wicked.

2. What do you think God means when God says that someone is wicked in the New Testament?

1 Corinthians 5:9-11 Today's New International Version (TNIV)⁹ I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—¹⁰ not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. ¹¹ But now I am writing to you that you must not associate with any who claim to be fellow believers but are sexually immoral or greedy, idolaters or slanderers, drunkards or swindlers. With such persons do not even eat. ¹² What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? ¹³ God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked person from among you.”^[a]

3. Why do you think the word of God is telling us it is okay to associate with immoral people in the world, but not immoral people in the church?

4. How do we apply grace, forgiveness and discipline to the above group of believers?

5. How is this judging different than judging in Matthew 7:1 when Jesus said, “do not judge or you too will be judged.”

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Today's New International Version (TNIV) ⁹ Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor practicing homosexuals ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

6. The word wrongdoers has usually been translated wicked in other translations. When all the changes that have taken place in our society, can God still hold people to this standard found in verses 9-10, why or why not?
7. Why does God put the sexual sins on the same levels of being greedy, slanders and swindlers?
8. Is it possible to remove items from the bible listed as sin, based on new scientific research based on psychology, psychiatry, and other mental or medical disciplines. Why or why not?

9. What do you think was God's purpose in identifying some things as sin?

10. How do we know that God simply can't wink and look the other way when it comes to sin?

11. How do we know that Paul was accepting of people who practiced these behaviors listed in this passage?

12. What is the great hope and encouragement that is found in this passage?