

# John

**“The Disciples”**



*John is represented by the chalice with the serpent. Supposedly an attempt to poison John was averted when he blessed the chalice with the poison and the poison escaped in the form of a serpent.*

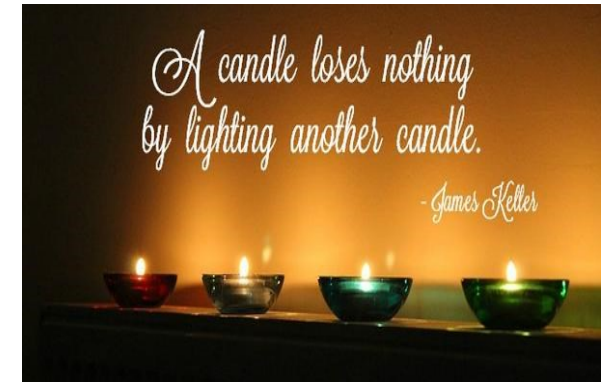
Are you like your father in disposition? What was the father of John like to be called “Thunder?” Perhaps this is not reference to his father, but something else. Many scholars have attached different meanings to being called a “son of Thunder.” One authority defines the term as being one who speaks with authority and often in an aggressive manner. John’s book in the Bible is definitely aggressive in talking about the love of God. Perhaps the best known verse in the Bible is John 3:16.

*“And John answered and said, ‘Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us.’ And Jesus said unto him, ‘Forbid him not: for he that is not against us is for us.’”  
Luke 9:49-50.*

John, called “Son of Thunder,” was ambitious. We know that he lived a long life and worked to spread the Gospel for many years. We also know that John spent much time with Christ. But, he was humbled by Christ on several occasions also. One such occasion is given in the Scripture reference above. John thought he knew what he should do, and he was sometimes early to act. Then he had to step back, and think it out again.

John was a doer, and he did what Christ commanded him to do. John realized that he was “a son of thunder” and sometimes too eager, but he loved the Lord, and he was willing to do whatever it took to spread the “Good News.”

John’s personality seems to change as we go through his life story. In the beginning he is called a son of Thunder but later on when he and Christ had spent quite a bit of time together he’s often referred to as John the beloved. One time when Jesus and the disciples were in Samaria on their way to Jerusalem they needed some help and they were refused. James and John heard he had been refused and said “Lord, do



*you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?” Luke 9:54. But when Christ was on the cross the one he called to take care of his mother, Mary, was John. Of the disciples, only John and Matthew wrote books of the Bible.*

Some people are talkers, and some are doers. It takes both to make the Kingdom grow. Whichever you are, you are important, just as John, Peter, and all the others were important although they were all different. Our problem comes when we try to put everyone into “our mold.” Christ took these men where they were, with their varied personalities, and they did the job.

John was the disciple who dared to be at the cross during the crucifixion. He certainly put himself in a place of danger. Most scholars believe that he wrote Revelation. John was with Jesus during much of the time that Christ was on this earth.

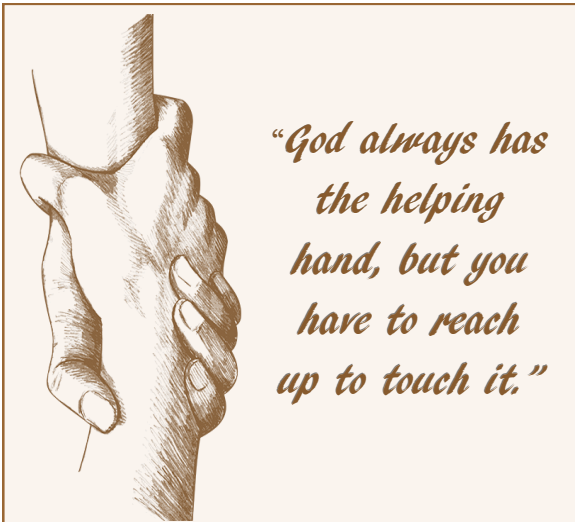
We all have talents. Some of us could be called “a son of thunder.” But the Lord will use us as we are. The only thing we have to realize is that we are as varied as the disciples, and we need to recognize each other’s gifts, and not

criticize those who are not like us.

People will often say about someone “he marches to a different drummer.” Is that wrong? In Thoreau’s “Walden”, he states *“If a man loses pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured, or far away.”*

How can that affect the way we act? Do we accept the person who hears a different drum, the one who is willing to take a stand on what he/she believes? Sometimes these people, like John, are not tied down with social norms and expectations. They follow what they believe. If a person is willing to do the work of the Lord, even though it is a little different than the way we do it, we need to acknowledge him and support him to others.

Everyone has gifts. By the same token, sometimes we are called to stand alone. Our only concern needs to be the people that don’t use their talent for the good of the Kingdom. Too often we are afraid to



stand up for someone because he is a little different, or like John, he comes across a little brusque. Only when we love this person where he is can we sing the song, “They’ll know we are Christians by our love.” The words are given at the end of this devotional. I pray that we can all sing it and know we are doing God’s will and will some day be in His kingdom together with Christ.

“We are one in the Spirit,  
We are one in the Lord,  
We are one in the Spirit,  
We are one in the Lord,  
And we pray that all unity may  
one day be restored.

“We will walk with each other,  
We will walk hand in hand,  
We will walk with each other,  
We will walk hand in hand,  
And together we’ll spread the news  
that God is in our land.

“We will work with each other,  
We will work side by side,  
We will work with each other,  
We will work side by side,  
And we’ll guard each one’s dignity  
and save each one’s pride.

“All praise to the Father,  
From whom all things come,  
And all praise to Christ Jesus,  
his only Son,  
And all praise to the Spirit,  
who makes us one.

Refrain: “And they’ll know we are  
Christians by our love, by our love,  
Yes, they’ll know we are Christians  
by our love.”

by Peter Scholtes

Prayer: Heavenly Father, You have given all of us many gifts, some we don’t even realize we have the talents until we are called upon to use them. Help us to be thankful for those talents, and then help us to use them to further Your work on this earth just as Christ used the disciples with their varied temperaments and talents.

1. Can we ever be too eager to act?
2. How can we discover our talents in the Lord’s work, and also help others discover and use their talents?
3. Do we have spiritual gifts? Are you using them?
4. Would you want to be called a “son of thunder”?
5. Is it sometimes good to be known as one who “marches to a different drummer”?

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**“Ambition** is the first step to success. The second step is **action.**”

