

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JUNE 8TH-9TH, 2019 // BOOK OF 3 JOHN

WALKING IN TRUTH (3 JOHN 1-4)

WHO IS JOHN TALKING TO?

This letter will revolve around 3 individuals: Gaius, who is the recipient of the letter, Diotrophes, the one causing problems, and Demetrius, who delivered the letter.

- Very little is known about these 3 men, and Gaius "whom John loved in the truth" had a very common name in Roman times.

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT JOHN CARED FOR GAIVS

Like 2 John, we see their relationship was grounded in "the truth," which is their love for Jesus Christ. John wished that Gaius was "prospering" and in "good health."

- To prosper can mean more than just financially. **We can prosper in health, family, and yes, financially. Success is ok as long as it's prioritized correctly.**

MORE IMPORTANT THAN HEALTH AND SUCCESS

John says that he has "no greater joy" than to hear the people's testimony about Gaius' "fidelity to the truth."

- **More important than success and health is the condition of the soul! We so often forget that this life is temporary but the one to come is eternal!**

WHAT IS "WALKING IN THE TRUTH?"

To walk in truth **we must love God by following His commands**. His commands include the 10 C's in Exodus 20, the teachings of Christ in the Gospels, and the doctrine given to the apostles of the NT.

- **We must also love others in a way that aligns with the Bible.**

GENEROSITY (3 JOHN 5-8)

DEPENDING ON HOSPITALITY

In the early years of Christianity, travelers depended on the hospitality of others because there were not a lot of inns or places to eat.

- Christian teachers would travel from place to place spreading the gospel and would stay with other Christians.

GAIVS WAS A MODEL OF HOSPITALITY

Gaius was "acting faithfully" by allowing ministers to stay at his house and feeding them, even when they were strangers.

- Of course there is wisdom and common sense that must be used! **We must be careful who we spend time with and who we allow around our families.**

GENEROSITY IS A MARK OF A CHRISTIAN

2 Cor. 9:6 says, "**whoever sows generously will reap generously**" and Jesus said **it is better to give than to receive (Acts 20:35)**.

- The true Christian understands that **God has been good to us, therefore we are to be good to others! Also remember that we are simply stewards of His possessions!**

WE ARE ALSO CALLED TO MEET OTHERS' NEEDS

We need to be stewards that honor God by helping those in need.

- **First, we should help those in the family of faith (Gal. 6:10). We must help widows and orphans (Js. 1:27). Second, provide for those willing to change or unable to help themselves (2 Thes. 3:10).**
- **Matthew 25:35-36 (CSB)**

AND GOOD DEEDS SHOULD LEAD TO THE GOSPEL

Our generosity to other Christians and helping those in need should always be centered in Jesus and the gospel.

- **When we're generous to other believers we should give all praise to God. When we help others who aren't believers, we must go the full distance and share Christ with them.**

"...COWORKERS WITH THE TRUTH." (V7-8)

The traveling teachers of the gospel (like Paul) were to not take money from people that didn't honor Christ. There are practical reasons why, but John's main point was spiritual.

- When we support churches, pastors, missionaries, and Christian non-profits we share in the work of teaching the truth and showing God's love.

PRIDE VS. HUMILITY (3 JOHN 9-15)

PROBLEMS IN THE CHURCH

The 2nd subject of the letter, Diotrophes is now introduced. It appears that he was a part of the same church as Gaius, but he loved being "first place among" the congregation and did not "receive [the] authority" of John.

- **Wanting to be 1st is the beginning of a fall. Proud people eventually destroy themselves and hurt others.**

WE THINK TOO MUCH OF OURSELVES

Diotrophes was power hungry, arrogant, and thought he was worthy of hospitality, but too good to serve. He, like many of us today, thought he was above menial tasks and being under someone else's authority.

- **Humility is key. If we're not willing to work hard, do small things, and submit to authority, we'll never succeed.**

JOHN WANTS TO DEAL WITH IT IN PERSON

Because the situation with Dio has escalated to the point of "slandering" and "malicious words," John is going to come and deal with the arrogant leader.

- Not only was he refusing "fellow believers," Dio was also stopping people from supporting them and kicking people out of the church.

3 THINGS THAT CAN KILL THE CHURCH

- **Gossip:** Slandering others and participating in gossip will destroy the church. Gossip is a sin that makes God angry!
- **Not being hospitable:** Not welcoming all kinds of people into our church family stifles the gospel.
- **Hindering others:** Jesus sternly talked about misleading others (Mk. 9:42).

"DO NOT IMITATE WHAT IS EVIL"

The world is arrogant and selfish, and John reminds us that **we are called to be counter-cultural**.

- We are counter-cultural because the ways of man ultimately fail. **Selfishness, pride, and being power hungry lead to a life of hurt, loneliness, and destruction.**

DEMETRIUS WAS A MAN OF HUMILITY

John mentions the 3rd focus of this short letter, a man that had a good reputation in the same church as Gaius and Diotrophes.

- Some believe Demetrius was a traveling missionary who might have delivered the letter. He was a humble man that spoke the truth and should have been welcomed by Dio.

MAYBE DIOTREPHE'S WAS JEALOUS

Possibly the arrogant and power hungry leader of the church was also jealous that a well thought of missionary was coming into town. Maybe he was a better communicator than Dio? Maybe more popular?

- **Do we let selfish ambition and jealousy get in the way of God working through and around us?**

FAREWELL

John ends this letter much like the last. He says that he would rather have as many face to face discussions as possible and not use so much "pen and ink."

- Notice his genuine care and love when he says, "Peace to you...Greet the friends in my name."

LET'S DO AN HONEST ASSESSMENT

- **Do we follow the commands of Christ?** What about when no one is looking?
- **Are we generous?** Do we give to the church, non-profits, or others in need?
- **What do we do with our time?** What are we investing in? Are they eternal things?
- **How do we talk about others?**
- **What is our reputation?** Do we live in such a way that honors God and makes others want to as well?
- Do we want those that come after us to excel beyond us?
- Are we like Diotrophes, **putting ourselves first and getting jealous of others?**
- **Do we realize that we get one shot at this life?** How are we stewarding the time, money, health, and talents that God has given us?