



LOVE IN ACTION

PLEASE SILENCE YOUR PHONE

courtesy Battle Creek CC



Herakles at the Crossroads
early 2nd c. A.D.

**Stood at a literal
crossroads in Philippi**

discovered Oct 2, 2022



**Vice: Choose me
for a life of
ceaseless pleasure
& no demands.**



**Virtue:
Choose me for
honor through
labor.**

***Hercules at the
Crossroads*
Pompeo Girolano
Batoni 1753**

Virtue said: “Choose me, and you will have the honor of your countrymen, but I cannot promise a life without labor.”
Heracles chose the path of Virtue, a choice that led to his prosperity.



Greek: εὐοδώ euodoo = highway,
later flourishing



Herakles chose the path of Virtue,
a choice that led to his prosperity.

Greek: εὐοδώ euodoo =
highway, later flourishing

3 John

² Dear friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and
are in good health, just as your whole life is going well.

Greek: εὐοδώ euodoo = used
with “you” [psyche, soul]
indicates internal prosperity

Greek: εὐοδώ euodoo =
used with “whole life”
indicates public prosperity

1 Pet

2 Pet

1 Jn

2 Jn

3 John

Jude

Rev

3 John

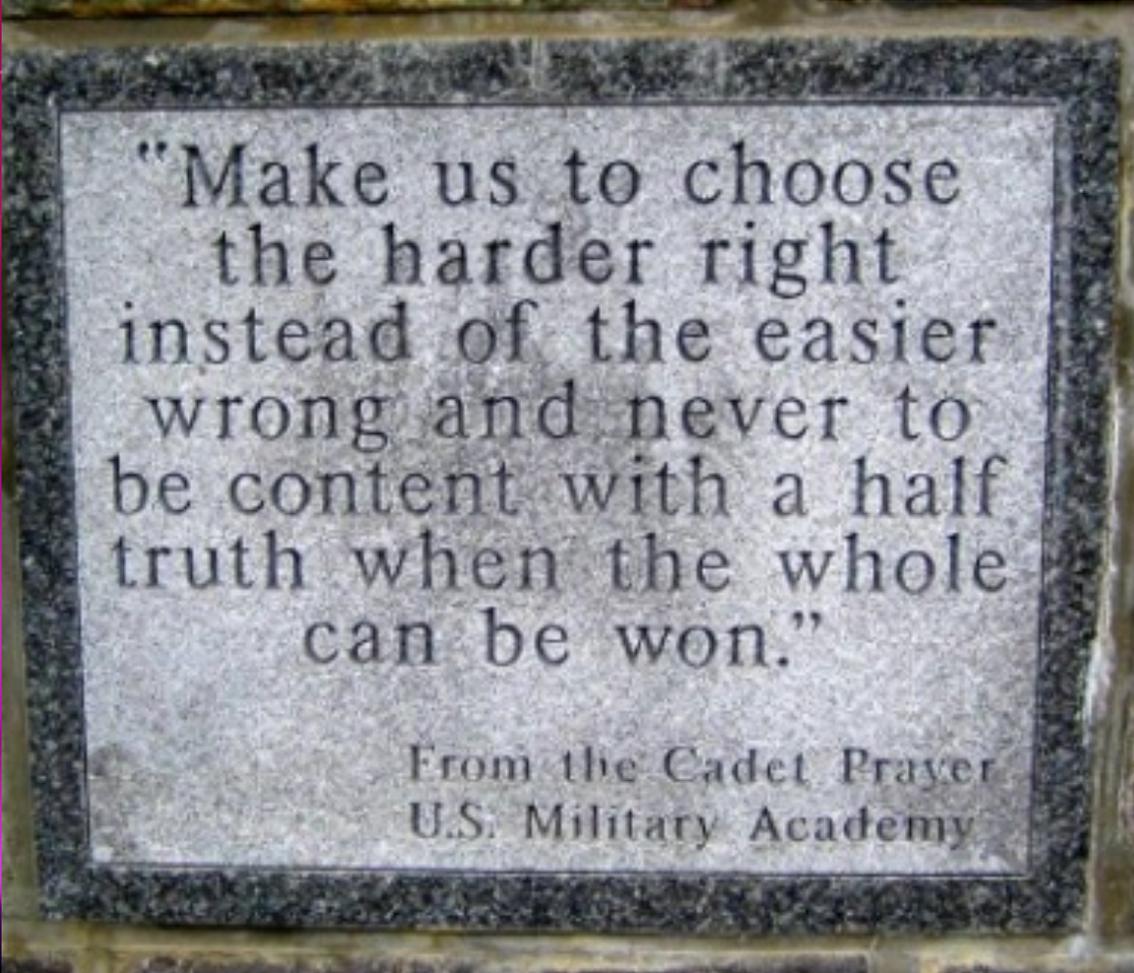
¹ The elder: To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth. ² Dear friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and are in good health, just as your whole life is going well. ³ For I was very glad when fellow believers came and testified to your fidelity to the truth—how you are walking in truth. ⁴ I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are walking in truth. ⁸ Therefore, we ought to support such people so that we can be coworkers with the truth. ^{CSB}

WB takeaway from 3 John (1-8):

**Sacrificing to do good brings
development & belonging.**

**By contrast, instant gratification
ultimately disappoints.**



A rectangular stone plaque with a dark, speckled border. The central area is a lighter, textured stone. The text is engraved in a serif font. The quote is centered and reads: "Make us to choose the harder right instead of the easier wrong and never to be content with a half truth when the whole can be won." Below the quote, in a smaller font, it says "From the Cadet Prayer U.S. Military Academy".

"Make us to choose
the harder right
instead of the easier
wrong and never to
be content with a half
truth when the whole
can be won."

From the Cadet Prayer
U.S. Military Academy



courtesy our beautiful (sic) world

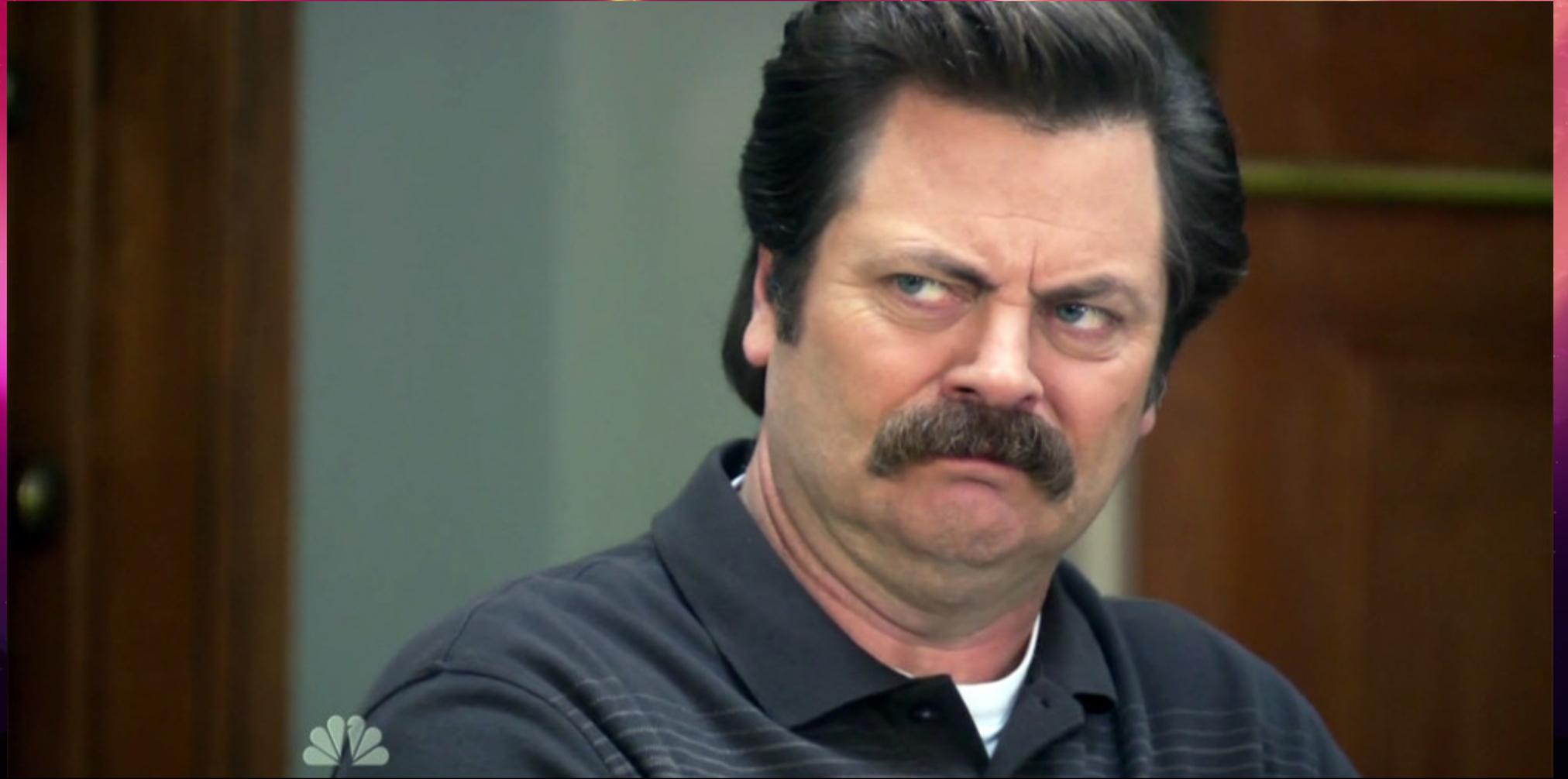


courtesy Mayo



**TRUST IN THE LORD
WITH ALL YOUR HEART
AND LEAN NOT ON
YOUR OWN UNDERSTANDING;
IN ALL YOUR WAYS SUBMIT TO HIM,
AND HE WILL MAKE
YOUR PATHS STRAIGHT.**

PROVERBS 3:5-6





courtesy Kendra Lakey; may be best Halloween costume ever



Nadezhda1906 via Getty Images



courtesy Getty



CHRISTIANS

courtesy Barnabas Fund

- **In the Russian-controlled city of Melitopol, occupying forces have shut the three largest evangelical Protestant churches.**
- **Names of all Christians who attend worship services have been registered.**
- **Most ministers have been detained.**
- **At the large Melitopol Christian Church, the pastor was forced to watch as the cross was torn down and the building turned into a 'cultural sports entertainment complex.'**

The Russian soldiers who showed up at Rev. Sergey Chudinovich's Ukrainian Orthodox church put a bag over his head, took him to the police station, then ordered him to make a video telling residents to accept Russian aid. Fr. Chudinovich refused. The Russians tied him up, tossed him in the basement and tortured him for the next two days.

Fr. Chudinovich re-enacting his detention by Russians



The Russians grilled him about his acquaintances. They left him in the cold without shoes, beat him in the knees and chest with a police baton, choked him until he passed out, and taunted him, saying: “Your God doesn’t exist.” At one point, he said, they tried to rape him with a stick.



The occupiers promised that making the videos would not only protect him, but it would also provide prosperity for his ministry distributing food & medicine in eastern Ukraine. They would provide the supplies he needed and his salary.

They lied. Fr. Chudinovich said he has tried to continue his work, but the Russian support never came. And the videos have shaken associates' trust in him—a common reaction after locals in the south are picked up by Russians. He now struggles to raise money for his church and his family.



Proverbs 16

**16 The LORD hates six things;
in fact, seven are detestable to him:**

**17 arrogant eyes, a lying tongue,
hands that shed innocent blood,**

**18 a heart that plots wicked schemes,
feet eager to run to evil,**

**19 a lying witness who gives false testimony,
and one who stirs up trouble among brothers. ^{CSB}**

Psalm 4

**⁴ Be angry
and do not sin;
reflect in your heart
while on your bed
and be silent.**

Selah

CSB

Romans 12

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ^{CSB}

When angry, do we avoid sin? Do we choose the easy path of vice – getting revenge, becoming bitter? Or take harder path of virtue – forgiving and loving even those who persecute you?

3 John

⁹ I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have first place among them, does not receive our authority. ¹⁰ This is why, if I come, I will remind him of the works he is doing, slandering us with malicious words. And he is not satisfied with that! He not only refuses to welcome fellow believers, but he even stops those who want to do so and expels them from the church. ^{CSB}

1 Pet

2 Pet

1 Jn

2 Jn

3 John

Jude

Rev

3 John

¹ The elder:

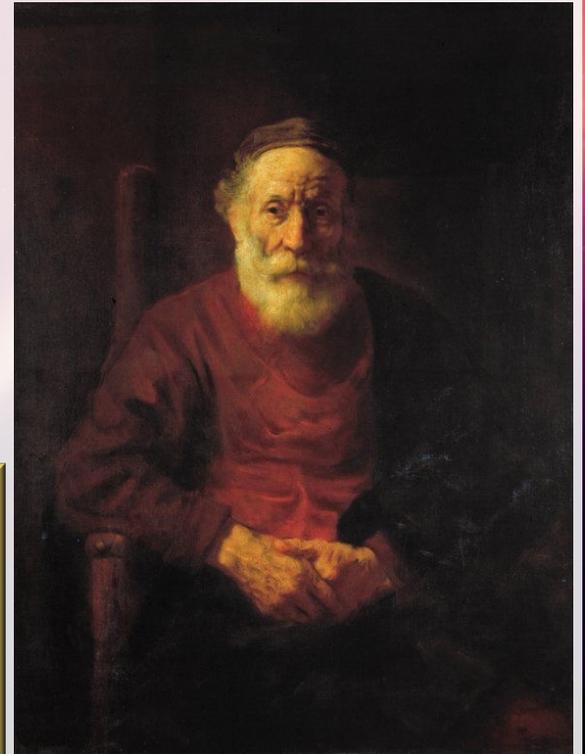
To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth.

Greek: πρεσβύτερος presbyteros = originally, a completely positive term for an old man; later, member of a board of trustees

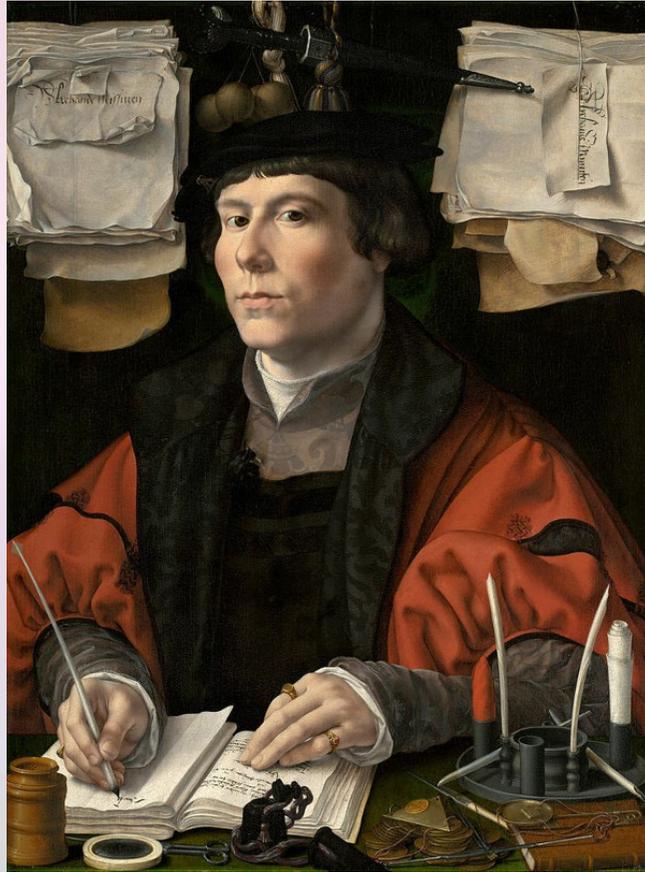
Portrait of an Old Man in Red

Rembrandt

1652-4



3 John

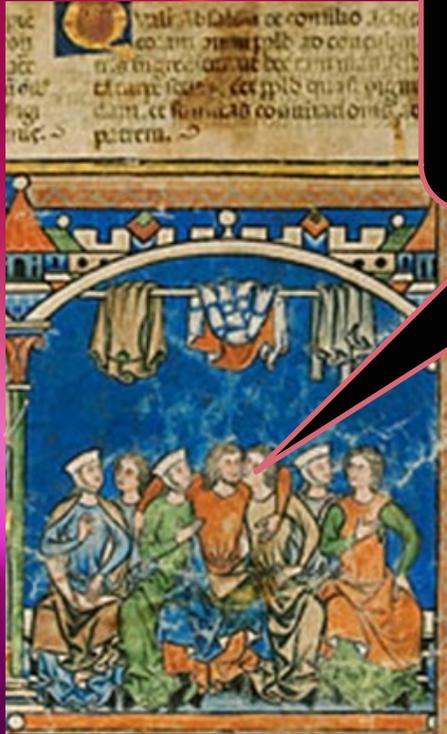


9 I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have first place among them, does not receive our authority.

Portrait of a Merchant
Jan Gossaert
1530

3 John

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**Absalom: If only
I were king...**

Absalom's revolt
Morgan Bible
ca. 1245

**Diotrephes:
Only I have
authority!**



Man with staff
Codex 61
ca. 800

There are improvements for the Lead Pastor to make, but he is overall a fine point person. The Associate

Pastor should be fired for cause. He has chosen the way of Diotrephes, and it will not end well. – WB



A person in a light-colored suit is seated at a dark table. On the table are several sheets of paper, two clear glasses of water, and an orange smartphone. The person's hands are visible, resting on the table. The background is dark, and the overall scene is framed by a vibrant, abstract background of purple and orange light streaks.

PASTOR

— GETS —

FIRED

He has chosen the way of Diotrephes, and it will not end well.



3 John

10 This is why, if I come, I will remind him of the works he is doing, slandering us with malicious words. And he is not satisfied with that! He not only refuses to welcome fellow believers, but he even stops those who want to do so and expels them from the church.
CSB

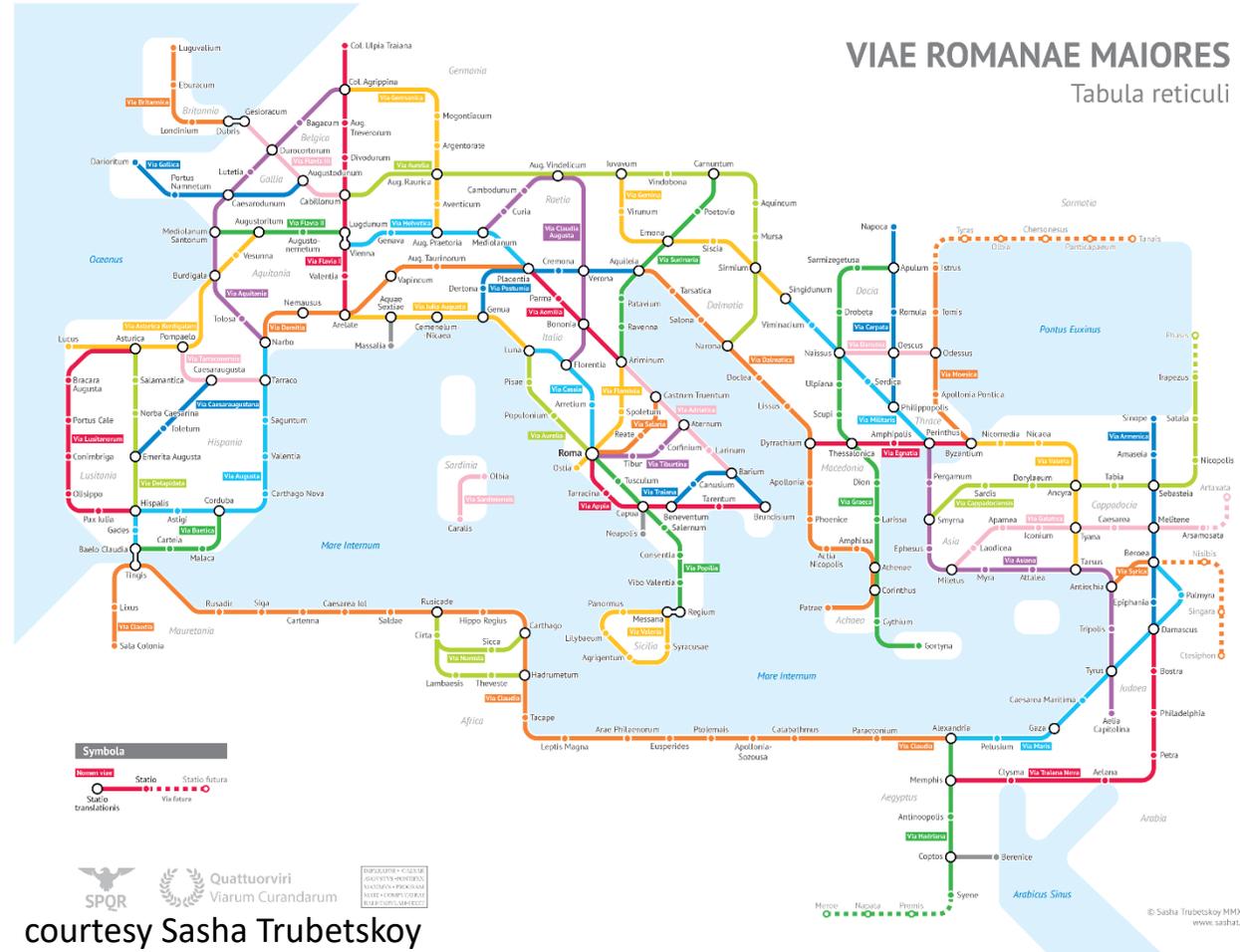


3 John

¹⁰ He [Diotrephes] not only refuses to welcome fellow believers, but he even stops those who want to do so. ^{CSB}

⁵ Dear friend, you [Gaius] are acting faithfully in whatever you do for the brothers and sisters, especially when they are strangers. ^{CSB}

Preachers were supported by churches they served. The Elders of each church oversaw both the teaching content of and the provisions for these wandering shepherds, necessitating that Elders be “able to teach” and thus capable of judging the merit of each new pastoral visitor.



3 John

10 He [Diotrephes] not only refuses to welcome fellow believers, but he even stops those who want to do so. ^{CSB}

5 Dear friend, you [Gaius] are acting faithfully in whatever you do for the brothers and sisters, especially when they are strangers. ^{CSB}



courtesy informer



3 John

⁹ I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have first place among them, does not receive our authority. ¹⁰ This is why, if I come, I will remind him of the works he is doing, slandering us with malicious words. And he is not satisfied with that! He not only refuses to welcome fellow believers, but he even stops those who want to do so and expels them from the church. ^{CSB}

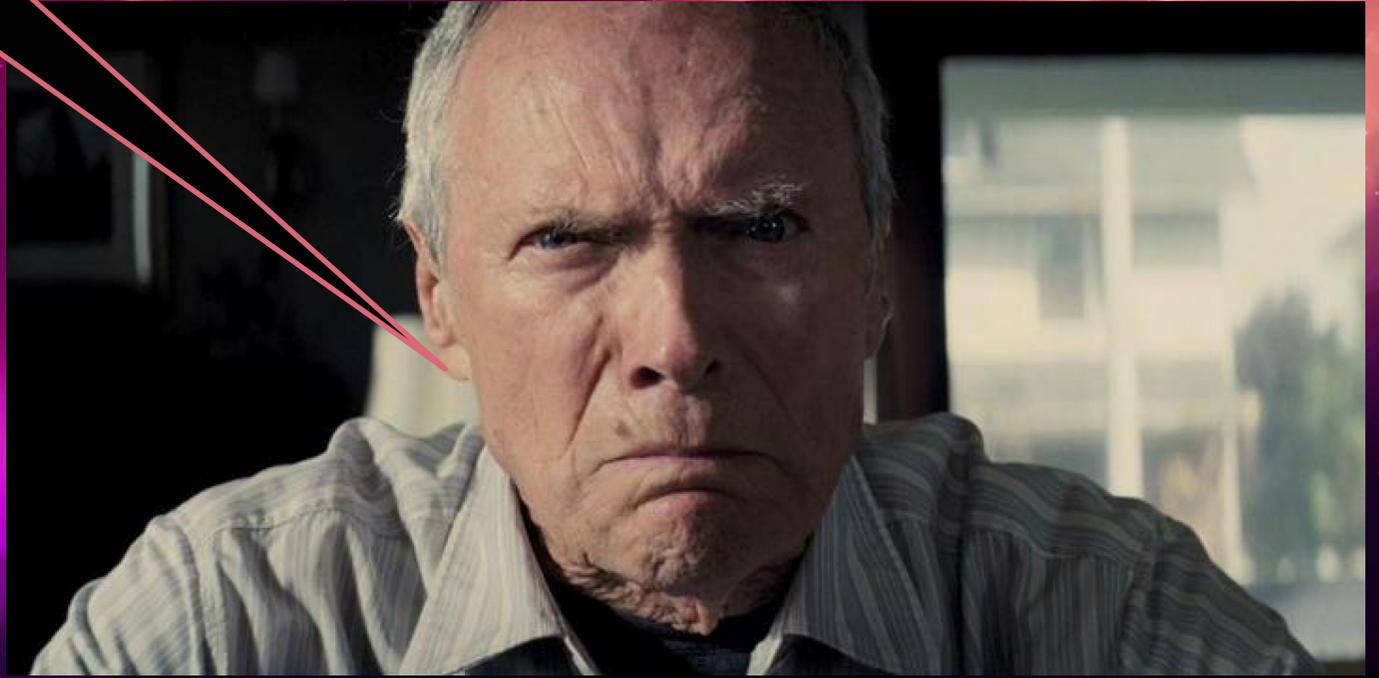
You are that man
Angelika Kauffman
1792



3 John

¹¹ Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God. ¹² Everyone speaks well of Demetrius—even the truth itself. And we also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true. ^{CSB}

**Who is this
Demetrius?**



courtesy Warner Bros.

3 John

12 Everyone speaks well of Demetrius—even the truth itself. And we also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true. ^{CSB}

John now provides an example (in addition to Gaius) of one who does good and is from God. It is most probable Demetrius was the bearer of 3 John and that this verse served as his recommendation...Given this sterling recommendation, Gaius would have more than adequate motivation to receive Demetrius and extend to him the gracious hospitality for which he was so well known. – Daniel Akin, *1,2,3 John*,

3 John

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courtesy morethanuseless

3 John

⁶ They have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God...

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- **He & his wife regularly took needy Christians in to live with them for short periods.**
- **He was respected in our church and in the community.**
- **He was tough in business, but fair. Vendors, clients, & employees spoke well of him.**
- **He was involved in politics but never spoke negatively of anyone. Never. He would only discuss positives or be silent.**
- **He was very supportive when I got drawn into ministry and he contributed to the launch of FBC.**

3 John

¹² Everyone speaks well of Demetrius—even the truth itself. And we also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true. ^{CSB}



Greek: μάρτυς martus = truth, especially spoken truth

3 John

¹² Everyone speaks well of Demetrius—even the truth itself. And we also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true. ^{CSB}

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MARTUS

3 John

¹ The elder: To my dear friend Gaius,
whom I love in the truth.

Greek: ἀγαπάω agapao
= the highest kind of
love; self-sacrificial,
other-centered choice

Greek: ἀλήθεια
alethia = truth; reality
which can be known;
not mythology

3 John

¹¹ Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God. ¹² Everyone speaks well of Demetrius—even the truth itself. And we also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true. ^{CSB}

False authenticity



Often when a person is described as “authentic,” it signifies that they are true to their own sinful desires. “That’s just the way I am” becomes their mantra, and their sins are considered proof of authenticity.

False authenticity



3 John

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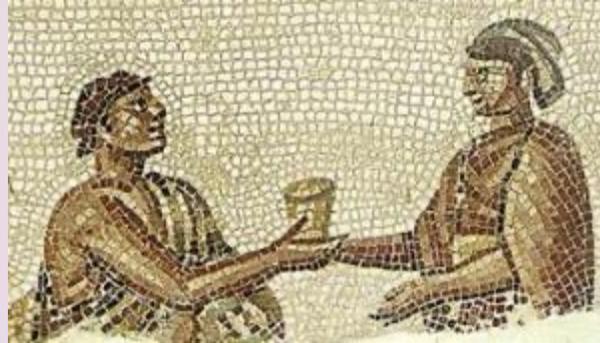


Greek: ἀγαπάω agapao
= the highest kind of love; self-sacrificial, other-centered choice

Greek: ἀλήθεια alethia = truth; reality which can be known; not mythology

love in the truth

do what I want



pretend



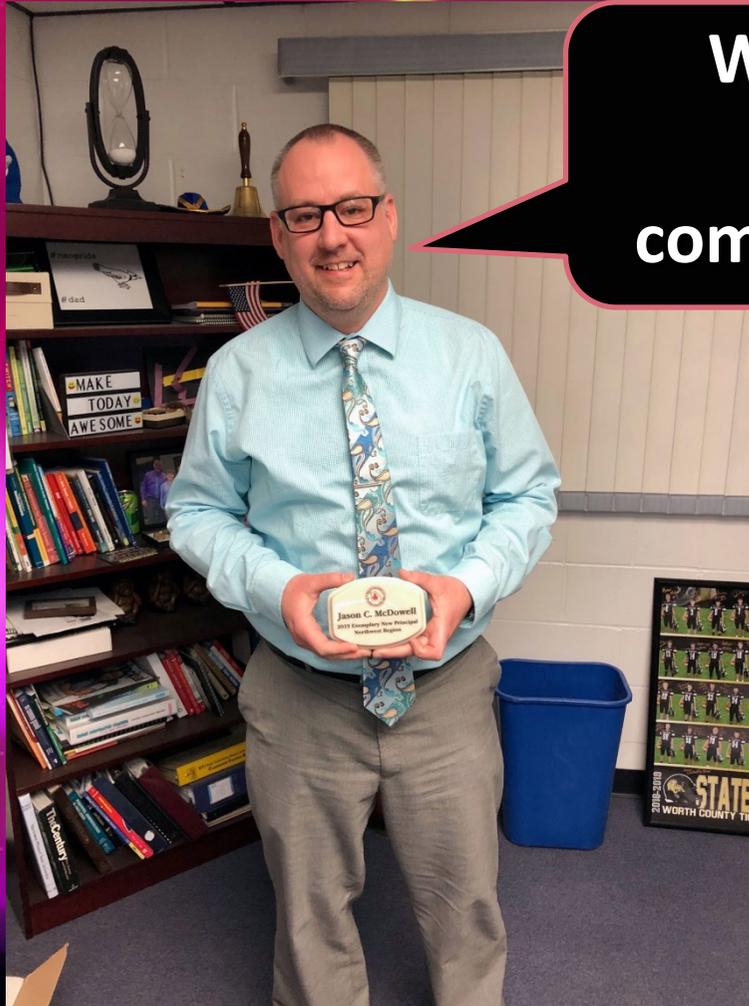
3 John

13 I have many things to write you, but I don't want to write to you with pen and ink. 14 I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. 15 Peace to you. The friends send you greetings. Greet the friends by name. ^{CSB}



courtesy 22 words

**We entered you in this
national leadership
competition. And you won!**



courtesy JohnCMcDowell

**Virtue said: “Choose me, and you will have the honor of your countrymen, but I cannot promise a life without labor.”
Heracles chose the path of Virtue, a choice that led to his prosperity.**



**Greek: εὐοδώ euodoo = highway,
later flourishing**





The way of Diotrophes is all about power, being closed and slanderous to keep control. It ends in very serious confrontation.



The way of Gaius & Demetrius is all about agape (benefitting others) and alethia (living in line with truth.) It ends with commendation.

Psalm 139

**23 Search me, God, and know my heart;
test me and know my concerns.**

**24 See if there is any offensive way in me;
lead me in the everlasting way. ^{CSB}**



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ACTION