

3 John

Jesus

1 The Elder, To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth: 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. 3 For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. 5 Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, 6 who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, 7 because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. 8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth. 9 I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. 10 Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church. 11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God. 12 Demetrius has a good testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true. 13 I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; 14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

- **Author** John. Once a Son of Thunder now Apostle of Truth/Love
- **Date** After Gospel of John, 1st, 2nd John, and Revelation. 90-100ad
- **3 Characters** Gaius [good] , Diotrephes [bad], and Demetrius [good]

2nd/3rd John: Traveling Prophets/Evangelists
Discerning Sheep from Wolves

I. Gaius

1 The **Elder**, To the **beloved** Gaius, whom **I love in truth...**

- John the **Elder**:
 1. Elder in Age: 90's.
 2. Elder in Spiritual Position

John greets Gaius not as an Apostle
But as an Elder/Friend

- **Gaius**
 1. Beloved 4 x
 2. Friendly Layman
 3. **Guy John loves in truth...**

2 John 1 The Elder [John], To the elect lady and her children, **whom I love in truth**, and not only I, but also **all those who have known the truth**, **2 because of the truth** which abides in us and will be with us forever...

Unified in our Common Love of Truth 7x
Gaius whom John loves in Truth...

2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

▪ **I pray you prosper...**

1. Financially
2. Physically
3. Spiritually

God is most concerned with our Spiritual Prosperity/Growth in Truth...

2 Peter 3:18 [Don't be led astray]but **grow in the grace and knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4: 14 [Don't be deceived] ... no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, **speaking the truth in love, may grow up** in all things into Him who is the head—Christ

▪ Our soul prospers as we feed it...

1. Word of God
2. Prayer
3. Fellowship...don't separate

John prays Gaius might Prosper
Financially, Physically, and most importantly Spiritually

3 For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and **testified of the truth** that is **in you, just as you walk in the truth.**

▪ **Walk** = The way we live your lives

You know the Truth...You do the Truth
That makes me celebrate!

2 John 1:4 I rejoiced greatly that I have found some of your children **walking in truth...**

Testimony of Others: Gaius knows the Truth and does it!

Proverbs 27:2 Let **another praise you**/not your own mouth; A stranger/not your own lips.

What is the truth Gaius knew/walked in during the First Century?
Four Gospels/Apostles Teaching

Acts 2:41 ...those who gladly received [Peter's] word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. 42 And they **continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.**

Gaius walks in Truth! Speaks the Word AND does the Word of God as Apostles taught
IOWs Gaius practices what he preaches!

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that **my children walk in the truth.**

Greatest Joy: People we minister to walking in truth

2 John 4:1 I rejoiced greatly that I have found **some of your children walking in truth...**

1 Thessalonians 2:19 ...**what is our hope**, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not **even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus...** at His coming? 20 For you are our glory and joy.

1 Corinthians 4:15 .. though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus **I have begotten you through the gospel.**

- 1984 Fabergé Shampoo: I told two friends and they told two friends and...

Gaius is one of John's spiritual children
Gaius is now giving John spiritual grandchildren

- **They resemble John:** Know/Walk in Truth
- John has no greater joy than this...

5 Beloved [Gaius], [I hear] you **do faithfully whatever you do** for the brethren and [especially] for strangers, 6 who have **borne witness of your love** before the church. If you **send them forward on their journey** in a manner **worthy of God**, you will do well...

I also hear you are faithful to those we and others send to you
Traveling Prophet/Evangelists. Yet many deceivers...

- **How did Gaius know Sheep from Wolves?**

1. **Those sent by John were Sheep**
2. Those not sent by John needed to be tested

Q. Do you know/believe/live the Apostles Doctrine?

- Salvation by Grace alone through Faith alone in Christ alone?
- Virgin Birth/Deity of Christ
- Purpose of the law
- Morality/Holy Living
- 6 Day Creation
- Tri-unity of God
- Love of the Word and...
- DO THEY LOVE THE BRETHREN? Sheep or Wolves dressed like sheep? Wheat/Chaff

2 John in Home: John warned against receiving false teachers

Send them away

3 John in Church: John encourages to receive true teachers

Support them...

If they pass the test support them
Send them off in a manner worthy of God: Provide for their needs...

7 ...because they went forth for **His name's sake**, taking nothing from the Gentiles.

- **Took nothing from Gentiles:** IOWs Did not accept help from non-believers

Believers support fellow believers in the work of the Lord
Note: Unbelievers should not be tithing

8 We therefore ought to **receive** such, that we may become **fellow workers for the truth.**

- When we support God's work we are...
 1. Co-workers for **Truth**
 2. Co-workers for **Christ**

Those sent by Jesus are to be received as Jesus

Matthew 10:40 He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.

- We are not to support Workers/Ministries till vested
- Once vested they must be routinely reevaluated

First Century Church gradually Digressed by Infiltration [Love w/out Truth or...]
Nothing has changed...

- **E.g. Cru:** Campus Crusade for Christ

Gaius knew Truth and Walked in it
Showing Hospitality to Visiting Ministers as to the Lord

II. Diotrephes

9 I wrote to [your] church, **but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.**

Problem with Pride and Disrespect of God given Authority

- **Diotrephes:** lit. Nourished by Jupiter [Jove as in " Jove] Zeus. God of Thunder.
- Preacher/Layman? Don't know but we do know he...
 1. **Loves preeminence:** lit. desire to be first. Associated as best
 2. **Did not receive us:** Told the Apostle John to stay home

Diotrephes did not even want the Apostle John to Teach at the church

- John who walked with Jesus
- John who wrote Gospel Eye witness account
- John who leaned on Jesus breast/Took Jesus mother in
- John who wrote 1,2,3 John and Revelation

Diotrephes wanted to be the only voice. The go-to guy

His motto was "to rule or ruin." He was going to have his own way, and it did not make any difference what the result might be...If he was a layman I sure feel sorry for his pastor...I have watched such people **wreck church after church**; A little group or an individual like Diotrephes who loves to have preeminence. Not only have I met Diotrephes but **I have also met Mrs. Diotrephes in church today.** [JV McGee]

- Exactly opposite of who Jesus calls as a leader

Matthew 20:24b... You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. 26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

1 Peter 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God... 3 [not] as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being **examples to the flock...**

Philippians 2:3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Motive? God's glory or our own?

- **Pride before the fall...**

Acts 12:21 So on a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat on his throne and gave an oration to them. 22 And the people kept shouting, "The voice of a god and not of a man!" 23 Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died.. **24 But the word of God grew and multiplied.**

- Herod a Heathen, yet...

How much worse one who names the Name of Jesus and...
At the same time seeks to usurp His authority

- Loves preeminence/Does not receive us...

10 Therefore, if [when] I come, I will **call to mind his deeds** which he does, **prating** [talking nonsense] **against us** with malicious words.

It's too bad other churches don't deal with Diotrephes because he will wreck a church if he is permitted to go on. [JV McGee]

Former Son of Thunder coming to deal Diotrephes

Proverbs 10:8 The wise in heart will receive commands, But **a prating fool will fall ...10** He who winks with the eye causes trouble, But a **prating fool will fall.**

- **Prating:** Talking nonsense about Apostle John

10b... And not content with that, he himself **does not receive the brethren,** and **forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church.**

- **Sends away those we send/Throws out those who don't agree**

I will be coming in the authority of an Apostle of Jesus Christ
I will call out this self-exalted unanointed/unappointed dictator

- **Don't be like him Gaius...**

11 Beloved, **do not imitate what is evil,** but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.

How do I know if they know God? By whom they Imitate

- **Imitate Satan** in Pride Bad
- **Imitate Jesus** in Humility Good

1 John 2:29 If you know that [Jesus] is righteous, you know that **everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.**

1 John 3:10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever **does not practice righteousness is not of God**, nor is he who **does not love his brother.**

We imitate Jesus...

Acts 10:38 ... Jesus...who went **about doing good**

3 John 4:17b ...**as He is, so are we in this world.**

Others should be able to imitate us as we imitate Jesus

1 Corinthians 11:1 Imitate me, just **as I also imitate Christ.**

- Talk is cheap. They will know us by our actions...

Matthew 7:16 **You will know them by their fruits.**

He who does good is of God...He who does evil is not

To claim to love the truth and yet hate the brethren is to confess ignorance of what the Christian life is all about, When God's people love Him, the Truth, and one another, the Holy Spirit can work in that assembly to glorify Jesus Christ. [Wiersbe]

- **Gaius**, *good*. **Diotrephes**, *bad*. **Demetrius**...*good*...

III. Demetrius

12 Demetrius has a **good testimony from all**, and **from the truth itself.**

- **Thrown out** of the church by Diotrephes for receiving brethren?
Demetrius had a Consistently Good Testimony *from All*
- **Qualification of a spiritual leader:** Good Reputation in Church and Out...

Acts 6:3 ... seek out from among you seven men of **good reputation...**

1 Timothy 3:7 [Deacons]...must have a **good testimony** among those who are **outside.**

Good Testimony from the Truth itself?
His life aligned with the Word of God

- Good Testimony from All? Woe to you when all men speak well of you. Luke 6:26
All men obviously excludes known Liars/Slanderers
IOWs Good Testimony from those who have a Good Testimony
- Good Testimony w/regard to others
- Good Testimony w/regard to the Truth
- **Good Testimony from John/His church....**

12b ...And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true.

One of the key words in this letter is witness [testify] It means not only the words we say but the lives we live. Each Christian is a witness, either a good one or a bad one. We are either [furthering] the truth or hindering it. [Wiersbe]

13 I had many things to write, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; 14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face.

John wants to wait and speak to us over a nice dinner

2 John 1:12b ...I hope to come to you and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

Diotrephes will be removed from his perch by the Apostle of Love

Gaius and Demetrius remained consistent in their walk with Jesus
They knew who they were in Christ and had nothing to prove

14b ...Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

Peace to you and our friends over there
Tell them John says hello