

3John – Week 2

I. Review:

A. A man named Gaius (3John 1:1-8)

i. We don't know too much about Gaius except the following:

1. He was well-known and well-loved by the apostle John and the brotherhood
2. He was faithful to the truth.
3. He lived the truth
 - a. He was a hospitable man
 - i. Not only did he gave food and lodging to the missionaries known by John
 - ii. He financially helped them
4. He was a loving man

II. Diotrephes

A. 3John 1:9-10 (ESV), *“I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. ¹⁰So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.”*

i. Diotrephes:

1. Apparently, he was a local leader of this congregation
 - a. From what we see, John wrote a letter to the Church, perhaps asking the congregation to greet the missionary brothers sent by John and help them out
 - b. But the congregation never heard the contents of that letter because Diotrephes discarded it.
2. He likes to put himself first:
 - a. He had no respect for John's authority (3John 9b)
 - i. Since he did not respect John, he didn't respect anyone sent by John as well (3John 10:b)
 - ii. He also talking bad about the apostle, John (3John 1:10a)
 - iii. Apparently, he was jealous of John's authority!
 - b. He was no Gaius!
 - i. Diotrephes was not a Gnostic, however...
 1. He did not walk in the truth (1John 2:4)
 - a. He was not a loving man!
 - b. He refused to welcome the missionaries sent by John
 - c. He refused to show them hospitality by offering food, lodging and financial help!
 - d. And to boot, he kicked out any member who showed support for these missionaries out of the church! (3John 1:10c)
 - c. His ambition was to be the only leader in that congregation
 - d. He loved the feeling of power as the person who led the church
 - e. He would not share this with John nor anyone else
 - f. He would dis-fellowship members who would help John's missionaries.
3. However, John was not a coward!
 - a. He was willing and ready to love this prideful man by confronting him of his wickedness (3John 1:10).

B. 3John 1:11 (ESV), “Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.”

i. John tells his dear friend, Gaius, not to imitate bad men like Diotrephes

1. We are called to copy good men in the way we live:

a. Seek good examples in the Church (Phil. 3:17; Heb. 13:7)

b. Question: How does one discern who are good examples to imitate?

i. By seeing the fruit of their lives

ii. By knowing them as a person

iii. By hearing what others say about them, especially those in authority

2. Imitate good...

a. Goodness is one of the virtues of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23)

b. Question: What is the difference between a righteous person and a good person?

i. A righteous person does what is right (i.e., goes to worship services, prays, speaks the truth, does not use foul language, etc.)

ii. A good person does what benefits others (clothes the naked, visits the sick/in prison, feeds the hungry, dies for another person, etc.)

iii. A good man seeks that which benefits others

iv. A good man is humble; he does not seek to be first, like Diotrephes!

v. A good man does not seek positions of authority, but seeks to serve others (cf. Luke 22:25-26)

3. Avoid the spirit of Diotrephes!

a. Be careful not to exalt yourself and seek positions of authority by saying things like...

i. Why can't I be a Bible teacher; I'm well qualified to be one!

ii. I want to be a ministry counselor; I'm well qualified to be one!

iii. I want to be a Bible Talk leader; I'm better equipped than others

b. Remember the lesson of Miriam, Aaron and Korah ...

i. Miriam, a prophetess and Aaron, a priest, spoke against their brother and leader, Moses and God was angry at that (Numbers 12)

ii. Korah, a Levite, along with other well-known community leaders, rose against Moses and God, also, was angry at that (Numbers 16)

c. God opposes the proud and those who seek recognition from men and love to be first!

C. 3John 1:12 (ESV), “Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.”

i. Here, John introduces Demetrius to Gaius:

1. Perhaps he is the one who brought this letter from John to Gaius.

2. Demetrius is another example of a good Christian man

3. He was well-spoken by all who knew him!

D. 3John 1:13-15 (ESV), “I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink. ¹⁴I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. ¹⁵Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, every one of them.”