

THE THIRD EPISTLE OF JOHN, CALLED  
**THIRD JOHN**

**O U T L I N E**

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**2 John and 3 John.**

- God is light 2 John
- God is love 12 John

**Second and Third Epistles.** Generally speaking, in first epistles the mass is going on well, but there is some failure that needs to be addressed. In second epistles the mass is in failure, but there are some individual faithful ones. The path is still clearly to be found, it consists of submitting to the leaders who are going on well. but in 3 John, it takes it one step farther, the path for the faithful is almost gone. There is a path, but it is hard to find. How do you go against the leadership? We have to go back to the true shepherd to have direction. This is a hard day. - When the path gets hard horizontally, the path turns vertically. This is a pastoral epistle.

**3 John.** John had written to the assembly, but Diotrophes intercepted and stopped it. John's only option was to find individuals who were faithful and encourage them.

## Greeting (v.1)

**1** The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

## What Gaius had been Doing that was Right (vv.2-8)

**2** Beloved, I desire that in all things thou shouldest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers. **v.2** Gaius was a hospitable and gracious man who was healthy spiritually, although he may have had medical health issues, and he definitely have a tough assembly situation. We cannot blame our state of our soul on our environment. If John was praying this for us that our physical health would = spiritual health, would that be something we would want? A commendation for Gaius.

**3** For I rejoiced exceedingly when *the* brethren came and bore testimony to thy *holding fast the truth*, even as “*thou*” walkest in truth.

**4** I have no greater joy than these things that I hear of my children walking in the truth. **v.4** Gaius didn't just understand the truth intellectually, we walked in it. But it is a process, you have to make an effort, day by day.

**5** Beloved, thou doest faithfully *in* whatever thou mayest have wrought towards the brethren and that strangers, **v.5** See Romans 16:23 for examples of what Gaius' hospitality. “The brethren” and “the strangers” are the same people. Brethren previously unknown to him. Gaius opened his home to the one who wrote Romans while Paul dictated (Romans 16). Hospitality plays a part in everything. One of Gaius' children was baptized by Paul.

**6** (who have witnessed of thy love before *the* assembly,) in setting forward whom on their journey worthily of God, thou wilt do well; **v.6** The report of Gaius was not that he “knew a lot” but that they had witnessed “his love before all the Church”. Hospitality is a central part of Christian conduct. You might entertain angels (Hebrews 13:2) or you might even entertain the Lord Jesus (Luke 24). The household that opens itself up is the one that gets blessed (two on the road, Obededom, etc.).

**7** for for the name have they gone forth, taking nothing of those of the nations. **.7** Prov.6:10-11 or 24:33-34 -these were like laboring brothers from a great distance.... it is very expensive. They took nothing of the gentiles, they didn't operate like the modern evangelicals who have a steady salary. Those who do have steady jobs can support those who labor.

**8** “We” therefore ought to receive such, that we may be fellow-workers with the truth.

## **Diotrephes, the Terrible Condition, His Judgment (vv.9-10)**

**9** I wrote something to the assembly; but Diotrephes, who loves to have the first place among them, receives us not. **v.9** Diotrophes loved the preeminence, he didn't love the brethren like Gaius and John did. There is only One who ought to have the preeminence. He rejected anyone who had God-given authority like the apostles, and excommunicated those who stood up.

**10** For this reason, if I come, I will bring to remembrance his works which he does, babbling against us with wicked words; and not content with these, neither does he himself receive the brethren; and those who would he prevents, and casts *them* out of the assembly. **v.10** You would think he would be governmentally struck down, but not at this time. John doesn't even say “when I come” but “if i come”.

## **Footsteps for Faith in the Dark Day (vv.11-12)**

**11** Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He that does good is of God. He that does evil has not seen God. **vv.11-12** the time will come when the Lord will intervene in judgment (v.10) but meanwhile these are what we should do.

**v.11b** En exhortation to Gaius - “don't repay evil for evil”.

**12** Demetrius has witness borne to him by all, and by the truth itself; and “we” also bear witness, and thou knowest that our witness is true. **v.12** in the darkest day we will have to be willing to go on alone but the lord will bring companion(s) along to encourage us. John was encouraging fellowship between Gaius and dimetrius. SOMehow dimetrius had a good report of all - including diotrophes. he was a peacemaker yet didn't use fleshly means and didn't compromise. It is a very hard thing to do, see Romans 12:20...How could you “feed”

Diotrophes? Present Christ, be gracious, get low, but never compromise the truth. He wasn't making peace in a fleshly way, by stroking Diotrophes' pride. But Maybe Gaius had the potential to be "weary in well doing".

## Conclusion (vv.13-14)

**13** I had many things to write to thee, but I will not with ink and pen write to thee; **14** but I hope soon to see thee, and we will speak mouth to mouth. Peace *be* to thee. The friends greet thee. Greet the friends by name.