

Series "Fixed On 66"
"3 John"
Book-64

Key Passage – 3 John 5-6

3rd John, like 2nd John, was probably written as a note to a friend attached to the circular letter of 1st John.

3 John is more like a "postcard" than a Letter.
It is the smallest Book in the Bible.

Third John (219 words) - Second John - (245 words) - Philemon (335 words)
- Obadiah (440 words)

1 John - is written so that one may have "*Fellowship With God*"

2 John – is written so that one may avoid "*Fellowship With False Teachers*"

3 John – is written so that one would share "*Fellowship With Itinerant Christians*"

Everything that Gaius and Demetrius are, Diotrephes is not.

The Author – Anonymous: It does not say who wrote it.

3 John 1 The elder

Elder – is an overseer within a fellowship.

Here it is much more because the author calls himself **The elder.**

He is one that has authority over another fellowship.

Reasons for believing the Elder to be John:

1. Vocabulary and subject matter close to 1st John:
2. Attributed to John by the early Church:

When Written – Probably in the year 90 AD.

Where it was Written – The place of the writing was probably Ephesus.

Written To – Gaius; four different men named Gaius in NT.

1. Gaius of Macedonia (Acts 19:29)
2. Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20:4)
3. Gaius of Corinth (1 Cor 1:14; Rom 16:23)
4. Gaius John's convert (3 John 1)

The Letter reveals the following information about Gaius:

1. He was won to Christ by John (v. 4)
2. He was possibly of failing health (v. 2)
3. He was faithful to the truth (v. 3)
4. He was hospitable to the saints and strangers (vv. 5-6)

Background – John writes these 3 letters 1, 2 and 3 John.

He seems to write these little notes to **commend Gaius for his love and walking in the truth**. At the same time, it is to **correct Diotrephes for his pride** and then to **commend Demetrius for his faithfulness**.

Purpose –

1. To assure Gaius of his love and prayers (v 1-2)
2. To commend Gaius for walking in the truth (v 3-4)
3. To commend Gaius for his hospitality (v 5-8)
4. To rebuke Diotrephes for his arrogance (v 9-10)
5. To commend Demetrius to the Church as a faithful brother (v 11-12)
6. To inform Gaius of his plan to visit (v 13-14)

Theme – 3 John – “Fellowship With Christian Brothers”

Key Words – love/loved – 8 times, Truth – 5 times, Beloved – 4 times

The Key Thought - The duty and delight of Christian hospitality!

Key Passage – 3 John 5-6

Outline –

- 1. Verses 1-8 Gaius The Diligent:**
- 2. Verses 9-11 Diotrephes The Dictator:**
- 3. Verses 12-14 Demetrius The Dependable:**

1. Verses 1-8 Gaius The Diligent:

Verses 1-2 He Was Well-Beloved:

3 John 1 The elder to the beloved Gaius,

His name is **Gaius** - *“lord.”* We don’t know who this man is, but John loved him.

whom I love in truth.

The word **“truth”** is used **five times** in this letter, so it is an important word. It means *“reality”* as opposed to mere appearance

John 14:6 - Jesus Christ is **“the truth”**

John 17:17 - God’s Word is **“truth”**

God has revealed truth in the person of His Son and in the pages of His Word. He has given us **“the Spirit of Truth” (John 14:16-17; 16:13).**

Verse 2 God Bless Gaius:

3 John 2 Beloved, *“esteemed, dear, favorite, worthy of love”*

Prosper – Literally *“to have a good journey”*

Metaphorically to “succeed, or prosper”

good health *"fit and well, to be safe and sound"*

There are two ways of looking at these words:

- 1. Possible physical problems with Gaius so John was writing to him, praying that he would be healed.**
- 2. That John was giving a greeting to Gaius.** We would say, *"I pray all is going well that you are feeling well, and you are growing in the Lord!"*

This greeting was common.

Many Latin letters of the first few centuries contained the following greeting:
"If you are well, it is good; I am well"

Verses 3-4 He Walked In The Truth: 3 John 3

For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, The testimony of others was that Gaius.

Psalm 1:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 2:13

3 John 4 John had said a similar thing in **2 John 1:4**

no greater joy

Literally "Greater joy have I none than this"

Hebrews 13:7; Romans 12:14-16

Verses 5-8 He Served Faithfully:

3 John 5 acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, What an awesome testimony Gaius had.

We have no indication that Gaius himself was a preacher or teacher, but he opened his heart and home to those who were.

and especially when they are strangers;

In John's second letter, John warned "the chosen lady" against entertaining false teachers (2 John 7-11)

In John's third letter, he commended Gaius for showing hospitality to the true ministers of the Word. Hebrews 13:2

3 John 6 and they have testified to your love before the church. Here was a person that loved, and that love was for the church. The church was the place to demonstrate that love.

You will do well to send them on their way

Visiting ministers and visiting saints from other places were being taken care of by Gaius. **Romans 12:13**

**Keep Doing What You Are Doing:
to send them on their way** *"to assist on their journey."*

Hospitality was a necessity and a duty in the NT. 1 Peter 4:9

Requirement of Elders (Pastors, Overseers) **1 Timothy 3:2**

1 John 3:16-19

a manner worthy of God befits God.

3 John 7

**Ministry Must Be God Centered:
For they went out for the sake of the Name,**
These were men that were not self-seeking, but were Christ serving!

**Ministry Must Not Solicit Funds From Unsaved:
accepting nothing from the Gentiles.**

3 John 8 Therefore we ought to support such men,
This ministry of hospitality and support is not only an opportunity,
but also an obligation.

Galatians 6:6-10

It makes it clear that those who receive spiritual blessings from the minister of the Word ought to share with him in material blessings.

1 Corinthians 9:7-11

**When We Support, We Become Fellow Workers:
so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.**

2. Verses 9-11 Diotrophes The Dictator:

**Verse 9 Diotrophes Was Filled With Self:
3 John 9 I wrote something to the church;**
What this could be was another letter that we don't have.

but Diotrophes, "a father of helps" who loves to be first among them,
The Greek verb indicates it was *"the constant attitude of Diotrophes to promote himself."* *Self-Promotion!*

Minister - means "a servant."

We are called to be servants (**Debtors not Creditors**)

Forgotten is the Biblical concept of the **church being a "Body"**

Rejected John's Teaching: does not accept what we say.

Diotrephes rejected the apostolic authority, which is not new today!

Verse 10 Diotrephes Promoted Evil Gossip:

3 John 10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, Note, that John was going to confront Diotrephes.

Titus 3:10-11

unjustly accusing us with wicked words;
"bringing false and empty charges against us."

Verse 10 He Was Anti-Missionary: 10 and not satisfied with this,

It was not enough that Diotrephes started a smear campaign against John, but he went even further.

he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so

Romans 16:17-19

and puts them out of the church.

This could mean *"excommunication, or physically evicting them"*

The basis of their fellowship was on personalities, not the doctrines that are fundamental to the faith.

Verse 11 He Was A Bad Example, Not To Be Followed: 3 John 11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.

The Bible is filled with examples of what to do, and what not to do!

1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 3:17; 2 Thessalonians 3:7

The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God. John said this in **1 John 4:20**

3. Verses 12-14 Demetrius The Dependable:

Verse 12 He Had A Good Report:

3 John 12 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone,

Note this man in the fellowship had received a good testimony from everyone.

Note the combination of a good testimony from people and from the truth itself: and from the truth itself;

we add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

John adds his witness of testimony!

Verses 13-14 He Was Preparing The Way For John's Coming:

3 John 13 I had many things to write to you,

His heart was filled with things he wanted to share but would not do it by pen.

3 John 14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face.

Literally "*mouth to mouth*" we would say, "*Eyeball to eyeball*"

Face to face encounter.

15 Peace be to you.

The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

Application:

1. What Witness Do I Leave Of Jesus Christ? (Dictator or Dependable)
2. Do I See Myself As A Minister/Servant Of Jesus Christ? (Debtor Verses Creditor)
3. Is My Life Characterized By A Good Testimony From People And The Truth Of God? (People and Truth)
4. Am I A Godly Friend?