

1

"The Beloved Gaius" (3John)

Truth Matters Church, Inc.

2 **Brief Introduction**

∞ Ancient manuscripts attribute the author to be the apostle John

∞ Writing style and grammar is consistent with 1John/2John

∞ Like 2John another "postcard epistle"

∞ Most scholars date the writing of this letter after the penning of 2John

∞ Possibly around the time 2John was penned

∞ 85AD-95AD

∞ In the vicinity of Ephesus

∞ The recipient of this letter is "to the beloved Gaius"

∞ Purpose of letter is:

∞ To commend Gaius for expressing love and hospitality to gospel missionaries

∞ To rebuke Diotrephes (an apparent Elder of a church) of his mistreatment of gospel missionaries and for unjustly administering church discipline

∞ To vouch for Demetrius (a convert and possible carrier of this letter)

∞

∞

3 **Overview of our passage**

Theme: Do not imitate what is evil, but what is good

∞ 3Jn 1-15

Doctrine: Those who walk in truth will welcome others who walk in truth

Application: We are to show Christian hospitality to those who rely on support to bring the gospel to others as missionaries and demonstrate Christian love to fellow believers

4 **Scripture Reading**

3 John (NASB)

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

2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers. 3 For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. 4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

5 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers; 6 and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. 7 For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. 8 Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.

5 Scripture Reading

9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. 10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.

11 Beloved, 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 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself; and we add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

13 I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink; 14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face.

15 Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

6 Exposit: 3Jn:1

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

☞The author identifies himself as “the elder (presbuteros)”

☞Some scholars hesitate to attribute this to John because it did not say “the apostle”

☞COUNTER:

☞John never identified his apostleship in the intro of the gospel of John or 1John

☞Peter too identified himself as a “fellow elder (presbuteros)” in 1Pet 5:1

☞Literary style (personality) is consistent to 1&2John

☞“the beloved Gaius” [more on this]

☞John affirms his love for Gaius in truth

7 “the beloved Gaius”

☞Gaius is a fairly common name in John’s day

☞There are 3 different Gaius’ in the NT:

☞Paul baptized a man named Gaius in:

1 Corinthians 1:14-15

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15 so that no one would say you were baptized in my name.

☞Gaius from Corinth (region of Achaia)

☞There were two Gaius’ in Paul’s company during Paul’s 3rd missionary journey:

Acts 19:28-29 (Ephesus was in an uproar)

28 When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” 29 The city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed with one accord into the theater, dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul’s traveling companions from Macedonia.

☞Gaius from Macedonia (i.e. Thessalonica, Phillippi, Berea)

☞

8 ☐ "the beloved Gaius"

Acts 20:4 (after the uproar ended in Ephesus)

4 And he (Paul) was accompanied by Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus, and by Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia.

☞ Gaius from Derbe (region of Asia Minor)

☞

☞ Gaius (from Corinth) provided hospitality to Paul and his company in:

1Cor 16 (Paul's closing remarks)

23 Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you.

☞ 'host' is 'xenos' which means stranger

☞ Gaius provided hospitality to Paul who was not previously known to Gaius

☞ Why did I go through all that?

☞ Gaius (from Corinth) who provided hospitality to Paul is likely the same Gaius John is commending in v. 1!

☞ Gaius (from Corinth) who supported gospel missionaries in the past is likely the same Gaius who is continuing to practice hospitality to gospel missionaries mentioned in 3 John

9 ☐ Exposit: 3Jn:2

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

☞ "Beloved" further support that John the apostle is the author

☞ He used this phrase regularly in 1John

☞ Expresses his heart and love for the sheep entrusted to his care

☞ A common greeting

☞ "Hope all is well", "hope you are doing good" in today's vernacular

☞ What we can glean from this common greeting is to pray for another believer's:

☞ Health

☞ Spiritual growth

10 ☐ Exposit: 3Jn:3

3 For I was very glad when brethren came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth.

☞ Believers apparently brought a positive report concerning Gaius

☞ Gaius was a Christian and was validated by him walking in truth (in faith in Jesus)

11 **Exposit: 3Jn:4**

4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

☞ What brought John (and other apostles) great joy is when those they are ministering to are walking in the truth of the gospel

☞ Shepherds are to feel the same

☞ Believers whose children also believe can attest that there is no greater joy as well!

12 **Exposit: 3Jn:5-6**

5 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers; 6 and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

☞ John is commending Gaius for acting faithfully (rightly) in what he's doing to support the furtherance of the gospel

☞ Gaius was providing hospitality to gospel missionaries

☞ The gospel missionaries (whoever they were) testified to Gaius's kindness, love, and hospitality before the church (and John learned of this)

☞ "send them on their way in a manner worthy of God"

☞ I'd like to cross reference Paul...

☞

13 **Exposit: 3Jn:5-6**

Romans 16:1-2 (in Paul's closing remarks)

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; 2 that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.

☞ Gaius received (welcomed) gospel missionaries in a worthy manner

☞ John is now instructing Gaius to send them off in a worthy manner

☞ Help them by providing what they need

14 **Exposit: 3Jn:7**

7 For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles.

☞ "they" are the gospel missionaries

☞ "went out for the sake of the Name (onoma)"

☞ They went out and felt called to proclaim the gospel, became missionaries

☞ They did so in faith in God's authority

☞ They did so to bring glory to God

☞ "accepting nothing from the Gentiles" is an indication that Gaius was a Jew

15 **Exposit: 3Jn:8**

8 Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the

truth.

- ☞ "ought" is 'opheilō' which means indebted, obligated
- ☞ To support "such men" the gospel missionaries
- ☞ "fellow workers of the truth"
 - ☞ In the body of Christ, we are many different parts of the same body
 - ☞ Some go on missions, some preach, some teach, some lead, some serve
 - ☞ When we support the church we are enabling it to minister to others, and in doing so, are fellow workers with the truth (gospel)
- ☞ Truth Principle: the church (believers) are obligated to support its gospel missionaries whether it be by providing lodging, food, money, etc.

16 **Exposit: 3Jn:9**

9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say

- ☞ John apparently wrote a letter to the church (that did not make its way to the canon)
- ☞ But a man named Diotrephes did not accept what John had to say
- ☞ "who loves to be first" is an indication that Diotrephes was not saved
- ☞ Another indication that Diotrephes is not saved is that he did not accept the words and instructions of an apostle:
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us (Paul an apostle, Silas, Timothy), you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

☞

17 **Exposit: 3Jn:10**

10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.

- ☞ "this reason" Diotrephes rejecting John's instructions
- ☞ "unjustly accusing us (John included)" further support that Diotrephes was not saved
- ☞ Diotrephes "did not receive the brethren (the gospel missionaries)"
- ☞ Diotrephes forbade the church to welcome and provide hospitality to them, and for those who did, he put "them out of the church"
 - ☞ An indication that Diotrephes was not only unsaved, but a church leader (Pastor/Elder)
 - ☞ Unjustly exercised church discipline to those who were doing what is right (providing hospitality to gospel missionaries)

18 **Exposit: 3Jn:11**

11 Beloved, 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.

- ☞ "do not imitate what is evil" in context is being against providing hospitality to gospel missionaries which was the case with Diotrephes
- ☞ "but what is good" in context John is imploring them to do the opposite
 - ☞ Do not follow the example of Diotrephes (didn't support gospel missionaries)
 - ☞ Follow the example of Gaius (supported gospel missionaries)
- ☞ "the one who does good" in context are believers whose aim is to obey Scripture
 - ☞ Listens to all of Scripture, including the writings from the apostles
- ☞ "the one who does evil has not seen God"
 - ☞ Again Diotrephes is the subject here
 - ☞ A clearer indication that Diotrephes (who does evil) was not saved

19 **Exposit: 3Jn:12**

12 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself; and we add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

- ☞ Demetrius is a convert and likely the courier of this letter and the letter John wrote to the church concerning Diotrephes
- ☞ The church provided John a positive report of Demetrius (walking in truth)
- ☞ John affirms Demetrius as on the side of truth
- ☞ John affirms that his testimony of the truth is true

20 **Exposit: 3Jn:13-14**

13 I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink; 14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face.

- ☞ Closing remarks is virtually identical to 2John
 - ☞ Further support that John is the author of these 3 letters
- ☞ "face to face"
 - ☞ As we covered at the close of 2John, the most effective way to encourage and show God's love is to see and speak to people "face to face"
 - ☞
 - ☞

21 **Exposit: 3Jn:15**

15 Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

- ☞ Common way to close the letter
- ☞ What we can glean from these closing remarks
 - ☞ Pray for God's peace in the believer's heart
 - ☞ Greet and say hello to fellow believers (stay connected)
 - ☞ "Greet the friends by name"
 - ☞ In the church get to know each other's name
 - ☞ Be sure to greet them in their name (not "hey brother", "hey sister")
- ☞ Did not find any prophetic implications concerning the end times other than

3 John 1:11 Beloved, 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.

☞ Other than that, pretty straightforward letter from John to Gaius