

The Third Epistle General of John

The Third Epistle of John, often referred to simply as 3 John, is a letter found in the New Testament of the Christian Bible. Here's an introduction to the Book of 3 John:

- **Authorship:** The author identifies himself as "the elder" (3 John 1:1), and while he does not explicitly identify himself as John, the apostle, early church tradition attributes the letter to John, the beloved disciple of Jesus Christ, who also authored the Gospel of John and the First and Second Epistles of John.
- **Date and Context:** The exact date of the composition of 3 John is uncertain, but it was likely written toward the end of the first century, between AD 70 and AD 100. The letter addresses concerns within the Christian community and emphasizes the importance of hospitality, support for traveling missionaries, and the defense against false teachers.
- **Purpose:** The primary purpose of 3 John is to commend Gaius for his hospitality and support of traveling missionaries and to condemn Diotrephes for his pride and refusal to welcome the brethren. The letter emphasizes the importance of hospitality, love, and support for those who labor in the service of the gospel.

Themes

- **Hospitality and Support:** 3 John highlights the importance of hospitality and support for traveling missionaries and ministers of the gospel. The letter commends Gaius for his hospitality and generosity toward the brethren and encourages believers to imitate his example of love and hospitality.
- **Unity and Cooperation:** The letter emphasizes the need for unity and cooperation within the Christian community. It condemns the divisive actions of Diotrephes, who rejects the authority of the apostolic leaders and refuses to welcome the brethren. It encourages believers to promote peace and unity in the body of Christ.
- **Faithfulness and Diligence:** 3 John commends those who remain faithful to the truth of the gospel and diligent in their service to God. It encourages believers to persevere in their faithfulness and to continue to support the work of the gospel, even in the face of opposition and resistance.
- **Discernment and Accountability:** The letter warns against false teachers and leaders who seek to exert control and authority over the Christian community. It calls believers to exercise discernment and accountability in their relationships and to reject those who promote division and discord.
- **Reward and Consequences:** 3 John emphasizes the rewards of faithful service and hospitality and the consequences of pride, arrogance, and disobedience. It assures believers that God sees and rewards those who faithfully serve Him and warns against the judgment that awaits those who oppose the truth.

Structure: The Book of 3 John is structured as a letter from the elder to Gaius, with a focus on commendation, condemnation, and exhortation. It includes: Greeting and Salutation (3 John 1:1-2), Commendation of Gaius (3 John 1:3-8), Condemnation of Diotrephes (3 John 1:9-10), Commendation of Demetrius (3 John 1:11-12), Final Greetings and Farewell (3 John 1:13-14)

In summary, the Book of 3 John is a personal and pastoral letter that emphasizes the importance of hospitality, love, and support within the Christian community. It encourages believers to imitate the example of Gaius, who faithfully supports the work of the gospel, and to reject the divisive actions of those like Diotrephes who seek to undermine the unity and peace of the body of Christ.

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CHAPTER 1

Greeting to Gaius; Gaius Commended for Generosity; John Criticizes Diotrephes, Follow The One Doing Good; Demetrius has a Good Report of All Men; Final Greetings

Greeting to Gaius

- 1 The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.
- 2 Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.
- 3 For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth.
- 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

Gaius Commended for Generosity

- 5 Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers;
- 6 Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:
- 7 Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles.
- 8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.

John Criticizes Diotrephes, Follow The One Doing Good

- 9 I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.
- 10 Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.
- 11 Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God.

Demetrius has a Good Report of All Men

- 12 Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

Final Greetings

- 13 I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee:
- 14 But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face. Peace be to thee. Our friends salute thee. Greet the friends by name.