

III JOHN THE LETTER

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3 JOHN - The LETTER

READ AND OBSERVE

Read through **3 John** and mark every reference to God the Father, including pronouns and synonyms, with a red triangle.

Read through **3 John** and mark every reference to the elder with a green capital "J".

Read through **3 John** and mark every reference to Gaius, the recipient of this letter, with an orange capital "G".

Read through **3 John** and highlight every reference to the brethren, including pronouns and synonyms, with beige.

Read through **3 John** and mark every reference to Diotrephes with a black box.

Read through **3 John** and mark every reference to truth, including pronouns and synonyms, with a red box filled in with yellow.

Read through **3 John** and mark every reference to love with a red heart filled in with pink.

Read through **3 John** and mark every reference to evil, including pronouns and synonyms, with an orange circle.

Read through **3 John** and mark testify, proclaim, write, or announce, including pronouns and synonyms, with a green trumpet.

Read through **3 John** and mark every time phrase with a blue box.

Read through **3 John** and mark every contrast with a bold pink diagonal slash.

Read through **3 John** and divide the passage into the following segments. Mark and title these segments in your text using brackets in the margin.

1. Loving in truth
2. Walking in truth

3. Support the brethren (especially when strangers)
4. Diotrephes
5. Imitate what is good (Demetrius)
6. We will speak face to face
7. Greetings

READ AND ANSWER

3 John 1

Who wrote this letter?

To whom did the elder write?

What relationship did the elder have with Gaius?

What type of love did the elder have for Gaius?

3 John 2-4

What did the elder call Gaius?

What did the elder do for Gaius?

What did the elder pray for Gaius?

1.

2.

What did the elder connect with Gaius' prosperity and good health?

What had the elder heard about Gaius' soul?

Who told the elder about Gaius's spiritual condition or behavior?

What did the brethren testify to?

What was the truth about Gaius' spiritual condition or behavior?

How did the elder feel about Gaius' spiritual condition or behavior?

What was the elder's greatest joy? (As a Bible teacher, I really, really, really understand John's feelings!)

Who were the elder's children? Were they his physical children or his spiritual children?

3 John 5-8

Once again, John calls Gaius beloved. What does he say Gaius is doing? Specifically, how was he walking in the truth?

1.

2.

Gaius is acting faithfully (according to the truth) in accomplishing things for the brethren. When is he acting especially faithful?

Are the strangers brethren?

Are some of the brethren strangers?

What has been testified concerning Gaius?

Who has testified concerning Gaius' love?

To whom have they testified about Gaius' love?

What did Gaius do? (Don't worry if you don't see it yet. You will soon! Just keep answering the questions from the text through at least **verse 8** and things will begin to make sense.)

What does John tell Gaius would be well for him to do?

In what way is Gaius to send them on their way?

Send who on their way?

What did "they" do?

Who are "they"?

Where did "they" go?

Out from where or what?

Why did they go out?

What is the Name?

What does the sake of the Name mean?

Were they Jew or Gentile?

How do you know?

What does John say “we” should do?

Who is “we”?

Why should “we” support such men?

Who are “such men”?



Hmmmm...
What is going on here?

**Who are these people and what is John telling them to do?
What do we know so far?**

**We know that brethren went out for the sake of the Name,
which is the Name of Jesus that brings glory to the Name of the Father.
Verse 8 bears this out because it says these were workers for the truth,
which is the message of Jesus Christ.**

**We know they went out, or left where they were (homes, towns, churches),
for the sake of the Name,
which certainly must be spreading the gospel, or evangelizing.
Verse 8 bears this out, as well, by saying they were workers of the truth
and those who helped them along their way were fellow workers for the truth.**

**We know that the particular ones that John is referring to must not be Gentiles,
therefore they must be Jews.
However, we know that they must be Jews who are Christians.**

**We know they must have needed places to stay and food to eat on their journeys
but they did not accept these necessities from Gentiles.**

**We know that Gaius was commended for his support of these men
and was instructed to continue his support
by sending them on their way in a manner worthy of God.
Gaius must have been welcoming these men into his home,
feeding and caring for them, whenever they came to his town.
John instructs Gaius to also provide them with these things
whenever he sends them on their way to their next town.**

Gaius must have known some of these men,
whereas some of these men were strangers to him—
brethren he had never met before.
Yet, if they brought the message of Jesus Christ,
as workers for the sake of the Name,
they were treated with the same faithfulness
that Gaius would have shown to men he knew personally.

Who were these men?

They were itinerant preachers of the message of Jesus Christ!
John is telling Gaius and us to support these men—these workers of truth!



How might Gaius have known who to welcome into his home and who to reject?
Most likely he would have heard the teaching
that John gave in one of his other letters.

2 John 9-11

*Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ,
does not have God;
the one who abides in the teaching,
he has both the Father and the Son.
If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching,
do not receive him into your house,
and do not give him a greeting;
for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.*

In the same way that John urged Gaius
to continue to receive those who brought the truth to his town,
he urged the chosen lady and her children (perhaps Gaius was one of them?)
to not receive those who did not bring the truth.

3 John tells us that we become fellow workers for the truth
when we support men who go out for the sake of the Name.
2 John tells us that we become fellow participants in evil deeds
when we support men who do not abide in the teaching of Christ.

How was Gaius loving the brethren?

How was Gaius loving the brethren who were strangers?

3 John 9-10

Had John previously written to the church Gaius assembled with?

Did those at the church accept what John and the other apostles said?

Who did not accept what John had to say?

How is Diotrephes described?

If John comes to Gaius' church, what will he do?

Why?

What was Diotrephes doing?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What was Diotrephes saying about John and his companions?

Was Diotrephes satisfied with unjustly accusing John and the other apostles with his wicked words?

Did Diotrephes receive the brethren who went out for the sake of the Name?

What did he do when someone else in the church wanted to receive a brethren who was traveling and preaching the truth for the sake of the Name?

How could he forbid them to do so? Did he have authority? (**3 John 9**)

Was forbidding them to support these itinerant preachers good enough for Diotrephes?

What did he do to the ones who received, or supported receiving the ones who came as workers of truth?

Again, does it seem he must have had authority?

3 John 11-12

What is John's exhortation to Gaius?

What is Gaius not to do?

What is Gaius to do?

What is the evil John is talking about? Whose deeds is he referring to?

What is the good John is talking about? Whose walk is he referring to?

What is true about the one who does good?

What is true about the one who does evil?

Who had received a good testimony from everyone?

What else had testified concerning Demetrius?

Whose testimony was added?

Did Gaius have any reason to disbelieve John's testimony concerning Demetrius?

Think for a moment with me. Just who was Demetrius? Was he someone in Gaius' church? Or was he one of the itinerant preachers who was probably coming to Gaius' town?

If Demetrius was coming to Gaius' town to preach the truth, what was Diotrephes' response going to be?

Why was it important that John remind Gaius that Demetrius had a good testimony?

What might Diotrephes try to do to Gaius?

3 John 13-14

Had John written everything he wanted to say?

Why didn't he write more?

What was John willing to do?

When did John hope to travel to Gaius' town?

What would John do when he arrived?

3 John 15 (Note: Some bibles include this as part of **verse 14**.)

What does John extend to Gaius?

Whose greetings does John send to Gaius?

What does John instruct Gaius to do?

What does that tell you about John's relationship with the rest of the brethren who assembled with Gaius?

READ AND REASON

2 John deals with the warning to not receive deceivers.

3 John deals with the exhortation to receive "truthers"—those who have a good testimony regarding the delivery of the truth.

Are the warnings and exhortations in John's letters something we need to know today?
Oh, yes!

We may not have the exact same situation of itinerant preachers as in John's day, but we certainly have a much greater quantity of preachers and teachers that want to reach us. Snail mail, e-mail, the internet, along with a much greater mobility in our world make us susceptible to multitudes of false workers.

How will we know which are which?

We need to know the Word of God.

We need to study the Word of God book by book, over and over again, embracing the truth in it, responding rightly to the God Who wrote it, and urging others to do the same.

 Theme

What is **3 John** mainly and plainly about?

Theme of 3 John
