

Alpha & Omega (The First & Last The Beginning & End)
Jehovah (Lord) Yahweh Adonai Prince of Peace King of kings
Lord of lords Messiah Holy Trinity Elohim El Shaddai (God
Almighty) Jehovah~Jireh (The Lord will provide)
Jehovah~Rophe (The Lord who heals) Jehovah~Nissi (The
Lord our Banner) Jehovah~Shalom (The Lord of Peace)
Jehovah~M'Kaddesh (The Lord who Sanctifies)
Jehovah~Tsidkenu (The Lord our Righteousness) Jehovah~Rohi
(The Lord our Shepherd) Jehovah~Shammah (The Lord is there)
Jehovah~Sabaoth (The Lord of Hosts) El~Elyon (Most High)
Abir (Mighty One) Kadosh (Holy One) Shaphat (Judge) El Roi
(God of Seeing) Kanna (Jealous) Palet (Deliverer) Gaol
(Redeemer) Magen (Shield) Stone Yeshua (Jesus) Eyaluth
(Strength) Tsaddiq (Righteous One) El~Olam (Everlasting God)
El~Berith (God of the Covenant) El~Gibhor (Mighty God) Tsur
(God our Rock) Melekh (King) Father Emmanuel

Hey! We're finally getting back to 3 John!

Ok...now, where were we? How about a little review first? I think that might be a good idea ~

- John writes (likely) from Ephesus where, toward the end of the 1st century, he lived and served and shepherded the church.
- His recipients were believers in nearby towns who were dealing with several issues revolving around itinerant teachers circulating through the area.
- Some of the traveling teachers were distorting the gospel, teaching that the divine Jesus and the human Jesus could not have been the same ~ see 2 John 7.

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

Interesting note here from the ESV Study Bible: "It has been suggested that 2 & 3 John were originally preserved because they were part of a single packet containing all three Johannine letters. On this view, 3 John was a personal letter to Gaius commending the courier of the shipment, Demetrius (v. 12); 2 John was to be read aloud to Gaius' church; and 1 John was a sermon for general distribution and not a letter in the strict sense. This scenario cannot be verified but is a useful hypothesis in envisioning how John's letters could have arisen and been preserved in early Christianity."

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

Here's the outline we're using for John's short letter:

- John's joy that Gaius is walking in the truth – v. 1-4
- John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8
- John's concern over Diotrephes' pride – v. 9-10
- John's testimony of Demetrius' consistent life – v. 11-12
- John's desire to speak face to face with Gaius – v. 13-15

My take on why John wrote this short letter: To preserve the true gospel by encouraging believers to support itinerant teachers of biblical truth.

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

John mentions three people in his letter—what does the text say about them?

Gaius –

- He was clearly very dear to John—4 times John refers to him as *beloved*. See v. 1, 2, 3, 5, 11, 14
- Others speak of his obedience to the truth and his love for the saints: v. 3, 4, 5, 6. You get the idea that he wasn't in this for his own glory.
- He actively supports itinerant teachers: v. 5, 8
- He consistently walks in the truth: v. 3-4
- And he is well known in John's home church (Ephesus): v. 15

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

John mentions three people in his letter—what does the text say about them?

Diotrephes –

- Likes to put himself first
- Does not acknowledge the authority of the apostles
- Talks “wicked nonsense” about John and his fellow workers
- Does not welcome itinerant teachers
- Puts out of the church those who welcome the itinerant teachers
- Had some significant authority in the church

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

John mentions three people in his letter—what does the text say about them?

Demetrius –

- He received a good testimony from everyone—he was well spoken of.
- He was known to live consistently with Scripture.
- He received a good testimony from John.
- And most writers think that he was the one who carried and delivered all three of John's letters to the churches nearby to Ephesus.

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

Think about this: What was the point John was making in 2 John?

- Compare that to the main thrust of 3 John—can you put the messages of these two short letters together and make one general statement that covers both? What is the big central issue John is tackling in these two letters?

He is doing the same thing Paul did in the book of Galatians—he is working to preserve the true gospel (and by extension the teaching of sound doctrine) from distortion, twisting, and confusion. It is always the gospel that is at stake.

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

John was writing to believers, but not just to individuals...the issue was the church, and the preservation and proclamation of a saving gospel through the church.

The church. Believers in community.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "So between the death of Christ and the Last Day it is only by a gracious anticipation of the last things that Christians are privileged to live in visible fellowship with other Christians. It is by the grace of God that a congregation is permitted to gather visibly in this world to share God's Word and sacrament."

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

“It is easily forgotten that the fellowship of Christian brethren is a gift of grace, a gift of the Kingdom of God that any day may be taken from us, that the time that still separates us from utter loneliness may be brief indeed. Therefore, let him who until now has had the privilege of living a common Christian life with other Christians praise God’s grace from the bottom of his heart. Let him thank God on his knees and declare: it is grace, nothing but grace, that we are allowed to live in community with Christian brethren.” ~ Bonhoeffer

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A little review of 3 John to start things off...

“Not only will love and harmony in our congregations help win the lost, they will help keep the found. In a day where we are increasingly marginalized and mocked, it is even more important that we find our greatest place of belonging in the church. Mere attendance and association will no longer cut it. Maybe we could get by, when society was on our side, in thin relationships with fellow believers. But as opposition increases, the richness of our life together in the church will matter more than ever.” ~ David Mathis

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A little review of 3 John to start things off...

John saw in Gaius a genuine faith—

- ...a brother who would not be content with “thin relationships with fellow believers.”
- ...faith that showed itself in works (like Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:11-14, 3:8; Heb. 10:24-25; James 2:14-17).
- ...faith that showed itself in perseverance (like 1 Pet. 1:6-7).
- ...and faith that bore fruit (like Matt. 7:17; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:8-9).

So John writes that Gaius' genuine faith, lived out in humility and service, and noticed by others, is his source of greatest joy.

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

In v. 1-4 we saw John's joy over Gaius' consistent "walking in the truth." And in v. 5-8 we see, broadly speaking, John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers.

- We noted that first century "inns were notoriously dirty and flea-infested. Innkeepers were notoriously rapacious, so that Plato compared them to pirates who hold their guests to ransom, before they allow them to escape."
- So traveling, itinerant teachers would stay with the families of believers. And so we explored the whole topic of hospitality in the OT and NT.

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

Some conclusions about hospitality -

At one level it is this:

- a readiness to welcome people into your home,
- and a hospitality that promotes the gospel and contributes to the maturing of the saints.

But beyond that, hospitality is an issue of the heart.

- It is a reflection of the heart of God towards sinners in the gospel,
- And it is a reflection of His heart to forgive, keep, preserve, and bring all the way home redeemed sinners

A little review of 3 John to start things off...

Some conclusions about hospitality –

Don't just come to church.

- Practice hospitality here too: you have a few strategic moments before church. Come a little early, greet people, welcome them warmly. Show new families to the children's check-in area, find someone sitting by themselves and say hi.
- Again, after the service, turn your hospitality radar back on and connect with someone.

Hospitality is a very graphic way to live out the gospel—that is (in context!) the meaning of Rom. 12:13. It is an issue of the heart, not the wallet.

John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8

So John tells Gaius in v. 7 to continue to support these itinerant missionary/teachers—but he qualifies or defines that support: “send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God.” What is that?

- The way Gaius treated these traveling teachers would reflect on the name and character of God.
- If he gave them little, treated them like beggars, it would bring discredit on the name of God: better to err on the side of generosity than otherwise.
- This is a very high standard: give to them generously...like God does.
- Notice the same thought in Col. 1:10, 1 Thess. 2:12. What are the implications?

John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8

And now John gives the reason why these brothers should be supported with such a high standard, in a manner worthy of God: “For *they have gone out for the sake of the name...*” (v. 7). Which means what?

The concept of “name” in Scripture—and in ancient civilizations—was reflective of the entire person.

Take a look through these OT references—note what each says about the name of the Lord:

- Psalm 20:7
- Psalm 102:15, 21
- Psalm 135:1
- Prov. 18:10
- Joel 2:32
- Zephaniah 3:12

John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8

Ok—now take a look in the NT: notice what takes place “for the sake of the name” in each –

- Acts 5:41, 9:16, 21:13
- Romans 1:5
- Philippians 2:9

The work that these traveling teachers were doing was the same work—done for the same reason—as God was doing in the world. See Col. 3:17.

John Stott: “Jealousy for the Name of Christ is the most compelling of all missionary motives.”

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John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8

In v. 8 John brings his encouragement to Gaius to a conclusion, “Therefore...”

Not every Christian can go “out for the sake of the name,” but every Christian can “support people like these,” and stand alongside them as “fellow workers for the truth.”

We can serve them, we can send them, we can support them. But be discerning. Why do I say that?

“...we ought to support *people like these*.” People like what?

- The ones who “have gone out for the sake of the name.” Be discerning about how you give.

John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8

John mentions in v. 7 that these traveling, itinerant teacher/missionaries had accepted “nothing from the Gentiles.”

- Why not? Is there a problem with, say, a missionary receiving financial support from non-believers?

Should a missionary refuse any offer of support from non-believers? Why? Or why not?

- The particular teacher/missionaries John writes about had refused offers of support from Gentiles...are Christians obligated to support all who call themselves missionaries? Is v. 8 a call to financially support any person or organization with the name Christian? What criteria do you use?

John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8

Take a look at Matt. 10:41...

John MacArthur, commenting on that verse, says this: "Thus, He promised eternal reward, as if the one caring for a prophet was himself a prophet. In His limitless grace God not only rewards a true prophet, preacher, or missionary for his faithfulness, but also rewards anyone else who receives him.

Receiving a prophet refers to embracing his ministry—affirming his call and supporting his work.

Receiving a righteous man is that same principle, extended to every believer who is accepted for Christ's sake...

John's commendation of Gaius' love for the brothers – v. 5-8

Take a look at Matt. 10:41...

...In an incomprehensible sharing of blessing, God showers His rewards on every person who receives His people because they are His people.

Whenever we become the source of blessing for others, we are blessed; and whenever other believers become a source of blessing to us, they are blessed.

In God's magnificent economy of grace, the least believer can share the blessings of the greatest, and no one's good work will go unrewarded."

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