Introduction And Summary Of Third John

Intro: 3rd John as but 14 verses and 299 words (in KJV) but has many great lessons.

I. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS
   A. Author:
      1. He simply calls himself “the elder.”
      2. It adequately identifies him to all readers.
      3. It is the apostle John.
   B. Recipient
      1. It is written to “the wellbeloved Gaius.”
      2. Gaius in the Bible
         a. From Macedonia; Acts 19:29 “29And the whole city was filled with confusion: and having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, Paul’s companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theatre.”
         b. From Derbe; Acts 20:4 “4And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus.”
         c. From Corinth; Rom. 16:23 “23Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother.”
         d. Possibly another from Corinth; 1 Cor. 1:14 “14I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;”
      3. We do not know if this Gaius is any of the others.
      4. He was a close personal friend of John and possibly a convert of John’s.
   C. A Study of Contrasts.
      1. Commendation and condemnation.
      2. Commends Gaius for his faithfulness and Christian hospitality.
      3. Condemns Diotrephes for his love of preeminence.
      4. Commends Demetrius for his good report.
   D. John gives emphasis to certain words (characteristic of his writing).
      1. John gives emphasis to “truth.”
      2. It is used 6 times in the book
      3. “Jesus” nor “Christ” is found in the book.

II. COMMENDATION OF GAIUS
   A. 3 John 1-8
   B. Introduction
      1. 3 John 1 “The elder unto the wellbeloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.”
      2. John had a sincere love for Gaius.
         a. He says he is wellbeloved
         b. He also says he is beloved.
         c. The words come from a form of the Greek agape.
      3. We need to have this type of love for one another.
         a. John 13:33-34 “33Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”
It is a love that does what is in the best interest of others.

1. This will include the best interest of an enemy; Mat. 5:43-44 “Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;”

2. It is the type love that will sacrifice for a loved one; Eph. 5:25 “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;”

John had a love for Gaius that would cause him to do what was in Gaius’ best interest.

As we see our great brotherhood being torn asunder (as Diotrephes was doing), we need to express our love one to another as John did Gaius.

C. John’s Prayer For Gaius.

1. 3 John 2 “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.”

2. John’s desire (KJV—“wish” and ASV—“pray”) for Gaius would have good health and prosper financially.
   a. John had a desire “to see Gaius prosper in his business, employment, plans, and purposes” (Kistemaker 390).
   b. The physical is important.
      1) 1 Tim. 4:8 “For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”
      2) We practice benevolence to others because we realize its importance.
   c. The spiritual is of greater importance.
      1) 1 Tim. 4:8 “For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”
      2) We must be concerned with the soul and not so much with the body.
      3) Mat. 6:19-21 “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”
      4) Col. 3:1-2 “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”
      5) Jam. 4:4 “Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”
      6) 1 John 2:15-16 “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.”

3. To pray this for many Christians today would be praying that they would be on death’s doorstep and financially bankrupt.
   a. Far too many are spiritually bankrupt.
   b. Materialism and worldliness has choked out God’s Word.

D. John’s Joy

1. 3 John 3-4 “For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”
2. The importance of “truth.”
   a. Relating to Gaius
      (1) John loves him in the truth.
      (2) Brethren testified of the truth that was in him.
      (3) Gaius walked in truth.
      (4) John’s joy was hearing his children walk in truth.
   b. “Truth” occurs more than any other word (other than “the” and “and”), 6 times.
   a. Brethren “came and testified” of the truth in Gaius and his walking in truth.
      (1) “Came” and “testified” are words that show action that has taken place on several occasions.
      (2) This was in contrast to Diotrephes who did not walk in truth.
   b. Who were these individuals?
      (1) Probably traveling missionaries who received lodging and had their physical needs provided for in the home of Gaius.
      (2) They had to have some way to determine he was living the Christian life.
4. Walking in truth—faithfulness to God.
   a. Christianity is more than simply believing something; it must be acted upon.
   b. Jam 2:14-26
      (1) Jam. 2:14 “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?”
      (2) Jam. 2:17-18 “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.”
      (3) Jam. 2:20, 24, 26 “But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?...Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only....For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”
   c. Gal. 5:6 “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”
   d. The faith that works is continued living according the commands of God.
      (1) 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
      (2) Gaius was a doer of all that God commanded.
      (3) Jam. 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”
   e. Many today consider faithfulness as:
      (1) Simply attending services on Sunday and Wednesday
      (2) Not committing any “grievous sins”
      (3) They fail to translate what God says into their daily life (i.e. attitudes, speech, actions).
5. What brought rejoicing to John (and us).
   a. Many think it is health, wealth, and things.
   b. Obedience to the Gospel.
      (1) Acts 2:41 “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”
(2) Acts 8:39 “And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.”
(3) Acts 16:34 “And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.”

c. Continued faithfulness to God
(1) 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
(2) 1 John 1:4 “And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.”
(3) Phi. 4:4 “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice.”

d. Because others continue in faithfulness to God.

E. John’s Encouragement For Gaius
1. 3 John 5-8 “Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and to strangers; 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: Because that for his name’s sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.”

2. Gaius extending hospitality to traveling brethren.
   a. Gaius was sacrificing himself for others.
   b. Paul was willing to sacrifice himself; 2 Cor. 12:15 “And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved.”
   c. Gaius’ love for brethren prompted him to give those things which he had.

3. Hospitality
   a. We are to be hospitable:
      (1) Rom. 12:13 “Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.”
      (2) Heb. 13:2 “Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.”
      (3) 1 Pet. 4:9 “‘Use hospitality one to another without grudging.’”
   b. “Hospitality” literally means “love of strangers.”
   c. Examples:
      (1) Gaius is an example of hospitality.
      (2) Abraham and Lot’s reception of the angelic visitors; Gen. 18-19.
      (3) Laban receiving Abraham’s servant; Gen. 24.
      (4) Manoah’s desire to detain the angel to fix him a meal; Jud. 13.
      (5) The Shunammite family making a room for Elisha to stay in; 2 Kin. 4.
   d. It extended to not only providing food and shelter, but also protection (sometimes even at the expense of their own family members).
   e. Jesus relied on hospitality to take care of his disciples when he sent them out on the limited commission; Mat. 10 and Luke 10.
   f. Hospitality is a requirement for being an elder.
   g. Hospitality today:
      (1) Customs are far different today, but we are still to be hospitable.
      (2) We have motels/hotels and plenteous places to eat, yet we can still show hospitality to others.
         (a) Taking people out to eat.
         (b) Bringing others to our home to eat.
(c) Opening our homes during meetings, lectureships or as one travels through.
(d) There is the need for hospitality within among members of the local congregation.
   i) Getting to know one another better.
   ii) Promotes a greater love one for another.

4. Spiritual aspect of hospitality.
   a. 3 John 8 “We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth.”
   b. The Philippians support of Paul:
      (1) Phi. 1:5 “For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;”
      (2) Phi. 4:15-16 “Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.”
   c. When we provide the needed support, we are in fellowship with them.
      (1) We thus must be careful whom we support.
      (2) We must not provide support to those who do not abide in Christ’s doctrine;
          2 John 9-11 “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”
   d. When we aid and support others, we are just as accountable as those to whom we give that aid and support.

5. Thankfulness:
   a. We should be thankful for what others do.
   b. God has always expected His people to be a thankful people.
      (1) Psa. 50:14 “Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High.”
      (2) Psa. 147:7 “Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God.”
      (3) Eph. 5:20 “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;”
      (4) 1 The. 5:18 “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”
   c. Some believe Gaius was in poor health or poor.
      (1) If true then Gaius should be especially commended.
      (2) How much more would this expression of thanks be mean to him?

6. Reputation
   a. Gaius had a sterling reputation.
   b. Others continued to tell John about Gaius’ good.
   c. We should be concerned with what others think about us.
      (1) Some say they don’t care what others think about them.
      (2) We must please God no matter what anyone else thinks about us.
      (3) Generally we should be concerned with what others think.
   d. Examples of concern with reputation:
      (1) Jesus; John 8:46 “Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?”
(2) elders; 1 Tim. 3:7 “Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”

(3) widows taken into the number; 1 Tim. 5:10 “Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints’ feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.”

(4) all Christians:
   (a) we are to be shining examples of godliness in our life.
   (b) 1 Pet. 3:16 “Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.”
   (c) 1 Pet. 2:12 “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”
   (d) Mat. 5:13-16 “Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

7. Gaius was supporting preachers.
   a. Gospel preachers are to be supported financially in the work which they do.
   b. Deu. 25:4 “Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn.”
   c. 1 Cor. 9:
      (1) Paul quotes the passage from Deuteronomy.
      (2) Example of soldiers not going to war at their own expense.
      (3) Those who serve in the temple; 1 Cor. 9:13 “Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?”
      (4) 1 Cor. 9:14 “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.”
   d. In the past the church had difficulty in this area—views are changing.
      (1) After the civil war:
         (a) There were poor economic conditions particularly in the South.
         (b) Few congregations could afford to pay a preacher a livable wage.
         (c) They helped by giving him food or clothing and other needs.
         (d) Some preachers were independently wealthy and did not take any pay.
      (2) West wrote, “In the course of time churches began to expect to receive all preaching without paying a preacher.... As economic conditions bettered themselves in the country, church members had more money, but they still wanted their preaching for nothing” (454).
      (3) West adds: “But the pendulum was slow in swinging. Any preacher who undertook to teach the congregation out of its selfishness, and to stress their duty to support their laborers, immediately ran the risk of severe criticism for preaching for money. Many were silent, preferring insufficient support to the criticism that they were preaching for money” (455).
      (4) some still believe that one who preaches the Gospel should be kept at a poverty level.
5. Gaius did not have that type of thinking, he believed in supporting those who preached.

6. We need to learn to support preachers in a manner that befits God’s service.

8. We have the obligation to take the Gospel to the whole world.
   a. This is what the traveling preachers were doing.
   b. Christ left heaven for the purpose of saving souls
      (1) Luke 19:10 “10For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”
      (2) He had such love for sinners that He gave life on Calvary to save us.
   c. Christ gives us a great commission:
      (1) Mark 16:15 “15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”
      (2) Mat. 28:19-20 “19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
   d. 2 Tim. 2:2 “2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”
   e. Every Christian has the obligation to defend the Truth.
      (1) With false doctrine running rampant in the church today, it is imperative we take a stand and fight against all that is false.
      (2) We cannot become so obsessed with fighting false teachers we fail to go out and teach the alien.
      (3) We have made many excuses for not doing it:
         (a) they are set in their ways
         (b) we have talked to them before
         (c) they are too rich or poor
         (d) they are too materialistic, or worldly, etc.
      (4) We do everything but get out and spread the Word.
   f. Paul was a great example:
      (1) A great defender of the Truth
      (2) A great evangelist.
      (3) All Christians should be such.

9. Gaius was doing all he could for the cause of Christ.
   a. He knew the importance of the Lord’s work—it being the greatest cause on earth.
   b. He knew not everyone could be an apostle.
   c. He knew that each one is important, and each has a function to perform; 1 Cor. 12:18 “28And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.”
   d. Some might consider providing hospitality a small thing.
      (1) God does not view things as man does.
      (2) Mat. 10:40-42 “40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. 41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet’s reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward. 42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”
e. Gaius received a great commendation from John, but received a greater reward in heaven.
f. We should never belittle our importance to the kingdom.
   (1) Some speak of only being able to sit on a pew.
   (2) If that is all you can do, then be sitting there participating at each service.
   (3) We should never underestimate what we can do for God.
      (a) Even though man might think it small.
      (b) God remembers and will give a proper reward for them.

III. CONDEMNATION OF DIOTREPHES
A. 3 John 9-10
B. His love of preeminence
   1. 3 John 9 “I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.”
   2. Diotrephes:
      a. A stark contrast to Gaius.
      b. Was a man of great influence in the congregation and possibly an elder in the church.
      c. He loved the power: wanted to be the boss.
   3. John’s letter:
      a. John had written a letter to the church but Diotrephes refused to accept John.
      b. Diotrephes either destroyed or ridiculed the letter, thus John himself.
   4. Power seekers:
      a. 1 Pet. 5:3 “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.”
      b. Diotrephes desire was disrupting the church.
      c. We have this often in congregations today:
         (1) It is their way or the highway.
         (2) They often destroy good works which brethren would enter into.
         (3) They will oppose anything unless they originate or lead the work.
         (4) These are illustrated by the man who comes into the business meeting and immediately announces that whatever you are talking about, “I’m agin it.”
         (5) The church was ready to aid visiting preachers but Diotrephes was “agin it.”
         (6) John T. Hinds writes, “He had an inordinate desire to be ruler, presiding officer, or occupy the chief seat. The seeking for authority is evident upon its face that one is not qualified to rule a congregation of God’s people. It not only violates the plain teaching of Jesus on the point (Luke 14:7), but such persons bring reproach upon the church by failing so completely to manifest the spirit of humility of Jesus, its founder. They always resort to schemes and disgraceful things in accomplishing their desires. As humanity does not change, those with the Diotrephes spirit are just as detrimental to the church now as then” (247).
5. Church leaders must be humble.
   a. Not like Diotrephes.
   b. The greatest in the kingdom: Mat. 18:2-4 “And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”
   c. We need men in leadership positions in the church today who are more concerned with doing the Lord’s work than controlling others and gaining a reputation for themselves.

C. His Wicked Actions
1. 3 John 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.”
2. “Remembering His deeds”
   a. Zodhiates states: “followed by the acc. of thing such as precepts, duties (2 Tim. 2:14); also evil deeds with the idea of censure, reprehension (3 John 1:10)” (G5279).
   b. John is going to rebuke him severely.
   c. Diotrephes was wrong in at least:
      (1) An ambition to hold the chief place
      (2) A refusal to receive John and his fellow workers
      (3) Slanderous attacks on them
      (4) Putting out of the church any who would receive them.
3. People are looking at us and remembering what we do.
   a. 2 Cor. 3:2 “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:”
   b. 1 Tim. 4:12 “Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
      (1) We must make sure they see an example of holiness and righteousness.
      (2) When the world sees a Christian acting wickedly, it is held against the Lord and His church.
4. Diotrephes was falsely accusing brethren with wicked words.
   a. He was gossiping and making unjustified charges against John and his associates, undermining Johns apostleship.
   b. Kistemaker states: “Therefore, he tries to undermine John with malicious gossip. In fact, the word gossip in Greek is descriptive for bubbles that appear momentarily and disappear. They are useless. The term, then, implies that the evil words Diotrephes utters are empty and meaningless (consult 1 Tim. 5:13). Nevertheless, the offense is an undisguised violation of God’s explicit command, ‘You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor’ (Exod. 20:16; Deut. 5:20)” (397).
   c. The faithful will regularly face false accusations against them.
      (1) We must live so others will know they are false.
      (2) Some relish any good gossip, yet live in such a way te majority will not believe it.
d. We should be careful about believing everything we hear about others.
   (1) Simply because someone accuses another does not make it so.
   (2) In dealing with elders: 1 Tim. 5:19-20 “Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Then that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”
   (3) When accusations are made:
      (a) Examine all the evidence and make sure it is correct.
      (b) Come to a proper conclusion based upon the evidence.
      (c) Act accordingly.

5. John was not afraid of Diotrephes.
   a. We have a lot of sissies rather than soldiers in the church who will not take a stand for anything.
   b. Some when challenged as to what they believe and practice will refuse to give any answer.
      (1) Some do not think they have to give account for anything they do.
      (2) They might get away with such in this life, but not in the next.
   c. Dan Carter wrote, “Someone might say: ‘Bless his heart, Diotrephes had his problems as all of us do, and let’s be brethren and accept him as he is.’ John said he was evil! He had an evil heart and needed to be stopped. His smell was unmistakable! The actions of Diotrephes were against the very mission God gave the church to do. That is a crime against God, against Christ, against the Holy Spirit and therefore against Heaven itself. Diotrephes was standing in the way of the ongoing message of salvation. We would hope that John was able to straighten him out, but this is generally the exception and not the rule with those who tend to be like Diotrephes” (292).
   d. John had the courage to do what was right no matter what the outcome might be.
   e. We must not allow the actions and words of others to deter us from doing what God wants us to do.

6. Sometimes we must separate from others.
   a. Tit. 3:10 “A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;”
      (1) Heretick is one who is divisive (ASV has “factious” while the ESV has “stirs up division”).
      (2) Friberg, Friberg, and Miller states about reject, “shun, avoid association with, have nothing to do with someone (TI 3.10)” (296).
   b. Diotrephes was being divisive by refusing faithful brethren and casting those who did out of the church.
      (1) Those like Diotrephes who cause division are to be rejected or withdrawn from.
      (2) In casting others out of the church, he was doing so unjustly and thus he needed to be withdrawn from.
   c. It is right to examine withdrawals in light of God’s Word.
      (1) John was examining Diotrephes actions.
      (2) Diotrephes actions were not according to God’s Word.
(3) Congregations can withdraw unscripturally and others should never support that.

(4) When there is a withdrawal and it is scriptural, then all should respect it.

7. This reminds us that we need to work together.
   a. At the tower of Babel; Gen. 11:6 "And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."
   b. The early church was able to accomplish great things when united; Acts 2:46 "And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart."
   c. We will never know how much damage was done by Diotrephes or by others of like spirit today.
   d. God has given us a great work to do today.
      1. Preaching the Gospel to a lost world.
      2. Unity will go a long way in helping us to accomplish that goal.
      3. Jesus prayed; John 17:21 "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."
   e. Unity can only be based upon Truth.

IV. COMMENDATION OF DEMETRIUS

A. 3 John 11-12

B. Exhortation
   1. 3 John 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."
   2. Encouragement is needed by all at times.
      a. It would have been especially trying times for Gaius and Demetrius.
      b. How encouraging to hear these words from the aged apostle to continue in their good works.
      c. Without encouragement many would become discouraged and would not continue in the Lord’s work.
   3. Follow:
      a. From the Greek μιμήσεσθαι (mimeomai) from which we get our word “mimic.”
      b. It means to imitate or follow as an example.
      c. Vine says, “The verb is always used in exhortations, and always in the continuous tense, suggesting a constant habit or practice” (2:248).

C. Two ways—good and evil.
   1. There are only two ways.
      a. Mat. 12:30 “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.”
      b. Far too many want to play both sides of the fence today.
      c. Some want to do just enough good to get to heaven, yet not be too religious.
      d. The words:
         1. Good is that which God has ordained.
         2. Evil is that which is immoral, base, or wicked; things contrary to God’s Will.
(3) Contextually to the showing of hospitality to visiting preachers and the evil of Diotrephes.

2. Results of the two ways.
   a. It is either having a relationship with God or not.
   b. The one who is of God is the one who has God as his source in life and action.
      (1) 1 John 3:6 “Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him.”
      (2) 2 John 9 “Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.”
      (3) When we remain in Christ’s teaching and do not sin, then we are “of God.”

3. The need for continued doing of good.
   a. No matter what opposition we might face.
   b. 1 Cor. 15:58 “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”
   c. We must not allow Diotrephes type to hinder or stop the work of the church.
   d. There will always be obstacles to overcome and our response to them will determine how successful we will be.

D. Commendation
   1. 3 John 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.”
   2. Demetrius:
      a. Others gave him a good report.
      b. Only other Demetrius is in Acts 19 but is doubtful that it is the same as here.
      c. He was probably the bearer of the letter
         (1) This would be consistent with his reputation.
         (2) He would probably come under the attack of Diotrephes and need the encouragement.
      (3) We should do good even if others mistreat us.
      d. Three commendations:
         (1) Everyone speaks well of him
         (2) The truth speaks well of him
            (a) Kistemaker writes: “What is the significance of the noun truth? The context does not call for an identification with God (John 17:3), Jesus (John 14:6), or the Spirit (I John 5:6). Because John writes about “walking in the truth” (v. 4), that is, the truth of the gospel of Christ, we infer that Demetrius lived according to the mandates of God’s Word so that his life showed clear evidence of the truth (I John 2:8)” (400).
         (3) John speaks well of him.
            (a) John gives Gaius assurance of him by stating that he knows that what he says is true.
            (b) What Paul wrote describes Demetrius; 1 Tim. 5:25 “Likewise also the good works of some are manifest beforehand; and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.”
      e. We do not know what work Demetrius did, but they must have known it.
      f. The report that we have from others is based upon our good or evil works and the only way to have a good report is to do good works.
3. Christianity is personal.
   a. Denetrius did not relay on the church to do good works.
   b. Each Christian has a personal responsibility to do God’s bidding.
   c. The judgment will be upon what each one does.
      1) 2 Cor. 5:10 “But we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”
      2) It will not be on what the congregation does, or what others do.

E. Two actions in dealing with brethren in this book.
1. There is commendation of Gaius and Demetrius for their doing good.
2. There is condemnation of Diotrephes for his ungodly actions.
3. Many want the commendation but reject any condemnation of anyone.
4. Condemnation is also necessary.
   a. Reproving and rebuking are as necessary as exhortation 2 Tim. 4:2 “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
   b. Jer. 1:10 “See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.”
   c. Both these give an emphasis to what most would view as condemnation.
5. For the work to prosper both must be done.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS
A. 3 John 13-14 “I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee: 14But 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.”

B. Similar to 2 John 12 “Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.”

C. John’s visit:
1. He had many things to say to Gaius but would rather speak to him in person about them.
2. It must have been encouraging to Gaius knowing that John would be coming for a visit.
3. John would take care of the problem with Diotrephes.

D. Peace
1. It was a common greeting and salutation.
2. Christians have true peace:
   a. Phi. 4:7 “And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
   b. Peace with God; Rom. 5:1 “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:”
   c. The Christian has inner peace; John 14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”
3. This peace would be important for Gaius in the trials he was going through with Diotrephes.
   a. No matter what Diotrephes did or said, Gaius could still have the peace of God.
   b. If we remain faithful, we will have that same peace.
E. The “friends”
   1. They would be faithful Christians.
   2. Shows us that the spiritual relationship is far more important than the physical.
   3. Mat. 12:48-50 “But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? 49And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! 50For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.”

Conclusion: What great lessons we find in this short book. Let us make sure we live in such a way as to receive commendation from God and not condemnation.