

The Epistles of John

Week 11: 3 John 9-10

Third John provides insight into a personality conflict that arose at the end of the first century and the strategy adopted by the elder to resolve it. Clearly then there is much that is valuable for our consideration in this letter. The church has neglected it for too long —at its own expense.

3 John 1-4

3 John 1–4 (NLT)

This letter is from John, the elder.

I am writing to Gaius, my dear friend, whom I love in the truth.

Dear friend, I hope all is well with you and that you are as healthy in body as you are strong in spirit. Some of the traveling teachers recently returned and made me very happy by telling me about your faithfulness and that you are living according to the truth. I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are following the truth.

3 John 5-8

3 John 5–8 (NLT)

Dear friend, you are being faithful to God when you care for the traveling teachers who pass through, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church here of your loving friendship. Please continue providing for such teachers in a manner that pleases God. For they are traveling for the Lord, and they accept nothing from people who are not believers. So we ourselves should support them so that we can be their partners as they teach the truth.

3 John 9-10

3 John 9–10 (NLT)

I wrote to the church about this, but Diotrephes, who loves to be the leader, refuses to have anything to do with us. When I come, I will report some of the things he is doing and the evil accusations he is making against us. Not only does he refuse to welcome the traveling teachers, he also tells others not to help them. And when they do help, he puts them out of the church.

3 John 9-10

In verse 10 John lodges four specific charges against Diotrephes:

- (1) he is gossiping maliciously about us
- (2) he refuses hospitality to the traveling teachers
- (3) he prevents others in the church who want to from doing so
- (4) he puts out of the church those who extend hospitality

3 John 9-10 Introduction to the Conflict

Sooooo . . . What do we do?

In the Bible, we see conflicts and errors resolved by an appeal or interaction with an Authority.

- Paul and Barnabas go to the church council in Jerusalem
- Paul gives instruction and correction to the church in Corinth
- John gives correction and instruction to churches in his epistles
- In these cases, the Authority was either a council or an Apostle/Overseer

What do we do when we don't have a church council, an overseer or apostle?

3 John 9-10

What Are The Choices?

It could be a danger to generalize this specific case and apply it directly into our time and circumstances

Are there principles we can use from this instance of a leadership problem?

Is there an Authority we could appeal to?

Application for This Week

Should we have an authority?

Are there advantages to oversight or authority outside of the local church?

The key to resolving issues with leaders is humility and submission instead of pride and arrogance.

Homework

John McArthur has said that he reads each book of the Bible 30 times before he begins to study it in preparation for teaching it. I'd like us to all read 3 John just one time per day this coming week to prepare for next week.

Read one translation of 3 John each day this week. It takes less than 2 minutes. Go slowly and think about what is being said.

Write down any questions or things you'd like to discuss in class next week on the first page or email them to me.

Thank you for coming!

See you next week