

Outline of the Book of 3 John

The book of 3 John, written by the Apostle John, is a personal letter addressing issues within the church, particularly the support of itinerant Christian workers and dealing with domineering leadership. John commends Gaius for his faithfulness and hospitality, warns against the negative behavior of Diotrephes, and commends Demetrius. Below is an exhaustive outline of 3 John, highlighting the dangers facing believers.

I. Introduction (1:1-2)

- A. The Elder's Greeting (1-2)
 - 1. From the elder (1a)
 - 2. To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth (1b)
 - 3. Prayer for Gaius's health and prosperity (2)

II. Commendation of Gaius (1:3-8)

- A. Gaius's Faithfulness to the Truth (3-4)
 - 1. Joy in hearing of Gaius's faithfulness (3)
 - 2. No greater joy than hearing that children walk in truth (4)
- B. Gaius's Hospitality and Support (5-8)
 - 1. Commendation for showing hospitality to the brothers (5)
 - 2. Sending them on their way in a manner worthy of God (6)
 - 3. Support for itinerant workers who have gone out for the sake of the Name (7)
 - 4. Encouragement to support such people, becoming fellow workers for the truth (8)

III. Condemnation of Diotrephes (1:9-10)

- A. Diotrephes's Rejection of Authority (9)
 - 1. Writing to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, does not acknowledge John's authority (9)
- B. Diotrephes's Harmful Actions (10)
 - 1. Spreading malicious nonsense about John (10a)
 - 2. Refusing to welcome the brothers (10b)
 - 3. Stopping those who want to do so and putting them out of the church (10c)

IV. Commendation of Demetrius (1:11-12)

- A. Call to Imitate Good, Not Evil (11)
 - 1. Do not imitate what is evil but what is good (11a)
 - 2. Anyone who does good is from God; anyone who does evil has not seen God (11b)
- B. Testimony of Demetrius (12)
 - 1. Well spoken of by everyone and by the truth itself (12a)
 - 2. John's personal testimony about Demetrius (12b)

V. Conclusion (1:13-15)

- A. John's Intention to Visit (13-14a)
 - 1. Many things to write but preferring to speak face to face (13)
 - 2. Hope to see Gaius soon (14a)
- B. Final Greetings (14b-15)
 - 1. Peace be with you (14b)
 - 2. The friends send their greetings (14c)
 - 3. Greet the friends there by name (15)

Dangers Facing the Believer Highlighted in 3 John

1. Lack of Support for Fellow Believers (1:5-8):

- **Danger:** Failing to show hospitality and support to fellow believers, particularly itinerant workers spreading the gospel.
- **Application:** Follow Gaius's example by supporting and welcoming those who work for the sake of the Name, becoming fellow workers for the truth.

2. Pride and Love of Preeminence (1:9):

- **Danger:** Being like Diotrephes, who loves to be first and rejects apostolic authority.
- **Application:** Avoid the desire for preeminence and acknowledge the authority of spiritual leaders.

3. Spreading Malicious Gossip (1:10):

- **Danger:** Engaging in or tolerating malicious gossip, as Diotrephes did against John.
- **Application:** Speak truthfully and avoid spreading harmful rumors about others.

4. Refusing to Welcome Fellow Believers (1:10):

- **Danger:** Refusing to welcome fellow believers and hindering others who want to do so.
- **Application:** Practice hospitality and encourage others to do the same, fostering a welcoming and supportive community.

5. Exercising Unjust Authority (1:10):

- **Danger:** Abusing authority by unjustly excluding others from the church, as Diotrephes did.
- **Application:** Exercise leadership with humility and justice, ensuring that all believers are treated fairly and inclusively.

6. Imitating Evil Instead of Good (1:11):

- **Danger:** Imitating what is evil, leading to actions that are not of God.
- **Application:** Imitate what is good, understanding that those who do good are from God, while those who do evil have not seen God.

Well-known Passages from 3 John

[3 John 1:2-4 ESV] Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

[3 John 1:5-8 ESV] Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

[3 John 1:11 ESV] Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.

Conclusion for 3 John

By understanding these dangers and applying John's exhortations, believers can foster a community characterized by truth, love, and support, while avoiding the pitfalls of pride, gossip, and unjust leadership.