

# III John 1:9-14

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## REVIEW...

- The Book if divided by addressing THREE people...
  - **III John 1:1-8** – The encouragement for Gaius
  - **III John 1:9-11** – The warning for Diotrephes
  - **III John 1:12-14** – The testimony of Demetrius
- Good Testimony
  - Gaius – presumably a church leader John was writing to – had a GOOD testimony...
  - Spiritually PROSPEROUS – because of was BELOVED and walked in THE Truth [Jesus]
  - HOSPITABLE – by FAITH he LOVED [φίλος] both BELIEVERS and UNBELIEVERS...
  - HELPFUL – he brought UNITY to the church by supporting other ministries!

## BAD TESTIMONY...

- **1<sup>st</sup> – BEING HURTFUL... vs. 9-11**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – Love being FIRST... vs. 9
    - **I wrote to the church...**
      - This was NOT the FIRST letter John had written to the CHURCH...
      - We do NOT know which letter John is referring to – the Gospel – I John – II John...
      - It could even be a letter that was not recorded in the Bible...
      - But he wrote to the CHURCH [ἐκκλησία] – we do NOT know which Church...
      - Presumably the CHURCH where Diotrephes was the PASTOR!
    - **But Diotrephes - who loves to have the preeminence among them - does not receive us!**
      - DIOTREPHESES [Διοτρεφής] – ironically his name means to feed ZEUS [chief of Greek gods]
      - He would NOT read the letters from John to the CHURCH – because...
      - PREEMINENCE [φιλοπρωτεύω] – to LOVE [φίλος] to be FIRST [πρῶτος]
      - He was NOT willing to allow anyone else – like JOHN – have authority in the CHURCH...
      - Because he wanted everyone to ONLY look to him for answers!
    - Called to Jesus...
      - People would rather put their FAITH in someone they can see – then a God they cannot see...
      - It is easier to follow a MAN – then it is to follow an INVISIBLE God - **Hebrews 11:1**
      - But MEN – pastors – are a poor substitute for Jesus...
      - They have LIMITED resources – LIMITED knowledge – and make MISTAKES...
      - Therefore any pastor who points men to himself – LOVES to be FIRST – is to be AVOIDED...
      - Because the PURPOSE of a pastor - is to point others to JESUS!
    - Called to SERVE...
      - **I Corinthians 4:1** – “Let a man so consider us as MINISTERS of Christ.”
      - MINISTER [ὑπηρέτης] - a slave on a Roman ship – rowed under the deck – hard working...
      - No one would ever see and under rower - it was a humbling POSITION – a MINISTER!
      - Sad to say the church has lost sight of that today – MINISTER has become a title...
      - Rather than working hard for God – it describes one who tells others what to do...
      - A good pastor is a MINISTER – comes early and leaves late – SERVES the people...
      - Therefore any pastor who longs to be in CHARGE – LOVES to be FIRST - is to be AVOIDED...
      - Because the PURPOSE of a pastor - is to MINISTER to the people!
      - **I Peter 5:3** – “[Do not] lord over those entrusted to you!”

- o 2<sup>nd</sup> – Confrontation... vs. 10
  - Therefore - if I come - I will call to mind his deeds which he does!
    - John was NOT sure if he would be able to come – he was OLD [the elder]
    - But IF he came – he would talk to DIOTREPHEs about what he had DONE [ἔργον]
    - Any time you get a bunch of sinners together [even Godly ones] there will be problems...
    - There is no such thing as a perfect church - they do not exist...
    - The question is what to do if the PROBLEM is a PASTOR in the church...
    - Too often we ignore what is happening - justifying it is not our problem...
    - What we fail to recognize is that the BAD example - does affect us...
    - And we need to be involved in our church - take a stand for Jesus!
  - ACCUSING a Pastor...
    - **I Timothy 3:19** – “Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.”
    - When an ACCUSATION is brought against a PASTOR – it must be VERIFIED...
    - To prevent someone from making a false ACCUSATION - personal attack - or agenda...
    - We must NOT just listen to one side - take the time to hear the whole story!
    - **Proverbs 18:17** – “The first to speak... sounds right - until the cross-examination begins.”
  - CONFRONTING sin...
    - **I Timothy 3:20** – “Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all - that the rest also may fear.”
    - SINNING [present] – NOT talking about something in the PAST – but an ongoing action...
    - If a Pastor is VERIFIED to be living in SIN – the PRIDE of DIOTREPHEs was sin...
    - We must [imperative] REBUKE them – bring light - or to expose them...
    - The reason for EXPOSING the SIN of a Pastor – is to set an example!
    - If people - see a Pastor living a compromised lifestyle – with NO consequences...
    - Then they will begin to think it is acceptable to God – follow a BAD example...
    - But the sin of a Pastor is EXPOSED – people learn to FEAR living in sin!
    - **Galatians 5:9** – “A little leaven [sin] leavens the whole lump.”
    - When sin goes unchecked it encourages others to sin...
    - Just as a little mud can quickly contaminate - make all the water unclean...
    - A little SIN can quickly spread out and infect a whole family or church...
    - Therefore a Pastor is to be EXPOSED publicly – to TEACH people to FEAR sin!
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> – Harsh words... vs. 10
  - Prating against us with malicious words!
  - There were TWO things John would CONFRONT Diotrephes about...
  - FIRST – his PRATING and MALICIOUS words...
  - PRATING [φλυαρέω] – to make FALSE accusation by saying EVIL [πονηρός] things!
  - In the same way a short person who wants to look tall – stands next to a shorter person...
  - A pastor who wants to seem GOOD – talks BAD about other pastors!
  - One way to spot a PASTOR who LOVES to be FIRST – is because he is always attacking others...
  - Attacking their THEOLOGY – other Pastors do not teach the right things...
  - Attacking them PERSONALLY – other Pastors do not live a godly life...
  - But the ATTACKS are FALSE – they come from a SELFISH motivation - making them EVIL...
  - Because the RESULT of the ATTACKS – is division within the CHURCH!
- o 4<sup>th</sup> – Not HOSPITABLE... vs. 10
  - Not content with that - he himself does not receive the brethren!
    - SECOND – John would CONFRONT Diotrephes about his lack of HOSPITALITY...
    - Diotrephes was NOT content to only ATTACK other pastors...

- He also REFUSED to RECEIVE [take the hand] of other BROTHERS...
- Meaning if you were not from HIS church – then you were not part of THE church!
- There are PASTORS who think their CHURCH is the only CHURCH – but they are WRONG...
- There is just ONE church – ONE body – **Ephesians 4:4**
- But it is NOT a particular DENOMINATION – it is the Body of CHRIST – **I Corinthians 12:12**
- God has allowed there to be many DENOMINATIONS within HIS Church...
- Each with a slightly different FLAVOR - different FOCUS- but all with the SAME Lord...
- The reason is so that the church can minister to all different kinds of people!
- **I Corinthians 9:22** - “All things to all men - that I might by all means save some.”
- One person might be more comfortable in the traditions of a Traditional church...
- Another might be blessed by the lively worship of a Pentecostal church...
- Another might draw closer to God in a church that focused on teaching the Bible...
- There are many churches for many different kinds of people!
- [Diotrephes] forbids those who wish to - putting them out of the church!
  - Diotrephes added to his FAULT – by refusing to let others fellowship outside HIS church...
  - If someone was determined to fellowship OUTSIDE – they were BANISHED...
  - He refused to let them come back to HIS church [better for that person to not go back]
  - Christ is NOT divided - therefore the Church of Christ should not be divided...
  - There is only ONE Jesus - ONE cross - there is only ONE salvation – ONE heaven...
  - There is only one heaven – there are not different ROOMS for various DENOMINATIONS...
  - We are going to spend eternity together – we should start getting along now!
  - **I Corinthians 12:25** – “There should be no [division] in the body... the members should have the same care one for another.”
- It is OK to have a CHURCH...
  - There is nothing wrong with preferring a particular CHURCH...
  - The problem comes when we follow MEN - rather than having unity in JESUS...
  - We focus on our DIFFERENCES - rather than coming together as a FAMILY...
  - We make our identity a CHURCH - rather than simply CHRIST...
  - Causing division within the BODY - hindering the power of the Gospel...
  - We wonder why more people do NOT believe in Jesus - why churches are EMPTY...
  - The church of God today is not KNOWN for its unity - its KNOWN for its differences!
- o 5<sup>th</sup> Bad Example... vs. 11
  - Beloved!
    - BELOVED [ἀγαπητός] – those who has received the unconditional LOVE of God!
    - Those who BELONG to Jesus – BELONG to HIS church!
  - Do not imitate what is evil!
    - Do NOT follow [μιμῆσθαι] and EVIL [κακός] EXAMPLED of Diotrephes...
    - Who LOVED to be FIRST – who ATTACKED other pastors with FALSE accusations...
    - Who caused DIVISION – refusing to have fellowship with other DENOMINATIONS!
  - [Instead follow] what is good!
    - GOOD [ἀγαθός] – refers to our HEART – or morals...
    - In other words do NOT follow MAN – FOLLOW the conviction that comes from the LORD!
    - We KNOW the CONVICTION John is talking about...
    - The CHECK we have in our SPIRIT when a PASTOR says something WRONG...
    - We might be tempted to IGNORE it – thinking the PASTOR knows better – but we need to...
    - **Acts 17:11** – “[Search] the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things [are] so.”
  - He who does good is of God - but he who does evil has not seen God!

- THE [ὁ] doing GOOD [ἀγαθοποιέω] is of GOD...
- Meaning the CHECK we have from the SPIRIT - is GOD speaking to our HEART...
- And if we do not have the CHECK – if we FOLLOW the EVIL [κακοποιέω] example of MEN...
- Men like Diotrefes – it shows we have not SEEN [know] God!
- If GOD is in our HEART – He is going to give us a GOOD example to follow...
- The EXAMPLE: NOT love to be first – NOT attack other pastors falsely...
- NOT cause division in the body by refusing fellowship with other denominations...
- Because we are to have HOSPITALITY – UNITY - LOVE in the BODY of CHRIST!
- John 13:35 – “All will know that you are My disciples - if you have love for one another.”

● 2<sup>ND</sup> – REDEMPTION... VS. 12

o 1<sup>st</sup> – The TESTIMONY...

- Demetrius has a *good* testimony from all!
  - DEMETRIUS – the name only appears THREE times in the Bible...
  - He was a RICH idol maker in the city of Ephesus – **Acts 19:24**
  - Ephesus was known for the Temple of DIANA – SEVEN wonders of the ancient world...
  - People traveled from all over the world to worship there – and they bought IDOLS...
  - But the GOSPEL had been so effective – people stopped buying IDOLS – **Acts 19:26-27**
  - So DEMETRIUS stirred up a RIOT – 25 thousand people crying out – great is DIANA!
- Is this the same DEMETRIUS...
  - There is NOTHING to say this is the same person...
  - But John did Pastor in the city of Ephesus – where DEMETRIUS was from...
  - It would be just like God – to take one of Christianity greatest ENEMIES...
  - A man who once caused DIVISION – by making false ACCUSATIONS against a PASTOR [Paul]
  - Because he did not like being SECOND to the Gospel – he LOVED being FIRST...
  - And turn around and make him someone who had a TESTIMONY [μαρτυρέω]!
  - Meaning there is HOPE for ANYONE to repent and come to Jesus...
  - It does not matter whether we think we are a GOOD person – or BAD...
  - Jesus gift of salvation is available to EVERYONE who will receive it...
  - No sinner is beyond His reach - no sin so great He cannot forgive it!
  - **Romans 5:20** – “Where sin abounded - GRACE abounded much more.”

o 2<sup>nd</sup> – The WITNESSES...

- From the truth itself!
  - The WITNESS of DEMETRIUS – was seen by EVERYONE [πᾶς]
  - That INCLUDED from THE Truth [τῆς ἀληθείας] – referring to Jesus – **John 14:6**
  - This is the MOST important WITNESS – because Jesus sees the HEART – **Hebrews 4:13**
  - And having a good WITNESS – means we are changed from the INSIDE out!
  - Christianity is NOT about following RULES – that just changes the OUTSIDE...
  - It is about KNOWING Jesus – which TRANSFORMS us on the INSIDE!
  - **II Corinthians 5:17** – “If anyone is in Christ - he is a new creation. Old things have passed away - behold all things have become new.”
- And we also bear witness!
  - The WITNESS of DEMETRIUS – also included PASTORS...
  - John includes himself [we] – but also alludes to other church leaders!
  - PASTORS are there to PROTECT the CHURCH – **I Peter 5:2-3**
  - Therefore they watch out for those who just SAY that have a TESTIMONY...
  - They OBSERVE – and make sure they are not wolves in sheep clothing – **Matthew 7:15**
- And you know that our testimony is true!
  - The WITNESS of DEMETRIUS – also included the CHURCH...

- Because the whole CHURCH could SEE [εἶδω] it was true that DEMETRIUS had changed!
- **Luke 6:27** – “Judge not - and you shall not be judged...”
- I have heard people say you CANNOT judge me – only God can judge me...
- And to some extent I think I understand what they mean – but they are WRONG!
- We CANNOT judge why someone does something – what their MOTIVE is...
- Because only God knows the motive of the heart - **Psalm 44:21**
- But we absolutely can JUDGE the actions of someone – by comparing them to the Word...
- And when we SEE [εἶδω] a CHANGED life – it is PROOF that person has a good TESTIMONY!

● **3<sup>RD</sup> – FINAL GREETING... vs. 13-14**

○ 1<sup>st</sup> – Face to face... vs. 13-14

- I had many things to write - but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink!
  - This was NOT the only thing John had wanted to WRITE about...
  - There were LOTS [πολύς] of other subjects he had desired to go over...
  - But he did not want to do it with - INK and STICK [describing old pens]
  - We do NOT use INK and STICKS anymore – we tend to use cell phone and computer...
  - But I can relate to John – they are NOT the best way to communicate...
  - EMAILS and TEXT lack emotion – intonation – and facial expression...
  - They are OK for basic information – but they are no substitute for FELLOWSHIP!
- I hope to see you shortly - and we shall speak face to face!
  - John HOPED [ἐλπίζω] to come and SEE them soon – and speak MOUTH to MOUTH...
  - To have GOOD fellowship by TALKING with each other!
  - There are those who argue – CHURCH is not necessary...
  - We can read our Bibles – worship – without other believers!
  - Going to CHURCH does not save us - but it does keep us from following BAD examples...
  - God calls us to FELLOWSHIP with one another in CHURCH – with different CHURCHES...
  - So we help keep each other in check - keep each other accountable to God!
  - **Hebrews 10:25** – “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together - as is the manner of some - but exhorting one another - and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

○ 2<sup>nd</sup> – Peace to you... vs. 14

- Peace to you!
  - What would John SAY – when he saw the church in person - PEACE [εἰρήνη] to you...
  - Notice – John does NOT come proclaiming himself – he came declaring PEACE...
  - Who is our PEACE – it is Jesus – who is the HEAD of the CHURCH!
  - **Ephesians 2:14** – “[Jesus] Himself is our peace [εἰρήνη].”
- Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name!
  - John finishes by saying – LOVE [φίλος] greets us – to warmly take our hand...
  - And we should greet each other in LOVE [φίλος] – by NAME!
  - Because when we have PEACE – Jesus – we will have LOVE [φίλος] for each other...
  - And when we are HOSPITABLE – we will have a GOOD testimony...
  - A CHURCH united in LOVE - so the world around us SEE Jesus in us!