



Discerning Love From the Letter of 3 John

March 8, 2020 | 3 John 9-15

Review:

Last week we saw the Apostle John commend Gaius for “walking in the truth” (3 John 4). What was he doing that gave John joy (3 John 5-8)?

Read 3 John 9-15:

⁹ I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who

- likes to put himself first,
- does not acknowledge our authority. ¹⁰ So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing,
- talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he
- refuses to welcome the brothers, and also
- stops those who want to and
- puts them out of the church.

¹¹ Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God. ¹² Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

¹³ I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink. ¹⁴ I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. ¹⁵ Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, each by name. (Bullet points added.)

A Bad Example

[Q] In 3 John 9-10, John calls out Diotrephes who is *not* walking in the truth. As you examine Diotrephes’ actions, how would you describe his character and his leadership?

Imitate Good

[Q] According to 1 Corinthians 11:1 and Hebrews 12:2-3, ultimately, we should imitate Jesus. How do we do that? What role do prayer, Bible reading and fellowship play in this?

[Q] Who has the Lord placed in your life as a positive influence to imitate? What Christlike quality do they demonstrate that would you most like to imitate?

[Q] Read 1 John 3:10–18. How does John help us discern who is of God and who is not in this letter?

¹⁰ By this it is evident who are the children of God, and who are the children of the devil: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. ¹¹ For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. ¹² We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother's righteous. ¹³ Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you. ¹⁴ We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death. ¹⁵ Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. ¹⁶ By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷ But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ¹⁸ Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

[Q] If we are not loving, what does that show us and others about the status of our hearts and the fruit that is being produced?

***Behavior demonstrates faith and is indicative of a person's level of intimacy with Jesus.**
—Brandon Sanford*

[Q] In 3 John 12, another faithful member of the church is mentioned: Demetrius. From what you know about “truth” according to John, why might Demetrius be so highly regarded?

[Q]How can we encourage one another to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24) this week?

Pray
