

3 John - ESGV

1 The Elder to the dear Gaius, whom I love with simplicity of heart. **2** My dear friend, my soul is determined that you will succeed in all your plans, and that I may be whole in body and soul, a man who has prevailed. **3** For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and told me about your faithfulness, that you walk in the way of truth. **4** I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the way of truth. **5** My dear friend, your deeds are done faithfully; all that you are doing with the sojourning brethren, **6** who gave their testimony about your love in the presence of the assembly. You will do well if you help them on their way in a manner acceptable before God, **7** because they went out for the sake of His name and took nothing from the hand of the Gentiles. **8** Therefore, it behooves us to welcome them and to be helpers of the truth. **9** I wrote to the congregation. However, Diotrophes, who desires to be the head among them, did not welcome us. **10** Therefore, when I come, I will deal with him concerning his deeds which he has done, because he has declared rebellion against us. Yet this is not enough for him, because he is not even willing to welcome the brethren, and restrains those who are willing, and expels them from the midst of the assembly. **11** My dear friend, do not walk in the footsteps of the wicked, but rather in the footsteps of the good. He who does good is from God, but the one who works wickedness has not seen God. **12** Demetrius has a good testimony from the whole congregation, from the truth itself, and from us as well; and you know that our testimony is trustworthy. **13** There are many things for me to write to you. However, I do not desire to write to you with pen and ink, **14** but I expect to see you soon, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends

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care for your peace. You should care for the peace of our friends who are with you, each and every one by name.

Commentary

History

According to *Apostolic Constitutions* 7.46, the Apostle John appointed Gaius as pastor (elder) of Pergamum and Demetrius as pastor (elder) of Philadelphia. Diotrephes is not listed as being appointed as a pastor anywhere in Asia Minor. The sentence structure in 3 John suggests that John is asking Gaius to provide safe passage for Demetrius from Philadelphia with his letter because Diotrephes has made it unsafe for evangelists to travel in his area. Both Thyatira and Sardis are between Pergamum and Philadelphia. Since John said Diotrephes desired to be the leader, I assume that he was not a pastor of any of these churches but wanted to take over someone's church by any means possible. To my knowledge there is no record of exactly what happened.

Major Points

Any pastor or Bible teacher that denies the Doctrine of Christ or divides the Body of Christ, like Diotrephes, cannot be tolerated. There will be persecution from outside and from inside the church and we must teach each other and protect our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Verse 1: For “simplicity of heart” see the *Testaments of the Patriarchs*.

Verses 2-4: John is determined that Gaius succeeds in his plans to stop Diotrephes from causing a church split. If they prevail

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over Diotrephes, it would put John and all of his churches at peace. This verse has nothing to do with the Word Faith heresy. They are not praying for wealth or prosperity.

Verses 5-7: Gaius supports John and his traveling preachers while they are in his area. Asking for support from non-Christians hinders your witness.

Verse 8: Receive and support those who teach the truth in contrast to 2 John 1:10. Do not allow those who refuse to teach the doctrine of Christ (non-Trinitarians) into your house fellowship to spread their false doctrine. You should not support non-Trinitarians in any way if they are going to use part of the support for their heresy. See the study on 2 John.

Verses 9-10: “Welcoming” means to treat them as brothers. When they come to preach at your church, you lodge them and feed them. John encourages Gaius not to be like, or have any part with, Diotrephes who refuses to allow John, Demetrius, or any of the traveling missionaries, to be supported. If Diotrephes found out that anyone in his congregation supported any of them, he excommunicated them.

Verse 11: Even if Diotrephes is a pastor, elder, or deacon, he cannot be good if he practices evil.

Verse 12: Demetrius is recognized by everyone as a godly man, including the Apostle John and his group.

Verse 14: The brethren who are with Gaius watch out for him, and Gaius watches out for them. We should care for and protect our brethren from wolves in sheep’s clothing, whether they are in our local church or anywhere else in the Body of Christ.

The Trinity

One God manifested in three persons that are co-equal, co-substantial, and co-eternal.

Interlinear

1. The elder to the dear Gaius, whom I love with simplicity of heart.

הזקן אל־גיוס היקר אשר אני אהב בתם־לב

לב	בתם־	אהב	אני	אשר	היקר	גיוס	אל־	הזקן	1
heart	with simplicity	love	I	whom	the dear	Gaius	to	the elder	
H3820	H8537	H157	H589	H834	H3368	G1050	H413	H2205	

2. My soul is consumed (with desire), my dear friend, that you may prosper in all your plans, and I may be whole in body and soul, a prosperous man.

כלתה נפשי ידידי כי תצליח בכל־חפצך והייתי שלם בגוף
ובנפש ואיש מצליח

שלם	הייתי	חפצך	בכל־	תצליח	כי	ידידי	נפשי	כלתה	2
whole	and I may be	your	in all	you	that	my dear	my soul	it is	
H8003	H1961	desires	H3605	will	H3588	friend	H5315	consumed/ determined	
		/plans H2656		prosper H6743		H3039		H3615	
			מצליח	ואיש	ובנפש	בגוף			
		prospering	and a man	and in the soul	in the body				
		/prevailing H6743	H376	H5315	H1480				

The “and I may be” is conditional based on Gaius plan being a success. This type of phrase started to dwindle toward the end of the second temple period. This shows that the age of some manuscripts used by [Salkinson](#) were indeed old.

3. For I rejoiced greatly when the brethren came and declared concerning your faithfulness, that you walk in the way of truth.

כי שמחתי מאד כאשר באו אחים ויגידו על־אמתך כי בדרך
אמת אתה הלך

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על־ about H5921	ויגידו and they told H5046	אחים brothers H251	באו they came H935	כאשר when H834	מאד exceedingly H3966	שמחתי I rejoiced H8055	כי for H3588	3
		הלך walk H1980	אתה you H859	אמת truth H571	בדרך in the way of H1870	כי that H3588	אמתך your faithfulness H571	

4. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the way of truth.

אין גדלה משמחתי כי אשמע על־בני אשר בדרך אמת יהלכון

אשר that H834	בני my sons H1121	על־ concerning H5921	אשמע I will hear H8085	כי that H3588	משמחתי than my joy H8057	גדלה greater H1419	אין there is not H369	4
				יהלכון they will walk H1980	אמת truth H571	בדרך in the Way H1870		

5. My dear friend, your deeds (are done) in faithfulness: all that you do with the sojourning brethren;

באמונה מעשיך ידידי כל־אשר אתה עשה עם־האחים הארחים

עשה doing H6213	אתה you H859	אשר that H834	כל־ all H3605	ידידי my dear friend H3039	מעשיך your deeds H4639	באמונה in faithfulness H530	5
				הארחים the travelers H732	האחים the brethren H251	עם־ with H5973	

6. who gave their testimony concerning your love in the presence of the assembly; and you will do well if you help them on their way in a manner acceptable before God.

אשר נתנו עדותם על־אהבתך בפני הקהל וטוב תעשה כי תעזר להם על־דרכיהם לרצון לפני אלהים

תעשה you will do	וטוב and good	הקהל the assembly	בפני in the face of	אהבתך your love	על־ about H5921	עדותם their testimony	נתנו they gave	אשר who H834	6
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H6213	H2896	H6951	H6440	H160		H5715	H5415	
אלהים God H430	לפני to the face of H6440	לרצון for acceptance H7522	דרכיהם their way H1870	על־ on H5921		להם to them (see glossary)	תעזר you will help H5826	כי if H3588

7. Because they went out for the sake of His name and took nothing from the hand of the Gentiles.

כי למען שמו יצאו ולא לקחו מיד הגוים מאומה

מאומה anything H3972	הגוים the Gentiles H1471	מיד from the hand H3027	לקחו they took H3947	ולא and not H3808	יצאו they went out H3318	שמו His name H8034	למען for the purpose H4616	כי because H3588	7
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8. Therefore, it behooves us to welcome them and to be helpers of the truth.

על־כן מוטל עלינו לקבל פניהם ולהיות עוזרים לאמת

לאמת to the truth H517	עוזרים helpers H5826	ולהיות and to be H1961	פניהם their faces H6440	לקבל to receive H6901	עלינו on us H5921	מוטל it was cast H2904	כן thus H3651	על־ on H5921	8
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9. And I wrote to the congregation; however, Diotrefes, who desires to be the head among them, did not welcome us.

ואני כתבתי אל־העדה אך דיוטריפס החפץ להיות לראש להם
לא קבל אתנו

החפץ who desires H2655	דיוטריפס Diotrefes G1361	אך but / only H389	העדה the congregation H5712	אל־ to H413	כתבתי I wrote H3789	ואני I H589	9
אתנו D/O us H853	קבל he received H6901	לא not H3808	להם to them (see glossary)	לראש for the head/first/chief H7218	להיות to be H1961		

10. Therefore, when I come, I will attend to him concerning his deeds which he has done, because he declared rebellion against us.

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Yet this is not enough for him, because he is not even willing to welcome the brethren, and those who are willing, he holds them back and expels them from the midst of the assembly.

על־כן בבאי אפקד עליו מעשיו אשר עשה כי דבר סרה עלינו
ואין די לו בזאת כי אף־לא יאבה לקבל את־האחים ואת־אלה
אשר יאבו יעצר־בם ומתוך הקהל יגרשם

כי because H3588	עשה he has done H6213	אשר that H834	מעשיו his deeds H4639	עליו concerning him H5921	אפקד I will attend H6485	בבאי when I come H935	כן thus H3651	על־ on H5921	10
כי because H3588	בזאת in this H2063	לו for him (see glossary)	די enough H1767	ואין and there is not H369	עלינו against us H5921	סרה rebellion H5627	דבר he declared H1696		
אלה these H428	ואת־ and D/O marker H53	האחים the brethren H251	את־ D/O marker H853	לקבל to receive H6901	יאבה he is willing H14	לא not H3808	אף־ even H637		
	יגרשם he expels them H1644	הקהל the assembly H6951	ומתוך and from the midst H8432	בם among them (see glossary)	יעצר־ he restrains H6113	יאבו are willing H14	אשר who H834		

11. My dear friend, do not walk in the footsteps of the wicked, but rather in the footsteps of the good. He who does good is from God, but the one who works wickedness has not seen God.

ידידי אל־תלך בעקבות הרעים כי אם־בעקבות הטובים העשה
טוב הוא מאת אלהים והפעל רע את־אלהים לא ראה

בעקבות in the footsteps of H6119	אם־ rather H518	כי but H3588	הרעים the evil ones H7451	בעקבות in the footsteps of H6119	תלך you walk H1980	אל־ do not H408	ידידי my dear friend H3039	11
רע wickedness H7451	והפעל and the one who works H6466	אלהים God H430	מאת from with H4480&H854	הוא he (is) H1931	טוב good H2896	העשה he who does H6213	הטובים the good ones H2896	
				ראה he has seen H7200	לא not H3808	אלהים God H430	את־ D/O marker H853	

The phrase והפעל רע conveys “the one who works toward wicked ends,” implying deliberate effort, whereas הטוב העשה refers more generally to “the one who does good.”

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12. And Demetrius has a testimony from the whole congregation, from the truth itself, and from us as well; and you know that our testimony is trustworthy.

ודימטריוס יש־לו עדות מכל־העדה גם־מפי האמת וגם־מפינו
וידעתה כי עדותנו נאמנה

מפי from the mouth of H6310	גם־ also H1571	העדה the congregation H5712	מכל־ from all H3605	עדות testimony H5715	לו to him (see glossary)	יש there is H3426	ודימטריוס and Demetrius G1216	12
	נאמנה it is trustworthy H530	עדותנו our testimony H5715	כי that H3588	וידעתה and you know H3045	מפינו from the mouth of us H6310	וגם־ and also G1571	האמת the truth H571	

13. There are many things for me to write to you, however, I did not desire to write (to you) with pen and ink,

רבות לי לכתב אליך אך לא חפצתי לכתב בעט ובריו

ובריו and with ink H1773	בעט with pen H5842	לכתב to write H3789	חפצתי I have desired H2654	לא not H3808	אך however H389	אליך to you H413	לכתב to write H3789	לי for me (see glossary)	רבות many things H7227	13
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14. but I expect to see you soon, and we shall speak face to face. Peace to you. Our friends care for your peace. You should care for the peace of our friends who are with you, each and every one by name.

אבל אקוה לראותך במהרה ופה אל־פה נדברה שלום לך רעינו
פקדים לשלומך ואת־רעינו אתך תפקד לשלום לאיש איש
בשמו

לך to you (see glossary)	שלום peace H7965	נדברה we shall speak H1696	פה mouth H6310	אל־ to H413	ופה and mouth H6310	במהרה with haste H4120	לראותך to see you H7200	אקוה I expect H6960	אבל but H61	14
איש man	לאיש to each	לשלום for the	תפקד you will	אתך with	רעינו our	ואת־ and D/O	לשלומך for your	פקדים (are)	רעינו our	

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H376	H376	peace H7965	care H6485	you H854	friends H7453	marker H853	peace H7965	caring H6485	friends H7453
								בשמו by his name H8034	

פָּקַד (paqad) here means “to take mindful, purposeful care of someone’s well-being.”

It does not refer to a physical visit or a verbal greeting, but to active concern for another’s peace.

The older English verb “visit” once carried this same sense of attentive care, but in modern English it has narrowed to imply physical presence.

Thus: פָּקְדִים לְשִׁלוֹמְךָ = “our friends care for your peace,”

תִּפְקֹד לְשִׁלוֹם = “you should/will care for their peace.”

footnote: “in His name” or “by his name”