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By Dan Maines

3 John

3 John 1

The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

† John writes again as "the elder," showing his personal pastoral authority.

† Gaius is praised for walking in truth, a theme central to John's letters.

† Clement of Rome (1 Clement 47) also wrote personally to

individuals within churches, confirming this practice.

3 John 2

Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.

† John prays for both physical health and spiritual health, showing holistic care.

† The prosperity here is spiritual first, then material.

3 John 3-4

For I was overjoyed when brothers came and testified to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth. I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

† John's greatest joy is faithfulness to the truth.

† Walking in truth shows genuine discipleship.

† Ignatius (Letter to Polycarp 1) expressed the same joy in hearing of believers walking faithfully.

3 John 5-6

Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brothers and sisters, and especially when they are strangers; and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.

† Gaius showed hospitality to traveling ministers of the gospel.

† To support gospel workers is to participate in their mission.

† The Didache (ch. 12) instructed churches on how to treat traveling teachers, paralleling John's commendation.

3 John 7-8

For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support such people, so that we may prove to be fellow workers with the truth.

† Missionaries depended on the hospitality of believers, not outsiders.

† Supporting them made the church partners in the truth.

3 John 9-10

I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brothers either, and he forbids those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.

† Diotrephes is condemned for arrogance, slander, and abuse of authority.

† He rejected apostolic teaching and opposed true brothers.

† Eusebius (Ecclesiastical History 3.31) recorded how false leaders arose seeking power, paralleling John's rebuke.

3 John 11

Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does what is good is of God; the one who does what is evil has not seen God.

† John exhorts believers to follow godly examples, not corrupt leaders.

† Good works prove relationship with God.

3 John 12

Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself; and we add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.

† Demetrius is commended as a faithful servant, a contrast to Diotrephes.

† Godly leaders are recognized by their testimony in truth.

† Polycarp (Letter to the Philippians 5) praised faithful leaders in

similar language.

3 John 13-14

I had many things to write to you, but I do not want to write to you with pen and ink; but I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face. Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

† John again prefers personal fellowship over writing.

† Greeting the friends by name shows love and unity within the church.

How it applies to us today

† 3 John highlights the importance of supporting true workers of the gospel and resisting arrogant false leaders.

† We are called to imitate what is good, love the brethren, and partner in truth.

† The fulfilled perspective reminds us that the kingdom is built through truth, love, and fellowship in Christ.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Clement of Rome, 1 Clement 47 - addressing individuals within churches

† Ignatius, Letter to Polycarp 1 - joy in hearing of faithful disciples

† The Didache 12 - instruction on treatment of traveling teachers

† Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.31 - false leaders seeking power

† Polycarp, Letter to the Philippians 5 - commendation of faithful leaders

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