

Third John

The elder to beloved Gaius whom I love in truth.

I pray that you may prosper in all things, beloved, that you be healthy too as your soul prospers.

“Is this the same Gaius Paul baptized? I wonder,” said Curious.

I rejoiced greatly when brothers confirmed that you are walking in truth. I have no greater joy than to hear of my children walking in the truth.

Apparently not. John claims him as his own.

“Without a Bible to refer them to, John has to rely on men. I’d be nervous about that too.”

Beloved, when you help strangers you are acting in faith, believing they are brothers who will testify of your love before the assembly. You do well to send them on their way supplied as befits a servant of God, remembering that for the sake of the Name they went out asking nothing of the Gentiles. When we welcome such men we become their fellow workers for the truth.

Quite the opposite of his concern about the lady in the previous letter, is it not?

“He seems to have no fear that Gaius will be deceived. But if I know John, there’s a reason why he’s recommending this so abruptly like a clap of thunder.”

I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not accept us. Therefore, if I come, I will remind them of what he did, prattling against us using wicked words. And not being content with that, he refuses to receive the brethren and forbids others to do so, threatening to cast them out of the church.

“I knew it,” said Curious.

Apparently Diotrephes represents another sort of threat to the health of the church.

“I know the type. You can’t call him a false teacher.”

Beloved, do not imitate what is evil—only what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.

What do you call him if he harms the church?

“That’s harsh even for one of the sons of thunder to say, John. I think you’re about to cast him out of the church.”

As Jesus said, “No good tree brings forth corrupt fruit.”

Demetrius is spoken well of by all who speak the truth. Yes, we bear witness to that, and you know our witness is true.

“There he goes. He’s suggesting that Demetrius replace Diotrephes,” said Curious.

I had many things to write to you which I am not going to write with ink and pen because I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face.

“John had his enemies, in this church at least. That’s hard to imagine. I’d like to believe that his friends were in the majority,” concluded Curious.

Peace to you.

The friends salute you.

Salute the friends by name.