

Outline of 3 John

We know very little about the book of third John, except that its linkage to second John and the close association in theological content with John's writings leads us to believe that John wrote the epistle. There is not a great deal of evidence. Eusebius listed the book as disputed by some but generally recognized in the church. The letter is a personal letter to Gaius, who appears to have been from another church.

Six times in 14 verses truth is mentioned. Six times in 14 verses love is mentioned. Four times God is mentioned. Jesus Christ is never mentioned, the only book of the New Testament not to mention Him.

The book, like 2 John, is an exhortation for love and truth. Three persons are contrasted in the book. First, there is Gaius, who is praised for his hospitality. Then there is Diotrephes who is condemned for his ruthless rule and inhospitality. Then there is Demetrius, who is well spoken of by all. I note that in each of the epistles, the fourth verse speaks of joy. That's just an interesting note.

Date: 85 A.D. (?)

I. Gaius' Faithfulness 1-8

- A. Stronger spiritually than physically or materially 1,2
- B. Joy in hearing of truth 3,4
- C. Sharing in the work through hospitality 5-8

II. Diotrephes' Deceit 9-11

- A. Loves first place 9
- B. Does not receive authority 9
- C. Speaks against authority 10
- D. Does not receive the brothers 10
- E. Forbids others to receive the brothers 10
- F. Kicks hospitable ones out of the church 10
- G. Has not seen God 11

III. Demetrius' Good Report 12

- A. From all
- B. From the truth
- C. From the Elder and his friends

IV. Closing

Key Idea: Hospitality is a mark of true spirituality.

Key Passage: 11

Key Lesson: Be hospitable.