


## The Message of Third John

# TALKING WALKING POINTS

## Leaders' Guide

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

**Talk** together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11  
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

## Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Read through 3 John aloud, and then, with your Bible open, consider the following questions:

- 1 John rejoiced that Gaius (v. 3) and his other spiritual children (v. 4) were “\_\_\_\_\_ in the truth”. According to v. 5, how was their continued adherence to the truth made evident?
- 2 It seems from v. 5 that Gaius' hospitality was particularly “faithful” because it was done for believers whom he did **not** personally know. Why might that fact make it noteworthy?
- 3 According to 2 John 7–11, how might assisting strangers be dangerous? To what safeguard does 3 John 12 point?
- 4 Gaius' hospitality toward Demetrius (v. 12) and the other members of the missionary band (v. 5-8) qualified as “a manner worthy of God” (v. 6). What might that be like? (Need help? See Colossians 1:10-12 & 1 Thessalonians 2:7–12.)
- 5 Have you ever supported a missionary? Tell us about it.
- 6 According to v. 7-8, what does that make you? (How significant is it that we be “fellow workers with the truth”? See Romans 16:3, 9, 21; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 1:24; 8:23; Philippians 2:25; 4:3; Colossians 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Philemon 1 & 24.)
- 7 Things turn dark in v. 9-10! “Sketch out” a profile of Diotrephes. What does he do? What is he like?
- 8 Who in a local church has the authority to do the sorts of things Diotrephes does?
- 9 Gaius, who “**does good** is \_\_\_\_\_”, while Diotrephes, “who **does evil** has not \_\_\_\_\_” (v. 11). According to 1 John 3:10-19, what must we conclude about Diotrephes?
- 10 Is it **actually possible** that a church leader might not be saved?! What do you think—and why?
- 11 How do the following passages point to the danger of “loving”—as did Diotrephes—“to be first” (v. 9)?  
Matthew 20:20-21  
Mark 9:33-34  
Luke 22:24-27
- 12 According to Philippians 2:3-5, what attitude must we have instead?

- 1 Did you, as a group, read through 3 John aloud? Very good. OK, onto the answers. They were “**walking** in the truth.” They were “**acting faithfully**”.
- 2 **Possible** answers include:
  - whereas your friends may pay you back, strangers might be less likely to
  - you don’t know whether those strangers will be pleasant house guests
  - according to 2 John 7-11, they may even be antichrist deceivers
- 3
  - Unknown “travelling missionaries” may in fact be heretics—and you’d be helping them!
  - Legit travelling missionaries should come with a recommendation from a trusted source.
- 4
  - There are culturally determined protocols—such as offering them iced tea, if you’re in the South.
  - **Colossians 1:10-12**—doing it “unto the Lord”; making sure that your deeds qualify as good fruit; relying on God’s power to serve (even when you’re tired); serving steadfastly, patiently, joyfully.
  - **1 Thessalonians 2:7-12**—gently and tenderly caring for their needs; fond affection for them; sharing gospel content plus your very own life with them; laboring, even in hardship, to meet their needs; behaving devoutly (no dirty jokes), righteously (doing them right) and blamelessly (especially towards guests of the opposite sex). As necessary, not refraining from exhorting them.
- 5 Be ready with your own (brief!) account; but wait for others to speak up first.
- 6 Simply supporting a missionary makes you a “**fellow worker** with the truth”!  
Besides being **their** fellow worker, 1 Corinthians 3:9 says that we are **God’s** fellow workers!  
**What an honor!**
- 7
  - in a crowd, Diotrephes loves to have first place
  - he rejects apostolic authority
  - he speaks wickedly about the Apostle John
  - he does not welcome travelling missionaries who had been sent by John
  - he forbids other Christians in his church from helping them
  - he excommunicates those who do (such as Gaius)
- 8 Seems like only a pastor or other church leader has that authority.  
If Diotrephes is not a pastor, perhaps he’s a rich man in whose home the church met.
- 9 Gaius, who “does good is **of God**”, while Diotrephes, “who does evil has **not seen God**.”  
According to 1 John 3:10-19, we must conclude that Diotrephes is **not truly a Christian**.
- 10 Of course it is—this is not unheard of. John and Charles Wesley, who founded the entire Methodist Deonomination, were unsaved for quite a while after they became missionaries and church leaders.
- 11 **Matthew 20:20-21**—they wanted the “power positions” in Christ’s up-coming kingdom  
**Mark 9:33-34** —they were arguing about who was the greatest  
**Luke 22:24-27** —non-believers “lord it over” others; Christians become servant of all
- 12 Humbly putting others ahead of ourselves—even at the cost of our lives!

## Third John

- 1 The elder: To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth.
- 2 Dear friend, I pray that you are prospering in every way and are in good health, just as your whole life is going well.
- 3 For I was very glad when fellow believers came and testified to your fidelity to the truth — how you are walking in truth.
- 4 I have no greater joy than this: to hear that my children are walking in truth.
- 5 Dear friend, you are acting faithfully in whatever you do for the brothers and sisters, especially when they are strangers.
- 6 They have testified to your love before the church.  
You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God,
- 7 since they set out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from pagans.
- 8 Therefore, we ought to support such people so that we can be coworkers with the truth.
- 9 I wrote something to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have first place among them, does not receive our authority.
- 10 This is why, if I come, I will remind him of the works he is doing, slandering us with malicious words. And he is not satisfied with that! He not only refuses to welcome fellow believers, but he even stops those who want to do so and expels them from the church.
- 11 Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.  
The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God.
- 12 Everyone speaks well of Demetrius — even the truth itself.  
And we also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.
- 13 I have many things to write you, but I don't want to write to you with pen and ink.
- 14 I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face.
- 15 Peace to you. The friends send you greetings. Greet the friends by name.

## Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

**"Five Question Bible Study"** (see below) *is useful for studying any topic.*  
*Let's use it to explore the spiritual significance of hospitality* (see 3 John v. 5-8 & 10).

**Monday**—Read 1 John 3:16-17.

**Tuesday**—Read Romans 12:10-13.

**Wednesday**—Read 1 Timothy 5:9-10.

**Thursday**—Read Hebrews 13:1-2

**Friday**—Read Matthew 10:7-15

**Saturday**—Read John 13:20.

Need blank copies for doing more

"Five Question Bible Study"?

e-mail: [Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com](mailto:Dan.Clement.TCC@gmail.com)

### Five Question Bible Study

Bible Text: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]