

Community Group Material:

Ask one person to pray at the beginning of your meeting.

Check-in

Check in with each other about how everyone is doing.

Bible Reading: 3 John 1-15

Sermon Summary:

John's third letter is the shortest book in the New Testament, & it's often overlooked in terms of its value. 3 John practically applies what John has been writing about in his Gospel & previous letters, that is, as we love God, we should love others also. This letter commends a house church leader named Gaius for caring for travelling Christian workers who arrived at his church. John also encourages Gaius to do more of the same in sending them forward on their gospel travels. In stark contrast to Gaius, we hear about Diotrephes, who refused the same evangelists at his church. In fact, if anyone at his church received these travellers, he kicked them out! John does not call him a heretic or 'antichrist' as he did concerning other in 1 & 2 John. Rather he calls what Diotrephes did as evil. So what was the issue with Diotrephes? He is a domineering person who micromanages everything. We come across people like this at times, & it's tempting to consider them as non-Christian. The truth is they are manifesting a personality flaw rather than Jesus in their living.

Discussion:

1. On a few occasions in 3 John, we read that Gaius 'walked in truth'. According to your reading of this book, what does that mean?
2. When John prays for Gaius 'to prosper in every way' some think it proves that God wants us all to be prosperous. Read Jonathan Black's quote below & discuss what John meant: *"The Greek word translated 'prosper' here never refers to financial prosperity...The text is not telling us that God wants all Christians to prosper financially...This is simply the standard form of greeting in a personal letter in antiquity."*
3. Gaius brought John great joy because of how he cared for other Christians. Talk about times when you've been joyful as you've witnessed Christians caring for others.
4. Based upon the context of this letter, what does it mean to co-work with the truth?
5. What do you think it means to care for others in a manner worthy of God?
6. Have you ever met someone at church like Diotrephes? What was your experience?
7. Many tell us how welcoming & warm we are as a church. While we're thankful to hear that, how can we all ensure that that characteristic continues among us, & a spirit of generosity grows as well?

End with Prayer.

- Pray we love Jesus & that in loving him we love others in a manner worthy of God.
- Pray for one another's concerns.