

Study 1 - 3 John 1:1-14

v1 The elder, To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth. v2 Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well. v3 It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth. v4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth. v5 Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you. v6 They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. v7 It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. v8 We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men so that we may work together for the truth. v9 I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us. v10 So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, gossiping maliciously about us. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church. v11 Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God. v12 Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone--and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true. v13 I have much to write you, but I do not want to do so with pen and ink. v14 I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. Peace to you. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.

3 John 1:1-14

BACKGROUND

1. Written by the Apostle John.
2. There are three friends of Paul with this name; Gaius of Corinth (1Cor 1:14), Gaius of Macedonia (Acts 19:29), Gaius of Derbe (Acts 20:4), but it is unlikely that this Gaius is either of these, though the *Apostolical Constitutions* does identify him with Gaius of Derbe.
3. Like 2 John, the letter only seems to have become public after the death of John. This makes knowing the exact occasion of the letter uncertain.
4. The style of writing and the tone of the letter leave us in no doubt that John wrote the letter.
5. Whatever the occasion, the letter speaks about:

The KIND of people that are in OUR CHURCHES

I Firstly, The CHARACTERISTICS of the KIND of people that WE DON'T NEED in OUR CHURCHES.

v9 I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us. v10 So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, gossiping maliciously about us. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church. v11 Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good.

Paul list FIVE characteristics that we must avoid:

1. PEOPLE, “WHO LOVE TO BE FIRST” - v9a – *“Diotrephes, who loves to be first”*

The name “Diotrephes” means “One nourished by Zeus/Jupiter”. The implication is that this man was drawing his desires from a WORDLY SYSTEM. The sad reality is that more Church Leaders are drawing Leadership Principles from people like John Maxwell, Simon Sinek, Tony Robbins, Barbara Kellerman or Steven Covey RATHER THAN FROM JESUS CHRIST.

The obsession Church Leaders have with SUCCESS has replaced the MODEL of SHEPHERD or SERVANT Jesus both taught and modelled for us.

2. PEOPLE, “WHO HAVE A SUPERIORITY COMPLEX” - v9b – *Diotrephes, ..., will have nothing to do with us.*

A superiority complex is a belief that your abilities or accomplishments are somehow dramatically better than other people's.

- Belittling or dismissing other people's opinions and contributions
- Competing for attention and admiration
- Behaving condescendingly toward others they deem inferior

Use of words like “them” or “they”.

3. PEOPLE, “WHO ARE MALICIOUS GOSSIPERS” - v10 – *So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, **gossiping maliciously about us***

A man spread vicious rumours and harmful gossip about another man. In this small village the judge not only presided over cases where the law was broken but also over cases involving unethical or improper conduct.

So the man who had spread the malicious gossip was brought before the judge. The judge stepped from behind the bench and handed the man a large bag full of chicken feathers.

Here is what I want you to do. I want you this very day, to place a feather upon the doorstep of each and every home that has heard and listened to your gossip, and upon the doorsteps of those who have repeated what you have said.

After you have completed this assignment, I want to see you back in my courtroom tomorrow morning.

Well, the man quickly began placing the feathers on the doorstep of each home that had either heard about the rumour or had helped spread the gossip by repeating it to others. After 4 hours the man returned home, Having nearly emptied his bag of feathers.

That night there was a terrible storm. The rains fell and the winds blew. But the man slept soundly. Happy that his punishment had been concluded.

The next day he entered the courtroom, and the judge again stepped out from behind the bench.

This time with an empty sack. Now, he said, I want you to go back to each home and collect the feathers.

The man said, "There is no way I can collect each of the feathers. The wind blew last night, and those feathers are surely scattered all over the countryside."

And the judge said, "And neither can you withdraw the harm you have done by saying what you said."

If you can't say anything good about someone "EVEN IF IT IS TRUE", **DON'T SAY ANYTHING**

4. PEOPLE, "WHO ARE NOT HOSPITABLE" - v10b – *"Diotrephes, Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers."*

Being a person who is hospitable is one of the core signs of a living relationship with Jesus. We are to be hospitable because the bible directs us to be hospitable:

Romans 12:13 *"Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality."*

Hebrews 13:2 *"Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it."*

1 Peter 4:9-11 *"⁹ Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰ Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."*

A Church Leaders must certainly be someone who shows HOSPITALITY

Titus 1:6-8 *An elder must be blameless, ... v8 ... **he must be hospitable**, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.*

5. PEOPLE, "WHO ARE BOSSY" - v10c – *He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church. v11 Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good.*

I am sure we all know someone in the church who always wants to have their own way. If you don't know anybody like that, PERHAPS YOU ARE THAT PERSON.

There are some people in the church who are never happy, and they are the most unhappy when others seem to be happy, and they are not!!!

They do the very opposite of what Jesus wanted us to do. Instead of bringing people into the church, **THEY ARE CAUSING PEOPLE TO LEAVE THE CHURCH.**

II Secondly, The CHARACTERISTICS of the KIND of people that WE WANT in OUR CHURCHES.

Paul list SIX characteristics that we must imitate:

- 1. PEOPLE WHO ARE SPIRITUALLY STRONG** - *v1 The elder, To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth. v2 Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, **even as your soul is getting along well.***

The name "Gaius" means "rejoice, glad, delight, pleased". The implication is that this man was a pleasure to be around.

Many Christian leaders equate Good Health a Prosperity with Spiritual Strength.

Spiritual Strength and peace of mind do not mean physical or material wealth. John prays that Gaius's physical and material wellbeing would improve to the level of SPIRITUAL STRENGTH.

- 2. PEOPLE WHO ARE FAITHFUL TO TRUTH** - *v3 It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth. v4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.*

Some people are good at DEFINING the TRUTH. Like the Rabbi's and Teachers of the Law at the time of Jesus.

Some people are good at PRACTICING the TRUTH. Like the Pharisee's at the time of Jesus.

Luke 11:28 *He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."*

Romans 2:13 *For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous in God's sight, but it is those who obey the law who will be declared righteous.*

- 3. PEOPLE WHO ARE FRIENDLY** - *v5 Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers, even though they are strangers to you.*

Romans 16:23 Gaius, whose hospitality I and the whole church here enjoy, sends you his greetings.

Gaius was the kind of person who treated you as a family member even though you were a stranger.

- 4. PEOPLE WHO ARE HOSPITABLE, MAINLY TO CHURCH WORKERS** - *v6 They have told the church about your love. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.*

The Early Church was serious about sending “Missionaries” out into the world. Many followed the pattern set by Jesus.

Matthew 10:5-16 *These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. v6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. v7 As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' v8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received, freely give. v9 Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts; v10 take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff; for the worker is worth his keep. v11 "Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and stay at his house until you leave. v12 As you enter the home, give it your greeting. v13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. v14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that home or town. v15 I tell you the truth, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town. v16 I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.*

5. **PEOPLE WHO ARE OPEN TO NEW LEADERS** - *v12 Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone--and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.*

God provides leaders for a season. John was sending Demetrius to help Gaius. We all can do with some help from time to time.

6. **PEOPLE WHO KNOW YOUR NAME** - *v14 I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. Peace to you. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.*

Large churches have many benefits, but smaller churches have one massive advantage. PEOPLE KNOW EACH OTHERS' NAMES.

CONCLUSION

ARE YOU THE KIND OF PERSON THE CHURCH NEEDS OR DOES NOT NEED?

WHEN PEOPLE IN THE CHURCH TALK ABOUT YOU, WHAT DO THEY SAY?

THE KEY TO THE KIND OF PERSON THE CHURCH NEEDS IS FOUND IN: ***v7 It was for the sake of the Name***