

Three Characters In The Church
3 John

Intro. In 3rd John we have a small book packed with a lot of meaning and practical applications for churches everywhere to carefully examine. Perhaps we can avoid some problems here if we strive to be the right kind of person in God's church.

I. The GAIUS Character. vs.1-8

1. "Your soul Prospers". v.2
 - a. How? - See Philemon 5-7; Rev.2:9
 - b. "Rich toward God" - Lk.12:21.
 - c. Gaius was rich where it counts.

2. "The truth that is in you" = Reason why his soul prospered.
 - a. Truth sets free - Jno.8:31-32
Free from sin, dark living.
 - b. Truth excites the hope of heaven. Col.1:5
 - c. Gaius "walked in the truth"
- vs.3,4 - He made it his primary interest and it became a way of life.

3. Serves the brethren's needs. 5,6
 - a. "especially strangers" (5)-
He would not let a stranger come into the assembly without trying to make him feel welcome. Can you imagine that he invited them home for lunch/hospitality?
 - b. We need more "Gaius" type members.
 - c. Heb.13:2 - Gaius took this to heart that "it will bless me" to do others good. It will encourage good in others.

4. A supporter of preachers. 6,7,8 -> "we ought to support such".
 - a. This same expression is used in 1 Cor.16:6,11; Tit.3:13,14
 - b. The Gaius character has a good spirit toward helping men who preach the gospel.
 - c. We should honor the Lord and His gospel by helping as many as we can in the work of the gospel.

II. The DIOTREPHEs Character. 9-11

1. PRIDE (pre-occupied with self importance).
 - a. Prov.13:10 "only by pride comes contention". Prov.16:18
 - b. Pride seeks desperately to be recognized, but the wise and observant are turned off by his misguided zeal and there is a clash of the wills.

2. Wants Power and Control.

- a. Be careful of those who are self-willed, yet want to be leaders, elders, teachers, etc.
- b. One who politics for position is not likely to be a good leader.
- c. A good leader is one keenly interested in the desires of flock.

3. Rejects Faithful Preachers.

- a. The leaders who will not play his game and follow his dictation are marked and avoided. Even John was rejected.

4. Malicious Backstabber.

- a. He had not the love or courage to confront those he opposed.
- b. He is best described in Psa.15:1-4

III. The DEMETRIUS Character. v.12

1. Not pushing for Brotherhood fame and recognition.

- a. Not much is known about Demetrius. One short verse.
- b. This might be because he was not concerning himself with brotherhood recognition.
- c. Yet, his good life crossed paths with the apostles from time to time. He clearly gave his time and support to the truth of the gospel.

2. A Good Reputation is a good name. Prov.22:1

- a. The church needs to have a building full of Demetrius'.
- b. He let his light shine. Did not shine his light.
- c. His influence on many was good and he encouraged good in others.

Conclusion: We have examined two good members and one bad member. Which character comes closest to representing your character? Will the story of your life close with nothing good to say? You are writing a book, but what will the story say? What do you want it to say? "He/she never obeyed the gospel?" This person discouraged the spread of the gospel? Start the story line over today.