

Three Kinds of Christians (Gaius, Diotrophes, Demetrius)

⇒ **Bible Reading:** III John 1-14.⇒ **Introduction:**

- Today many churches are being destroyed from within by the sins of professing Christians.
- One person wants the pre-eminence, so he has to put others down.
- This results in loss of:
 - a) Love to Christ,
 - b) Peace of God,
 - c) Freedom to serve God,
 -) Joy in service
 - d) Soul Winning

⇒ Each Christian is a good or bad witness.

- We are either helping or hindering the truth.
- We need to ask ourselves: 'Are we part of the problem or are we part of the solution?'
- III John was addressed to Gaius, a church leader.
 - John discusses Diotrophes and Demetrius.
- Consider each man's ways:

⇒ I. GAIUS the Encourager. (v.1-8).

- i) Gaius was well beloved (v.1) and beloved (v.5).
- ii) Gaius was Spiritually Healthy (v.2).
 - John wished that Gaius would be as physically healthy as he was spiritually healthy.
- Spiritual health results from:
 - a) Nourishing ourselves daily with God's Word.
 - b) Exercising ourself unto Godliness (I Timothy 4:6-7).
 - c) Keeping ourselves clean (II Corinthians 7:1) and avoiding contamination and pollution of world.
 - d) Resting in the Lord and renewing our strength by close personal fellowship with Him. Matt 11:28-30
- iii) Gaius was a good testimony (v.3-4).
 - Why?
 - Because God's truth was in him and he obeyed it. (v.3).

- We must digest God's Word and make it part of us in order to have a good testimony. (Jeremiah 15:16).
- iv) Gaius was a soul-winner and a Disciple-maker.
 - John here gives the key to joy in the Christian life (v.4).
 - It is soul winning and disciple making.
 - "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." (v.4).
 - It is Winning people for Christ, and Teaching them to walk in God's truth.
 - Nothing else gives greater joy.
 - Gaius may have been one of John's converts and disciples.
- v) Gaius was a faithful man. (v.5).
 - Gaius helped both the brethren and strangers.
- Question: What motivates us to have a practical ministry to other believers?
 - a) Desire to honour God (v.6). "after a Godly sort" means "worthy of God, as it befits God."
 - Gaius showed hospitality to strangers who bore witness of Gaius' charity before the church.
 - Some of these strangers may have been traveling gospel preachers.
 - b) Desire to help win the lost. This is achieved as we help God's servants do this task. (v.7).
 - These traveling missionaries took no support from unsaved Gentiles, only from believers.
 - c) Desire to obey God. "We ought to receive such." (v.8).
 - God wants us to help Gospel preachers who bring salvation to others.
 - Let us open our hearts to those who teach God's truth.
- ⇒ II. DIOTROPHES the Dictator. (v.9-11).
 - Many churches have members who insist on being boss.
 - A pastor or minister means 'servant'.
 - Christ's disciples argued over who would be greatest in the kingdom. (Matthew 18:1-6).

- Jesus reminded them that their model for ministry was not government officials, but Christ who became a humble servant.
- What are we told about Diotrophes?
 - a) He loved to have the pre-eminence. (v.9). He wanted to be number one. His motive was pride.
 - b) He would not receive John (v.9). He could have learned so much from the Apostle John.
- Why did he reject John?
 - Because John challenged his right to be a dictator in the church. (v.10a). Diotrophes was proud and sought self-glory.
 - Diotrophes would not receive him. (v.10a).
 - c) He lied about John: 'prating against us with malicious words,' (v.10) means bringing false charges against us.
 - Do not believe all you are told about people.
 - Some people twist the truth.
 - d) Diotrophes rejected John's associates. 'neither doth he himself receive the brethren.' (v.10).
 - e) Diotrophes disciplined those that disagreed with him by casting them out of the church.
 - He was destroying his own local church through his pride, fear and insensitivity.
 - He knew nothing of love.
- **Lesson:** "Follow not that which is evil, but that which is good." (v.11).
 - Follow good and you'll follow God.
 - A test of 'goodness' is: 'Is this beneficial to all'?
- ⇒ III. DEMETRIUS the Good Example (v.12-14).
 - Demetrius had a good report of :a) all men; b) the truth of the Bible; c) John himself.
 - Demetrius was 'an example, a model, an ideal Christian worthy to be ~~imitated~~ followed'
 - Question: Is it right to follow men? Yes, only as they follow Christ.

- 'Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example.' Philippians 3:17.
- 'Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.' I Corinthians 11:1.
- By our good example, we will 'consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.' Heb.10:24

⇒ **Conclusion:**

- John concludes that he would soon visit the church and speak face-to-face with the people.
- This thought of accountability is important.
- John wishes them peace, something that is hard to enjoy when Diotrophes wanted to be a boss and expel people.
- In spite of trouble, we can still have the peace of God.
- Greet the friends by name.
- John calls them friends.
- It's good to be a friend-maker as well as a soul winner.
- Diotrophes was so dictatorial that he had fewer and fewer friends.