

The Problem “Child” (vv. 9-10)

VERSE 9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first

among them, does not accept what we say (*aor.act.ind.1s. grapho write + pro.acc.nt.s.*

tis + d.a.w/noun dat.f.s. ekklesia + conj. alla + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. philoproteuos desire

to be first; 1x + pro.gen.m.p. houtos “among them” + noun nom.m.s. Diotrephes + neg ouk +

pres.dep.ind.3s. epidechomai receive, pay attention to + pro.acc.m.s. su]).

VERSE 10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he

does (*διὰ τοῦτο, ἐὰν ἔλθω, ὑπομνήσω αὐτοῦ τὰ ἔργα ἃ ποιεῖ [prep. dia + pro.acc.nt.s. houtos*

“For this reason” + part. ean if + aor.act.ind.1s. erchomai come + fut.act.ind.1s.

hupomimnesko recall; “call attention” + pro.gen.m.s. autos his + d.a.w/noun acc.nt.p. ergon

deed + pro.acc.nt.p. hos which + pres.act.ind.3s. poieo do], unjustly accusing us with

wicked words [*λόγοις πονηροῖς φλυαρῶν ἡμᾶς, [noun dat.m.p. logos + adj.dat.m.p. poneros*

evil, wicked + pres.act.part.nom.m.s. phluareo slander + pro.acc.m.p. ego]; and not satisfied

with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either [*conj. kai + neg me +*

pres.pass.part.nom.m.s. arkeo be content + prep epi + pro.dat.nt.p. houtos “with this” + conj.

oute neither + pro.nom.m.s. houtos this + pres.dep.ind.3s. epidechomai receive + d.a.w/noun

acc.m.p. adelphos], and he forbids those who desire to do so and [even] puts them

out of the church [*καὶ τοὺς βουλομένους κωλύει καὶ ἐκ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐκβάλλει [conj. kai +*

d.a.w/pres.dep.part.acc.m.p. boulomai wish “those who desire” + pres.act.ind.3s.koluo hinder,

forbid + conj. kai even + prep ek + d.a.w/noun abl.f.s. ekklesia + pres.act.ind.3s. ekballo

expel]).

ANALYSIS: Verses 9-10

1. This letter now reaches a climax, for which the preceding was to encourage Gaius who was in the same church as Diotrephes.
2. The Diotrephes’ problem, more than anything else, precipitated this letter.

3. John informs Gaius that he has sent a letter to the local church which Diotrephes has suppressed.
4. When he read it, he openly disagreed with its contents and maligned its author before the assembly.
5. The fact the letter is now lost is not surprising if it fell into his hands.
6. We do not know if this letter was addressed to this man or the church in general.
7. Diotrephes resented John and his influence over the church.
8. He desired to be the solitary leader over the church.
9. Diotrephes, whatever his position within the church was driven by STA power lust.
10. At the time of writing, he had established himself in a position of authority (either by maneuvering or by apostolic appointment).
11. So he was an individual driven by personal ambition and not by love of the truth.
12. Under this difficult situation, apostolic action was called for.
13. John informs Gaius that upon his next visit to the area he would confront Diotrephes with his evil deeds.
14. John would exercise his apostolic authority and remove him from the church if necessary.
15. Diotrephes abuses (see v. 10) included: (1) Malicious maligning of John and his associates (anyone supportive of John, like Gaius).; (2) He put out of the church anyone who was supporters of John and who received into their homes visitors who were in support of John.; (3) He suppressed or contradicted John's letter.
16. How did this affect Gaius?
17. Beware of anyone who seeks to undermine your pastor-teacher.
18. This man's inordinate ambition and consequent disdain for all peers, resulting in a bullying office, is a warning to all (cf. Jam. 3:13-16).
19. He who engaged in this evil power-play has his actions immortalized in a canonical book!

An Exhortation and an Axiom (v. 11)

VERSE 11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good (Ἀγαπητέ, μὴ μιμοῦ τὸ κακὸν ἀλλὰ τὸ ἀγαθόν. [*adj.voc.m.s agapetos + neg me + pres.mid.imper.2s. mimeomai imitate + d.a.w/adj.acc.nt.s kakos evil, bad + conj. alla + d.a.w/adj.acc.nt.s. agathos good*]).

The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God (ὁ ἀγαθοποιῶν ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστίν· ὁ κακοποιῶν οὐχ ἑώρακεν τὸν θεόν. [*d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. agathopoieo do good + prep ek + d.a.w/noun abl.m.s. theos + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi + d.a.w/pres.act.part.nom.m.s. kaiopoieo do evil + neg. ouk + pf.act.ind.3s. horao see + d.a.w/noun acc.m.s. theos*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 11

1. In the wake of this unpleasant situation, John felt compelled to exhort Gaius to imitate “what is good” over against “what is evil.”
2. “Beloved” is a singular adjective.
3. The verb “imitate” means to follow an example of another (e.g. ‘to copy’).
4. Diotrephes represents a negative example of what to avoid.
5. Verse 11a is a general exhortation and its application requires knowledge of the directive will of God found in the WOG.
6. Those who set a good example we are to emulate.
7. First, we are to imitate God (Eph. 5:1) and secondly, we are to imitate those who are in line with God’s will (2 Thess. 3:9; Heb. 13:7).
8. For the corresponding noun (*mimētos*) see: 1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14; Heb. 6:12.
9. What do we make of the second line in this verse?
10. Doctrinally it is to be connected to those who are born again versus those who are unsaved.
11. For “the one who does good” see Jn. 5:29 “those who having done the good (d.a.w/aor.part. *poieo* to do), to a resurrection of life, and those who have practiced (d.a.w/aor.part. *prasso* practice) the evil (d.a.w/noun *phaulos*), to the resurrection of condemnation.”
12. Doing “the good” refers to saving faith.
13. The salvation adjustment thus far in John’s epistles is characterized as doing righteousness (1 Jn. 2:29 & 3:10) and love for one another (1 Jn. 4:7-8, 20).
14. Unbelievers are engaged in perpetual hate towards God (1 Jn. 3:15).
15. The words “has not seen God” refers to the absence of salvation (Jn. 6:40 “For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”; 12:45).
16. “The one doing the evil” refers to a state of unbelief.
17. The words “is of God” refers to being born again (as in, 1 Jn. 3:9; 4:7; 5:19).
18. How does all this relate to the situation at hand?
19. Both Gaius and Diotrephes were believers.
20. But Diotrephes was acting like an unbeliever is his perpetual STA state of opposition and antagonism to those who were doing good.
21. In conclusion, John makes one of his typical observations distinguishing the believer from the an unbeliever.

A Believer Worth Emulating (v.12)

VERSE 12 Demetrius has received a **good** testimony from everyone (Δημητρίω

μεμαρτύρηται ὑπὸ πάντων [*noun dat.m.s. Demetrius + pf.pass.ind.3s. martureo witness, testify + prep apo + adj.abl.m.p. pas*], **and from the truth itself** [καὶ ὑπὸ αὐτῆς τῆς ἀληθείας· [*conj kai + prep hupo on behalf of + pro.abl.f.s. autos itself + d.a.w/noun abl.f.s. aletheia truth*]]; **and we add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true** [καὶ οἶδας ὅτι ἡ μαρτυρία ἡμῶν ἀληθῆς ἐστίν [*conj kai + pf.act.ind.2s. oida know + conj. hoti that + d.a.w/noun nom.f.s. marturia testimony; reputation + pro.gen.m.p. ego our + adj.nom.f.s. alethos true + pres.act.ind.3s. eimi*]]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 12

1. By contrast, John holds up Demetrius for Gaius' consideration.
2. Was he with John or was he someone in Gaius' church?
3. Is his commendation designed to inform Gaius in the event of a meeting of the two men?
4. In this verse there is a three-fold witness to Demetrius' integrity.
5. First, he had a group of individuals who attested to his character ("from everyone").
6. No one had a negative thing to report about this man.
7. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, he had a positive testimony "from the truth itself."
8. The word of God is like a mirror (Jam. 1:23) which reflects to the listener the good and the not so good.
9. Thirdly, all within John's immediate cadre vouched to him ("and we add our testimony").
10. John appeals to the track record of himself and associates, which Gaius full well knew to have been always reliable in matters related to truth and integrity.
11. Gaius had 100% confidence in John and his associates.
12. So it would seem that Gaius was unfamiliar with a believer he would soon encounter.

A Future Visit (vv. 13-14)

VERSE 13 I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write *them* to

you with pen and ink (Πολλὰ εἶχον γράψαι σοι ἀλλ' οὐ θέλω διὰ μέλανος καὶ καλάμου σοι γράφειν [*adj.acc.nt.p. polus many + impf.act.ind.1s. echo have + aor.act.infin. grapho + pro.dat.m.s. su + conj. alla + neg. ou + pres.act.ind.1s. thelo wish + prep dia + adj.gen.nt.s mela black; ink + conj. kai + noun gen.m.s. kalamos cane; pen + pro.dat.m.s. su + pres.act.infin. grapho*]);

VERSE 14 but I hope to see you shortly, and we will speak face to face (ἐλπίζω δὲ

εὐθέως σε ἰδεῖν, [*pres.act.ind.1s. elpizo hope + conj. do but + adv. eutheos shortly, soon + pro.acc.s. su + aor.act.infin. eidos + conj. kai + noun acc.nt.s. stoma mouth + prep. pros to + noun acc.nts. stoma + fut.act.ind.1p. laleo speak*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 13-14

1. John announces a prospective visit to communicate face-to-face with his friend (v. 13).
2. Earlier he told Gaius that he would visit and deal with the Diostrephes' problem.
3. But here, John informs Gaius that he has much more doctrinal information to communicate to him.
4. Issues that would presumably be for the entire church as well.
5. So a lengthy letter would not be needed as the more ideal situation is that of face-to-face communication from their right-apostle.
6. There is a place for an alternate form of communication if circumstances dictate (NT letters).

Final Greeting (v. 15)

VERSE 15 Peace be to you (εἰρήνη σοι [*noun dat.s. eirene peace + pro.dat.s. su*]).

The friends greet you (ἀσπάζονται σε οι φίλοι [*pres.dep.ind.3p. aspazomai greet + pro.acc.s. su + adj.nom.m.p. philos friend*]).

Greet the friends by name (ἀσπάζου τοὺς φίλους κατ' ὄνομα [*pres.dep.imper.2s. aspazomai greet + d.a.w/adj.acc.m.p. philos + prep kata + noun acc.nt.s. onoma name*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 15

1. John pronounces a blessing of peace for Gaius.
2. The peace in view is inner peace.
3. This peace is for those who live under the truth even where there are external difficulties.
4. This greeting was used by Jesus (Jn. 20:19, 26).
5. It was used by other NT writers (Eph. 6:23; 1 Pet. 5:14).
6. The friends were believers who were with John and shared his sentiments.
7. He tells Gaius that they greet him.
8. Finally, Gaius is asked to greet like-minded 'friends' who were with Gaius.
9. Friends refer to close category 3 individuals (cf. Jn. 11:11; 15:13-15; Acts 10:24; Jam. 4:4).

END: 3rd John
July, 2020
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