

Camrose Way Housegroup

10th May 2023

3 John – Good Leaders

Context

The author was probably the apostle John. The letter was written in Ephesus in the last decade of the 1st century AD

2 John was written to a church congregation and encouraged the church to “walk according to the truth the truth” and to avoid anyone who does not bring the teaching of Christ.

3 John was written to an individual, one of the leaders of the church, to encourage steadfastness in the face of opposition.

Q1 What’s the difference between a good and bad leader? How can we tell?

This is a general question to get us thinking about what motivates leaders.

What motivates good leaders. Having clear goals and more concern for their team rather than themselves. In a Christian sense knowing and following the teaching of Jesus. The ability to communicate and inspire. Good judgement.

Read 3 John

1. The elder, To my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth.
2. Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, just as you are progressing spiritually.
3. It gave me great joy when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth, telling how you continue to walk in it.
4. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.
5. Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you.
6. They have told the church about your love. Please send them on their way in a manner that honours God.
7. It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans.
8. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for the truth.
9. I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will not welcome us.
10. So when I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, spreading malicious nonsense about us. Not satisfied with that, he even refuses to welcome other believers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.
11. 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.

12. 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.
13. I have much to write to you, but I do not want to do so with pen and ink.
14. I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face.
15. Peace to you.
16. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.

Q2: Who are the three individuals in the letter? What is said about each?

This is a high-level question to draw out their characteristics.

Gaius: Faithful to the truth; walking in the truth; ministering even to strangers

Diotrephes: Selfish; Loves to be first; not welcoming; Spreading malicious nonsense

Demetrius: Wellspoken of by everyone

Q3: Why does John commend the qualities of Gaius?

This is aimed at drawing out what is commended about his faithfulness to the truth and demonstration of love.

Because of his faithfulness to the truth and his demonstration of love even to strangers

Q4: Why are these qualities important in church leaders?

We see that John commends these qualities so that the church will see what is necessary for leadership.

Because they are characteristics necessary for good Christian leadership.

Q5: What is the danger with Diotrephes? Why does this matter?

This question is aimed at helping us see the issue with Diotrephes putting himself first but also preventing faithful ministry like that of Demetrius.

Diotrephes puts himself first; does not respect the authority of the church leaders; false teaching; blocks faithful ministry, stops others doing what is right, does not welcome others

Q6: How does the leadership of Diotrephes compare with Gaius and Demetrius?

This is to draw out the contrast between putting himself first versus loving others in the truth.

Diotrephes

Selfish putting himself first

False teaching

Unwelcoming

Blocking the spread of the gospel

Gaius and Demetrius

Selfless service others in love and truth

Teaching the truth

Welcoming in love

Keen to spread the gospel

Read 2 John, 4-11

4. It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us.
5. And now, dear lady, I am not writing you a new command but one we have had from the beginning. I ask that we love one another.

6. And this is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands. As you have heard from the beginning, his command is that you walk in love.
7. I say this because many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.
8. Watch out that you do not lose what we have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully.
9. Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son.
10. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or welcome them.
11. Anyone who welcomes them shares in their wicked work.

Q7: How does the need to welcome genuine believers in 3 John compare with the warning against false teachers in 2 John?

A chance to compare and contrast two important aspects of faithfulness—being devoted to the truth but also being welcome to those who walk in the truth.

The focus in 2 John is on the danger of false teaching on the existing church and encourages people to be devoted to the truth and watchful for false teachers.

John 3 encourages being welcoming to those who walk in the truth.

Both books tell the church to reject false teachers.

Q8: How does 3 John help us look for the right qualities in a leader? What should we commend? What should we be alert to?

Test the truth of their teaching against the bible.

Look for their approach to others, do they demonstrate love, do they welcome everyone

Q9: How might this apply to different areas of St Mary's?

1. Us, as church members?

Be discerning

2. The various group leaders

Be concerned about group members, and be devoted to Biblical truth, be alert to risks posed by members who are themselves not walking in truth

3. The leadership of the church

Our church: Be concerned about every member of the church family, be devoted to Biblical truth; welcome strangers in love; be on the watch for false teaching, be alert to individuals or groups within the church who are straying from the truth

4. The church as a whole

- a. Be seen to walk in the truth, have courage to stand up for the truth, be welcoming in love

- 5. Our relationship with the wider church**
Stand up for biblical truth.