



## Opposing Testimonies (III John)

### Children Walking in Truth

“The Elder, To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth: Beloved, **I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.** For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth. **I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.**” III John 1:1-4 NKJV

### III John 1:1-4

☑ *“The Elder, To the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth: Beloved, **I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.**” III John 1:1-2 NKJV*

☑ **Prosper in all things...**

- ☑ What does it mean to prosper? It means to do well or that it goes well with you. Certainly the world has sold us that prosperity is a financial thing. If we just imagine all the world tempts us with. We often invest the vast majority of

our time, energy and resources into vocational or business success. Think about what most people view as success: wealthy businessmen; professional athletes, entertainment stars; corporate giants; famous people; politicians, etc.

- ☑ And yet, what most of them have in common, the great majority, is that they fail in faith, family and health. They are so consumed with “prosperity, success, achievements, and accomplishments” that they are driven without recourse. They see no alternative path to nor definition of prosperity.
- ☑ Where do they end up so often? Alone, sick, and regretful.
- ☑ **Be in health...**
- ☑ John says, “be in health.” But what is health? In God’s economy it is certainly a healthy spirit, soul and body. I am often reminded of Paul’s words in 1 Thessalonians when I think of true health...
- ☑ *“Now may the God of peace Himself **sanctify you completely**; and may your whole **spirit, soul, and body** be **preserved blameless** at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.**” 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NKJV*

- ☑ Sanctified means “set-apart” or “holy.” Yes, be different from all those prosperity-chasers who care only about a small fraction of what matters. It never ends well for them. But, you should focus on doing it right in all areas of life. And let’s be perfectly clear; the only way to attain true success is when your faith is involved.
- ☑ If we were to further clarify **spirit**, **soul**, and **body**, I would add that you need to have a plan for “holy health” in all areas of a life.
  1. *Rest*: Leisure time and recovery; time to smell the roses; no striving; a true sabbath
  2. *Relationships*: excellent connections between you and your innermost circle all the way to acquaintances and professional affiliations.
  3. *Faith*: spiritual practices and/or living life with a greater sense of purpose and destiny.
  4. *Finances*: Excellent stewardship of all of your resources (giving, saving, spending, investing, sowing and reaping)
  5. *Work*: Your chosen vocation or deepest calling to impact the world and leave it a better place.

6. *Ministry*: Your call to serve mankind beyond what you get in return; charity; philanthropy
7. *Health*: without which all the above comes to nothing. A balanced approach to wellbeing, fitness, energy, fulfillment, sustainability; considering all the aspects of being human, body, soul and spirit.

☑ **As your soul prospers**

- ☑ A prospering soul...it's a life in which your mind, will, emotions, intentions, and inspirations are in complete alignment with Yahweh. It's a heart that feels full to overflowing, one that is joyous regardless of what the world is offering you.
- ☑ A prosperous soul is satisfied by the rivers of living water that only God can provide.
  - ☑ *"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."* John 7:38 NKJV
- ☑ *"For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and **testified of the truth** that is in you, **just as you walk in the truth**. I have no greater joy than to hear that **my children walk in truth**."* III John 1:3-4 NKJV

☑ **Truth is only truth when...**

- ☑ Truth is manifested in you when you actually live by it. It is one thing to testify of something with your mouth. It's altogether different if your testimony is what others see. That is the true and everlasting witness.

☑ **No Greater Joy**

- ☑ Any parent, natural or spiritual, has no greater fulfillment than to see the lives of their children demonstrating the truth that they have gained. Truth is caught, not just taught, and when we see that it has been caught, we know that we have done the the most important job on the planet. We know also that these "children" will be able to pass it along in the same manner!

### **Doing Ministry Right**

**"Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well, because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth."** III John 1:5-8 NKJV

### III John 1:5-8

- ☑ *“Beloved, you **do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers**, who have borne witness of your love before the church. **If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God**, you will do well, **because they went forth for His name’s sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles.**”*

III John 1:5-7 NKJV

- ☑ **Faithful ministry bears witness of your love**

- ☑ Here it is in action, as John commends them for living out their testimony. It is in this demonstration that love is on display.

- ☑ I love how James teaches this concept:

- ☑ *“If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” **but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?** Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.”*

James 2:15-18 NKJV

- ☑ **Sending out the brethren in ministry God’s way...**

- ☑ What is John saying? He is saying that those who are going forth need to be provided for. That is God's way.
- ☑ **They took nothing from the gentiles**
- ☑ Don't send them out to preach to the lost and make them dependent on being supported by those to whom they are ministering. God's way is to send them out with all the provisions they need to do the work of ministry.
- ☑ *"We therefore ought to **receive such**, that we may become fellow workers for the truth." III John 1:8 NKJV*
- ☑ **Receive such**
- ☑ Those coming in from their ministering journey should be refreshed and given provision as needed.
- ☑ **And receive such**
- ☑ And we too must be provided for when we go out!

### **Opposing Testimonies (Diotrephes vs. Demetrius)**

"I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, **who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.** Therefore, if I come, **I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting them out of the church.** Beloved, **do not imitate what is**

**evil, but what is good.** He who **does good is of God**, but he who **does evil has not seen God.** **Demetrius has a good testimony from all**, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true." III John 1:9-12 NKJV

### III John 1:9-12

☑ *"I wrote to the church, but **Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us.**" III John 1:9 NKJV*

☑ **Loves to have preeminence—won't acknowledge others...**

☑ There is always someone (or a faction) who wants to be the big dog. They want all attention and prominence and therefore are unwilling to accept or recognize others who are doing the important work of ministry, in fear that the success of others will detract from the attention they are drawing unto themselves.

☑ *"Therefore, if I come, **I will call to mind his deeds** which he does, **prating against us with malicious words.** And not content with that, **he himself does not receive the brethren,** and **forbids those who wish** to, putting them out of the church." III John 1:10 NKJV*

☑ **I will expose him**



☑ It is imperative that men and ministries like this be exposed.

☑ **Some indicators that you are dealing with such narcissists...**

☑ They incessantly malign others with their foul mouths!

☑ And as if that is not enough, in addition to their words of death, they won't support those in ministry and forbid others in their organization from doing so as well.

☑ If you think that words can't possibly be that harmful, consider what James taught us.

☑ *“My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. **Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things.** See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. **The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole***

*body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.” James 3:1-6 NKJV*

☑ And consider how James perfectly describes these men like Diotrephes, who loves to have preeminence...

☑ *“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. **But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.** For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.” James 3:13-16 NKJV*

☑ *“Beloved, **do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.** He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.” III John 1:11 NKJV*

☑ **Take a close look and do not do what he does, it's evil!**

☑ Let's not mince words...men like this are evil and are not deserving of the “benefit of the doubt.” That may seem harsh and not so gracious, but John calls it like it is. *“He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.”*

☑ *“Demetrius has a good testimony from all, and from the truth itself. And we also bear witness, and you know that our testimony is true.” III John 1:12 NKJV*

☑ **Demetrius has the exact opposite testimony**

- ☑ Those walking in the truth have an opposing testimony.  
Any true believer can bear witness to whether they are in the presence of a Diotrephes or a Demetrius.

### **Paper and Ink vs. Face to Face**

**“I had many things to write**, but I do not wish to write to you with pen and ink; but I hope to see you shortly, and **we shall speak face to face**. Peace to you. Our friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.” III John 1:13-14 NKJV

### **III John 1:13-14**

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☑ **Paper and Ink vs. Face to Face**

- ☑ Much like we saw in John’s second letter, he would prefer to connect face-to-face with these disciples instead of writing a longer letter. We also, should strive to make

personal connections whenever possible. I'll repeat my final words from last week. *"In a world that has become increasingly dependent on social media, do not depend on such to maintain relationships with those who could be right in front of you. Make the time to see those people, touch those people and know them face to face!"*

### **NEXT WEEK**

The Obadiah Allegory (Obadiah 1)