

Third John

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1This letter comes from the elder ¹ to Gaius, my dear friend, whom I love in the truth. ² My friend, I pray most of all that you're doing well and are in good physical health, for I know you're doing well spiritually.

3I was delighted when some fellow-believers arrived and told me about your commitment to the truth, and how you continue living in the truth. ⁴ Nothing makes me happier than to hear how my dear friends are following the truth. ⁵ My friend, you show you are trustworthy in what you're doing by looking after the brothers ², even those you don't know. ⁶ They have spoken well about your love in front of the church. Please be so kind as to send them on their journey in a way that God would appreciate, ⁷ for they are traveling in his name, not accepting anything from non-believers ³. ⁸

We ought to support them so we can share together in the truth.

9I did write about this to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves being in charge ⁴, refuses to accept our authority. ¹⁰ So if I do visit, I will make it clear what he's been doing. He's been making malicious accusations against us. Not satisfied with doing that, he refuses to welcome any other brothers. He won't let anyone else welcome them either, and throws those who do so out of the church.

11My friend, don't imitate what is evil, but what is good. Those who do what's good belong to God; those who do evil don't know God ⁵.

12Everyone speaks well of Demetrius—and the truth does so too! We also speak well of him, and you know we tell the truth. ¹³ I have so much to say to you, but I don't want to do it in writing with pen and ink. ¹⁴ I hope to see you soon so we can talk face to face. May peace be with you! The friends here send their greetings to you. Please personally greet our friends there by name.

¹+ 1. Usually understood to refer to John, the writer of this letter.

²+ 5. Christian believers traveling around spreading the good news.

³+ 7. Literally, "Gentiles."

⁴+ 9. Literally, "loves to be first."

⁵+ 11. Literally, "have not seen God."