








3 John People Chart

Greetings, Prayer and Joy (v1-4)


- 1 The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth 
- 2 Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers 
- 3 I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, that is, how you are walking in truth  
- 4 I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth 

Commendation of Gaius (v5-8)







- 5 Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers 
- 6 they bear witness to your love before the church; 
- 6 you will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God
- 8 we ought to support such men, that we may be fellow workers with the



Rebuke of Diotrephes (v9-10)

- 9 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say 
- 10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words
- 10 he himself doesn't receive the brethren, & he forbids those who desire to do so, and puts them out of the church

Commendation of Demetrius (v11-12)

- 11 Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God   
- 12 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself 
- 12 we bear witness of Demetrius, & you know that our witness is true  

Closing Remarks (v13-14)

- 13 I had many things to write to you, but I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink
- 14 I hope to see you shortly, and we shall speak face to face.
- 14 Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by name.

Fellow Workers with the Truth (3 Jn 8)

True Christian Love (3 Jn 6)

Christian Hospitality (3 Jn 5,6,8)

Key Words **Theme:** Truth and Love

Truth (6x), true (1x)
Love (2x), Beloved (4x)
Witness (4x), Walking (2x)
Good (3x), Evil (2x)

Context
of
3 John

Purposes for writing

1. to commend Gaius for his obedience to the truth & for his hospitality to fellow workers of the truth (v3-6)
2. to encourage Gaius to continue to support workers of the truth (v6,8)
3. to inform Gaius of Diotrephes' pride and evil deeds and to warn him against imitating Diotrephes (v9-11)
4. to recommend Demetrius to Gaius' aid (v12)
5. to inform Gaius of his impending visit (v13-14) and of a possible visit to Diotrephes to settle the problem (v10)

Occasion for writing

Faithful workers of the truth were rejected and believers who received them were excommunicated by Diotrephes (v9-11)

When written
c. AD 90

Historical Setting of 1 John

1. House Churches
2. Hospitality in the Early Church provided by believers in their own homes
3. Itinerant Preachers and Teachers who go out for the sake of the Name

The Author of 3 John:

the Elder who has a personal and loving relationship with Gaius - pastoral, authoritative, protective of his flock

The Recipients of 3 John

The beloved Gaius, possible leader of a house church, a genuine believer who shows hospitality to the brethren (itinerant preachers and teachers) – loving, generous and obedient

Problem People in 3 John

Diotrephes, proud, insubordinate, refuses to bow to apostolic authority

His Evil Deeds:

Accuses unjustly with wicked words (v10)
Excommunicates other believers who want to receive true teachers of the Word (v10)

3 John – Fellow Workers with the Truth

True Christian Love

Commendation of Gaius (v1-8)			Condemnation of Diotrephes (v9-14)		
Godliness of Gaius (v1-4)	Generosity of Gaius (v5-8)		Rebellion of Diotrephes (v9-11)	Recommendation of Demetrius (v12)	Remarks of John (v13-14)
Love in Truth (v1)	Walking in the Truth (v2-4)	Fellow Workers for the Truth (v5-8)	Witness of the Truth (v9-12)		Fellowship in Truth (v13-14)
	A Christian's Relationship to			Good and Evil	
	Truth	Other Fellow Workers			
Prosperity	Participation		Pride	Praise	Parting
Fellowship	Faithfulness		Faithlessness	Faithfulness	Farewell
Salutation	Servanthood		Selfishness	Selflessness	
Gaius			Diotrephes	Demetrius	John

Written in Ephesus about AD 90

3 John – Christian Hospitality 2

The Commendation Regarding Christian Hospitality (1–8)	The Condemnation Regarding Violating Christian Hospitality (9–11)	The Conclusion Regarding Christian Hospitality (12–14)
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2 John

3 John

<p>1. Love (4x)</p>	<p>1. Love (2x), beloved (4x)</p>
<p>2. Truth (5x), Commandment (4x), Teaching (3x)</p>	<p>2. Truth (6x)</p>
<p>3. “The elder... whom I love in truth” (v1)</p>	<p>3. “The elder... whom I love in truth” (v1)</p>
<p>4. Expresses Joy over the Report of the Readers</p>	<p>4. Expresses joy over the report of the readers</p>
<p>5. “walking in truth” (v4)</p>	<p>5. “walking in truth” (v3,4)</p>
<p>6. Warns against Hospitality to Enemies of the Truth</p>	<p>6. Encourages Hospitality to Teachers of the Truth</p>
<p>7. Commendation followed by Rebuke</p>	<p>7. Commendation followed by Rebuke</p>
<p>8. Condemnation of Bad Doctrine</p>	<p>8. Condemnation of Bad Conduct</p>
<p>9. Short Letter due to Planned Visit</p>	<p>9. Short Letter due to Planned Visit</p>

Agapetos, adj, 62x, beloved, esteemed, dear, favourite, worthy of love

Gaios, of Latin origin; 5x α Gaius = "lord"

1 The elder to the beloved Gaius,

Presbuteros, 67x, elder, of age; a term of rank or office among the Jews, among the Christians, those who presided over the assemblies (or churches) The NT uses the term bishop, elders, & presbyters interchangeably

Pres act ind, agapao, 142x, love, place first in one's affections

whom I love in truth.

Ego, I, emphatic

aletheia, 110x, objectively, what is true in any matter under consideration; subjectively, truth as a personal excellence, that candour of mind which is free from affection, pretence, simulation, falsehood, deceit

2 Beloved,

I pray *Pres mid ind, euchomai, 7x, to pray to God; to wish, to pray for*

that

In all things (peri pantôn). "concerning all things."

in all respects

Pres pass inf, euodoo, 4x, to grant a prosperous & expeditious journey, to lead by a direct and easy way; to grant a successful issue, to cause to prosper; to prosper, be successful

you may prosper

Pres act inf, hugiaino, 12x, to be sound, to be well, to be in good health; metaph. of Christians whose opinions are free from any mixture of error, of one who keeps the graces and is strong

and

be in good health,

Psuche, 105x, the soul, the seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our heart, soul etc.) the (human) soul in so far as it is constituted that by the right use of the aids offered it by God it can attain its highest end and secure eternal blessedness, the soul regarded as a moral being designed for everlasting life

kathos., adv, 182x, according as, just as, even as, in proportion as, in the degree that

just as your soul prospers.

Pres pass ind, euodoo

3 To the truth (têi alêtheiâi). Dative case. "As always in the Johannine writings, 'truth' covers every sphere of life, moral, intellectual, spiritual" (Brooke).

3 For

Lian, adv, 14x, greatly, exceedingly, exceedingly beyond measure

I was very glad

Aor pass ind, chairo, 74x, to rejoice, be glad; to rejoice exceedingly

when brethren came

Pres mid ptc, erchomai, 643x, to come, to come from one place to another, and used both of persons arriving, to appear; metaph. to come into being, arise, come forth, show itself

Adelphos, from 'a' (as a connective particle) and delphus (the womb); 346x, a brother; a fellow believer, united to another by the bond of affection

and

aletheia, 110x, objectively, what is true in any matter under consideration; subjectively, truth as a personal excellence, that candour of mind which is free from affection, pretence, simulation, falsehood, deceit

bore witness to your truth,

Pres act ptc, matureo, 79x, to be a witness, to bear witness, i.e. to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something, or that he knows it because taught by divine revelation or inspiration, to give testimony, to utter honourable testimony, give a good report

that is,

Pres act ind, peripateo, 96x, to walk, progress; Hebrew for, to live, to regulate one's life, to conduct one's self, to pass one's life

kathos., adv, 182x, according as, just as, even as, in proportion as, in the degree that

how you are walking in truth.

Pres act ind, echo

4 I have no greater joy than this,

Chara, 59x, joy, gladness

Teknon, 99x, offspring, children, metaph. the name transferred to that intimate and reciprocal relationship formed between men by the bonds of love, friendship, trust, just as between parents and children

to hear of my children walking in the truth.

Pres act subj, akouo

Pres act ptc, peripateo

5 **Beloved**, *Agapetos*, adj, 62x, beloved, esteemed, dear, favourite, worthy of love

Pres act ind, poieo, to do
you are acting faithfully

Pistos, adj, 67x, trusty, faithful - of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties, one who kept his plighted faith, worthy of trust, that can be relied on 2

in whatever you accomplish for the brethren,

Adelphos, 346x, a brother; a fellow believer, united to another by the bond of affection

From Homer's time (Od. XV. 74) it was customary to speed the parting guest, sometimes accompanying him, sometimes providing money and food. Rabbis were so escorted and Paul alludes to the same gracious custom in Ro 15:24; Tit 3:13. (Rob)

Aor mid subj, ergazomai, 39x, to work, labour, do work

and especially

Xenos, 14x, a foreigner, a stranger

when they are strangers;

6 and

Aor act ind, matureo, 79x, to be a witness, to bear witness, i.e. to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something, or that he knows it because taught by divine revelation or inspiration, to give testimony, to utter honourable testimony, give a good report

they bear witness to your love

Agape, 116x, brotherly love, affection, good will, love, benevolence

Enopion, prep, 97x, in the presence of, before before the church;

Ekklesia, 118x, any gathering, in a Christian sense, an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a religious meeting, a company of Christians, or of those who, hoping for eternal salvation through Jesus Christ, observe their own religious rites, hold their own religious meetings, and manage their own affairs, according to regulations prescribed for the body for order's sake

and

you will do well to send them on their way

"Since they are God's representatives, treat them as you would God" (Holtzmann).

Aor act ptc, propempeo, 9x, to send before or forward, bring on the way, accompany or escort; to set one forward, fit him out with the requisites for a journey

Axios, adv, 6x, suitably, in a manner worthy of God.

7

For

Onoma, 230x, name; the name is used for everything which the name covers, everything the thought or feeling of which is aroused in the mind by mentioning, hearing, remembering, the name, i.e. for one's rank, authority, interests, pleasure, command, excellences, deeds etc.

"This name is in essence the sum of the Christian creed" (Westcott) as in 1Co 12:3; Ro 10:9.

Aor act ind, exerchomai, 222x, to go or come forth of

they went out for the sake of the Name,

Pres act ptc, lambano, 263x, to take; to receive (what is given), to get, obtain

Ethnikos, 4x, adapted to the genius or customs of a people, peculiar to a people, national; in the NT savouring of the nature of pagans, alien to the worship of the true God, heathenish, of the pagan, the Gentile

accepting nothing from the Gentiles.

Apo, prep, from; away from; by means of;

To welcome (hupolambanein). Present active infinitive (habit of welcoming) of hupolambanô, old word, to take up under, to carry off (Ac 1:9), to reply (Lu 10:30), to suppose (Ac 2:15), only here in N.T. in this sense of receiving hospitably or to take under one's protection like hupodechomai (Lu 10:38). (Rob)

John is anxious that Christian missionaries receive nothing from the heathen, as our missionaries have to watch against the charge of being after money. There were many travelling lecturers out for money. Paul in 1Co 9 defends the right of preachers to pay, but refuses himself to accept it from Corinth because it would be misunderstood (cf. 1Th 2:6ff.; 2Co 12:16ff. 12:16ff.). Note apo here as in collecting taxes (Mt 17:25) rather than para, which may be suggestive. (Rob)

8 Therefore

Pres act ind, opheilo, 36x, to owe, be in debt for

we ought to support such men,

Pres act inf, hupolambano, 4x, to receive hospitably, welcome

that

aletheia, 110x, objectively, what is true in any matter under consideration; subjectively, truth as a personal excellence, that candour of mind which is free from affection, pretence, simulation, falsehood, deceit

Pres act subj, ginomai, be, become = that we may keep on becoming

we may be fellow workers with the truth.

Sunergos, adj, 13x, a companion in work, fellow worker

9 I wrote something to the church;
Aor act ind, grapho

Ekklesia, 118x, any gathering, in a Christian sense, an assembly of Christians gathered for worship in a religious meeting, a company of

but *Diotrephes, 1x* α *Diotrephes = "nourished by Jove" or "cherished by Zeus" - a proud arrogant Christian, an opponent of the apostle John*

This ambitious leader and sympathiser with the Gnostics would probably prevent the letter referred to being read to the church, whether it was II John condemning the Gnostics or another letter commending Demetrius and John's missionaries.

Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them,
Pres act ptc, philoproteuo, 1x, to aspire to pre-eminence, to desire to be first / strive to be first, like to be leader

This ambition of Diotrephes does not prove that he was a bishop over elders, as was true in the second century (as Ignatius shows). He may have been an elder (bishop) or deacon, but clearly desired to rule the whole church.... Diotrephes refused to accept John's authority or those who sided with him, John's missionaries or delegates (cf. Mt 10:40).

does not accept what we say.

Pres mid ind, epidechomai, 2x, to receive hospitality; to admit, i.e. not to reject / as acknowledging someone's authority accept, admit (3J 9)

10 For this reason,

3

Aor act subj, erchomai, 643x, to come, to come from one place to another, and used both of persons arriving, to appear

if I come,

Fut act ind, hypomimesko, 7x, to cause one to remember, bring to remembrance, recall to mind: to another; admonish, of something

Pres act ind, poieo = which he keeps on doing

I will call attention to his deeds which he does,

Ergon, 176X, an act, deed, thing done

Poneros, adj, 76x, bad, of a bad nature or condition; in an ethical sense: evil wicked, bad

Logos, words

unjustly accusing us with wicked words;

Pres act ptc, phluareo, 1x, to utter nonsense, talk idly, prate; to bring forward idle accusations, make empty charge; to accuse one falsely with malicious words

(logois ponêrois). Instrumental case. Not simply foolish chatter, but malevolent words.

and

Pres pass ptc, arkeo, 8x, to suffice, to be enough, to be satisfied, to be contented

not satisfied with this,

Adelphos, 346x, a brother; a fellow believer, united to another by the bond of affection

neither does he himself receive the brethren,

Pres mid ind, epidechomai, 2x, to receive hospitality; to admit, i.e. not to reject / as showing hospitality

and

receive (kindly), welcome, entertain (3J 10)

He forbiddeth (kôluei). "He hinders." Present active indicative of kôluô and means either actual success in one case (punctiliar use of the present indicative) or repetition in several instances (linear action) or conative action attempted, but not successful as in Mt 3:14 (this same verb) and Joh 10:32.

Pres act ind, koluo, 23x, to hinder, prevent, forbid

he forbids those who desire to do so,

Pres mid ptc, boulomai, 34x, to will deliberately, have a purpose, be minded; of willing as an affection, to desire

and

Pres act ind, ekballo, 82x, to cast out, drive out, to send out, to compel one to depart;

puts them out of the church.

Ekklesia, 118x, any gathering, an assembly of Christians

Casteth them out of the church (ek tês ekklêsias ekballei). Here again ekballei can be understood in various ways, like kôluei. ...If this ancient "church-boss" did not succeed in expelling John's adherents from the church, he certainly tried to do it.

11 Beloved,

Agapetos, adj, 62x, beloved, esteemed, dear, favourite, worthy of love

do not imitate what is evil,

Pres mid imp, mimeomai, 4x, to imitate: any one

Kakos, adj, 51x, of a bad nature; of a mode of thinking, feeling, acting - base, wrong, wicked; troublesome, injurious, pernicious, destructive, baneful

but

Agathos, adj, 102x, of good constitution or nature; useful, salutary; good, pleasant, agreeable, joyful, happy; excellent, distinguished 5) upright, honourable

what is good.

Pres act ptc, agathopoieo, 11x, to do good, do something which profits others, to be a good help to someone, to do someone a favour, to benefit; to do well, do right

The one who does good is of God;

Pres act ptc, kakopoieo, 4x, to do harm; to do evil, do wrong

the one who does evil has not seen God.

Demetrios, 3x ≠ Demetrius = "belonging to Ceres"

Perf act ind, horao, 59x, to see with the eyes; to see with the mind, to perceive, know; to see, i.e. become acquainted with by experience, to experience. Horao gives prominence to the discerning mind, blepo, to the particular mood or point.

12 Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone,

Perf pass ind, matureo, 79x, to be a witness, to bear witness, i.e. to affirm that one has seen or heard or experienced something, or that he knows it because taught by divine revelation or inspiration, to give testimony, to utter honourable testimony, give a good report = it has been witnessed of Demetrius

and aletheia, 110x, objectively, what is true in any matter under consideration

from the truth itself;

and *He may indeed be the bearer of this letter from Ephesus to Gaius and may also have come under suspicion for some reason and hence John's warm commendation... John knew Demetrius well in Ephesus. (Rob)*

humeis, we, emphatic

we also bear witness,

Pres act ind, matureo, to bear witness, i.e. to affirm

and

Marturia, 37x, a testifying

Pres act ind, eimi

Alethes, adj, 25x, true, honest, real, genuine, truthful

you know that our witness is true.

Perf act ind (w pres meaning), oida, 666x, to see, to perceive with the eyes, notice, discern; to know – signifies a clear & mental perception

imperf, act ind, echo *Aor act inf, grapho*
13 I had many things to write to you,

but

Pres act ind, thelo, 210x, to will, have in mind, intend, to be resolved or determined, to purpose, to desire, to wish

I am not willing to write them to you with pen and ink;

Pres act inf, grapho

14 but

Pres act ind, elpizo, 32x, to hope

Eutheos, adv, 80x, straightway, immediately, forthwith

I hope to see you shortly,

Aor act inf, horao, 59x, to see with the eyes; to see with the mind, to perceive, know; to see, i.e. become acquainted with by experience, to experience. Horao gives prominence to the discerning mind, blepo, to the particular mood or point.

and

Fut act ind, laleo

we shall speak face to face.

Eirene, 92x, a state of national tranquillity, exemption from the rage & havoc of war; peace between individuals, i.e. harmony, concord; security, safety, prosperity, felicity; of the Messiah's peace, the way that leads to peace (salvation); of Christianity, the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its earthly lot, of whatsoever sort that is; the blessed state of devout and upright men after death

Peace be to you.

Pres mid ind, aspazomai, 60x, to salute one, greet, bid welcome, wish well

The friends greet you. *Those in Ephesus. (Rob)*

Philos, adj, 29x, friend, to be friendly to one, an associate

Onoma, 230x, name

Greet the friends by name.

Pres mid imp, aspazomai

Spiritual Prosperity vs Material Prosperity

Is it okay for me to pray for “material” prosperity? Yes

1. John says so (3 Jn 2) – health and material prosperity *just as your soul prospers*
2. David says so (Ps 144:12-15) – strong healthy sons and beautiful daughters, full barns, healthy flocks, multiplied cattle
3. Agur says so (Prov 30:7-9) – no lies and deception; also neither poverty nor wealth, but enough to eat and drink
4. Jesus says so (Matt 6:7-13) – “daily bread”, forgiveness and deliverance from temptation

The challenge is keeping it in proper perspective:

If our desire for material prosperity is for personal gain, then we should not expect God to answer favorably - cf. Ja 4:2-4

But there can be altruistic reasons for praying for material prosperity:

- a. We can pray for health, that one might live longer to serve the Lord in this life
- b. We can pray for success in business, that we might have the means to help others
- c. We can pray for peace, that we might further the spread of the gospel

Of course, it is much easier to pray with prosper perspective when it is others we are praying for, and not ourselves (3 Jn 2)

The Relationship between “Material” and “Spiritual” Prosperity

1 Tim 6:6-10, 17-19 – Instructions for the Contented Godly (v6-8) - godliness actually is a means of great gain, when accompanied by contentment and if we have food and covering, with these we shall be content

The Danger for the Discontented (v9-10) - those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang.

How to Use Your Wealthy Wisely (v17-19) – don’t be conceited, don’t fix your hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God. Do good, be rich in good works, be generous and ready to share, storing up for yourselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that you may take hold of that which is life indeed.

What our Lord has to say about “Spiritual Prosperity” versus “Material Prosperity”.

He praised the church in Smyrna and told them that although they were materially poor, yet they are spiritual rich (Rev 2:8-11)

He condemned the church in Laodicea, for though it was materially very rich and wealthy, it was absolutely wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. He advised them to buy true gold from Him and to repent and open the door of their heart to Him again so that He can enter and dine with him

Supporting True Ministers in the Lord

In writing to Gaius, John has referred to his joy of hearing that Gaius is “walking in the truth” (v3-4) and an area of Gaius’ life in which this was especially true was in the area of showing hospitality to traveling ministers (v 5-8).

In Second John, we saw the “danger” of receiving and supporting those teachers who do not proclaim the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9-11), but here in Third John, we learn of the “good” that can be done when we receive and support those involved in the spreading of the gospel.

Matt 10:5-10 - the worker is worthy of his support

1Cor 9:3-15 - the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel

Gal 6:6 - let the one who is taught the word share all good things with him who teaches.

The rapid spread of the gospel and growth of the early church was facilitated by such people as Gaius (3 John 1-8), along with Priscilla and Aquila, who allowed the churches to meet in their homes (Romans 15:3-5a; 1 Corinthians 16:19), and Philemon, who let the church meet in his house, and could be called upon without hesitation to provide lodging for the apostle Paul (Philemon 1-2, 22). There is still a need today to support those who preach the gospel, especially in places which are hostile to our Lord Christ, or in places where poverty is the norm.

Dealing with the Spirit of Diotrophes

Division in the church or among churches is a very real problem even today. How is one to deal with such a problem?

- Appeal to apostolic authority and take a stand for truth

Warn the flock about these “Diotrophes” type people who refuse to bow down to apostolic authority and wilfully do their own things

- Urge obedient believers to continue to obey the truth
- Urge believers to imitate what is good, not what is evil

Matt 20:20-28 - “whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Phil 2:1-11 –

Basis (v1): encouragement in Christ, consolation of love, fellowship of the Spirit, and affection and compassion

Instructions (v3-5): make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus

Example of Christ (v6-8): although God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. As a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross

Exaltation of Christ (v9-11).: God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the highest name that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Diotrophes even dares to reject what John, the last surviving apostle of the Lord, says. This spirit of Diotrophes appears to reign unchecked in those churches that reject

- The authority of the apostles in preference for the authority of their own councils, synods, or conferences.
- The clear apostolic teachings on such issues as homosexuality, greed, etc.
- Apostolic precedent (whether by command or example) in order to authorize any church practice that suits their fancy.

The spirit of Diotrophes reigns supreme in the lives of those professing Christians who reject the apostles’ call for holy and sanctified living,

- so that they can choose their own sexual preference and lifestyle, and
- so that they can put their own personal interests first, before the kingdom of God.

The third way the spirit of Diotrophes manifests itself is

- when Christians engage in malicious gossip against other believers, and
- when overzealous and self-appointed “guardians of the faith” lambaste their brethren with whom they differ.

The fourth way the spirit of Diotrophes manifests itself is in church discipline. Just because one church has carried out church discipline against someone does not mean that they did so properly. You must check whether

- It may have been prompted as part of a power play by a “Diotrophes” and the ones being withdrawn from may be innocent.

Paul’s Example in Dealing with Divisions and Problems in the Corinthian church.

1 Co 1:10-17 – the problem of divisions

1Cor 3:1-9 – the problem of exalting human leaders and creating factions

1Cor 4:14-21 – the problem of arrogant people

1Cor 6:1-8 – the problem of brethren suing one another in the law courts

1Cor 11:17-19 – the problem of factions

Paul had to deal with believers suing one another (1 Corinthians 6:1-8), the place of women in the church (11:1-16), eating the Lord’s Supper improperly (11:20:34), the issue of Spiritual Gifts and the quarrel over the gift of Tongues (Chapters 12-14).

Imitate What is Good (Role Models)

We are natural imitators and we imitate those around us, a process beginning from childhood and which even extends into adulthood. If that is so, we must choose who or what we want to imitate because we become like those we imitate. Since that is so, it is best that we consciously pick out people we honour and respect, people who have good character traits and attitudes that we need and then imitate them.

Even if you have no good role models in your life, there are many you can still imitate – our Lord, and the many godly people in the Bible. In fact, Paul identifies for us the best Persons for us to imitate: be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us (Eph 5:1-2). We ourselves must be good role models for others as well, and the only reason we can ever dare ask people to imitate us is found in 1 Cor 11:1 - Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.