

Be Consistent with Your Christian Identity:

vs. 11 Live out truth in love. Your conduct should correspond to your theology.

A.D. 90

Introduction vs. 1

Upholding truth with love: vv. 2-12

Conclusion: vv. 13-14

Imitation of Goodness

Imitation of Evil:

vv.1-8:

vv.9-10:

I. Opening Greetings: vv. 1-4

vs. 1: Elder to Gaius: dear brother whom I love in truth;

vs. 2. Pray for dear friend that physical health is as great as spiritual health.

vs. 3. Author rejoiced greatly in receiving the testimony of Gaius. His conduct reflects

John expresses joy for his co-laborer in truth

II. Gaius' Responsibility:

vv.5-12:

A. Gaius' support of fellow believers: vv. 5-8

B. Diotrephes' Opposition vv. 9-11:

*The apostle intends to confront Diotrephes when he comes (vs. 10)*

C. Endorsement of Demetrius: vs. 12:

*Demetrius bears a good reputation, lives out doctrinal truth; his conduct correspond to his theology.*

*The apostle John endorses Demetrius.*

John commends Gaius for support of missionaries

III. Closing Greetings: vv. 13-14:

John plans to speak to Gaius in person.

Unique Features:

1. John & Gaius share mutual affection in the doctrinal truth of Christ (vv. 1-4; 14)

2. Priority of evangelism & support of missionaries (vv.5-8)

3. Internal tensions among early Christian leaders (vv.9-10)

4. Importance of living out a Christ-like truth (vs. 11)"imitate" means "mimic"; it is present tense imperative-calling for continual action...."keep on imitating!" "Seen" is in perfect tense-stressing the state or continual outworking of having seen.

vs. 1: Build relationships (agape) with those whom know the truth.

vs. 2: Pray for those friends.

vs. 3: Rejoice in the godly testimony of others.

vs. 5: Be faithful in your responsibilities by serving others (even those you don't know): Show hospitality!

vs. 6a: Genuinely loving/serving others (agape) should be your reputation.

vs. 6b: Be generous in your support to those who are worthily from God's point of view (support them).

vv.7-8: Since missionaries don't partner with the world for their support, you support them. Therefore, be a co-worker with the the Spirit of God himself by supporting missionaries.

vv. 9-10: Diotrephes, who rejected an earlier visit by the apostle, was prideful person. His love "to be first" manifested itself in how he treated others in the church:

1. He had spread unjustified charges against John with evil words (10a);-he is charged with gossip - slander.

2. He refused to welcome traveling missionaries himself (10b);-shows the "door" to people who disagree with his judgments.

3. He was hindering others in the church who desired to receive them (10c);

4. He expelled those in the church who did assist the missionaries (either by instigating the expulsion or possessing the power to throw them out himself).

In this former letter of recommendation, Gaius and Diotrephes denote two historical figures who depict polarized lifestyles. Gaius imitates good vs. Diotrephes who imitates evil. Whom are we imitating? When we uplift ourselves before others, love (agape) is replaced with pride, servanthood is exchanged for oppression, and trust is supplanted by hypocrisy. But when we are faithful to God by genuinely loving others, even people we don't know, our reputation is honorable, pointing people to Jesus Christ. Therefore, "Dear friend, do not imitate what is bad but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does what is bad has not seen God." 3 John 11. Your lifestyle is a direct reflection of the extent to which you have seen God. Keep your eyes on God!