

# 3John

**Summer, 2013 - Auditorium**

Teacher: Steve Fontenot

Before the first class, read the entire letter in one sitting. It is only one chapter.

Copies of the text are available on the front pew if you would like to use a highlighter to do the suggested marking and/or to make notes in the margin.

### ***Attestation and Authorship***

The name of the author is not mentioned in the letter. However, it is similar in style and content to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> John and the Gospel of John. External evidence is found in the writings of the early writers and versions, e.g., Council of Carthage (397 A.D.), Athanasius (326-373 A.D.), Cyril (315-386 A.D.), Origin (c. 185-254 A.D.), Dionysius (died 265 A.D.), et al. Date of writing is uncertain, but if as the 1<sup>st</sup> epistle, before the destruction of Jerusalem.

Suggested marking:

- “truth”
- names of the three men in the letter

Compare “truth” in this letter with the “tested by faith” and “tested by love” sections in 1<sup>st</sup> John, and the “truth” they were “walking in” in 2<sup>nd</sup> John. If the “truth” of 3<sup>rd</sup> John is the same as John wrote about in the first two epistles, summarize what he is referring to.

Two of the three men mentioned had good “testimony” from the faithful brethren.

- How did this testimony affect John?
- No doubt this affected the other faithful brethren who knew of these men in the same way. Compare **2Co 9:2; 1Th 1:6-9; 2Th 1:3,4; Phm 5,6.**
- For thought: Can brethren “testify” about us—our conduct, devotion, attitudes—in a way that is encouraging to others...or, is our “walk”—our lack of commitment, love, and devotion— a discouragement to those who know about it?

Gaius is commended for “acting faithfully” and that these actions testified to his “love.” What did Gaius do that is being referred to? Compare **Php 4:10,14-18; 1:5.**

For thought: What does a *lack* of such attitude and actions “testify” about us?

Contrary to Gaius and Demetrius, what does Diotrephes *not* do? (v9) Compare **1Jn 2:24; 4:6; 2Jn 9,10.**

Is it possible for people to *unjustifiably* be withdrawn from? (v10)

Apply v11 to the three men in the letter; two men fall in one category and one man falls in the other.

For thought: *Where would we fall?* Would John encourage people to “imitate” us?