

3 John 1:1 – 15

English Standard Version

1 ¹The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.
2 ²Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you
3 may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul.³For I
4 rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to
5 your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth.⁴I have no
6 greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the
7 truth. ⁵Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your
8 efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, ⁶who
9 testified to your love before the church. You will do well to
10 send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. ⁷For
11 they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting
12 nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸Therefore we ought to support
13 people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the
14 truth. ⁹I have written something to the church, but
15 Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not
16 acknowledge our authority. ¹⁰So if I come, I will bring up
17 what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And
18 not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers,
19 and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the
20 church. ¹¹Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good.
21 Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not
22 seen God. ¹²Demetrius has received a good testimony from
23 everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our
24 testimony, and you know that our testimony is true. ¹³I had
25 much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen
26 and ink. ¹⁴I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to
27 face. ¹⁵Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the
28 friends, each by name.

Observation (What does it say?):

Read through the entire letter once before you start marking.

Underline anything that is noticeably different from John's two other letters. (If you were not in our discussions, what stands out to you in this brief letter?)

*Mark with an asterisk * themes or wording you notice from John's first two letters.*

Circle anything that sounds like a completely new idea that was not in 1 John or 2 John.

What other observations do you make?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

How would you summarize John's purpose in writing this letter?

How do you think this letter relates to 1 John and/o 2 John (or does it)? Before or after? To the same church or a different church? Same issues or new ones?

How might the relationship between the two letters affect your reading of both of them?

Application (What does it mean for me?):

- *What parts of this passage fit your current life situation?*
- *What parts seem unrelated to your circumstances?*
- *What part of this passage would be the most challenging for you to apply?*

Additional questions for thought and discussion:

- How do you relate two statements John makes in two different letters:
 - If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting (2 John 1:10)
 - [Diotrephes] refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.
- What clues might you see in the three letters of John to suggest the sequence they were written in? How might the purpose of each letter relate to the sequence of John’s writing?
- From this letter (as well as all of John’s New Testament writing), how did he relate doctrine and fellowship? Which should be our priority?

Inductive Bible Study

(A few general ideas)

Observation
(What does it say?)

What facts do you **observe** about the passage that help bring out the writer’s thought process?

- Who are the people involved?
- What action takes place?
- What type of literature is it (poetry, history, didactic, etc.)?
- What details are included or left out?
- Are any unusual words used?
- Is there symbolic language?
- What is the grammar of the passage (pronouns, prepositions, verb tenses)?
- Are words or ideas repeated?
- Any comparisons or contrasts?
- Any cause and effect?
- Are there indications of purpose (“in order that...”)?
- Are there conclusions (“Therefore...”)?
- Are there explanations?
- Does the passage logically break into sections?
- How would you summarize the passage?
- What would be a good “headline” for the passage?

Interpretation
(What does it mean?)

What questions come to mind about the facts that would help you **interpret** the meaning?

- How would the original readers have understood the passage?
- What is the main emphasis?
- Why does the writer use repetition, or contrast, or unusual words?
- What does the grammar or structure of the passage reveal about the writer’s thought pattern?
- Is there a logical sequence in the passage?
- How are different ideas in the passage connected?
- Are there any new ideas or concepts presented?
- Are there difficulties in the passage?

Application
(What does it mean for me?)

What is the impact on your life? What **application** does the Holy Spirit want to show you?

- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there a promise to be thankful for?
- Is there an attribute of God to worship?
- Is there an example to follow?

**Read nothing into the Scriptures, but draw everything from them, and suffer nothing to remain hidden that is really in them.
J.A. Benael (1687-1752)**