

The Third Epistle of John is a short but instructive letter traditionally attributed to the apostle John. In this letter, John addresses the themes of hospitality, supporting those who uphold the truth, and the importance of imitating what is good.

Key Themes

- **Hospitality:** A central theme in 3 John is the concept of hospitality. The letter commends Gaius for his hospitality towards traveling missionaries and fellow believers, emphasizing the importance of welcoming and supporting those who proclaim the Gospel.
- **Supporting Those Who Uphold the Truth:** The epistle highlights the theme of supporting those who uphold the truth. John contrasts Gaius's support for traveling missionaries with Diotrephes, who rejected them. This theme underscores the importance of supporting those who faithfully proclaim the Gospel.
- **Imitating Good:** Another key theme is the call to imitate what is good. John encourages believers to follow the example of those who live according to the truth and to emulate their virtuous conduct.

Key Stories

- **Gaius's Hospitality (3 John 1:5-8):** John commends Gaius for his hospitality and support of traveling missionaries who went out for the sake of Christ's name. This story exemplifies the theme of hospitality and the importance of supporting those who proclaim the Gospel.
- **Diotrephes's Rejection (3 John 1:9-10):** The letter mentions Diotrephes, who refused to welcome the traveling missionaries and spoke against John's authority. This passage highlights the contrast between those who support the truth and those who reject it.

Key Lessons

- **Hospitality:** 3 John teaches us the significance of hospitality within the Christian community. It encourages us to welcome and support those who are committed to proclaiming the Gospel, reflecting Christ's love and kindness.
- **Supporting Those Who Uphold the Truth:** The epistle underscores the importance of supporting individuals and ministries that uphold the truth of the Gospel. It challenges us to be discerning in our support and to align ourselves with those who faithfully proclaim God's Word.
- **Imitating Good:** 3 John provides valuable lessons on imitating what is good. It encourages believers to follow the example of those who live according to the truth and to emulate virtuous conduct in their own lives.

The Third Epistle of John is a concise but impactful letter that emphasizes the themes of hospitality, supporting those who uphold the truth, and imitating what is good. As we study 3 John, may we be inspired to practice hospitality, support those who proclaim the Gospel, and imitate the virtuous conduct of those who walk in truth. This letter serves as a reminder of the importance of love, hospitality, and discernment within the Christian community.

