

Diotrephes and Demetrius: 3 John 9-14

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INTRODUCTION:

REVIEW:

- A. John prays for Gaius to prosper, because he walks in truth (2-4)

- B. Gaius is faithful to believers, so continuing to receive those ministering in Christ's name who depend on God will give him a share in their reward) (5-8)

NEW EXPOSITION: Diotrephes and Demetrius

1. John wrote to the church, but Diotrephes refuses the apostles and their emissaries, because he seeks pre-eminence among [the elders] (9) *Said letter is not in the NT.*

2. [In light of Diotrephes refusing the apostle] John will recount [in a trial] Diotrephes' gossip, refusal of apostolic emissaries, and excommunicating those receiving them, (10)

3. Gaius should not imitate Diotrephes' evil, but should imitate what is good, because one who does good is of God, but the evildoer has not seen God (11)

4. [Gaius should receive] Demetrius who has a good testimony from the brethren, from the apostles, and from the truth (as God's representative) (12)

Farewell (3 John 13-14)

1. John had much to tell Gaius, but wants to do it personally (planning to see him soon) (13-14a)

2. Friends with John greet Gaius and Gaius is to greet friends personally (14)

Friend = *philos*: John does not sharply distinguish *philos* and *agapē*

John 20:2 ... the other disciple, whom Jesus loved (*phileō*)..."

John 13:23 ... one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved (*agapaō*).

Evidence in 3 John that John does not sharply distinguish these words. Neither does Paul sharply distinguish *philos* and *agapē* either.

EXCURSUS: THE NT PICTURE OF LOCAL CHURCH LEADERSHIP

The NT frowns upon one elder becoming pre-eminent over other elders.

1. In John’s writing, cf. 3 John 9-10

2. In Peter, cf. 1 Peter 5:2 [You_{pl}] shepherd the flock_{sg} of God among you_{pl}

3. 3a. in Luke’s writings, cf. Acts 14:23 They appointed elders_{pl} in every church_{sg}

4. 3b. cf. Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders_{pl} of the church_{sg}

5. 3c. Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which God has made you [elders] overseers, to shepherd the church of God

6. 4. in Paul’s writings, cf. 1 Timothy 5:17, Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of a double honorarium, **especially** those who labor in the word and teaching.

	Those Ruling Well	Those not Ruling Well
Those laboring in Word & Teaching	1	3
Those not laboring in Word & Teaching	2	4

#1 and #4 make sense under any model:

#1 Those ruling well & laboring in word & teaching are especially worthy of DH

#4 Ones not ruling well & not laboring in the word & teaching unworthy of DH

#2 and #3 only make sense under a multiple-elder model

If one rules well, but does not labor in teaching and the word: DH

If one does not rule well, but labors in teaching and the word: No DH

If there were only one elder (the pastor), why would #2 receive DH, but #3 does not?

If there were plural elders, Paul does not scold one who does not labor in the Word. (Laboring for extended periods in the word and teaching be part of job-profile for some elders, but would not be part of the job-profile for all elders)