

UNIT 4

3 JOHN

English Standard Version	Revised English Bible
<p>¹The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.</p> <p>²Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul. ³For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. ⁴I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.</p> <p>⁵Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, ⁶who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. ⁷For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.</p> <p>⁹I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. ¹⁰So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.</p> <p>¹¹Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God.</p>	<p>¹ The Elder to dear Gaius, whom I love in the truth.</p> <p>² Dear friend, above all I pray that things go well with you, and that you may enjoy good health: I know it is well with your soul. ³ I was very glad when some fellow-Christians arrived and told me of your faithfulness to the truth; indeed you live by the truth. ⁴ Nothing gives me greater joy than to hear that my children are living by the truth.</p> <p>⁵ Dear friend, you show a fine loyalty in what you do for our fellow-Christians, though they are strangers to you. ⁶ They have testified to your kindness before the congregation here. Please help them on their journey in a manner worthy of the God we serve. ⁷ It was for love of Christ's name that they went out; and they would accept nothing from unbelievers. ⁸ Therefore we ought to support such people, and so play our part in spreading the truth.</p> <p>⁹ I wrote to the congregation, but Diotrephes, who enjoys taking the lead, will have nothing to do with us. ¹⁰ So when I come, I will draw attention to the things he is doing: he lays nonsensical and spiteful charges against us; not content with that, he refuses to receive fellow-Christians himself, and interferes with those who would receive them, and tries to expel them from the congregation.</p> <p>¹¹ Dear friend, follow good examples, not bad ones. The well-doer is a child of God; the evildoer has never seen God.</p>

<p>¹² Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone, and from the truth itself. We also add our testimony, and you know that our testimony is true.</p> <p>¹³ I had much to write to you, but I would rather not write with pen and ink. ¹⁴ I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face. ¹⁵ Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends, each by name.</p>	<p>¹² Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone, and even by the truth itself. I add my testimony, and you know that my testimony is true.</p> <p>¹³ I had much to write to you, but I do not care to set it down with pen and ink. ¹⁴ I hope to see you very soon, when we will talk face to face. ¹⁵ Peace be with you. Your friends here send you greetings. Greet each of our friends by name.</p>
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I/ Gaius (vv. 1-8)

...and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. (Acts 5:40–41)

Excerpt: "The Parent's and Pastor's Joy," Charles Haddon Spurgeon, December 21, 1873

You may view, dear friends, the text as specifying the pastor's greatest reward. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." The minister who is sent of God has spiritual children, they are as much his children as if they had literally been born in his house, for to their immortal nature he stands under God in the relationship of father...

No minister ought to be at rest unless he sees that his ministry does bring forth fruit, and men and women are born unto God by the preaching of the word. To this end we are sent to you, not to help you to spend your Sundays respectably, nor to quiet your consciences by conducting worship on your behalf. No, sirs, ministers are sent into the world for a higher purpose, and if your souls are not saved, we have labored in vain as far as you are concerned. If in the hands of God we are not made the means of your new birth, our sermons and instructions have been a mere waste of effort, and your hearing has been a mere waste of time to you, if not something worse. To see children born unto God, that is the grand thing. Hence every preacher longs to be able to talk about his spiritual sons and daughters...

It is very grievous to see how some professedly Christian parents are satisfied so long as their children display cleverness in learning, or sharpness in business, although they show no signs of a renewed nature. If they pass their examinations with credit, and promise to be well fitted for the world's battle, their parents forget that there is a superior conflict, involving a higher crown, for which the child will need to be fitted by divine grace, and armed with the whole armor of God.

Alas, if our children lose the crown of life, it will be but a small consolation that they have won the laurels of literature or art. Many who ought to know better think themselves superlatively blessed in their children if they become rich, if they marry well, if they strike out into profitable enterprises in trade, or if they attain eminence in the profession which they have espoused. Their parents will go to their beds rejoicing, and awake perfectly satisfied, though their boys are hastening down to hell, if they are also making money by the bushel. They have no greater joy than that their children are having their portion in this life, and laying up treasure where rust corrupts it. Though neither their sons nor daughters show any signs of the new birth, give no evidence of being rich towards God, manifest no traces of electing love or redeeming grace, or the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit, yet there are parents who are content with their condition.

Now, I can only say of such professing parents that they have need to question whether they be Christians at all, and if they will not question it themselves, they must give some of us leave to hold it in serious debate. When a man's heart is really right with God, and he himself has been saved from the wrath to come, and is living in the light of his heavenly Father's countenance, it is certain that he is anxious about his children's souls, prizes their immortal natures, and feels that nothing could give him greater joy than to hear that his children walk in truth. Judge yourselves, then, beloved, this morning, by the gentle but searching test of the text. If you are professing Christians, but cannot say that you have no greater joy than the conversion of your children, you have reason to question whether you ought to have made such a profession at all.

II/ Diotrephes (vv. 9-10)

And he is the head of the body,
the church. He is the beginning,
the firstborn from the dead, that
in everything he might be
preeminent. (Colossians 1:18)

III/ Demetrius (vv.11-12)

Remember your leaders, those
who spoke to you the word of
God. Consider the outcome of
their way of life, and imitate their
faith. Jesus Christ is the same
yesterday and today and forever.
(Hebrews 13:7-8)

IV/ Conclusion (vv.13-15)