

Examples To Follow Or Avoid

3 John 1

In a world where people are looking for good examples to emulate and follow, 3 John offers some good examples to take lessons from and also one example who displays attitudes to avoid.

There and Then

Outline:

A complete outline for 3 John is available on the [Downloads](#) page in the *Outlines & Word Lists* folder.

Group ¹	C	V	Description
(No headings in the NASB text)	1	1	Salutation
		2-4	Greeting; John's joy over Gaius' good example
		5-8	Support for those who preach the Gospel
		9-10	John's planned rebuke of Diotrephes
		11-12	Do good; Demetrius' good report
		13-14	John's desire to see them in person
		15 ²	Blessing

People³:

- **elder** - G4245 - πρεσβύτερος, presbuteros, *pres-boo'-ter-os*
 - Strong's: *older*; as noun, a *senior*; specifically an Israelite *Sanhedrist* (also figuratively, member of the celestial council) or Christian *presbyter* - elder (-est), old.
 - NASEC: *elder*: - elder (3), elders (57), men of old (1), old men (1), older (1), older man (1), older ones (1), older women (1), women (1).
- **Gaius** - G1050 - Γάϊος, Gaios, *gah'-ee-os*
 - Strong's: Of Latin origin; *Gaius* (that is, *Caius*), a Christian: - Gaius.
 - NASEC: Gaius (5)
 - Acts 19:29; 20:4; Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14; 3 John 1:1.
- **beloved** - G27 - ἀγαπητός, agapētos, *ag-ap-ay-tos'*
 - Strong's: *beloved*: - (dearly, well) beloved, dear.
 - NASEC: *beloved*: - beloved (60), very dear (1).
- **children** - G5043 - τέκνον, teknon, *tek'-non*

1 (NASB) "Group" column from the headings in the NASB text.

2 (NASB) Some translations include verse 15 at the end of verse 14, but most newer ones mark it as a separate verse.

3 (Strong; NASEC) Greek words identified with Strong's numbers and how they are translated in the NASB text.

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- Strong's: a *child* (as *produced*): - child, daughter, son.
- NASEC: a *child* (of either sex): - child (13), children (76), children's (2), son (8), sons (1).
- **brethren** - G80 - ἀδελφός, adelphos, *ad-el-fos'*
 - Strong's: a *brother* (literally or figuratively) near or remote (much like [H1]): - brother.
 - NASEC: a *brother*: - believing husband (1), brethren (170), brethren *(13), brother (111), brother's (8), brothers (40).
- **strangers** - G3581 - ξένος, xenos, *xen'-os*
 - Strong's: *foreign* (literally *alien*, or figuratively *novel*); by implication a *guest* or (vice versa) *entertainer*: - host, strange (-r).
 - NASEC: *foreign, a foreigner, guest*: - host (1), strange (2), strange thing (1), stranger (4), strangers (6).
- **church** - G1577 - ἐκκλησία, ekklēsia, *ek-klay-see'-ah*
 - Strong's: a *calling out*, that is, (concretely) a popular *meeting*, especially a religious *congregation* (Jewish *synagogue*, or Christian community of members on earth or saints in heaven or both): - assembly, church.
 - NASEC: *an assembly, a (religious) congregation*: - assembly (3), church (74), churches (35), congregation (2).
- **God** - G2316 - θεός, theos, *theh'-os*
 - Strong's: a *deity*, especially (with G3588) *the supreme Divinity*; figuratively a *magistrate*; by Hebraism *very*: - X exceeding, God, god [-ly, -ward].
 - NASEC: *God, a god*: - divinely (1), God (1267), god (6), God's (27), God-fearing (1), godly (2), godly *(1), gods (8), Lord (1).
- **Name** - G3686 - ὄνομα, onoma, *on'-om-ah*
 - Strong's: a name (literally or figuratively), (*authority, character*): - called, (+ sur-) name (-d).
 - NASEC: *a name, authority, cause*: - called (1), name (175), name's (7), named (34), names (8), people (1), people *(1), persons (1).
- **Gentiles** - G1482 - ἔθνικός, ethnikos, *eth-nee-kos'*
 - Strong's: *national* (ethnic), that is, (specifically) a *Gentile*: - heathen (man).
 - NASEC: *national, foreign*, i.e. spec. a *Gentile*: - Gentile (1), Gentiles (3).
- **such men** - G5108 - τοιοῦτος, toioutos, *toy-oo'-tos*
 - Strong's: *truly this*, that is, *of this sort* (to denote character or individuality): - like, such (an one).
 - NASEC: *such as this, such*: - like this (1), men like (1), other (1), similar (1), so (2), such (16), such a fellow (1), such a kind (1), such a man (3), such a one (5), such a person (2),

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such as these (4), such men (5), such people (1), such persons (2), such thing (1), such things (7), such women (1).

- **fellow workers** - G4904 - συνεργός, *sunergos*, *soon-er-gos'*
 - Strong's: a *co-laborer*, that is, *coadjutor*: - companion in labour, (fellow-) helper (-labourer, -worker), labourer together with, workfellow.
 - NASEC: *a fellow worker*: - fellow worker (6), fellow workers (6), workers (1).
- **Diotrephes** - G1361 - Διοτρεφής, *Diotrephēs*, *dee-ot-ref-ace'*
 - Strong's: *Jove nourished*⁴; *Diotrephes*, an opponent of Christianity: - Diotrephes.
 - NASEC: "cherished by Zeus," *Diotrephes*, an opponent of the apostle John: - Diotrephes (1).
- **Demetrius** - G1216 - Δημήτριος, *Dēmētrios*, *day-may'-tree-os*
 - Strong's: *Demetrius*, the name of an Ephesian and of a Christian: - Demetrius.
 - NASEC: *Demetrius*, the name of a silversmith and of a Chr.: - Demetrius (3).
 - Acts 19:24,38; 3 John 1:12.
- **friends** - G5384 - φίλος, *philos*, *fee'-los*
 - Strong's: a *friend*; actively *fond*, that is, *friendly* (still as a noun, an *associate*, *neighbor*, etc.): - friend.
 - NASEC: *beloved*, *dear*, *friendly*: - friend (12), friends (17).

Location:

No specific location is mentioned in the text because it is written to an individual, Gaius (v. 1). Probably written around the same time as the rest of John's letters, around 90 ad.⁵

Context:

1 John focuses on how a Christian can have assurance in their relationship with God. 2 John focuses on being able to identify a true disciple and teacher. 3 John focuses on giving some specific examples of people to support and another to beware of following.

Key Words:

New Testament, Letters, 3 John, John, Gaius, Diotrephes, Demetrius Friends, Examples

Key Verse(s):

[3 John 1:4 NASB](#) I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.

[3 John 1:8 NASB](#) Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth.

Cross References⁶, Questions, Notes, and Commentaries:

4 (Strong) Lit., from combining G2203 & G5142.

5 (Galan et al. 200; 254-257; Fee and Stuart 420-422) on 3 John.

6 (Smith)

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Greeting: “you may prosper and be in good health” – v. 2

The greeting that John gives has been used to promote a gospel of Health and Wealth or the Prosperity Gospel. John does wish his friend to be in good health and that he be successful in his business dealings, just as anyone would wish for their friends, but from the text it would seem that John is more excited to hear about Gaius' spiritual “health and wealth” as delivered in the good report about him.⁷

One must be careful not to build an entire doctrine on a single verse. Consider the following commandments from the Pentateuch, as summarized from the website, Judiasm101.org⁸.

The Poor and Unfortunate

40. Not to afflict an orphan or a widow (Ex. 22:21) (CCN51).
41. Not to reap the entire field (Lev. 19:9; Lev. 23:22) (negative) (CC16).
42. To leave the unreaped corner of the field or orchard for the poor (Lev. 19:9) (affirmative) (CC11).
43. Not to gather gleanings (the ears that have fallen to the ground while reaping) (Lev. 19:9) (negative) (CC17).
44. To leave the gleanings for the poor (Lev. 19:9) (affirmative) (CC12).
45. Not to gather ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard (Lev. 19:10) (negative) (CC18).
46. To leave ol'loth (the imperfect clusters) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10; Deut. 24:21) (affirmative) (CC13).
47. Not to gather the peret (grapes) that have fallen to the ground (Lev. 19:10) (negative) (CC19).
48. To leave peret (the single grapes) of the vineyard for the poor (Lev. 19:10) (affirmative) (CC14).
49. Not to return to take a forgotten sheaf (Deut. 24:19) This applies to all fruit trees (Deut. 24:20) (negative) (CC10).
50. To leave the forgotten sheaves for the poor (Deut. 24:19-20) (affirmative) (CC15).
51. Not to refrain from maintaining a poor man and giving him what he needs (Deut. 15:7) (CCN62). See Tzedakah: Charity.
52. To give charity according to one's means (Deut. 15:11) (CCA38). See Tzedakah: Charity.

The Sabbatical and Jubilee Years

217. To release debts in the seventh year (Deut. 15:2) (CCA64).
218. Not to demand return of a loan after the Sabbatical year has passed (Deut. 15:2) (CCN57).
219. Not to refrain from making a loan to a poor man, because of the release of loans in the Sabbatical year (Deut. 15:9) (CCN56).
226. To grant redemption to the land in the Jubilee year (Lev. 25:24) (affirmative).

Why would God make provisions for the poor, the orphans, and the widows, in the commandments that He gave to the Israelites even before they entered the promised land, and even stating that the poor would always be with them in (which Jesus repeats) if all his people would be wealthy?

Deuteronomy 15:11 NASB "For the poor will never cease *to be* in the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land.

7 (Kistemaker; Barnes; MacDonald and Farstad; Walvoord and Zuck; Perowne; Gill; Clarke; Ice; Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown; *Life Application Study Bible Notes*; *NET Notes*; Johnson; Utley)

8 (Rich) summary of the laws of the Torah.

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Matthew 26:11 NASB "For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me.

Mark 14:7 NASB "For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish you can do good to them; but you do not always have Me.

John 12:8 NASB "For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me."

The context in which Jesus quotes the reference in Deuteronomy 15:11 is when a woman anoints Him prior to His trial and crucifixion, which He says because Judas asks about selling the perfume and giving the proceeds to the poor. If His disciples were all to be rich, why would Jesus mention this verse from the Torah, which clearly states that the poor will always be with us? He doesn't say that if they were poor they weren't his disciples. He doesn't exclude them.

Consider too the early church, where they shared with each other as they had need. If all of the disciples were to be wealthy, why would they have need to share with each other as they had need?

That being said, if a person follows the principles in the Bible for how to live to honor God and how to conduct themselves in business and in relationships with other people, seeking to honor God in all that they do, there is every likelihood that the chance of sickness that can result from sinful actions and the possibility of financial success increases. If you are honest in your dealings, people will want to do business with you. If you and your spouse remain faithful to each other, the likelihood of either of you getting a sexually transmitted disease drops dramatically to almost nothing.⁹

For a good explanation of this topic, I would suggest some articles on gotquestions.org.¹⁰

Three examples in John's letter – v. 3-10, 12

Consider the three people named in the letter and what is said about them.

Gaius—v 3, 5-6	Diotrephes—v 9-10	Demetrius—v 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Humble, accepting, and gracious.• Brethren came and had a good report about him• acting faithfully toward the brethren, especially strangers• loved of the church testified about• provide for strangers "in a manner worthy of the gospel"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proudful, uncooperative, and inhospitable.• Proudful and seeking a position of authority• doesn't accept what is the apostles say• unjustly accusing the apostle with "wicked words"• doesn't receive the brethren• forbids others to do it too• excommunicates others if they do	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has a good report among the brethren• John shares in this testimony as well

John's Joy – v.4, 11

John's greatest joy was to hear that his "children" were "walking in the truth" and then he begins to outline what that means by describing the people mentioned above, including those who came and gave a good report about Gaius and Demetrius to John. In verse 11, John encourages his readers to follow the good examples and not to "imitate what is evil".

9 (Lange) Yes, it is possible to do contract an STD without intercourse but some of the ways involves activity that is not in line with God's design for sex and marriage.

10 ("What Does the Bible Say about the Prosperity Gospel?"); ("Is the Word of Faith Movement Biblical?"); ("Is 'name It Claim It' Teaching Biblical?"); or ("Is There Power in Positive Confession?").

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We are reminded of the commandments that was first given by Jesus and then repeated by Peter, Paul and John: love one another. John explains that to love is to do the commands of God. If we love God, we will keep His commands.

John 14:15 NASB "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

John 14:23 NASB Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.

John 14:24 NASB "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

John 15:10 NASB "If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

1 Peter 4:8 NASB Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.

1 John 5:3 NASB For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome.

2 John 1:6 NASB And this is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.

The reference in 1 Peter is a little obscure, but I think the principle fits.

Speak face to face – v. 13-14

John has many more things to speak to Gaius about but limits his comments in this short letter so that he can have a fuller conversation with his friend in person. This seems to be a preferable means of communication as there is less likely a chance for misunderstanding which can take place through an exchange of letters. In person, all matters can be addressed at once and understood or resolved.

Here and Now

my LOG v. others SPECK: Answer the questions below as you reflect on your own life and this study.¹¹

S – Are there *sins* to avoid or confess?

- Make sure that we don't become prideful and be unwilling to take direction from those who are in authority over us.

P – Are there *promises* from God to claim?

-

E – Are there *examples* to follow or avoid?

- Follow □ Gaius: see chart above
- Follow □ children walking in the truth

¹¹ (The Navigators) [with additions] & Matthew 7:1-5.

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- Follow □ Demetrius: see chart above
- Avoid □ Diotrephes: see chart above
- Follow □ the elder (John the apostle) desires to speak to people face to face rather than through a letter.

C – Are there *commands* to obey?

- Supporting those “fellow workers” who do the work of the gospel is a blessing to them and to us.

K – How can this passage increase my *knowledge* about God / Jesus Christ / Holy Spirit?

- God’s sees the things done by individuals and will respond appropriately. (v. 11)

Other Application Questions

Are there principles to guide?

Are there warnings to heed?

Are there attitudes to adopt?

Are there actions to take?

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