

Handout: Third Letter of John

Besides St. Paul's letters to St. Timothy, St. Titus, and Philemon, this is the only other New Testament letter written to an individual. However, the letters to Philemon and the Third Letter of John are the only New Testament letters to ordinary Christians. St. John writes to a man named Gaius, a model Christian who set an example of hospitality and encouragement to his faith community by opening his doors to visiting missionaries. It is also the shortest letter in the New Testament.

The letter divides into four parts:

Part I: Greeting (verses 1-2)

Part II: The Godliness of Gaius (verses 3-8)

Part III: The Pride of Diotrephes (verses 9-12)

Part IV: Benediction (verses 13-14)

Summary Outline of the Third Letter of St. John

BIBLICAL PERIOD	# 12 The Kingdom of the Church			
FOCUS	Commendation		Condemnation	
COVENANT	New and Eternal Covenant			
SCRIPTURE	1:1-----3-----9-----13-----14			
DIVISION	Greeting	Godliness of Gaius	Pride of Diotrephes	Benediction
TOPIC	Servanthood		Selfishness	
	Praise for Gaius' Hospitality		Diotrephes' Arrogance Contrasted with Praise for Demetrius	
LOCATION	Ephesus, the second most important city in the Roman Empire located on the western coast of Asia Minor			
TIME	It was probably written in the mid-first-century AD after John wrote his Gospel and First and Second Letters but before the great Roman persecution that began in AD 64. The persecution resulted in John's imprisonment on Patmos before the Jewish Revolt of 66, the end of the world as they knew it for the Jews that led to the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70. The letter mentions none of those terrible events predicted by Jesus.			