

**1, 2, 3 JOHN**  
**THIS IS THE LIFE**  
**SMALL GROUP STUDY #12**  
**PRACTICE HOSPITALITY**  
**3 John**

**Ice Breaker:** Think about a time when you were welcomed into another Christian's home for a meal or an overnight stay. What made your visit particularly encouraging (or discouraging)? What did the visit reveal to you about hospitality?

**INTRO:** John wrote this letter to his friend Gaius because members of Gaius's church were refusing to show hospitality to some of the missionaries, such as Demetrius. The root of the problem was a self-appointed leader named Diotrephes who dominated the church and refused to welcome traveling brothers.

**READ: 3 John**

1 *The elder, To my **dear friend Gaius, whom I love** in the truth.*  
2 *Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well. 3 It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about **your faithfulness to the truth** and how **you continue to walk in the truth.** 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.*  
5 *Dear friend, **you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers**, even though they are strangers to you. 6 They have told the church **about your love**. You will do well to **send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.** 7 **It was for the sake of the Name that they went out**, receiving no help from the pagans. 8 We ought therefore to show hospitality to such men **so that we may work together for the truth.***  
9 *I wrote to the church, but **Diotrephes, who loves to be first**, will have nothing to do with us. 10 So if I come, **I will call attention to what he is doing, gossiping maliciously about us.** Not satisfied with that, **he refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.***  
11 *Dear friend, **do not imitate what is evil but what is good.** Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God. 12 **Demetrius is well spoken of by everyone—and even by the truth itself. We also speak well of him, and you know that our testimony is true.***  
13 *I have much to write you, but I do not want to do so with pen and ink. 14 I hope to see you soon, and we will talk face to face.*  
*Peace to you. The friends here send their greetings. Greet the friends there by name.*

Q: What did John say right up front, to let Gaius know how he felt about him? What qualities of Gaius did John praise? (vs. 1-3, 6-6)

- *My dear friend; Whom I love; brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth.*
- What phrase or statements do you use to building others up in letters, phone calls, emails or texts?

Q: Should Christians make a habit of expressing love and admiration for each other?

- Why is it so important to build each other up? (1Thess. 5:11; Heb. 3:13, 10:25)
- If time allows, prompt the group to take turns affirming each member, allowing two or three comments from the group about each person then moving to the next.

Q: In verse 8, John tells us to show hospitality to those who serve Jesus. In what way(s) do you think the world's idea of hospitality differs from Christian hospitality?

- Are entertaining and hospitality the same? Explain.
- *Entertaining seems to be focused on showing people a good time, while hospitality seems to focus on showing them God... treating people the way God would if they were meeting or staying with Him.*

Q: Why should we go out of our way to show hospitality to those who are working hard at serving Jesus? (Vs. 8)

- *Whom ever you "take into your house or welcome" (2John 10) ends up influencing you and you end up as a part of what they are doing.*
- *John warned us NOT to be hospitable to deceivers in 2John 10-11 for the same reason.*

Q: John says he wrote to the church, (apparently asking that certain men who were missionaries be shown hospitality by members of the church) but a man named Diotrefes was causing problems. What was Diotrefes doing (vs. 10) and what was his real problem (vs. 9)?

- What does it mean the Diotrefes wanted to "be first"?
- What can you do to make sure that you don't fall into the same trap he did?
  - *Make sure you don't gossip, practice hospitality and encourage others to do the same!*
  - *Make every effort to keep a small profile... promote others, not yourself.*
  - *Phil. 2:3 "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves."*

Q: In verse 11, John tells us to imitate those who do good, not those who do evil. In verse 12 John identifies Demetrius as someone to imitate. Who do you know that is good at showing godly hospitality?

- *Try to identify some people you can begin to imitate and take steps to put this into action.*
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APPLICATION ASSIGNMENT: *Answer the following questions as best you can, then get with your discipler/discipleship group and discuss your answers.*

1. Do you express your honest love and admiration for your Christian brothers and sister with specific statements? If so, give some examples.
  - a. What keeps you from being as open and encouraging to others as you could be?
2. What changes do you need to make in your style of hospitality to make it more in keeping with Scripture?
  - a. What can you do to better *practice* hospitality?
3. Who do you think God wants you to imitate in this area?