

3 John

1 From: The Elder

To: Gaius the Loved One

(I really, truly love you!)

2 Loved One, I am praying that in everything you'll be as prosperous and healthy as your soul is already prosperous (which is to say—a lot!).

3 I was overjoyed because Siblings came and told me all about the Truth in you, how you are walking in Truth. 4 (Let me just say that I have absolutely no greater joy than this: when I hear that my children are walking in the Truth.)

5 Loved One, you do all your work faithfully for the Siblings, even the ones you don't know! 6 The Siblings have told everybody here about the quality your love in front of the Gathering. It would be beautiful for you to financially support and send on those Siblings in a way worthy of the Divine. 7 For the sake of the Name, they left here receiving no financial support from groups outside of ours. 8 Therefore, we really owe it to them to support them so that we all may be colleagues with the Truth.

9 I wrote something to the Gathering there, but the *Preeminent* Diotréphes doesn't want to welcome us. 10 Because of this, if I were to come, I will be certain to remind everybody of the work he does do for us:

- Slander
- Nonsense

And, as if this weren't enough:

- He does not welcome the Siblings
- He forbids Siblings even from visiting and kicks them out of the church

11 Loved One, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.

The one doing good: From the Divine.

The one doing evil: Has not even *seen* the Divine!

12 On the other hand, Demetrius has been affirmed by everyone—and from the Truth itself—and we also speak well of him. You know if we speak well of him, you can take it seriously.

13 Even though this letter is short, I actually had a lot to write to you, but at this point, I'm not wanting to say what I've got to say through ink and pen.

14 But I'm hoping to see you very soon, and then we can talk face-to-face.

15 Peace to you. The Friends here greet you. Greet each of the Friends there name by name.

1 From The Presbyter

To Gaius the Beloved

Whom I myself love in truth.

2 Beloved, in all, I pray you may be prospered and be whole just as is prospering your soul.

3 For I was gladdened greatly, when came siblings and they testified to your truth, as you, in truth, are walking. 4 Greater than this no joy I have: that I hear these my children in the truth are walking.

5 Beloved, faithfully you are doing whatever you work for the siblings and the strangers. 6 They have testified to your love before the Gathering, which beautifully, you will do, to Deity-worthily send them on. 7 For the sake of the Name, they left, accepting nothing from the ethnic groups. 8 We, therefore, owe to assume such people so that co-workers we may be with the truth.

9 I wrote something to the Gathering, but Loves-to-Be-First Diotr phes does not welcome us. 10 For this reason, if I were to come, I will remind of his work which he is doing, evil words, talking nonsense about us, and, he, not being satisfied with this, neither is he welcoming of the Siblings and those willing he is forbidding and out of the church he is putting them.

11 Beloved, do not imitate the evil but the good. The one doing good from the Divine is. The one doing evil has not seen the Divine.

12 Demetrius has been affirmed by everyone—and from the Truth itself—and we testify, and you know that our testimony is true.

13 Much I had to write to you, but I am not wanting through ink and pen to you to write. 14 But I am hoping immediately you to see, and mouth-to-mouth we will speak.

15 Peace to you. Greet you, the friends do. Greet the Friends name by name.

New Testament Glossary

D

Divine, the. Name for the Jewish and Christian God. In my translation, I have decided to steer away from translating *theos* simply as God, as if "God" were the Creator's first name. The word God, to modern ears, almost immediately conjures up an image (such as old man in the sky or on a literal throne) that does not well reflect who God actually is.

I will admit that going with "The Divine" could impose some ambiguity. For instance, is John 1:1 saying that the Word was God or the Word was merely divine? I'm hoping by maintaining the definite article "the," it is clear that we are talking about the actual deity and being usually called God.

E

Elder. The Greek word *presbyteros* can variously be translated, depending on context, as merely referring to someone's age ("old person") or a title, "elder." The level of formality the first-century church had in the title of elder is debated. In 1—3 John, the author refers to themselves as "the elder." Whether this was a title he alone had to the churches that knew him, or if it was shared with others, is open for debate.

G

Gathering, the. *Ecclesia* is most often translated "church." More generically, it means any assembly or gathering of people. In the interest of de-Christianizing overly familiar language, I've gone with the more neutral "gathering," capitalizing it when the definite article is present to make it clear it's referring to a specific concept known to fellow Christians at the time.

N

Name, the. This is an example of metonymy, a figure of speech in which a thing or concept is referred to by the name of something closely associated with that thing or concept. For instance, you might say, "the White House came out with a statement today" as a way of referring to entire executive branch of government. Similarly, there was a Jewish inclination to not say the actual name of God. Therefore metonymy's were used as a sign of deference and respect.

S

Siblings. *Adelphoi* is the plural form of *adelphos*. *Adelphos* is translated as "brother," in a literal sense (sharing parents) or a variety of metaphorical senses (nationality, fellow human). In the New Testament, Christians used family metaphors to explain the relationship amongst themselves.

Older translations rendered *adelphoi* simply as "brothers." However, more gender-inclusive translations eventually began to recognize that—unless there was a specific contextual reason stating otherwise—*adelphoi* could refer to someone of any gender. Translations used "brothers and sisters."

I've gone with a fully gender-inclusive rendering of "siblings." When capitalized, it's being used to refer to the family relationship amongst fellow Christians.

T

Truth. Johannine literature (the Gospel of John, 1—3 John, Revelation) has a particular interest in *aletheia*, truth. Note that the words "Gospel" or "Good News" does not appear in any Johannine literature except Revelation. However, *aletheia* / truth shows up 25 times in the Gospel of John and 20 times in 1—3 John (not counting related words).

Any short definition given will do violence to what the Johannine authors are trying to convey. Truth is deeply linked to the Spirit, the message of Jesus, and life. It is the opposite of darkness, deception, and false teaching.