

Introduction to 3 John

NIV Study Bible

AUTHOR

The author is John the apostle. In the first verses of both 2 John and 3 John the author identifies himself as “the elder.” Note other similarities: “love in the truth” (v. 1 of both letters), “walking in the truth” (v. 4 of both letters) and the similar conclusions. See Introductions to 1 John and the Gospel of John: Author.

DATE

The letter was probably written about the same time as 1 and 2 John (a.d. 85–95). See Introduction to 1 John: Date.

OCCASION AND PURPOSE

See Introduction to 2 John: Occasion and Purpose. Itinerant teachers sent out by John were rejected in one of the churches in the province of Asia by a dictatorial leader, Diotrephes, who even excommunicated members who showed hospitality to John’s messengers. John wrote this letter to commend Gaius for supporting the teachers and, indirectly, to warn Diotrephes.

OUTLINE

- Greetings (1–2)
- Commendation of Gaius (3–8)
- Condemnation of Diotrephes (9–10)
- Exhortation to Gaius (11)
- Example of Demetrius (12)
- Conclusion, Benediction and Final Greetings (13–14)

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