

In this book, we see the Apostle John writing a personal letter to an individual, wishing him success in all areas of life, including good health. This is a very unique letter, distinct from John's other letters to churches, such as the Book of Revelation.

The letter concerns wishing a person prosperity in every aspect of life—his work, business, projects, education, possessions, plans, and family—and most importantly, health. Clearly, this is a letter of comfort that even today we love to apply to many people, reminding them of God's promise in His Word:

“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 John 1:2 (NIV)

The Motivation Behind the Blessing

It is important to understand why John gave such blessings. Before bestowing these blessings through the power of the Holy Spirit, he first identifies the recipient of this letter. At the beginning of the epistle, John clearly mentions a person named Gaius. The letter was written specifically to him.

Let's read:

3 John 1:1-2 — “The elder, to my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth. 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.”

Unlike other letters written to entire churches, this letter was not addressed to all believers. Some epistles, such as Jude, Peter's letters, and 1 John, were written to multiple recipients or to entire congregations. Others, like the letters to Timothy, Titus, Philemon, 2 John, and this third letter to John, were addressed to a single individual.

Many of us love this epistle, but we fail to understand that it was written for a specific person, Gaius. For the blessings of this letter to apply to us today, we must emulate Gaius; otherwise, the blessings cannot take effect.

Who Was Gaius?

Reading further, we see why Gaius deserved such blessings:

3 John 1:3-4 — “I was overjoyed when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth, telling how you continue to walk in it. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”

Gaius was a man of compassion and generosity for the work of God. Whenever there was a need to spread the Gospel, he fully committed himself to supporting God’s servants, providing for them and hosting traveling missionaries without concern for personal loss. Unlike others, he welcomed both local believers and distant Christians who came to serve God.

3 John 1:5-8 — “Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church about your love. Please send them on their way in a manner that honors God. It was for the sake of the Name that they went out, receiving no help from the pagans. We ought therefore to show hospitality to such people so that we may work together for

the truth.”

Gaius’ faithfulness and hospitality ensured that God’s work thrived in his area. He eliminated any obstacles—financial, material, or logistical—that could hinder ministry. His dedication reached the ears of the Apostle John, who recognized and commended his actions.

The Contrast: Diotrephes

In contrast, another man named Diotrephes opposed Gaius’ generosity:

3 John 1:9-10 — “I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will not welcome us. So when I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, spreading malicious nonsense about us. And not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers and sisters. He also stops those who want to do so and puts them out of the church.”

Diotrephes acted as a hindrance to the Gospel, seeking to exalt himself rather than serve God. He refused to support visiting missionaries and sought to control the church selfishly—a warning against leaders who lack sacrificial love and service (cf. Matthew 20:26–28).

3 John 1:11-12 — “Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but imitate what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God; anyone who does what is evil has not seen God. 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.”

Gaius’ faithfulness and humility made him a model believer, comparable to Job, who remained righteous and faithful amidst a challenging community. Because of his integrity and generosity, God blessed him abundantly in material wealth, family, health, and spiritual life.

Many Christians fail to understand God's principles for blessing. We desire prayer and blessings but often overlook God's established paths and requirements. True blessings, like those given to Gaius, require faithfulness, hospitality, generosity, and integrity.

Haggai 2:2-10 — “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘These people say, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the Lord’s house.’ ... Consider your ways. You have planted much, but harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages only to put them in a

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