

Message #2

III John 1:1-4

When the Apostle John wrote III John, he was very old. This will be his last letter before he goes into eternity. We get a glimpse as to what really thrilled him—to know that those he influenced were walking in the truth of God.

SPIRITUALLY-MINDED PEOPLE FIND THEIR GREATEST JOY IN KNOWING THAT THEY INFLUENCED SPECIFIC INDIVIDUALS TO LIVE THEIR LIVES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE TRUTH OF GOD.

INTRODUCTION #1 – The introduction of the author. **1:1a**

John simply refers to himself as “the elder.”

- 1) John was physically old—well into his nineties.
- 2) John was spiritually mature—he was well-developed in his spiritual life.
- 3) John was a church leader—the term “elder” refers to a leadership office in the church.

INTRODUCTION #2 – The introduction of the recipient. **1:1b**

The man to whom this letter was written was named “Gaius.”

Fact #1 - Gaius was beloved by John.

The word means much more than just friendship. John made a choice to highly prize and highly esteem Gaius (Smith, pp. 3-4).

Fact #2 - Gaius was loved by John in the context of truth.

The pronoun “I” is emphatic in Greek. John is stressing that his love is based on truth. John would not just love any person. He would not consider one to be “beloved” unless they were a person who lived life in the sphere and context of truth

Fact #3 - Gaius had a tremendous reputation as a man of truth. **1:3**

Other people testified that he stood for truth and lived his life in the context of the truth of God.

Fact #4 - Gaius was very rich. **1:6**

Gaius apparently had a lot of money and he used his money for God.

INTRODUCTION #3 – The introduction of John’s prayer. **1:2-3**

Request #1 - John prays that Gaius would financially prosper. **1:2a**

The word “prosper” refers to being successful and prosperous, especially in the financial arena. The Apostle Paul used this very word to refer to financial prosperity (I Cor. 16:2).

Request #2 - John prays that Gaius would physically prosper. **1:2b**

It is very possible that Gaius had some health problems and so John, the elder, prays that he would have good health.

Request #3 - John prays that Gaius would spiritually prosper. **1:2c**

Now notice the important adverb “just as.” John qualifies this prayer in accordance with spiritual prosperity. In other words, in John’s mind, financial prosperity and physical health were directly related to spiritual prosperity.

John would not pray that some spiritual deadbeat in the church would prosper in finances or health. Why wouldn’t he pray such a prayer?—it is not in the context of truth.

Now the “for” which begins **verse 3** gives us further explanation why John prayed this prayer—because Christians continually came and continually testified (present tense) that Gaius lived his life in the context of truth.

Gaius could be trusted with financial wealth and he could be trusted with health because John kept continually hearing how he lived his life in the context of truth, which meant he would continually use his resources for the furtherance of the work of God.

INTRODUCTION #4 – The introduction of John’s joy. **1:4**

The greatest joy John found in life was the joy of knowing that one of his children in the faith was walking in accordance to the Word and will of God.

John is very emphatic here—Gaius was his child in the faith. Through John’s ministry, Gaius had come to faith in Jesus Christ and had been pointed in the way of truth. He lived his life in that context and that is what thrilled the heart of John.

Parting Thoughts:

- 1. Are we a person who would bring joy to God because we are so truth-oriented?**
- 2. Are we a person who can be trusted to use our health, wealth and spirituality as a means of ministering God’s truth to others?**
- 3. Have we influenced someone to trust Jesus Christ as Savior and live a life committed to the truth of God?**