

Message #4**III John 1:9-11**

In every church ministry, sooner or later a Diotrephes or Mrs. Diotrephes will surface. They are not in the ministry to bring glory to God. They are not doing a work because God has called them to do a work. They are in church to bring glory to themselves. They love the power, they love the public eye, they love the limelight; but they are not real servants of God.

A DIOTREPHEIS IS AN EVIL PERSON IN THE CHURCH WHO LOVES TO ELEVATE HIM OR HERSELF, EVEN ABOVE THE WORD OF GOD, AND GOD'S PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW THAT A DIOTREPHEIS NEEDS TO BE PUBLICALLY EXPOSED AND GOD'S PEOPLE MUST NEVER IMITATE THIS PERSON'S EVIL WAYS.

A Diotrephes is not someone with just a personality problem; they have a serious spiritual problem. They have somehow manipulated their way into a position of power and it is very possible they are not even truly saved.

POINT #1 – There was a person who was a real problem in the church. **1:9**

Fact #1 - This man was in the church.

This man was in the church and he was in some position of leadership.

Fact #2 - This man is named.

This man is not only named in the local church in which he was the problem, he is named in the Bible for everyone in the Church Age to read. There is a place for naming people. There is a place for pointing them out. One old Bible teacher used to say, "Silence is Golden, but sometimes it is just plain yellow."

Fact #3 - Diotrephes was against apostolic writing.

He actually thought he was more important than things the apostles were writing, some of which was the inspired Word of God.

There is an article before "church" meaning this is "the" local church that Gaius and Diotrephes were members, and Diotrephes would not receive it.

Now he had no way of knowing whether or not this was an inspired letter of God. But do you see the point—he thinks he is more important than what is written to the church. A Diotrephes is one who does not like to focus on the written Word of God.

Fact #4 - Diotrephes continually loves to be first.

The participle “loves to be first” is present tense, meaning this was his continual and habitual character. This was not just a quirk or slip out of character; this was his character. In the church, Diotrephes continually strived to be first even above the written Word of God.

Fact #5 - Diotrephes continually rejected apostolic authority.

The tense of the verb “does not accept” indicates this was his continual action. Diotrephes continually rejected the authority and instruction of the Apostle John. A Diotrephes will not submit himself to the true authority of God or God’s Word.

POINT #2 – The Apostle John intended to personally do something about this problem. **1:10**

What John specifically says he will do was to “call attention” to exactly what Diotrephes had done. That verb “call attention” is one that means John intended to remember, bring up and mention this man’s evil. John was not just going to forgive and forget and let bygones be bygones. He intended to publicly and openly discuss the evil of Diotrephes.

Evil #1 -He unjustly accuses those really right with God.

A Diotrephes will verbally and viciously attack one right with God with words that are not just and true and sound.

Evil #2 -He does not receive true teachers of the Word.

The ministers who could present truth and sound doctrine, he would not receive them. He would not listen to them and he would invent things against them.

Evil #3 -He attacks those who support the true teachers of the Word.

There were some who realized true teaching and they recognized they did represent the apostles. When they would take them into their home, he would not only attack them, but put them out of the church.

POINT #3 – The Apostle John warns the church not to imitate this evil man. **1:11**

Now look carefully at this verse—what Diotrephes is doing is evil. It is not a personality clash; he is evil and John implies that he is not really saved because he says such a one has not “seen God.” I truly believe Satan has used a Diotrephes to stifle and ruin more churches than we even begin to know. When one surfaces in this church, they need to be spotted, named and dealt with.

Let me ask all of us a personal question—why do you serve? Why do you do what you do in the church? Can you honestly say, “I do it for the glory of God”?