



Sermon Growth Guide

November 23, 2025

The Truth Prevails

3 John 1:9-14

Key Verse: “Dear friend, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. Anyone who does what is good is from God. Anyone who does what is evil has not seen God.”
3 John 1:11

Big Idea: Who we imitate reveals who we trust—and we hold to the truth because we trust the Truth to prevail.

Foundations

In 2nd and 3rd John, we are encouraged to stay strong and faithful in difficult times. That includes when the truth is being undermined. And isn't this the society we live in today? Since 2016, we've been told we are living in the “post-truth” era. But how is that possible if we believe the Way, the Truth, and the Life is alive in Jesus Christ (John 14:6)?

Here, John writes to Gaius, promising to come in person to confront the lies and damaging actions of a leader who claimed to be “walking in the truth.” John also commends another follower whose life actually aligns with what he professes.

John lived to teach and proclaim the Truth we know in Christ. He says, “imitate what is good,” and he speaks up when a member of the Body is being disruptive. John doesn't retaliate or give into the sin of pride. He knows and trusts the Truth will prevail, not because he is faithful, but because God is.

As Martin Luther once wrote, “The devil's mess is always loud, but God's truth has a louder voice.”

Understanding God's Word

John introduces us to two very different men: Diotrephes and Demetrius. These two men stand side by side as a warning and an example: one whose self-exalting behavior harms the community, and one whose faithful life strengthens it. We also see how John and Gaius are called to react by imitating what is good and speaking the truth in love. This passage reminds all believers that our ability to walk in what is true is our testimony.

Applying God's Word

How would you describe Diotrephes? What specific things does he do?

Now look at the key verse (v. 11) and consider how one person's actions can affect how we treat both people and God's Word. How have you seen sin take hold and cause you to behave in a manner that needed (or needs) to be called out by a brother or sister?

Witnessing God's Word

In 1st John, we are instructed to love not only in words and speech, but in action and in truth (1 John 3:18) How will your actions demonstrate the love of Christ this week and into the Holiday season? How will you speak up for truth, and in truth to those you love?