

Why Was Diotrephes Wrong?

I. Introduction:

A. People often try to find Scriptures to prove their points and twist passages along the way (i.e. **Mark 12:18-27**).

1. It is not good to lack proper knowledge (**Proverbs 19:2, Isaiah 5:13, Hosea 4:1-6, and I Corinthians 15:34**).
2. There are eternal consequences for twisting Scriptures (**II Peter 3:15-18**).

B. We are going to discuss Diotrephes today, which is an example in which some err and do teach from the following (**III John 1:9-10**) these false doctrines...

1. Some err concerning Diotrephes to teach that it is wrong to cease fellowship, practice discipline, etc. upon the erring. That is false (**Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:1-13, II Thessalonians 3:6-15, I Timothy 6:3-5, and II Timothy 3:1-5**).
2. Some err concerning Diotrephes to teach that you must receive anyone who comes to you professing to be “a member of the church”. That is false (**Matthew 7:13-20, Galatians 2:1-5, Ephesians 5:6-11, Titus 3:9-11, I John 4:1, and II John 1:9-11**).
3. Some err concerning Diotrephes to teach that you cannot speak “negatively” about erring saints. That is false (**Matthew 16:21-23, Romans 16:17-18, I Timothy 1:19-20, II Timothy 2:14-18, and II Timothy 4:10-15**).
4. Some err concerning Diotrephes to teach that it is wrong, even unloving, to aggressively and pointedly contest error/sin/etc. That is false (**Matthew 15:1-14, Matthew 16:1-4, Matthew 23:1-31, Luke 11:37-54, Luke 17:3-4, John 2:13-17, Galatians 2:11-17, Galatians 3:1-3, I Timothy 5:20, Titus 1:5-14, and Jude 1:3-4**).

II. Body: Consider What Was Actually Wrong Concerning Diotrephes (**III John 1:9-10**).

A. Diotrephes was wrong to desire the preeminence [*ambitious of distinction; desire to be first*] (**Mark 10:35-45**).

1. Think about what ties to one’s desire of preeminence (**Matthew 23:1-12**).
2. Faithful saints are servants one to another (**Galatians 5:13**).
3. Faithful saints elevate others above themselves (**Romans 12:10 and Philippians 2:1-11**).
4. This especially applies to “preachers” who erringly get elevated all too often (**I Corinthians 3:1-7; 4:6-7**).

B. Diotrephes was wrong for not receiving faithful saints (**John 13:20**).

1. Receiving the faithful is equal to receiving Christ (**Matthew 10:40-42**).
2. On the other hand... (**Luke 10:1-16**).

3. Think about what it means of a man who refuses fellowship with FAITHFUL saints (**Psalms 133:1, Matthew 12:30, John 17:20-23, Ephesians 4:1-6, Philippians 2:1-2, and I John 1:1-7**).

C. Diotrephes was wrong for prating against the faithful with malicious words (**Proverbs 16:28** and **James 4:11-12**).

1. Diotrephes resembled that which God hates (**Proverbs 6:16-19**).

2. This was not a new problem (**Jeremiah 9:1-4**), nor can you expect it to cease today (**II Timothy 3:13**).

D. Diotrephes wasn't content to just speak against and not receive the faithful, he also went to forbidding and casting out the faithful from the assembly which tells us he hated workers of truth (**Isaiah 66:5**).

1. Think about how we see that saints were taught to receive those with weak consciences with regard to authorized liberties (**Romans 14:1-4**).

2. This mentality of self-righteous and desire for being exalted was reproved by Jesus (**Luke 18:9-14**).

3. People like Diotrephes carnally think they are so much better than everyone else (**Isaiah 65:5**).

4. Sadly, people have long been willing to compromise the truth to stay amongst men such as Diotrephes (**John 9:1-34** [*emphasis vs. 15-23*] and **John 12:37-42**).

E. The elder said: "if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth" (**III John 1:10**; cf. **I Corinthians 4:16-21**, and **II Corinthians 10:1-11; 13:1-10**).

III. Conclusion: Don't follow the evil examples you see, such as Diotrephes (**III John 1:11**).