

Facing Liars in the Church
International Bible Lesson

3 John 1:1-15

Sunday, May 3, 2015

L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

“Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church” (3 John 1:10—KJV).

“So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing in spreading false charges against us. And not content with those charges, he refuses to welcome the friends, and even prevents those who want to do so and expels them from the church” (3 John 1:10—NRSV).

Remember these encouraging words: “Indeed, all who want to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked people and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:12-13). When persecuted, Christians can face persecution the way Paul did: “When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure” (1 Corinthians 4:12). The Apostle John suffered persecution from a powerful church leader, who even expelled from his church those who disagreed with him. Different translations reveal that Diotrephes spread “false charges” or “wicked nonsense” or

“malicious words” about John and others. Not content with just lying about John and others, he refused to pass on John’s letters to his church and he refused to welcome the true believers that John sent to his church. Indeed, Diotrephes was going “from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived.” Because Diotrephes was destroying the spiritual well-being of some, preventing others from being saved through a true faith in Jesus Christ, stopping the spread of the Gospel through Christian missions, and not walking in truth and love, John wrote that if he visited Diotrephes’ church that he would “call attention to what he is doing in spreading false charges.” We do not know if Diotrephes repented of his sins and turned from putting himself first to a true faith in Jesus Christ. We do know that Gaius and Demetrius were prepared by God to replace a godless church leader. – L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Thinking Further

1. Give some reasons John loved Gaius.
2. Why do you suppose it was well with Gaius' soul?
3. What gave John "no greater joy"?

4. How did “the friends” conduct their ministry?

5. When we support true Christian workers, what do we become?

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