

## **Becoming a Difference-Maker for God**

### **3 John**

#### **Introduction:**

1. Did you know that our God is on a mission? His mission is not to insure our earthly prosperity and happiness. God's mission is to rescue souls from eternal judgment and damnation. 1 Timothy 2:4 clearly states that God "...will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."
2. God is so serious about His mission that He gave His only begotten Son (Jesus Christ) to come into this world and make it possible for sinful man to be reconciled back to a holy and righteous God. 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 John 4:9-10
3. How does God go about fulfilling His mission, and bringing lost souls to the knowledge of the truth of Jesus Christ? God fulfills His mission through people - people like you and me. He always has. He always will.
4. Did you know that one day heaven will recognize those who were difference-makers in God's mission? Paul said that they will receive an incorruptible crown. 1 Corinthians 9:19-25
5. There was a man here in 3 John that was a difference-maker. His name was Gaius. Gaius had developed quite a testimony as a man with a huge heart for God's mission. As men went out to spread the truth of God, Gaius was a fellowhelper to them. vs. 5-8
6. John writes to Gaius, and commends him, and basically says, "Hey Gaius, you are a difference-maker, and I wish I had several thousand more like you."
7. Gaius was not an apostle, not a pastor, not a miracle-worker, and not a famous spiritual giant. He was just a man doing his part and making a difference in God's mission.
8. I want to be a difference-maker. I don't want to just live out my life, accumulate some earthly treasures, and then die and leave it all behind. When I get to heaven, I want to see that my life made a difference for eternity's sake. Do you? How can we do it?

#### **First, we must accept responsibility to do our part.**

1. Remember, God's mission is to get the good news of His Son out to every person on the earth, so that they can trust Christ and be saved and reconciled to God.
2. But, with over six billion people on the earth, this is no small task, especially when you consider language and cultural barriers. It certainly isn't going to happen through a one-man effort or even a one-church effort, or one-country effort.
3. You cannot individually reach all six billion people on the earth, nor does God expect you to. But, each of us can **do our part** in being fellowhelpers.
4. Here in 3 John 6, this man Gaius did his part. He loved those who were spreading the truth of God, and did everything in his power to use his material resources to help them.

5. Compare this with a man in the church named Diotrephes. This man had an adverse and ungodly attitude towards missionaries. vs. 9-10
6. Diotrephes did nothing to help get God's truth out. Are you a Gaius or a Diotrephes? Are you doing your part to help in God's mission to save souls?
7. You have to make God's mission personal – "*thy charity,*" "*thou bring forward,*" "*thou shalt do well*" (vs. 6). Also notice verse 8. It is not enough to **think** correctly about God's mission. It is not enough to **talk** correctly about God's mission. We have to step up to the plate, take responsibility, and do something! The "R" in truth = Responsibility.
8. Remember the Nike slogan, "Just do it!" This is basically what Paul told the church at Corinth. They had been talking about doing something to help towards an offering for those in Jerusalem for a year, but had done nothing. 2 Corinthians 8:10-11
9. Difference-makers take responsibility and do their part to help in the mission.

### **Second, we must sacrifice our personal agendas.**

1. I'm sure it was not always convenient for Gaius to help these missionaries. I'm sure it was financially costly to help them. There were probably things he wanted that he could have spent that money towards. But Gaius wanted to be a difference-maker.
2. Compare this with Diotrephes. This man had a "me first" attitude. Verse 9 states that he "*loveth to have the preeminence...*" In other words, "It's all about me."
  - As a result of this selfish spirit, notice his actions towards missionaries in verse 10. You have to ask yourself, "Why would he treat them this way?" After all, they were just trying to get the truth of God out.
  - I believe the key is right in the middle of the verse – "*not content.*"
3. Diotrephes was self-consumed. He knew if he got involved with these missionaries, it would **cost** him something. He might feel compelled to give and help. So, it was easier for him to simply look the other way and forget about their needs and God's mission.
  - It was easier for him to simply continue on the path of his own personal agenda.
4. How applicable this is for today. People today in America have their own agendas. We want to capture the American dream. We desire bigger, better, newer, and nicer stuff. I'm afraid that for many of us, God's mission takes a backseat to our personal agendas.
5. As Americans, we are doing a great job accumulating earthly treasures down here, but I'm afraid many believers will stand empty-handed before Christ one day in heaven. Here is a penetrating question: "When was the last time you sacrificed something **you wanted** in order to give to God's mission?"
6. The Bible teaches that it should be Christ first. He deserves the preeminence (Colossians 1:18). Yet so many times, it is "me first," and if there are any leftovers, God can have those. We would be wise to consider Christ's words in Matthew 6:19-21.

7. When most of our treasure is spent on our own personal agenda, then that is where our heart is. Our heart is not with God's mission, or God's missionaries. Instead of becoming a difference-maker, we become a Diotrephes.
  - The "U" in truth = Unselfishness.
8. The furtherance of God's mission has always depended on people who are willing to lay aside their personal agendas, sacrifice, and give to something much bigger than themselves. It takes unselfishness if God's truth is to get out to this world.
9. You can't reach all six billion people on the earth, but you can do your part. You can help in the furtherance of God's mission. You can truly be a difference-maker and one day hear from the lips of Christ, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant.*"