

MARC'S REMARKS

Ten Rules to Promote Harmony Among Brethren

1. Remember that we are all subject to failings of one kind or another.
2. Bear with—and not magnify—each other's infirmities (Gal 6:1–2).
3. Pray for one another in both public and private meetings.
4. Always refuse to listen to a slanderous report, and lay no charge against any person unless well founded.
5. If a member be in fault, tell him in private, before it is ever mentioned to others.
6. Put the best construction on any action that has the appearance of opposition or resentment.
7. "Leave off contention before it is meddled with" (Prov 17:14).
8. If offended, consider how Godlike it is to forgive, and how unlike a Christian it is to seek revenge.
9. Remember how much more good we can accomplish when we are all united in love, than we could do when acting alone, and indulging in a contrary spirit.
10. Consider the beautiful example of Christ as to these other rules (Eph 4:32; 1 Pet 2:21; John 13:5, 15).

—Selected

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert
Rodney Ellis
Sam McJunkins II

Deacons

Jon Barry
Mike Davis
Dave Massey
Phillip Moore

Evangelist

Marc Hinds
(870) 772-0746
marc@txkChurch.com

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study . . . 9:30 A.M.
Worship 10:15 A.M.
Worship 6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study . . . 7:00 P.M.

www.txkChurch.com

THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Hear the word of truth Romans 10:13–17

Believe the truth Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24

Repent from all sins. Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38

Confess the name of Christ
. Matthew 10:32–33; Acts 8:35–39

Be baptized in His name
. Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12

Walk in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death
. Romans 6:1–4; Revelation 2:10

Think on These Things

Franklin Drive Church of Christ

2301 Franklin Drive • Texarkana, AR 71854 • (870) 772-0746

Volume xvii

May 30, 2010

Issue 22

The Trouble with Diotrophes

Mike Wilson

In a postcard-sized glimpse of a first-century church, John commends his friend Gaius, who had opened his heart and his home.

Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God (3 John 5–6, ESV).

One of life's greatest blessings is to have spiritual brothers and sisters who will sacrifice for the cause of Christ, practice genuine hospitality, and support the travels of faithful preachers.

But all was not well. There was another man who wanted to run the church. His name was Diotrophes, and this is what John says about him:

I have written something to the church, but Diotrophes, who likes to put himself

first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church (3 John 9–10).

He Loved Preeminence

Christians serve a Savior who "came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Matt 20:28). Jesus said,

"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

It is all about humble service, not about power, control, or the limelight. Unfortunately, some followers of Christ have somehow missed the obvious. Motivated by selfish ambition and pride, they want to run things.

Thanks for worshipping with our church family!

FAMILY TALK

About Our Sick

L.G. Clemmons underwent surgery on his left arm Friday after falling and breaking it. He is doing well, recovering at home.

Herman Burnham was under the weather this past week, but is doing better now.

Continue to remember **Lenita Lansford's** husband, **Charles**, who is struggling with health issues right now.

Pat Winters, our newest shut-in, remains at Bailey Creek in Room 412.

Ladies Meeting

The ladies of the congregation are invited to the home of **Jean Cronce** this Tuesday at 10 o'clock.

Duty List

The duty list is on the shelf. The men's public responsibilities switch Wednesday.

Elders and Deacons Meeting

The elders and deacons will meet this Tuesday night at 7 P.M.

Singing Night

Our monthly singing is this Wednesday.

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements
Jon Barry

Song Leading
Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper
Jack Calvert
Mark Davis
W. H. McFerrin
Sonny Monaghan

Prayers
Bill Rinehart
Bill Brittenham

Scripture Reading
Caleb Rinehart

Bulletins
Hayden Ellis
Nathan Scott

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements
Jackie Jamison

Song Leading
Daniel Allgor

Lord's Supper
Preston Ellis
Zack McJunkins

Prayers
Jon Barry
Zack McJunkins

WEDNESDAY

Announcements
Gerald Eaton

Song Leading
Marc Hinds

Prayers
Joey Avance
Reese Lunsford

Invitation
Jon Barry

The Trouble with Diotrephes concluded from previous page

He Slighted an Apostle

John says that Diotrephes “does not accept us.” Was it a wholesale rejection of apostolic authority, or simply a personal rejection of John? Either way, think how much Diotrephes could have learned from John! Someone’s ego got in the way of his own best interest. He no doubt saw John as a challenge or a threat to his own standing. Fortunately, John knew the truth about Diotrephes and was willing to expose him.

He Lied About John

John says, “So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us” (or “unjustly accusing us with wicked words,” NASB). Warren Wiersbe suggests, “Apparently, Diotrephes had made these accusations against John at one of the church meetings when John was not present to defend himself.” Like a schoolyard bully, from a safe distance and behind John’s back, he could wage a malicious

campaign to smear John. However, the time would come to settle accounts.

He Rejected John's Co-workers

“He refuses to welcome the brothers.” These were good men who had “gone out for the sake of the name” and who should have been received “in a manner worthy of God” (vv. 6–8). Yet Diotrephes rejected them and did not extend the customary hospitality and support. It was likely a matter of guilt by association. They were affiliated with John, so Diotrephes would have nothing to do with them.

He Excluded Members

So extensive was this man’s control over the levers of congregational power that when brothers in good standing welcomed those sent by John, he would kick them “out of the church.” Church discipline is good, but not as a weapon for a dictator to protect himself. In order for Diotrephes to have rejected good men from elsewhere and

unilaterally excommunicated well-meaning local brothers who welcomed them, he had to have mislabeled them as troublemakers. Again, Wiersbe suggests that church dictators “are experts in putting labels” on others who do not play their game.

Why is the little letter of 3 John in the New Testament? It seems that people will be people . . . in any age. Divisions over personalities and power struggles still beset churches. Sometimes it stems from an outspoken preacher who proclaims Christ “out of selfish ambition” (Phil 1:15–17). In other congregations, it may be a “chief elder” who must have his way. Finally, it may be a patriarch of a prominent family who has to be in control of every detail in the church.

Sadly, the spirit of Diotrephes lives on. Many weak-minded and spineless Christians would rather follow such a man than confront him.

Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good (v. 11). 📖

Sermon Notes

TONIGHT ...

“C” Sins

Not all sins are necessarily evil in and of themselves. But three that happen to start with the same letter can easily become stumbling blocks rather than stepping stones, if they are abused in our lives.

This evening, we’ll look at the dangers of compromise, comparison and competition.