

Absolutely! Here's the expanded report for **3. Condemnation of Diotrephes (3 John 1:9-10)**:

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Prologue: The Danger of Pride and Rejection of Authority

As the family sat together for their evening Bible study, Ryan opened to 3 John 1:9-10. This passage contrasts the humble service of Gaius with the prideful actions of Diotrephes, a member of the church who had allowed his desire for control and preeminence to disrupt the unity and mission of the body of Christ. John, with boldness, addresses Diotrephes' behavior and warns against the dangers of rejecting godly authority and fostering division.

"Tonight, we're going to learn about the dangers of pride and how it can cause harm in the church," Ryan said. "John speaks very strongly about Diotrephes, who refused to welcome fellow believers and caused divisions."

Ariel, curious about Diotrephes' actions, asked, "Why would someone want to be in control like that, even if it hurt the church?"

Ryan answered, "Sometimes, people get so focused on their own position or power that they forget about the mission of the church and the love we're called to show one another. Diotrephes cared more about his own authority than about welcoming others or supporting the truth."

Alice, clutching Mr. Fluffernutter, said, "So, Diotrephes didn't want to share or help?"

"That's right," Yaya responded. "He was rejecting godly authority and causing harm to the church by keeping people from helping each other. This is something we have to watch out for in our own hearts too."

Key Teachings: The Dangers of Pride and Rejection of Godly Authority

1. The Pride of Diotrephes

3 John 1:9

"I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not."

- **The Desire for Control:**

Ryan explained, "John points out that Diotrephes loved to have the preeminence, meaning he wanted to be in charge. He didn't accept authority or respect the leadership of others, including John and those who came to minister in the church. He wanted to be the one who made the decisions, and this was causing problems."

Ariel asked, “What does it mean that he ‘loved to have the preeminence’?”

“It means that Diotrephes wanted to be first, always in charge, and that no one else could be in charge over him,” Ryan clarified. “Pride made him blind to the truth of serving others and letting Christ lead.”

- **The Disruption of the Church:**

Ryan continued, “When someone in the church seeks control over everything, it disrupts the unity and fellowship that should be there. Diotrephes wasn’t just rejecting John’s authority; he was rejecting the very principles that bind the church together: love, humility, and mutual respect.”

Yaya added, “The church is not a place where anyone should try to rule over others in a way that disrupts God’s work. It’s a place for everyone to work together for the good of the body of Christ.”

2. Rejection of Godly Authority

3 John 1:10

“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.”

- **Diotrephes’ Hostility and Malicious Words:**

Ryan explained, “Not only was Diotrephes rejecting authority, but he was also speaking maliciously about John and others. He was causing division by spreading lies and trying to turn the church against those who were doing the work of God. This is dangerous, because it can tear apart the relationships in the church.”

Ariel asked, “Why would he want to spread lies?”

“When someone is focused on their own power and pride, they can become defensive and protective of their position, even at the expense of the truth. Diotrephes’ pride led him to behave this way,” Ryan said.

- **Turning People Away from Fellowship:**

Ryan continued, “Diotrephes wasn’t just rejecting John’s authority—he was also turning others away from the church’s work. He prevented people from welcoming others who were coming in God’s name, and he even cast out those who tried to help. His actions were completely contrary to the spirit of hospitality and unity in the body of Christ.”

Yaya added, “This kind of attitude causes the opposite of what God desires for His people. The church is meant to be a place of welcoming, where believers serve one another with love and humility.”

3. The Key Teaching: Humility and Submission to God's Authority

Key Teaching:

The key teaching of this passage is that pride and a desire for control can have disastrous effects in the church. Diotrephes' actions reveal the dangers of rejecting godly authority, spreading division, and valuing personal power over unity. True Christian leadership is about service, humility, and submission to God's will, rather than seeking to elevate oneself above others.

Ryan summarized, "Diotrephes wanted to be in charge and didn't care who he hurt in the process. He rejected God's way of humility and love. As believers, we're called to serve, not rule over each other. Leadership in God's kingdom is about being humble, showing kindness, and putting others first."

Practical Applications: Guarding Against Pride and Division

The family reflected on how they could avoid the pitfalls of pride and disunity:

1. **Serving Humbly:**

Ariel said, "I can make sure I'm always looking for ways to serve others and not try to be in charge or control things."

Alice added, "When we all help each other, we can make everything work better, like a team!"

2. **Avoiding Malicious Talk:**

Ryan encouraged, "We need to be careful about how we talk about others. If we spread lies or talk badly about others, we're not helping anyone. Instead, let's encourage one another and build each other up."

3. **Supporting Godly Leadership:**

Yaya reminded them, "It's important to respect and support those who are leading in godliness, but we must also be vigilant and check everything against the truth of God's Word."

Takeaway: Humility and Unity in Christ

As the family reflected on the passage, Ryan shared a personal story of how, in his early years as a believer, he witnessed a church that had been torn apart by someone who wanted too much control. "It was sad because the unity was broken. But when people started choosing humility and respecting one another, things started healing. That's the power of humility—when we submit to God, He restores."

Ariel smiled, "So, when we put others first, we help make the church stronger, right?"

"That's exactly right," Ryan affirmed. "In God's kingdom, the first will be last, and the last will be first. Humility and service are what make the church thrive."

Key Points Summary

1. **Pride Disrupts Unity:**

- Diotrephes' desire for control and his rejection of authority caused division and harm in the church. Humility and service are the true marks of Christian leadership.

2. Submission to God's Authority:

- True leadership involves submitting to God's authority, not elevating oneself above others. We must follow the example of Jesus, who came to serve, not to be served.

3. Unity and Peace in the Church:

- To maintain unity, we must guard against pride, reject divisive behavior, and strive to serve one another with humility, respecting the leadership that God has placed in the church.

Key Verse:

“Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not.” (3 John 1:9)

This passage teaches us the dangers of pride and the importance of submission to God's authority. By serving one another in humility, we help build a unified and strong church body, honoring God in all things.