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Structural Analysis of 3 John via Outline

- I. INTRODUCTION 1:1
 - A. The Elder
 - B. To beloved Gaius
 - 1. whom I love in truth

John introduces himself as the elder as he has in John 2, and refers to Gaius as beloved, a key phrase he used elsewhere in his writing, referring to the state of believers, being beloved by God. More than this, he goes on to also share that he too loves Gaius in the truth (in their mutual relationship in Christ, not to be misconstrued as a romantic relationship etc.)

- II. PRAY AND REJOICING 1:2-4
 - A. I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health
 - 1. Just as your soul prospers (already)
 - B. I rejoiced greatly when I heard from the brothers the truth is in you
 - 1. And that you walk in the truth
 - 2. I have no greater joy that to hear that my children walk in the truth

John shares that he is encouraged to hear of Gaius' faith and more than that, that his faith is that of action, he loves hearing of how believers actually walk in the truth, not just have a knowledge of it. The next section describes some of the ways in which Gaius is living out his faith in action.

- III. CONTINUED FAITHFULNESS 1:5-9
 - A. The brethren witness to your faithfulness
 - 1. Concerning meeting the needs of the brethren and strangers
 - 2. You show your love for the church
 - B. You do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God
 - 1. They went forth for His sake (God/Christ's, not their own)
 - 2. Taking nothing from the Gentiles (to not be a burden and to strengthen their message)
 - 3. It is good that we take in such workers that we share in their work of truth

John commends Gaius based on the many witnesses who have testified to the good work he has been doing in helping the brethren who have passed by his way. He has been meeting their needs and sending them off on their journey to minister to the Gentiles and surrounding areas. John shares that the work they do is for the Lord and by serving these fellow believers Gaius is actually sharing in the work that they do by extension, so this is an encouragement to continue on in this work.

- IV. WARNING AND COMMENDATION 1:10-12
 - A. Diotrephes and his evil
 - 1. Having written to the church, Diotrephes appears to be blocking John and the brethren
 - i. This is due to his pride (preeminence) – loves having the attention himself
 - ii. Does not like being under another's authority
 - 2. If John does come he will address this and bring to light Diotrephes sinful deeds
 - i. Malicious words, prating against, not receiving the brethren
 - ii. Forbidding others to receive the brethren, casting people out if they do
 - 3. A word of caution is given not to imitate what is evil but what is good.
 - 4. He who does what is good is from God
 - 5. He who does evil has not seen God

6. In summary, Diotrephes is not of God and is not a believer – John will bring this to light
- B. Demetrius – Godly character
 1. Demetrius however has a good testimony from all and from the truth itself.
 2. John also bears witness (he says we, so a plurality of the brethren)
 - i. He shares that Gaius knows their testimony is true/trustworthy

John provides a word of caution against a sinful non-believer named Diotrephes who has gained power within the church, raising himself up and casting out those who question him from the church. John has sought to meet within him but has been turned away so far, those who have wanted to receive the brethren have been cast out from the church. John shares that should he go he will address the issue and bring to light the evil that Diotrephes has done. Based on his summary statement, it would appear as if he does not believe he is from God as he does not bear the fruit of a believer. On the other hand, Demetrius is a contrast and exhibits godly character, John puts his stamp of approval on him and passes this along to Gaius, letting him know he is trustworthy.

- V. CONCLUSION 1:13-14
- A. I hope to see you soon, face to face
 - B. I have much to share
 - C. Peace to you, our friends greet you.
 1. Greet the friends by name.

As in John 2, John mentions he has much more to say but would like to do it in person. He ends on a message of peace and shares greetings from their friends and asks Gaius to greet their friends by name. Unlike other epistles that mention names, this one does not. Perhaps there are too many to list on the parchment John used or perhaps there are risks involved not shared such as persecution or unintended consequences of creating such lists with a multitude of believer's names on it, especially with such opposition as found with Diotrephes in the area who might use such a list as a means of casting people out of the local church knowing they are aligned with John.