

## “Get Real”

Use this guide as a tool to help you prepare to experience spiritual transformation in a practical way. It is a flexible guide that will help you discover, own, and apply the truths of God’s Word.

### Message Summary

As leadership was forming in the early churches they struggled with character and relationships in ways very similar to what we deal with today. As Christians were learning what it meant to follow Jesus some were encouraging them while others were tempting them to live lives of compromise. The issue John deals with in this short letter is not one of false teaching as much as a failure of some to live out what they know to be the truth.

John writes to Gaius, a believer that is living out a faithful testimony in his community. He was supporting missionaries and Christian workers in a way that sets a strong example for us today. This testimony of faithfulness was being spread among the believers and even back to John. Gaius was sharing in the mission of these workers as a partner by helping them, but he was about to come into conflict with another Christian brother who did not support his actions.

Diotrephes was a leader in the church who liked to put himself first. This stands in contrast to how Gaius was living, and Diotrephes had a history of removing from the fellowship those who opposed his leadership. John writes a laundry list of evidence revealing Diotrephes' character that is embarrassing for us to even read, but also describes believers we have known and shamefully have been. He does this to warn Gaius and challenge him to model biblical faithfulness in the church even if it would cost him.

John writes to encourage Gaius to keep living a testimony of faithfulness even if conflict would come because of it. In very clear words John pleads with Gaius to imitate what is good, and do not imitate evil. This challenges him, and us to do good in a way that demonstrates our faith even in difficult circumstances.

As you prepare to meet with your Missional Community ask yourself what kind of testimony you are living. Are you living in a manner worthy of God towards those around you? God has placed us among believers who set great examples for us in how they live out their faith. Are you an encouragement to them, a positive influence like John or Gaius? Or is the legacy you will leave behind something similar to Diotrephes? John's encouragement to Gaius was imitate good, and not evil.

### Message Outline

1. Live a testimony (2-8).  
by...
  - Living in a manner worthy of God (6).
  - Loving those around us. (5).
  - Looking for God's provision (7).
  - Working for the truth (8).
2. Stay faithful. (9-10)
  - Leave a legacy.
  - Bad examples abound.
  - Model biblical faithfulness.  
Be John, be Gaius, be the body .
3. Don't be Tofu, be tofurky. (11-12)
  - Imitate good not evil\_\_\_\_. (11)

## “Get Real”

### Group Discussion

Use the following questions to help make application of God’s Word to your Head (What God wants me to know), to your Heart (What God wants me to desire/value), and to your Hands (What God wants me to do).

In regard to 3 John 1-15:

1. What does this passage teach about God? (God’s Identity; Theology)
2. What does this passage teach about what God has done? (God’s Action; Christology)
3. What does this passage teach about man/me? (Old & New Creation Identity; Ecclesiology)
4. What does this passage teach about what I should do? (Reveals what I really believe about Questions 1-3; Missional Ecclesiology)
5. What does this passage teach about how I do it uniquely in my context? (personal action steps of obedience)

### Weekly Prayer Focus

- **Church:**

- Pray for families who will attend the First Steps Child Dedication class in September as well as the Child Dedication Service in October.
- Pray that all who have believed the Gospel will obey Jesus in believer’s baptism.
- Pray for new relationships that will lead to Gospel conversations.
- Pray for the elders as they lead us to accomplish the mission.
- Pray for the Missional Communities to impact their communities with the Gospel.
- Pray for Missional Communities to multiply into new neighborhoods.
- Pray for new DNA groups to start.

- **Local:**

- Pray that God would burden us with the lostness in our cities, neighborhoods, and at work.
- Pray that God will identify 5 people you can begin to invest in and engage with the Gospel.

- **Global:**

- Pray that God would give you a heart for the nations.
- Pray for the team working in SEA, the new believers, for those who have heard the Gospel, and the church planting movement among the unreached.
- Pray for Good Shepherd Ministries and Bill & Sandy Younger.
- Pray for Servants Hearts Ministries and Bob & Georgette Kornegay.
- Pray for Pastor Abraham and his church in Guatemala.
- Pray for the work of Paul & Sarah Young and Dakota Baptist Church in North Dakota.