

FILLMORE STUDY BIBLE

John's Third Letter

Metaphysically Interpreted



FILLMORE BIBLE SOCIETY

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<https://fillmore.bible>

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Front cover image: Wall painting (1st century AD) from Pompeii depicting a multigenerational banquet. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Public Domain.
Back cover image: Wood sculpture, Unity of Shreveport.

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The Fillmore Bible Society

The Fillmore Bible Society are collaborators who comb through dozens of metaphysical books written by Charles Fillmore and his students as well as over 70 years of Fillmore articles and sermons for metaphysical insights into the Bible. They edit and submit these insights as short annotations which are then applied to the text of the text of the World English Bible, a contemporary-language update of the American Standard Version of the Bible, both online and in print.

This collaboration project is managed by TruthUnity Ministries, which is the publisher of The Fillmore Study Bible. In time the Fillmore Bible Society will become free-standing with its own board, Editorial staff and peer-review committee.

Members of the Fillmore Bible Society include:



Rev. Dan Beckett. Mark, Colossians.



Thomas Scheinler. Acts, Galatians.



Rev. Lisa Herklotz and Rev Jim Ernstsén.
Revelation to John.



Susan St John. Hebrews.



Rev. Mark Hicks. General Editor. John,
Acts, Romans, Corinthians 1.



Rev. Michelle Vargas. Luke.



Mary Salama. Matthew, Corinthians 2,
Thessalonians 1 & 2, Timothy 1 & 2,
Titus, Peter 1 & 2, Jude.

The Fillmore Study Bible

The Fillmore Study Bible provides the reader with an introduction to metaphysical Bible interpretation by offering annotations and commentary from the works of Charles Fillmore and his students. Many Bible students learn their theology by reading the annotations and commentary of study Bibles. Study Bibles have a theological point of view, typically Catholic, Evangelical or Mainline Protestant. The Fillmore Study Bible makes this method of study available to the Metaphysical Christian.

Metaphysical Christianity is an authentic and distinct expression of the historic Christian faith that acknowledges and embraces the influence of Platonic and Stoic Greek philosophy in the early development of Christian theology. Much of this influence has been suppressed in orthodox Bible commentaries because metaphysical interpretation relies on an inner knowingness as authority for spiritual matters. The annotations included here embrace inner knowingness as authority.

This study bible uses the *World English Bible* translation, which is a contemporary-language update of the bible used by Charles Fillmore, the American Standard Version. The language

of the WEB is not American nor British, but *contemporary, world* English, making the text pleasant to read for the broadest possible audience of global English speakers. The WEB differs from several contemporary-language translations by not adopting gender neutral language but it has provided footnotes when gender neutral language would be appropriate.

We believe that our present day culture of information, science and technology is ready to restore to it's spiritual teachings the perspectives of original thinkers who gave us not only mathematics, ethics, democracy and medicine, but also deep insights into the inner world of soul and Divine mind—the Greek metaphysicians. We also believe that contemporary Christianity needs a contemporary, global interpretation applied to a contemporary, global biblical text. The Fillmore Study Bible is our offering for addressing these spiritual needs.

JOHN'S THIRD LETTER



Wall painting (1st century AD) from Pompeii depicting a multigenerational banquet. Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples. Public Domain.

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN'S THIRD LETTER

See the Introduction to John's First Letter by Dr. Hunt for an overview of The Three Letters of John and The Letter of Jude.

This is a brief personal letter, written by the Apostle John, and addressed to a highly esteemed friend named Gaius. It is interesting to note that a man bearing this same name was closely associated with Paul during his ministry at Ephesus. (See Acts 19:29.) However, this Epistle of John was not written until many years after Paul's ministry at Ephesus, so the two men mentioned could scarcely have been the same. The Gaius mentioned in this Epistle was apparently a wealthy and influential layman, having membership in one of the "seven churches of Asia."

John's main purpose in writing this little Epistle was to secure the support of Gaius in connection with a controversy that had arisen between the apostle and a church leader named Diotrephes. Apparently Diotrephes had acted contrary to instructions, and was also seeking to repudiate the authority of John, who was then the bishop, or presiding elder of

the Christian churches in that area. John states that he had written a letter to Diotrephes, which had been disregarded. John further charges that Diotrephes “likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge my authority . . . he is . . . prating against me with evil words . . . refuses himself to welcome the *brethren*, and also stops those who want to welcome them and puts them out of the church.” The word *brethren*, as used here, would refer to some traveling evangelists of those days.

Two possible reasons for Diotrephes’ strange conduct may be suggested. About that time (A.D. 100), some Christian churches in that area were making changes in organization, and the controversy mentioned in the Epistle may represent some breakaway from the old patterns. However, what seems more likely is that Diotrephes had come under the influence of the false prophets mentioned in connection with John’s other Epistles, and this led to the break between Diotrephes and John. Possibly this is why John hesitated to “write with pen and ink”; preferring to make a fact-finding visit, and assure himself the support of Gaius, before taking any drastic steps in dealing with Diotrephes. The Demetrius mentioned was, in all probability, the bearer of this Epistle.

 Introduction to *John’s Third Letter* by Herbert J. Hunt, former Dean of Bible Studies for the Unity School of Christianity.

THIRD JOHN 1

Calling Forth Redemption of the Body

^{1:1} The elder to Gaius¹ the beloved, whom I love in truth.²

1. *Gaius*. Greek: of the earth; earthy man; exulting; rejoicing; gladness; Lord. Metaphysically, the acceptance by the body consciousness (of the earth, earthy man) of the truth pertaining to the divine law, or Lord. This acceptance of Truth by the seemingly earthy phase of man’s being works with Paul (the activity of the word of Truth) in bringing about the redemption of the body; great gladness

and rejoicing are thus realized by the individual. (MBD/Gaius)

2. *love in truth*. Divine love in the heart of man, expressed in love of all that is good, right, and true, as well as in love of all people. He who loves in accordance with Truth sees the ideal side of everyone with whom he comes in contact. To see as God sees is to love as God loves, without stint or reservation. Human love is personal rather than universal in its scope.

Gaius Commended for His Hospitality

^{1:2} Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be healthy, even as your soul prospers.¹ ^{1:3} For I rejoiced greatly, when brothers came and testified about your truth, even as you walk in truth. ^{1:4} I have no greater joy than this, to hear about my children walking in truth.

^{1:5} Beloved, you do a faithful work in whatever you accomplish for those who are brothers and strangers.² ^{1:6} They have testified about your love before the assembly. You will do well to send them

forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, ^{1:7} because for the sake of the Name they went out, taking nothing from the Gentiles.³ ^{1:8} We therefore ought to receive such, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

1. *Be healthy, even as your soul prospers*. The Scriptures give spirit, soul, and body as constituting all of man. Spirit is I AM, the same in character as Divine Mind, or God. Soul is man’s consciousness—that which he has apprehended or developed out of Spirit; also the impressions that he has re-

ceived from the outer world. Soul is both conscious and subconscious. Body is the form of expression of both spirit and soul. In its invisible forces it expresses Spirit, and in its seeming materiality it pictures the limitations of soul. When man puts out of consciousness all limitations and realizes the perfection of Spirit, his body will be perfect; in other words the salvation of the soul results in the redemption or spiritualization of the body. (MBD/soul)

2. *For those who are brothers and strangers.* Whoever helps strangers without expectation of reward

and without expectation of seeing them again has a better chance to express the Christ Spirit than the one who extends help to those well known to him. We make no distinction between our treatment of strangers and our treatment of friends. To us they are all one in Christ Jesus.

3. *Taking nothing from the Gentiles.* Spiritual love shows us that accident, chance, and events classed as happenings are “Gentiles,” and if we are faithful to Principle, we do not allow any of these things to operate as causes in our life.

Diotrephes and Demetrius

^{1:9} I wrote to the assembly, but Diotrephes,¹ who loves to be first among them, doesn't accept what we say. ^{1:10} Therefore, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words. Not content with this, neither does he himself receive the brothers, and those who would, he forbids and throws out of the assembly.

^{1:11} Beloved, don't imitate that which is evil, but that which is good.² He who does good is of God. He who does evil hasn't seen God. ^{1:12} Demetrius³ has the testimony of all, and of the truth itself; yes, we also testify, and you know that our testimony is

true.

1. *Diotrephes.* (“trained by Zeus”) is a symbol of personal exaltation active in consciousness. This state of mind keeps man from entering spiritual consciousness.

2. *Imitate ... that which is good.* Imitation of the good is best for those who have not yet developed power to form original conceptions of the good and the initiative to execute them. Until we are moved by the Spirit within us to original action, we cannot do better than take Jesus Christ as our model and do good as He did and as He taught others to do.

3. *Demetrius.* (“belonging to Demeter,” “grain”) symbolizes substance.

Final Greetings

^{1:13} I had many things to write to you, but I am unwilling to write to you with ink and pen;¹ ^{1:14} but I hope to see you soon, and we will speak face to face. Peace be to you. The friends greet you. Greet the friends by

name.

1. *I am unwilling to write to you with ink and pen.* See Dr. Hunt's Introduction above.

 Fillmore Study Bible annotations by Mark Hicks.

APPENDICES

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Nearly all the New Testament writings are available online. Print editions of individual books, like this one, are being released as they become available. The society's focus in 2023 is publishing a complete New Testament edition and the start of selected Old Testament books. The society welcomes new collaborators in this ongoing project.



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