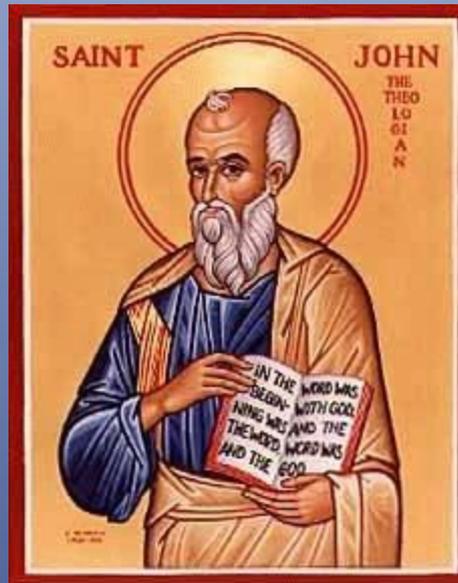
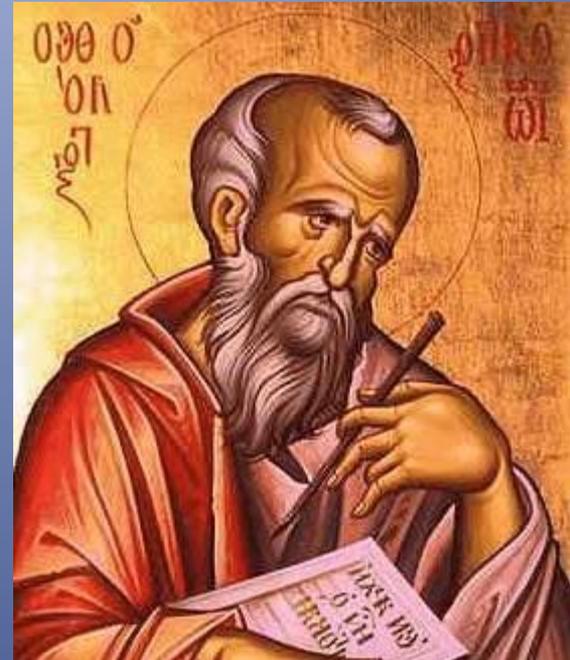


THE Epistles of St John



Overview

- Last week we learnt the First Epistle of John was written at a time of heresies. Themes were forgiveness, and love.
- This week: the Second and Third Epistles of John. We will discuss:
 - Important Facts
 - The main point of these Epistles



The Second Epistle of John

- Fast Facts

- Written by St John in around 90-95AD, around the same time he wrote the other epistles and his gospel.
- Who was it written to?
 - “To the **elect** lady and her children, whom I love in truth..” (2 John 1)
 - Either to an actual woman and her children who were well known to St John.
 - OR MORE LIKELY, the church which is elsewhere called the “Bride of Christ,” in which case it is not unreasonable to refer to it as a “lady..”

The Main Points...

- Follow the Law of Love
 - “And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. This is love, that we walk according to His commandments...”

(2 John 5)

- Discussion Questions
 - Why was it so important that the members of the Church love each other?
 - What are the consequences of a lack of love?

The Main Points...

- Beware of Deceiving Heretics
 - “For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.” (2 John 7)
- Discussion Questions
 - Which group is it that did not acknowledge that Jesus is the Christ? What does the word “Christ” actually mean?
 - If Jesus is God, why did He have to come in the flesh and die for us? Can’t He just click His fingers?

Main Points

- “Whoever transgresses and does not **abide in the doctrine of Christ** does not have God...” (2 John 9)
 - In this verse, St John explains that unless we understand the doctrine (teaching) of the Incarnation, we do not have God. Why?
- “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds.”
 - Isn't that harsh and rude?

One More Thing

- “Having many things to write to you, I did not wish to do so with paper and ink; but I hope to come to you and **speak face to face..**” (2 John 12)
 - What is the difference between cultural tradition and church tradition?

Did you know...

That although Christ's ministry was about 3 years, if you add up all the days mentioned in the gospels, it is only about 3 weeks. What was he doing for the rest of the time?

The Third Epistle of St John

- Fast Facts

- Written by St John around 90-95AD.
- Written to “the beloved Gaius,” probably a member of one of the churches under the leadership of St John.
- It was written to address a dispute amongst the leaders of the church...

The Main Points..

- Basically, there is a dispute between some of the members of the Church. St John says that Gaius and Demetrious are good, but Diotrephes is bad...
 - Gaius is good
 - “Beloved (*St John is addressing Gaius here*), I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. ³ For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth *that is* in you, just as you **walk in the truth**. ⁴ I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.” (3 John 1-4)
 - What does it mean to “walk in truth?”

The Main Points..

- How to score extra points
 - St John explains to the members of the Church that they should look after the people who are serving the Lord so they can become “fellow workers for the truth.” (3 John 8).
 - “He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet **shall receive a prophet’s reward**. And he who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man’s reward.” (Matt 10:41)
 - Do you think that is fair? What is the link between this and the parable of the vinedressers in Matthew 20?
 - » Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? (Matt 20:15)

Main Points...

- Diotrephes is bad
 - I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the pre-eminence among them, does not receive us. (3 John 9)
 - What is the big deal if Diotrephes loves “preeminence?”
 - Diotrephes thought He was good, and therefore thought that relatively, everyone (including St John) was bad. He rejected St John as an apostle, and rejected those sent by St John (Gaius) and rejected some of the Church teaching!
 - What can I do if I do not have the virtue of humility?

If you forget everything else..

- Listen to Jesus when He says: This is My commandment, that you **love** one another as I have **loved** you. (John 15:12)
- Understanding who Christ is, and why He came, is essential for loving Him.
- Not only everything in the Bible – we also rely on the Church Tradition
- Be humble, because nothing puts the brakes on your spiritual life like pride!