

GENESIS ROAD PRESENTS...



a look at the picture of God
in every chapter of
the 64th book of the Bible

Chapter 1

GOD PLAYS SECOND FIDDLE.

In this third letter from the apostle John, he draws another distinction between good and evil, using as an example a man by the name of Diotrephes, who was a prominent leader in the church: “I did write a letter to the church, but Diotrephes, *who wants to be head of everything*, does not recognize us! . . . And it doesn’t stop there, alas, *for although he wants to be leader he refuses the duty of welcoming the brothers himself*, and stops those who would like to do so—he even excommunicates them! *Never let evil be your example*, dear friend of mine, but always good. The man who does good is God’s man, but the man who does evil does not know God at all.” (vs 9-11)

What really jumped out to me about this was the “charge” John leveled against Diotrephes. It wasn’t that he was dishonest or sexually immoral or greedy or violent. No, it was simply that he nurtured in his heart the desire to be head of everything. Then, a couple of sentences later, John equated this desire with evil.

We so often think of “evil” in terms of awful actions—murder, rape, robbery, exploitation of others—that it is so easy to forget that pride and the lust for power are what truly lie behind all those things. So, it seemed like this was an excellent opportunity to once again examine the stark difference between the attitudes of Satan and Christ.

John equated Diotrephes’ attitude with evil because it is precisely how Lucifer (who eventually became Satan) is described in Isaiah: “How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the

dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, *‘I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God. . . I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.’*” (Isa 14:12-14)

By contrast, Christ—whose throne *already was* above the stars and who *already was* the Most High—is described this way in Philippians: “In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, *did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing* by taking the very nature of a servant.” (Phil 2:5-7)

This is *the* fundamental difference between good and evil. Every action stems from one of these two motives. Either we are eager to have power and position over others or we are eager to serve. It’s as simple as that.

From the record of human history, there is no doubt about where God stands. He is always willing to play second fiddle. When it comes to His creation, nobody—and I mean, *nobody*—can out-serve Him. Instead of using His power and position for *His* advantage, He always uses it for the benefit of others.

For God, power and position are simply a means by which to serve. He harbors no desire to be greater than anyone else.