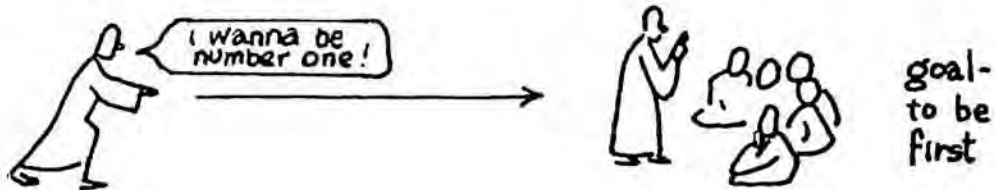


Diotrephes (the name means Zeus-reared) is a character mentioned in the Apostle John's third epistle. Little is known about him outside the brief reference in 3 John 9 and 10. It is possible that Gaius and Diotrephes were leaders in the same congregation. It is clear that Diotrephes was in conflict with the Apostle John and was doing everything possible to counter his influence in the church. This brought him into conflict with Gaius who was sympathetic to John and accepted his leadership.

Diotrephes' goal was "to be first." This goal put him in conflict with Christ himself. He evidently had forgotten what Paul wrote to the Colossians. "And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the first born from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy."<sup>29</sup> If Diotrephes had truly recognized the supremacy of Christ, he would have treated His last apostle differently.



There is some evidence that Diotrephes was in a position of considerable authority (he put people out of the church, but there is no evidence that he reached his goal unchallenged. It appears that Gaius was the leader of the church favored by John. Diotrephes might

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<sup>29</sup>Col. 1:18