**Postcard Epistle Series July 31, 2022**

**What kind of testimony will I have? - 3 John 1:9-15**

Diotrephes: **Selfish Rebel** 3 John 9-10

* “Loves to be first” or “**first-lover**”
  + Demonstrates his pride, arrogance, and self-centered nature
  + In total contrast to the life of a Christian
  + Mark 9:35   
    Sitting down, He [Jesus] called the twelve and said to them, “If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all.”
* Ignores **authority**
  + “does not accept what we say”
  + John was God’s chosen messenger and the pride of Diotrephes caused him to foolishly reject the truth
  + He would not yield himself to one of higher authority because he wanted to be first
* He was a **malicious gossip**
  + “Unjustly accusing us with wicked words”
  + He was tearing down the work and ministry of the apostle John and his ambassadors
  + He was more interested in tearing down than building up
* **Rejected** Christ’s evangelists and missionaries
  + “he himself does not receive the brethren”
  + “he forbids those who desire to do so”
  + “he puts them out of the church”

How do you deal with someone like Diotrephes?

* Be aware of the nature of character of the person
  + John warned Gaius to be on the alert and we must do the same with these types of people
* You cannot handle this person(s) on your own
  + You have Christ who is with you
  + You have the Holy Spirit who lives in you
  + Consistently pray and ask the Lord to guide your words and actions carefully
* Realize that the person is operating out of **their flesh** and is not filled with the Holy Spirit
  + He or she is certainly not yielded to God and is governed by personal desires over God’s direction
  + He or she is not operating in love and grace
* If you have a position of closeness with this person, you can, in love, **point out the sin**
  + Galatians 6:1   
    Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

Demetrius: **Commendable Testimony** 3 John 11-12

* John urged Gaius to shun the evil represented by Diotrephes
  + “do not imitate evil, but what is good”
  + Do not pattern your life after Diotrephes!
* John commended Demetrius, the letter carrier of 3 John, to Gaius and the church, as a man of high character
  + “Demetrius has received a good testimony from everyone” (11a)

**What does this mean for us?**

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**What kind of testimony will I have? - 3 John 1:9-15**

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  + “Unjustly accusing us with wicked words”
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* **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Christ’s evangelists and missionaries
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Demetrius: **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** 3 John 11-12

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