

Building a Good Testimony

Have you ever wondered what people say about you when you're not in the room?

- **Proverbs 22:1** — “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches.”
- **Ecclesiastes 7:1** — “A good name is better than precious ointment.”
- **Acts 16:2** — Timothy “was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium.”
- **1 Timothy 3:7** — An elder “must be well thought of by outsiders.”

Again and again, God's Word says: **your name matters**. Your reputation matters. And for believers in Jesus, we often use another word for this: **testimony**. Your testimony is more than your words — it's your *life*. It's how others experience you. Your coworkers. Your classmates. Your neighbors. Your family. Your church. They're all witnesses. And the question is: **What are they seeing in you? What are they saying about you?**

A GOOD TESTIMONY ISN'T WHAT YOU SAY ABOUT YOURSELF - IT'S WHAT OTHERS SAY ABOUT YOU.

Proverbs 27:2 *“Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.”*

How do you build a stronger testimony — a reputation that honors Jesus?

Based on 3rd John, I want to present to you **5 questions to ask yourself.**

Question #1 – (Influence) – What is your goal for how you impact others? (3 John 1–4)

John wasn't interested in impressing people. But if he had the chance to influence someone, he had one priority: *that they would walk in the truth of God.*

Gaius was like a spiritual son to John. They lived in different cities, but Christians who had recently visited Gaius came to John and said, *“We need to tell you — he's walking in the truth. He's staying faithful to God's Word.”* Remember, Jesus said God's Word is Truth, and He said if you abide in My Word, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. That was Gaius.

And when John heard about Gaius, he lit up. He says in verse 4, *“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”*

Question #2 – (Hospitality) – How do you treat newcomers? (3 John 5–8)

How do you treat people you’ve never met before?
People who are new to you?

That’s what the word *hospitality* is all about — literally, “love of strangers.” It’s about loving people you don’t know well yet.

John says to Gaius, *“These men were strangers to you, but you discovered they were faithful servants of Jesus. They’ve sacrificed much for the sake of His name. They told me how you treated them in the same way you would’ve treated Jesus Himself. And when they left to continue preaching, you even gave them financial support.”*

That’s hospitality — treating others in a way that honors God. So here’s the reflective question: *How do you treat newcomers?*

Question #3 – (Humility) – How do you see yourself? (3 John 9–10)

We're all born with a "me first" mentality. It's part of our sinful nature. We want the front of the line. We want to be noticed. We want people to admire us, listen to us, and seek our advice.

Diotrephes was a "me first" kind of leader. He didn't just want influence—he wanted control. He couldn't stand the thought of someone else getting recognized instead of him. He was a dominating personality and an attention-seeker.

Before we shake our heads at him, maybe we should pause and look inward. Pride can sneak into any of our hearts. It might not look as extreme as Diotrephes, but the question is the same: How do you see yourself? Romans 12:3 tells us, *"Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment."*

None of us have it all figured out. None of us are above correction. None of us are perfect. Every one of us still has room to grow in humility.

Question #4 – (Imitation) – Who are you becoming like? (3 John 11–12)

Who are you becoming like? If you're a Christian, God's ultimate goal for you isn't just to make your life

easier—it's to make you more like His Son, Jesus. Romans 8:29 says, *“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son.”*

When you truly see God—when you behold Him as He reveals Himself in His Word—you can't stay the same. You begin to see His holiness, His justice, His wrath against sin, His sovereign power, and His deep, unshakable goodness. You see that He is gentle and patient, abounding in steadfast love, merciful to sinners who deserve nothing but His judgment. And when you see Him clearly, you want to live for Him. You start believing—deep down—that His ways are better than yours, and His will is far better than anything you could plan for yourself.

Question #5 – (Friendship) – Are you befriending others? (3 John 13–15)

Are you cultivating friendships? Are you intentionally being a friend?

John wasn't just an apostle—he was a friend. He didn't want to merely write to Gaius; he longed to see him, to talk face-to-face. There's something irreplaceable about being physically present with the people you care about.

Our greatest example of friendship is Jesus Himself. He inconvenienced Himself for us. He paid the ultimate price for us. He left the splendor of heaven, not counting equality with God a thing to be grasped, but came to earth in human form. And what did we have to offer Him? Nothing of value. We had gone our own way, ignored His Word, and lived in rebellion against Him. And yet... He came to befriend us.

In John 15, Jesus told His disciples, *“I no longer call you servants... I have called you friends.”*

Have you ever stopped to ask, *Why would Jesus want to be my friend?*

If He was willing to befriend us, we can be willing to befriend others.