Lesson 1 – the first two symptoms of Disease of Diotrephes (DD)

1. **He loves to be first** (v. 9). How does this characteristics usually show itself? (upset not to be picked first, wanting to do things first, “I want it my way”)

\* What did Jesus say to the disciples who had this problem? (Mark 9:33-35)

Mar 9:33 They came to Capernaum. When he was safe at home, he asked them, "What were you discussing on the road?"

Mar 9:34 The silence was deafening--they had been arguing with one another over who among them was greatest.

Mar 9:35 He sat down and summoned the Twelve. "So you want first place? Then take the last place. Be the servant of all."

\* Jesus spoke about suffering and death, but the Twelve argued over who was the greatest! They misunderstood Jesus’ teaching. They lived in a society in which position and power were important, and they thought that the Christian fellowship functioned the same way. God wants us to be childlike but not childish. In the Aramaic that Jesus spoke, “child” and “servant” are the same word. True greatness is found, not in reputation, how good you are at something, or how good looking you are, but in character and service

\* Instead of wanting to be first, what attitude should we have?

[write out their response for all to see]

\* Then read Phil. 2:1-7

[as I read this have someone write out key attitude development ways that are said (things in bold)]

Phi 2:1 If you've gotten anything at all out of following Christ, if his love has made any difference in your life, if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a **heart**, if you **care**--

Phi 2:2 then do me a favor: **Agree** with each other, **love** each other, be **deep-spirited** friends.

Phi 2:3 Don't **push** your way to the front; don't **sweet-talk** your way to the top. Put yourself **aside**, and **help** others get ahead.

Phi 2:4 Don't be **obsessed** with getting your own advantage. **Forget** yourselves long enough to lend a **helping** hand.

Phi 2:5 Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself.

Phi 2:6 He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what.

Phi 2:7 Not at all. When the time came, he set aside the privileges of deity and took on the status of a slave, became human!

\* How can we develop these attitude?

\* “It’s no one’s right to play or coach in the National Football League, it’s a privilege, an honor,” Edwards said upon his introduction in Kansas City. “I will carry that tradition here. I have carried that all my life. I know what the National Football League is about, it’s about commitment. It’s the best game in the world and it’s played by the best players in the world. Talent alone does not win games, teams win games. Teams with commitment.” – Herm Edwards new head coach for Kansas City. Mr. Edwards would never let DD effect his NFL team.

2. **He would have nothing to do with us** (v. 9). How does this characteristics usually show itself? (Disrespect to sponsors, talking when it is worship time, prayer time, and lesson time, rolling our eyes or deep breathes when asked to do something by sponsors, teachers, parents, etc)

\* Why do you think Diotrephes would want to reject one of Jesus' apostles?

\* Do we ever reject leaders in the church today? (Pastor Mark, the sponsors?) If so, how? (when we talk when it is worship time, prayer time. Message time)

\* What should our attitude be toward leaders in God's church? (Heb. 13:7, 17)

Heb 13:7 **Appreciate** your pastoral leaders who gave you the Word of God. Take a good **look** at the way they live, and let their **faithfulness** instruct you, as well as their **truthfulness**. There should be a consistency that runs through us all.

Heb 13:13 So let's go outside, where Jesus is, where the **action** is--not trying to be privileged insiders, but taking our share in the **abuse** of Jesus. (MSG)

Heb 13:13 So we must go to him outside the camp and **endure** the insults he endured. (God’s Word Bible)

\* How can we be more supportive of our leaders? This year we have a great sponsor team that is going to do everything it can to develop strong relationships with you all. I encourage ever one of you to not miss this opportunity in your life to get to know these leaders and show great respect to them. [look at the ABC’s guide]

Thought for the week:

Is your attitude infected by DD?