

# A Good Name

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.”  
Proverbs 22:1

“A good name is better than precious ointment.”  
Ecclesiastes 7:1

## **WHAT IS A GOOD NAME?**

- A. A “good name” is a good reputation, where your name alone evokes thoughts of a great Christian person, such as the name David had in Israel (I Samuel 16:18; 18:1,5,14-16,28,30).
  - 1. “Great riches” describe prosperity, success, and wealth that most men passionately covet.
  - 2. Lesson #1: Solomon, with incredible wealth, valued a good reputation higher than riches.
  - 3. A man with a good reputation is greater than a very rich man. A good name is true riches!
  - 4. Lesson #2: A good name can be chosen: you were not born with it; others cannot ruin it.
  - 5. Every day and at all times you choose to build a great name or leave yours in the mud.
- B. “Loving favour” is a good reputation that causes others to befriend and love you, such as David, Jesus, an elect lady, and Gaius (I Sam 18:1; Luke 2:52; II John 1:1; III John 1:1).
  - 1. Silver and gold are precious metals metonymically put for financial and business success.
  - 2. Replacing the ellipsis, having others love your person is a choice just like a good name.
  - 3. Men make great efforts over much time to gain financially, but wise men will for a name.
  - 4. If you are short of friends that love you dearly, you have blown it (Prov 11:16; 18:24).
  - 5. It is not your birth; it is not the fault of others; it is not magic; you have been odious.
- C. A good name enhances life, brings joy, and increases appeal more than precious ointment.

## **WHAT DO YOU REALLY MEAN?**

- A. I mean, What do most people think of first and second, when they hear your name spoken?
  - 1. Is your name a pleasant sound that makes people cheerful, comfortable, and encouraged?
  - 2. Is your name a bitter sound that makes people squirm, uncomfortable, and discouraged?
  - 3. What will others think when you are finally laid to rest in a coffin? Relief? Or Loss?
- B. Do they think ... that is a great person! I know he/she is a Christian! He/she is the best! He/she is such a hard worker! He/she is so cheerful! He/she is always thankful! He/she is always helpful! He/she loves the Lord! He/she is important to our church!
- C. Or do they think ... he/she is a loose cannon! He/she is so loud! He/she is so moody! He/she always talks about himself! Why does he/she even come to our services? He/she is always saying something harsh or rude! He/she never says anything valuable!

## **BUT I HAVE TWO NAMES!**

- A. Yes, but your last name cannot hinder you long from having a great first name yourself.
- B. A family should work for the same goal of a great family name by wise parental leadership.
- C. You do have two names, and you should be focused on using both names for God’s glory!
- D. You really have three names! Because you have taken the name of Jesus Christ as your God!

## **BUT I HAVE A GOOD NAME!**

- A. Your opinion of yourself is distracting and deceitful, because it is a lying measure (Jer 17:9).
- B. Gracious people love to hear graciousness taught, but odious people presume they have it.
- C. Every man thinks he is pretty special, but God and men know better (Prov 16:2; 20:6; 21:2).

- D. What your spouse says to you about yourself in public or private is inadmissible evidence!
- E. Spousal answers to your direct questions are inadmissible? Why? They dare not tell the truth!
- F. My mother thinks I am okay! Yes, and she also enjoyed changing your diaper 10 times a day!
- G. You have a good name in God's sight when godly men testify plainly of your life and works.
- H. If the opinion of my family does not count, what does? The word of God. See III John 1:12.
- I. What can I do? Measure yourself honestly by God's measure, confess your sins, and change!
- J. How do you measure up in the sight and memory of teachers, employers, employees, neighbors, customers, students, siblings, parents, grandparents, church, enemies, and so on?

### **BUT I LIVE AND LOVE IN MY OWN WAY!**

- A. Your way is not nearly good enough, because God only cares how others perceive you.
- B. Love is not measured by the intended effect in your head, but by the real effect received.
- C. If you are not buried with friends, then you are doing something wrong, so think again.
- D. If your life is not growing in approval by God and good men, then it is not growing at all!

### **IS A GOOD NAME IMPORTANT?**

- Prov 22:1 A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.
- Ecc1 7:1 A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.
- Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.
- I Sam 2:26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.
- I Sam 18:30 David behaved himself more wisely than all the servants of Saul; so that his name was much set by.
- Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
- Rom 14:18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.
- Prov 3:3-4 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.
- Prov 11:16 A gracious woman retaineth honour; and strong men retain riches.
- Prov 31:23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.
- Heb 11:39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

### **HOW DOES IT RELATE TO THE GOSPEL?**

- Matt 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
- Phil 1:27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;
- Phil 2:14-16 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of

life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

- I Tim 2:9-10 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works.
- I Tim 5:14 I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.
- I Tim 6:1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.
- Titus 2:1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:
- Titus 2:5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.
- Titus 2:8 Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.
- Titus 2:10 Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity; that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.
- Titus 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.
- I Pet 2:15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:
- I Pet 3:1-2 Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear.
- I Pet 3:16 Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.

### **CAN YOU GIVE ME SOME IDEAS?**

- A. How do you treat slow clerks, waitresses, cars in front, children, or others holding you up?
- B. Are you gracious or odious, positive or negative, happy or moody, thankful or complaining, arrogant or humble, selfish or serving, loud or quiet, a talker or a listener, foolish or wise, tardy or punctual, impulsive or cautious, slothful or diligent, critical or praising, generous or stingy, gentle or harsh, kind or cruel, forgiving or vengeful, dependable or unfaithful, honest or questionable, courteous or contentious, sober or jesting, godly or worldly, etc., etc.?
- C. Your resume says more about you than your Sunday attendance. Your resume should list a few jobs, where you were highly esteemed and promoted, and who would hire you again.
- D. Your credit score says more about you than any words you can utter. Your credit score tells how faithful, honest, disciplined, diligent, patient, truthful, and trustworthy you are.
- E. If you do not have many friends craving your presence or friendship, are you too talkative, too critical, too overbearing, too moody, too selfish, too carnal, too weird, too loud, too harsh, too quiet, too empty, too distant, too blunt, or too what? You are blowing it somehow.
- F. Do you talk enough about the Lord for others to know you are a Christian? Is your life such that you commend the Christian religion, or do you slander it with bad speech, actions, or habits? If it was a crime to be a Christian, is there enough evidence to convict you?

## **WHAT IF I HAVE BLOWN IT?**

II Sam 23:1 Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said,

Gal 1:18 Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days.

### **Conclusion:**

1. A high priority in your life, above other pursuits, should be earning a great name and reputation.
2. Regardless of your birth, upbringing, or how others have treated you, you can have a great name!
3. Since you are known as a Christian in and out of this church, your reputation helps or hurts Christ!
4. All of this will come to bear at your funeral, when everyone will think or say, "Relief!" or "Shame!"

### **For Further Study:**

1. The sermon outline, "[Actions Speak Louder than Words](#)," lists the gospel value of our character and works.
2. The Proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 22:1](#)," which opens and applies this precious proverb about your name.
3. The Proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 11:16](#)," which describes how women can always be honored and loved.
4. The Proverb commentary, "[Proverbs 18:24](#)," which details how friendliness is necessary to have friends.