

Key Verse

Proverbs 22:1 (NKJV)

“A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold.”

Introduction

In a world where wealth and material success are often seen as ultimate goals, Scripture offers a different standard: *a good name a reputation of integrity, godliness, and moral uprightness is of greater value than financial gain*. God’s Word calls us to prioritize character over possessions because our name reflects who we are before both God and man.

1. What Is a “Good Name”?

Biblically, a *good name* refers to a positive reputation rooted in righteousness and consistent moral conduct. It is not just what people think of us, but what we *really are* when tested by the standards of God’s holiness.

Ecclesiastes 7:1 (NIV):

“A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.”

In ancient Israel, perfume was extremely valuable. Comparing a good name to fine perfume illustrates its preciousness and influence just as perfume spreads fragrance, a good name spreads favor and trust.

2. Wealth Isn't Evil But It Is Secondary

The Bible does not condemn wealth itself. In fact, God blesses some with wealth (e.g., Abraham, Job, Solomon). The problem lies in *prioritizing wealth over righteousness*.

1 Timothy 6:10 (NIV):

“For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

It is not money that is evil, but the **love of it** when it leads one to compromise values, sin, or damage their witness.

3. The Cost of Choosing Wealth Over a Good Name

A. Compromising for Money

- Some people choose jobs (e.g., bars, casinos, dishonest businesses) just because of the financial return.
- Even believers may abandon their calling such as leaving worship ministry to pursue secular fame all for fast money.

This reflects misplaced priorities and damages not just one's reputation but also their witness for Christ.

Matthew 16:26 (NIV):

“What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”

4. A Good Name Reflects Christlikeness

Jesus Himself grew in favor with both God and man a testimony of His sinless character and obedience.

Luke 2:52 (NIV):

“And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

This shows us the model: growing in moral, spiritual, and relational favor should be the goal of every believer.

5. God Uses Those with Good Testimony

God often chooses people with a good name for special assignments:

- **Cornelius:** Though a Gentile, he was “*respected by all the Jewish people*” God sent Peter to preach the Gospel to him.

Acts 10:22 (NIV):

“The men replied, ‘We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man, who is respected by all the Jewish people.’”

- **Ananias:** Described as a devout man with a good reputation.

Acts 22:12 (NIV):

“A man named Ananias came to see me. He was a devout observer of the law and highly respected by all the Jews living there.”

- **Stephen:** Chosen for leadership in the early church due to his good character.

Acts 6:3 (NIV):

“Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom.”

6. A Good Name Honors God and Builds Trust

People are drawn to those who live with integrity. A good reputation opens doors of influence for ministry, business, and relationships.

Matthew 5:16 (NIV):

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

This means our *actions and reputation* should point people to God.

7. Practical Applications

- Not every service should be charged for generosity builds goodwill and reflects God's love.
- Churches should avoid entangling themselves in politics for gain — this taints their identity and spiritual influence.
- Believers should aim to be known for their compassion, honesty, and faithfulness, not just their achievements.

Conclusion: Choose the Eternal

We live in a culture that glorifies wealth, but as believers, we are called to live for something greater: a testimony that honors God. A good name may not fill your bank account, but it fills your life with eternal value.

Proverbs 10:7 (NIV):

“The name of the righteous is used in blessings, but the name of the wicked will rot.”

Let us seek to be known as faithful servants of God, like Jesus, Cornelius, Ananias, and Stephen. In doing so, we gain favor not only with people but with God Himself.

May the Lord bless you.

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