

riches but lacking a good name will do little to advance the cause of Christ.

- 2) Having a good name and good favour in God's sight will enable you to serve the Lord powerfully, witness for the Lord effectively, and gain the praise of the Lord eternally.
- 3) Jesus taught, (Mark 8:36) "*For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*" In this verse, I believe that to lose your soul is not to go to hell but to lose your opportunity to serve the Lord effectively.
- 4) We must jealously guard our godly character, not for personal pride, but for God's glory.

### c. A good name will last longer

- 1) Even if used prudently, you will leave behind all earthly riches when you die.
- 2) On the other hand, having a good name will honour you in this life as well as in eternity. Jesus said, (Matthew 6:20) "*But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:*"
- 3) Maintaining a good name was very important to the Apostle Paul. He said, (1 Corinthians 9:27) "*But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.*" (i.e., disqualified for reward).

**Conclusion:** Thomas Constable summed up this verse well when he wrote, "True value must be seen, however, not in what one has but in what he or she truly is."

One of the most precious treasures you possess in this life is your good name. Build it continually. Keep it unspotted. Protect it passionately. Guard it jealously. Pray over it fearfully.

**Song:** Nothing Between - 321

# Better Choice – Good Name

6 September 2020 PM – Proverbs 22.1 – BC20 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Some years ago, a young man said to me, "I do not care what people think about me." That kind of attitude is the opposite of what God tells us in our text this evening. (Read Proverbs 22:1). If we do not have a good name, our testimony for Christ will be marred and our service for God impaired. Unbelievers will have reason to blaspheme the name of the Lord and reject His saving grace.

**Transition:** This evening as we note the Better Choice of a Good Name, I want us to examine the coveted values, the better values, and the reasons that ought to motivate us to make the right choice.

## 1. The Coveted Values

### a. Great riches

- 1) The idea of "*great riches*" as used here speaks of material riches or wealth. Many people covet material riches.
- 2) Great riches provide a comfortable lifestyle. They purchase many pleasures. They fulfil many greeds. They supply an abundance of delicious foods.
- 3) Great riches gain many superficial friends. People like the company of the rich because they benefit from their gifts.

### b. Silver and gold

- 1) Being synonyms of great riches, *silver* and *gold* present many of the same attractions.
- 2) People covet silver and gold because of the ease and leisure they often provide. They can hire others to do the work so that relaxation can be enjoyed.
- 3) Possession of much silver and gold gains a fame among those successful in this world.

## 2. The Better Values

### a. A good name

- 1) A *good name* refers to a good reputation. Wardlaw notes, "*'A good name' is a reputation among fellow-men for piety, wisdom, prudence, integrity, generosity, and any other virtues that enter into a good character.*"
- 2) A truly good name is one that God himself calls good. A

person may have a pious reputation among his friends, but if his private life is polluted, he does not have a good name in God's view. (1 Samuel 16:7) "*But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.*"

- 3) How can we **obtain** and **maintain** a truly good name?
  - a) We must carefully guard our hearts. (Proverbs 4:23) "*Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*" (Mark 7:21-22) "*For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.*"
  - b) We must rule our spirit. (Proverbs 25:28) "*He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls.*"
  - c) We must keep our tongues. (Proverbs 21:23) "*Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.*"
  - d) We must be careful what we do. (Proverbs 20:11) "*Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.*"
  - e) In sort, having biblical character will both obtain and maintain a truly good name.
- 4) "You can't build a reputation on what you are going to do." (Henry Ford)
- 5) One foolish action can ruin a reputation that took a lifetime to build.
- 6) If you have tarnished your reputation, with God's help rebuild it with consistent godly character.
- 7) God clearly assures us that a good name is better than great riches. Seek to obtain and maintain a good name and let God decide your financial standing.

#### **b. Loving favour**

- 1) *Loving favour* is closely linked with a good name. "*The 'loving favour' is the affectionate esteem which springs from the 'good name'*". (Wardlaw)

- 2) While the word *loving* simply means good or excellent, the word *favour* refers to graciousness or elegance. Thus, loving favour is excellent favour or good grace.
- 3) We frequently find in the Bible this word for favour in the context of **finding grace in the sight of God or man**. Finding excellent favour in the sight of godly fellow man is a very noble praise, **but to find excellent favour in the sight of God is a priceless treasure**. There can be no greater privilege than to have God Himself say of you on Judgment Day, "**Well done**"!
- 4) Note God's advice on how to find favour in His sight.
  - a) (Psalms 84:11) "*For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give **grace** and **glory**: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.*"
  - b) (Proverbs 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.*"
  - c) (Proverbs 3:34) "*Surely he scorneth the scorers: but he giveth **grace** unto the lowly.*"

### **3. The Reasons** (Wardlaw's Outline)

#### **a. A good name gives greater satisfaction.**

- 1) Having a good name and excellent favour due to a clean heart and noble character gives great satisfaction.
- 2) Wardlaw reminds, "**The satisfaction that arises from character is of a much higher and purer description; more worthy far of being coveted and valued.**"
- 3) Much of the Bible is God's admonitions to flee evil and follow righteousness. Therefore, obtaining and maintaining a good name and excellent favour is possible by living each day without cause for regret.
- 4) On the other hand, as Matthew Henry states, "**Great riches bring great cares with them, expose men to danger, and add no real value to a man.**"

#### **b. A good name is more useful**

- 1) Riches, in themselves, can only enable a man to live a comfortable life and to aid those around him. Having