

# God's Gift of Confession

## Protecting Your Reputation

### Points to Consider

1. The importance of a Good Reputation
2. Examples Illustrating the Importance of a Good Reputation
3. Building a Good Reputation
4. Rebuilding a Broken Reputation

### The Importance of a Good Reputation

**Prov 22:1** *A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, Loving favor rather than silver and gold.*

**Ecc 7:1** *A good name is better than precious ointment, And the day of death than the day of one's birth*

A good \_\_\_\_\_ is better than great riches and precious ointment. Our reputation is built over \_\_\_\_\_ by living according to God's plan.

**Titus 1:5-9** *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you — 6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, 8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*

**1 Tim 3:1-7** *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

An Elder is to be \_\_\_\_\_ and have a good reputation among outsiders.

**Phil 2:14-16** *Do all things without complaining and disputing, 15 that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.*

\_\_\_\_\_ Christians are to be lights in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation.

**Matt 5:13-16** *You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*

Our reputation is vital to \_\_\_\_\_ receiving glory!

**1 Peter 2:11-12** *Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, 12 having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

Our reputation should be able to handle \_\_\_\_\_ accusations.

**1 Tim 5:9-10** *Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, 10 well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.*

In order for a widow to be taken care of by the church she has to have a \_\_\_\_\_ for doing good works. Think of Dorcas.

## Examples

**Ruth 2:11-12** *And Boaz answered and said to her, "It has been fully reported to me, all that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, and how you have left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and have come to a people whom you did not know before. 12 The Lord repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge."*

Ruth's reputation was \_\_\_\_\_. Her good works were \_\_\_\_\_ to Boaz.

**Ruth 3:10-12** *Then he said, "Blessed are you of the Lord, my daughter! For you have shown more kindness at the end than at the beginning, in that you did not go after young men, whether poor or rich. 11 And now, my daughter, do not fear. I will do for you all that you request, for all the people of my town know that you are a virtuous woman.*

Boaz calls Ruth a \_\_\_\_\_ woman. That was her reputation.

**Acts 9:20-21** *Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God. 21 Then all who heard were amazed, and said, "Is this not he who destroyed*

*those who called on this name in Jerusalem, and has come here for that purpose, so that he might bring them bound to the chief priests?"*

**Acts 9:26-27** *And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. 27 But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.*

Saul earned the reputation that caused Christians to fear him because of his \_\_\_\_\_.

His reputation was \_\_\_\_\_ him from being useful to the Lord.

It took Barnabas' good reputation to overcome Saul's bad one.

## **Building a Good Reputation**

Our reputation is based on our \_\_\_\_\_. An image is built by making bad behavior appear to be good character.

Consider the description of a man who is to be put in the position of an elder: blameless, temperate, self-controlled, sober-minded, just, \_\_\_\_\_, of good behavior, hospitable, not given to wine, not violent, not quick-tempered, not greedy for money, not self-willed, hospitable, lover of what is good, \_\_\_\_\_, not quarrelsome, not covetous, have a good testimony of those \_\_\_\_\_ the church

**Acts 10:1-2** *There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, 2 a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always.*

**Acts 10:19-23** *While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. 20 Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them." 21 Then Peter went down to the men who had been sent to him from Cornelius, and said, "Yes, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come?" 22 And they said, "Cornelius the centurion, a just man, one who fears God and has a good reputation among all the nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to summon you to his house, and to hear words from you."*

Cornelius' reputation was based on his \_\_\_\_\_. He was devout, just, and generous. He also feared God and prayed often. For those reasons, he had a \_\_\_\_\_ reputation among all the nation of the Jews.

God rewarded him by allowing him to be the first Gentile converted to Christ.

When we ruin someone else's reputation by unnecessarily talking about their sins, we are gossips.

What are we when we unnecessarily talk about our own sins?

**Matt 23:27-28** *Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead*

*men's bones and all uncleanness. 28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*

The Pharisees were concerned about their \_\_\_\_\_. Their image was about them.

## **Rebuilding a Destroyed Reputation**

**Gen 39:19-23** *So it was, when his master heard the words which his wife spoke to him, saying, "Your servant did to me after this manner," that his anger was aroused. 20 Then Joseph's master took him and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were confined. And he was there in the prison. 21 But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. 23 The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under Joseph's authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.*

You rebuild your reputation by doing the \_\_\_\_\_ thing. There are no shortcuts.

**Acts 9:28-30** *So he was with them at Jerusalem, coming in and going out. 29 And he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and disputed against the Hellenists, but they attempted to kill him. 30 When the brethren found out, they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him out to Tarsus.*

By turning people's attention to Christ

**2 Cor 7:9-12** *Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. 10 For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 11 For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*

If your reputation is destroyed due to your own sins, then you need to be moved with godly sorrow, confess, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Remember there is a difference between confessing your sins and advertising your sins. Don't hinder God's ability to use your reputation for His glory by unnecessarily confessing your sins to the wrong people.

\*\*\* Confession is a gift that **must** be practiced according to God's instructions!

If you have sin in your life that needs to be confessed to God - confess it to God.

If you have sin in your life that needs to be confessed to someone you've sinned against - confess it to them!

If you have sin that needs to be confessed to this group - confess it to this group!