

A GOOD NAME

"A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver or gold." (22:1)

INTRODUCTION—Would you rather have someone tell your children, after you are gone, that you were a rich man or that you were a good, honest, and noble man (19:1)? A man's integrity can gain him honor, glory, and dignity that money cannot buy (22:1). *"It is the foundation of society, the basis of justice, and the guarantee of treaties among men and nations."* (J.A. McNutt, *Pearls From Proverbs*, Vol. II, p.27).

I. A GOOD NAME

- A. Importance (12:3). It establishes him.
- B. Originates from Others, Not Self (27:2,21). Man's reputation comes from others recognizing his integrity, not from him announcing it! The value of gold and silver is tested by refining—the value of a man's character is tested by his reputation.
- C. Honor (3:3-4). Along with a good reputation is the honor associated with it.
 - 1. From God (11:20).
 - 2. From Men (12:8; 10:7; 11:16). The world has nothing to say but praise for honorable men. But dishonorable conduct always brings reproach (18:3).

II. HOW TO ACHIEVE A GOOD REPUTATION

- A. Integrity (10:9; 11:3; 20:7). Integrity is 'adherence to a code of values.' It is a man's noblest possession. It is not an action in particular, but a **motivation** to action. Integrity speaks of a man's relationship with himself.
 - 1. A man who walks in integrity will not stumble, because he has something to guide his steps properly. The dishonorable man is a blight on his family—they must also live under his bad reputation.
- B. Honesty (12:20; 13:5; 17:20; 20:17). Integrity calls for honesty. Deceit is in the heart of the unrighteous (26:24-26). Honesty sets a man apart and gives him a good name. Surely 'Honesty **is** the best policy'!
- C. Diligently Seek God (11:27; 21:21). Then when you make a mistake, others will know where your heart is.
- D. Righteous Deeds (20:11). What we **do** tells people what we **are** (cf. Matthew 12:33-35).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS—

- 1) *Why is a good name better than riches (22:1)?*
- 2) *As a Christian, is it important for you to have a good name?*
- 3) *Who honors such people?*
- 4) *What is integrity? Why is it important?*

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- 5) *How does a just man bestow blessing upon his children (20:7)?*
 - 6) *What does honesty tell people about you?*
 - 7) *Does a man with a good reputation ever make mistakes? What do people know about him though?*
 - 8) *Why are our actions a good indication of our integrity or lack of it (cf. Matthew 12:33-35)?*
 - 9) *What is the final goal of a life of integrity (4:18)?*
 - 10) *Do you have a good reputation?*