

Introduction: What do people think of you? Do you care? You should! Reputation is the estimation in which a person or thing is held, especially by the community or the general public. We have all known people of ill repute. These are people who have lost respect among their peers because of things they have done in life. Reputation and respect go hand and hand. When Jesus said we are the light of the world, He spoke of the fact that Christians are to influence the wicked world around them to seek after God and to glorify his name. If we damage our reputation with worldly living, then our salt loses its flavor, and we dim our light. Let's think about our reputation as we consider its inestimable value.

Every Christian should strive to have a good reputation.

1. Proverbs 3:3-5: In whose sight should we "find favor and high esteem?" From verses 3 and 5, list three things that can establish a good reputation.
2. Luke 2:52: With Whom did Jesus increase in favor?
3. Romans 14:17-18: What three things can we do to be acceptable to God and approved by men?

A good reputation is of inestimable value.

1. Proverbs 22:1: This Proverb follows a Hebraism. It mentions the same thing in both lines— "A good name" and "Loving favor." Name the two characteristics mentioned. How is their value illustrated?
2. Ecclesiastes 7:1: What is compared to a "good name?"
3. 1 Timothy 4:12, 16: Paul told Timothy to be an example to believers in what six things? By being a good example in these, what two things could Timothy accomplish? (vs 16).

Our character determines our reputation.

1. Someone once said, "Take care of your character, and your reputation will take care of itself."
2. 2 Corinthians 8:16-24: Where did Paul say Titus' praise was? (vs 18). What does this mean?
3. Acts 6:3, 5: Name two things we can possess today that caused these men to be "men of good reputation."

Our reputation can determine how effective we can be in leading others to Christ.

1. Matthew 5:13-16: What did Jesus mean when he said that we are "The salt of the earth" and "the light of the world?"
2. Did He intend for us to make good use of our reputations?
3. What was the goal of using our reputations for good? (vs. 16).

We must do all that we can to protect our good reputations.

1. We can spend years acquiring a good reputation and then lose that good standing in one moment of indiscretion.
2. 1 Peter 2:11-12: What should we do to have our conduct honorable among the Gentiles? What effect can our good reputation have on the Gentiles?
3. Philippians 2:14-16: What two things can damage our reputation among those in the world? (vs. 14).
4. Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:7: What did Paul mean by the phrase "good testimony?" (1 Tim 3:7). Why is it important for leaders in the church to have a good testimony among those who aren't Christians? If a preacher, elders, deacon, or member has a bad reputation in the world, what can this cause in relation to God's name and His doctrine? (1 Timothy 6:1)
5. Titus 2:7-10: Name four things in which we should show a pattern of good works. What are the results? (vs 8b, 10b)