

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Your Testimony

Bill Brinkworth

One of the most valuable assets a Christian can have is his testimony. What others think of him is often what they see him do, how he reacts in certain situations, and how they believe a Christian should be living (although their view may not always be accurate). Paul gave some advice on how to preserve that testimony in Ephesians 4. Some of his advice included:

- Do not live like the rest of world and put the wrong value on things that are not really that important (Eph. 4:17-18).
- Do not lust after things of this world, and be consumed with greed for them (Eph. 4:19).
- Do not let your conversation with others be about lust for this world's things (Eph. 4:22).
- Live a righteous life and strive to be a good example (Eph. 4:24).
- Let your conversation always be honest, and do not lie (Eph. 4:25).
- If you get angry, get it right with those involved before the sun goes down (Eph. 4:26).
- Do not get close to sin, and allow the devil to destroy your testimony (Eph. 4:27).
- Do not steal, but work hard for what you want (Eph. 4:28).
- Be careful of the words you utter, making sure what you say helps others (Eph. 4:29).
- Do not sadden the indwelling Holy Spirit by committing sin (Eph. 4:30).
- Do not allow the sins of bitterness, violence, anger, and evil speaking to be part of your life (Eph. 4:31).
- Be kind to others (Eph. 4:32).

As hard as we try, there will always be some that see our example wrong no matter how we adhere to the above advice and other godly principles. Although it is impossible to please all the people all the time, we have a responsibility to try to have the best testimony we possibly can. Our example is not so much about what others think about us, but what others think about Christ from our example. We are often all the unsaved will ever see about Christ. Will they determine that they do not want to be a Christian, because of what they observed in our behavior; or will they consider being one because of the way we live our lives?

“Your walk talks louder than your talk talks!”

Your Name

Bill Brinkworth

More valuable than your house, your intelligence, your good looks, or your wealth is your name. When your name is uttered, what connotation does it bring to the hearers' minds? Do they first contemplate, "Oh, he has lied in the past, so chances are what he says may not be the truth"? When you are mentioned, do they giggle and remember all the foolish things you have done, and because of your past, refuse to take anything you do seriously? Does the label "adulterer" flash through their minds when you are mentioned, because of sinful behavior in the past? Are you branded as a cheat forever, because of being caught in class many years ago? When "hard worker" is mentioned, is your name the first one they think of? Are you always remembered positively, because of your concern and care of others?

What we do or say usually burns an impression in someone's mind of who they think we are, and what they think of us and our character. It is an impression that is difficult to change or erase from their memory. The value others put on our name often dictates how we will be treated by them. It may affect job placement; how we are treated in school, or even who will agree to marry us. Others' opinions and thoughts when our name is mentioned have a lot to do with who we are, and who we will be.

Most of the references in the Bible using "name" have to do with God's name. All through the Bible His name has earned others' respect. His name stands for justice, truthfulness, faithfulness, one who is able to do the "impossible", and the one to go to in time of need. *"O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Psalm 8:9 Also: Psalm 8:1, Psalm 29:2, Psalm 102:15, Isaiah 9:6.*

The Bible does have something to say about the values our name can have. Here is some of what the Bible says our name can mean to others:

- The Bible says the reputation your name brings is of great value.
"A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." Proverbs 22:1
- Do good and the right thing and your name will have a positive meaning to many. Do wrong and your name will be forgotten, or it will not be a pleasant memory to those that know you. If your name has a negative connotation, it is usually no one's fault but your own.
"The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot." Proverbs 10:7
- An ointment may be fragrant and smell good to many, but it will not affect as many as will one with a good reputation. The loss of such a wondrous person with a good name will be a great tragedy to those that were touched by his life.
"A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth." Ecclesiastes 7:1
- God will not honor the reputation of those that did not honor Him.
"Thou hast rebuked the heathen, thou hast destroyed the wicked, thou hast put out their name for ever and ever." Psalms 9:5
- Those that love God will have a good reputation for doing so.
"But if any man love God, the same is known of him." I Corinthians 8:3

Our lives impact many. What impact did we leave in their minds when we interacted with them? What do others think when they remember us?

"To keep a good reputation: "Abstain from all appearance of evil."

— I Thessalonians 5:22

I Can Show Whose Side I Am On

D. L. Moody

I remember the old woman who started out when the Civil war began with a fire-poker in her hand. When asked what she was going to do with it she said, "I can't do much with it, but I can show whose side I'm on."

Christian, even if you can't do much, you can show to which side you belong.

"I would not give much for your religion, unless it can be seen. Lamps do not talk, but they do shine." — *Author Unknown*

Imitate the Right One

D. L. Moody

Be ye imitators of God, as dear children; not as slaves might imitate their master unwillingly, dreading the crack of his whip; but loving, willing imitators such as children are. You do not urge your children to imitate you; they do this even in their games. See how the boy rides his wooden horse like his father, and the girl imitates her mother. See the minister's little boy trying to preach like his father; and the tiny girl with a Bible in front of her and an ancient pair of spectacles upon her nose, saying, "Now I'm grandmamma." They copy us. They cannot help it.

Such should be the holiness of the genuine Christian. He is born from above, and hence he lives above. His imitation of God springs out of his relationship with His Lord. Holiness must be spontaneous, or it is spurious. We cannot be driven to holiness like an ox to his ploughing. We must delight in the law of God after the inward man. Be ye imitators of God, as dear children because you do not wish for anything better than to be like your Father, and have no ambition in the world that takes away your aspiration to be holy even as God is holy.

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Mat. 5:48

What an Example

Author Unknown

Years ago, the communist government in China commissioned an author to write a biography of Hudson Taylor with the purpose of distorting the facts and presenting him in a bad light. They wanted to discredit the name of this consecrated missionary of the Gospel. As the author was doing his research, he was increasingly impressed by Taylor's saintly character and godly life, and he found it extremely difficult to carry out his assigned task with a clear conscience. Eventually, at the risk of losing his life, he laid aside his pen, renounced his atheism, and received Jesus as his personal Savior. Whether we realize it or not, our example leaves an impression on others.

"Your reputation arrives long before you do, and remains long after you are gone."