

BIBLICAL ECONOMICS

THE MINISTRY AND ITS FINANCIAL INTEGRITY, [2 Corinthians 8:1-9:15](#)

B. The Men Who Handle the Collection, [2 Corinthians 8:16-24](#)

- 1. They care for the church—earnestly care (v.16-17).**
- 2. They have a reputation for the gospel, a testimony for witnessing (v.18).**
- 3. They are representatives chosen by the church in order to avoid charges of misconduct against the minister (v.19-21).**
- 4. They are diligent in many things, but especially in collections (v.22).**
- 5. They are partners of the minister (v.23).**
- 6. They are to be loved by the church (v.24).**

THE PRAISE FOR THE ASSISTANT TO TITUS—[2 Corinthians 8:18](#)

2 Corinthians 8:18 (NASB)

¹⁸“We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in *the things of the gospel has spread* through all the churches.”

An unnamed man is chosen to assist Titus in his trip to Corinth because of his testimony for Jesus Christ in spreading the Gospel. A variety of guesses have been offered at his identity, but they are speculations. We do know, however, that he had a good name or testimony. His faithfulness and love for Christ gave people confidence that he could be entrusted with the important task of helping Titus with the love offering.

We are reminded of the importance of having a good name and the loving favor of people. Solomon stated that they are more valuable than gold and riches.

Proverbs 22:1 (NASB)

¹“A *good name is to be more desired than great wealth, Favor is better than silver and gold.*”

If the goal of your life is to have a good name for Christ, then your attitude will help you to live above the boards. You will be motivated to not do anything that will hurt your testimony or other people. What do people think, when they hear your name? Do they have thoughts of graciousness, goodness, kindness, and faithfulness? Is your name sweet to their ears and thoughts? Do they crave your company or do they hope to avoid you? Is

your name a bitter thought? Does your name trigger thoughts of a person characterized by harshness, selfishness, stubbornness, moodiness, or a lack of discretion?

Solomon places a priority on the loving favor, acceptance, or approval of men. Such approval comes from having a good name and being a person of integrity and character. Having a good name is to be considered more important than riches. The loving favor of people is more valuable than gold and silver. Do your best to have a good name for Christ and for your family.

*“You got your name from your Father. It was all he had to give.
So, it’s yours to use and cherish, for as long as you may live.
If you lose the watch he gave you, it can always be replaced.
But a black mark on your name, son, can never be erased.
It was clean the day you took it, and a worthy name to bear,
When he got it from his father, there was no dishonor there.
So, make sure you guard it wisely, after all is said and done.
You’ll be glad the name is spotless when you give it to your son.”*

Charles Spurgeon wrote, “A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you, and were helped by you, will remember you when forget-me-nots are withered. Carve your name on hearts, and not on marble.” This is what a man named Kyle Rote did in the NFL.

Kyle Rote, Sr., was an all-pro National Football League player of the 1950s. He was the captain of the New York Giants football team for 10 years. After Rote’s death, his son, Kyle Jr., said of all the compliments and awards his dad had received, one stood above the rest: Fourteen of the elder Rote’s former teammates named their sons Kyle. Beloved, take care of your character, and your reputation will take care of itself. Few things are more dangerous to a person’s reputation than having nothing to do, and plenty of time in which to do it.

Folks, **our name**, **our character**, **our integrity**, and **our testimony** are what give our witness for Jesus Christ credibility or diminish it. If we have a rotten reputation, then our words about how Jesus changed our lives are muffled and muted because there seems to be no evidence of change. Our words have little power or impact upon the people we are telling about the Lord because we have hurt our own personal credibility. This is why it is vital that you clear your conscience with God and with men if you have lived an inconsistent, carnal, backslidden life. Clearing your conscience is the beginning phase of restoring your name and testimony.

Acts 24:16 (NASB)

¹⁶“In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience *both* before God and before men.”

At the end of World War I, Herbert Hoover, later to become President of the United States, led the allied relief efforts in Europe. He kept hundreds of thousands from

starving, and a new word entered the Finnish language. In Finland, to “**hoover**” means “**to be kind, to help.**” I can clearly remember this phrase as it was still used when I was a child in New York City.

If someone coined a word from your name, what would it be? Would it signify **character**, **helpfulness**, or **cheerfulness**, or would it be some mean and ugly word? Beloved, God wants us to focus on having a good name more than great wealth. He wants us to live above the boards. How do we do this?

Some Things you can Do to Live above the Boards and Have a Good Name

1. Conquer Hypocrisy in Your Life.

Those without Christ are quickly turned-off by our hypocrisy. How many times have we heard such statements as, “**I’m not going to church! It is full of hypocrites!**” Unfortunately, there are hypocrites in the church. When we claim to be something we are not, our lives become a stumbling block to others, especially for weak Christians and people who do not know the Lord. It becomes much more difficult to reach that unsaved person for Christ. Paul warned us about this and Jesus rebuked hypocrisy.

Matthew 23:27-28 (NASB)

²⁷ “**Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness.**”

²⁸ “**So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.**”

1 Corinthians 8:9 (NASB)

⁹ “**But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.**”

Romans 14:13 (NASB)

¹³ “**Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother’s way.**”

A stumbling block is usually something that is low and is doing nothing but getting in the way. Many times, it is covered with dirt and cannot be easily seen. We become stumbling blocks, too, when we are spiritually low and not growing in the Lord.

When we are doing nothing in our spiritual growth and walk with God, we tend to get in the way of the spiritual growth of others. When we are dirty or living in sin, we are a stumbling block. Let me ask, “Are you a stumbling block? Are you a Christian, but because of your hypocritical lifestyle, have you become a stumbling block to others?” If so, why not get that corrected now?

Conquering hypocrisy in our lives will help us to establish a good name. For many people, the only thing they know about God is what they see in the lives of Christians. What do they see in your life? Are you living above the boards?

2. Be Consistent in your Conduct.

The story is told that, as Alexander the Great reviewed his troops one day, and one of his soldiers slouched a bit. "What's your problem?" Alexander asked him. The soldier explained that he had been out on the town the night before. "What's your name?" Alexander asked. "Alexander," the soldier answered. The general said, "Either change your conduct or change your name." Alexander was concerned about the conduct of one that bore the same name as his. Beloved, we too, should be concerned about having a good name and conducting ourselves properly. Our goal should be to live above the boards.

Titus 2:7 (NASB)

⁷"In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified."

Matthew 5:16 (NASB)

¹⁶"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

When we are up one day and down the next, all the time, when we are living in a Christ-like manner one day, and then acting like the Devil on another, we create confusion in the minds and hearts of those without Christ. Our inconsistency turns people off toward the Lord and hurts our reputation. You will find that the world has a higher standard for Christians than what believers have for themselves. The unsaved may not know Christ, but they do expect us to act like Him consistently.

The reason we are inconsistent is because we are trying to serve two masters. We try to serve the Lord and this world or ourselves at the same time. We have not made up our mind to serve Christ and this makes us inconsistent and unstable.

Matthew 6:24 (NASB)

²⁴"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth."

James 1:8 (NASB)

⁸"*Being* a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."

God wants us to finish our course for Jesus Christ. When we get mad, backslide, quit going to church, or stop living for God, we are saying to the world that the Lord is not

worth living for and thus, we damage our name. We are saying that there are other things more important than the Son of God. This is what Demas did when he quit serving Christ.

2 Timothy 4:10 (NASB)

¹⁰“For Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.”

3. Be Compassionate and Concerned for Others in order to gain a good name.

People tend to respond to our love more than anything else we do or say. In fact, they don't care how much we know until they know how much we care. This is what the Lord was trying to get across to us.

John 13:35 (NASB)

³⁵“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Galatians 5:13 (NASB)

¹³“For you were called to freedom, brethren; only *do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*”

You and I become an example of love by loving people. People learn to love others by the way they are loved or see love. Our kindness, patience with the faults of others, sacrifice, forgiveness, and not complaining when we are hurt, demonstrate our love. One of the best ways we can establish a good name is by our compassion and love for other people. It is pretty hard to offend people when you are showing them love. It is easy to offend them when you show hate and indifference toward them.

4. Have Christ-like Communication.

Our tongue has a way of offending people and turning them away from Christ. It is for this reason we are to be careful in what we say. More people have ruined their reputation and their name by what they have said, than by any other method. God consistently warns us of the power of the tongue.

James 3:2 (NASB)

²“For we all stumble in many *ways*. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.”

Proverbs 18:21 (NASB)

²¹“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, And those who love it will eat its fruit.”

Titus 2:7-8 (NASB)

⁷“In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, *with* purity in doctrine, dignified,
⁸sound *in* speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.”

Colossians 4:6 (NASB)

⁶“Let your speech always be with grace, *as though* seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.”

5. Clear your Conscience.

There are going to be times when you do fail or offend others by your actions, attitudes, or words. If this happens, then we are obligated to clear our conscience with God and men. We protect God’s reputation of justice by judging ourselves and making our “wrongs” right with others. Paul stressed this truth repeatedly.

1 Timothy 1:19 (NASB)

¹⁹“Keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.”

1 Timothy 1:5 (NASB)

⁵“But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.”

Having a clear conscience means you have a conscience which is not troubled or distressed by the guilt of your offenses. It means that you have made right, made restitution, or sought forgiveness for your offenses. No one can point a finger at you and say, “You wronged me and have not made it right.”

6. Be Consecrated to Christ.

Our attitude about sin, and our actions concerning temptation, heavily influence others. The crowd can influence someone to do that which is wrong, but also that which is right. God wants us to be holy people and encourage others to live for Him. He wants us to be pure in heart, character, actions and attitude. When we live holy lives, we properly represent the Lord who is holy. The world expects us to live holy lives even though they may tempt us to sin and compromise. When we are consecrated to Christ, we are behaving in a way that will help us to establish a good name.

1 Timothy 5:22 (NASB)

²²“Do not lay hands upon anyone *too* hastily and thereby share *responsibility* for the sins of others; **keep yourself free from sin.**”

1 Peter 1:15-16 (NASB)

¹⁵“But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all *your* behavior;

¹⁶ because it is written, “YOU SHALL BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY.”

1 Corinthians 6:18 (NASB)

¹⁸“Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body.”

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 of consecration and godliness leaves an impression on others. Hudson Taylor established a good name by a godly life. His life pointed an unsaved man to Christ.

7. Be Confident in the Lord.

When we have faith and confidence in the Lord, it brings honor and glory to Him and gives us a good name. Our confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ pleases Him.

Hebrews 11:6 (NASB)

⁶“And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

Romans 1:17 (NASB)

¹⁷“For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

If we do not trust Him, how can we expect an unsaved person to have confidence in Him? Our praise for Him demonstrates our confidence in Him.

Psalms 107:2 (NASB)

²“Let the redeemed of the LORD say *so*, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the adversary”

Psalms 18:49 (NASB)

⁴⁹“Therefore I will give thanks to You among the nations, O LORD, And I will sing praises to Your name.”

We have examined two areas in this portion of **2 Corinthians 8**.

* *The Passion of Titus*

* *The Praise for the Assistant to Titus*

* *Next, the Precautions for Security and Integrity*