



Command 3: Rejoice
Day 18

TRADE IN YOUR REPUTATION!

Few experiences in life are more painful than having one's name and reputation damaged. Our name represents all that we are, and when it is slandered or vilified with false or distorted information, we are jolted into action—or reaction. We instinctively know that . . .

“A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold” (Proverbs 22:1).

We often try to increase respect for our name through personal riches, prestigious possessions, and praiseworthy achievements. The driving force behind this self-effort is usually a fear of man's rejection. God warns that “the fear of man bringeth a snare . . .” (Proverbs 29:25). A snare is a death trap that holds its victims in its grip until destruction comes.

A person's name is important and should not be tarnished by words, actions, or attitudes that harm other people. However, there is a far better name than ours which is rather to be chosen! It is the name of Jesus, which is above every name in heaven and on earth (see Philippians 2:9–11). The command to rejoice involves trading in our name and reputation for God's.

No longer should we wonder what people think of us, but rather we should ask, Do they see Jesus Christ in us?

When I was 29 years old, I was the director of a youth organization. For several years I had been developing a plan that I believed would be effective for youth. When I presented it to the board of directors, I was stunned by their reaction! They not only rejected and reviled the plan, but they brought against me ten accusations, which I believed were false or trivial. They also demoted



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SEE ENEMIES AS AGENTS!

Wisdom is basing responses on the bigger picture. This means recognizing that whatever happens to us is not the whim of fate or the will of man but the work of God. If a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without God's approval, neither can anyone attack us without God's permission.

If we view revilers as our enemies, we will get angry and discouraged, but if we see them as agents for our good and God's glory, we will rejoice!

Paul was tormented and attacked so painfully that he pleaded with God three times to deliver him. When God explained that this messenger (agent) from Satan was allowed for the purpose of keeping Paul humble so that the power of God would rest upon him, Paul gloried in the assault and took pleasure in it. (See II Corinthians 12:6–10.)

Job had the same insight. Satan was clearly responsible for the destruction of Job's children, possessions, and health; yet, Job did not say, "God has given, and Satan has taken away." Instead, he said, "The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away . . ." (Job 1:21).

God causes the wrath of men to praise Him (see Psalm 76:10) by using revilers to bring about the very achievements that they ridiculed.

The brothers of Joseph reviled him for his preposterous dreams, which foretold that one day they would bow down before him. In an act of hate and envy, they sold Joseph as a slave, which actually brought his dreams to pass. Later, he told them, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20).

Jesus was reviled by the Pharisees for stating that if they destroyed the temple (of His body), He would raise it up in three days. Their cruel act of nailing Him to the cross allowed this historic achievement to come to pass for our salvation.

Actually, the pages of Scripture and history are filled with examples of great achievements that were facilitated through the reviling of opponents. Dr. Raymond Damadian was ridiculed by colleagues for thinking that he could design an imaging unit that would produce an image of internal organs. Their reactions spurred him on to invent the MRI scanner, which revolutionized diagnostic medicine.

Since this is the way of God, it is no wonder that we are to rejoice when all men speak evil of us falsely. God is getting such a person ready for great achievement here and for great rewards in heaven!

Rhema Search

“. . . Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven . . .” (Matthew 5:11–12).