

THE VALUE OF REPUTATION

By Dr. Hal Webb, Evangelist

"I THEREFORE, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. With all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love." Eph. 4:1&2

As a young boy my parents taught me the importance of family reputation. Born in Conklin, NY my folks lived lives above reproach. When my father shook hands on an agreement that settled it, and he was a trusted man of integrity. Growing up, my brother and I were taught the importance of family, and the affect of our lives in the neighborhood. We were taught belonging to the Webb family was a large responsibility, and we must never besmirch the name. We were raised to keep our reputation acceptable to all around us. On my first car, after my graduation and ordination, I put a little clergy sign on the rear license plate. Whenever I showed impatience with other drivers my mother would always say "remember the little sign on the back of your car." For those of us who have accepted Christ we have been placed in the family of God. We have the responsibility for Godly behavior as members of the family of God. Let's study Ephesians 4-6 and see how we should live up to our position as members of the family of God. **(1). Live Up To Your Position:** *"Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called."* Eph. 4:1b. We are to walk worthy of our identification with Christ. We must be humble, gentle, patient, loving and united. We are called to one body and spirit into the living family of Christ. We must be careful to reflect Him in all that we do and say. Actually, we are the only Bible most of our friends are reading. Never forget whose we are, and bring any reproach upon our Christian family. Our actions are constantly observed by those

around us who evaluate Christianity by what they see in us. We must not disgrace the family of God. **(2). Cultivate Our Spiritual Gifts:** *"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. Eph. 4:15.* Every person saved by the grace of God, is urged to grow up and use every part of our body to glorify God. God has given each of us some talents and abilities not to be hidden, but developed into our very best service unto God. Move out of the ranks of those in your church who do little, and pitch in your loving help to the needs around you.. The abilities Christ has given you must be put into practice in your church and neighborhood. **(3). Put Off The Old Life:** *"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart."* Eph. 4:17 &18. To continue in the old darkened way of thinking and living is a great mistake, if you profess to be saved. You are no longer under the curse of sin, alienating in your mind the things of God. You are an indwelt soldier of the cross and are being taught the truth in Jesus Christ. Don't allow Satan to darken your mind, leaving you a life of greediness and uncleanness. No longer walk in the circles of sin and blindly follow the paths of evil. Branch out into the very best believer you can be, and don't rethink and be entertained in the old ways that enslaved you. **(4). Put On The New Life:** *"That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts: And be renewed in the spirit of your mind: And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. 4:22-24.* Decide to live your life totally for Christ, putting old things behind, and reaching for the victories of a Christ filled life. Every day will be a thrill as the Holy Spirit directs your daily

living. Discard the old and live in the glories the Lord plans for you. **(5). Love Others:** *"And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."* Eph. 5:2. This is not as easy as it sounds. We are to love people around us no matter what they do. This can require sacrifice, but as Christ forgave them who mistreated Him, so must we. True love can break down every barrier, and our goal is to be like Christ. He loved the very ones who spit on Him and nailed Him to the cross. Loving everyone is not easy, but it pays great dividends. and enhances your work for God. Not only our words, but our actions have great effect upon others. **(6). Walk In The Light:** *"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth."* Eph. 5:8 & 9. We do this by manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. Where He leads we must follow among the shadows of everyday living. I say again we must manifest the fruits of the Spirit. Avoid all the darkness of the flesh and the world around us and walk in the light. **(7). Let The Holy Spirit Fill You:** *"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. Eph. 5:18 -19.* We know that every true believer received the Holy Spirit when they received Christ. He dwells within as God's switchboard of communication. He dwells within whether we are awake or sleep. He will never leave us or forsake us. There are additional times when He fills more and His power of direction is there within us. There is never an excuse to flounder around in our own ways, confused by the problems we face. The formula is in the Word and the Spirit will lead us to the very verse we need. Learn to lean upon the Spirit,s direction and you will not lose your way. *"Giving thanks*

always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Eph. 5:20. Be sure the Holy Spirit has full control of your life. **(8). Put On The Armor Of God:** *Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* Eph. 6:10 & 11. We need to not just put it on, but understand the parts and how they will help us in the fight. We are urged to stand in the whole armor of God. Our loins are to be girt about with truth as righteous soldiers of the cross. Our feet are shod with the Gospel of peace, the eternal foundation of all that is of the Lord. The shield of faith has protected every battling saint, no matter what the age and time. The helmet Of salvation covers our mind and all the challenges that surround us. The sword of the spirit, the mighty Word of God will be the weapon that will deliver us. We are totally armed and protected against all the darts of wickedness around us. Our resources and the promises of God will guarantee our victory Praise God! **(9). Pray Continually:** *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.* Eph 6:18. With the many complications of today's living, a great source of strength is prayer. We must utilize it faithfully and continually for it is our source of communication with God. Sinners struggle in the flesh of man and we Christians must trust in the strength of the Lord. His promise is *"I will be with thee; I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courageous.* Joshua 1:5b&6a. God promises to be with you in every situation. Let's concentrate on our testimony, and be a shining example of all that is right before the eyes of God and men. Our reputation will assist our witness, and a genuine Godly life will do much to bring the lost to God. **Treasure it, and be a firm consistent example of a child of God.**

