



Course 3, Session 6 Student Notes: A Good Name, Reputation and Word of Mouth

The Marketing You Cannot Buy or Fake

Big Idea: A good name is the marketing you cannot fake, and it is worth more than great riches. The best promotion is other people speaking well of you.

How to use these notes. These are yours to study on your own, before or after the session. Read each section slowly. Under every principle there is a **Notes** space to write what stands out to you, and a **Reflect** question to answer honestly in writing. Keep your Bible nearby. Take about 30 minutes, and end in prayer. Bring your notes and questions to the group. This is the final session of Course 3, so let it pull the whole course together.

Open in Prayer

Before you begin, pray this simple prayer, or your own: "Father, You say a good name is more precious than riches. Help me build one, not by promoting myself, but by being the kind of person and business worth speaking well of. Let my reputation point back to You. Amen."

The Scripture for This Session

Read these slowly, out loud if you can:

- **Proverbs 22:1**, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
- **3 John 1:12**, "Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself."
- **Luke 7:1 to 10** (the centurion others vouched for, whom we study below).

Reflect: When you need a plumber, a doctor, or a contractor, what do you trust more, their ad or a friend saying "use this person, they are amazing"? So what are your own customers saying about you when you are not in the room?

The Big Picture

We have spent this whole course building marketing you can be proud of. You have learned to know the one person you serve, to carry your message in a true story, to make it plain, to promote without ever bearing false witness, and to keep sowing consistently. Tonight we arrive at the thing all of that produces, and it is the most powerful marketing in existence: a good name.

When another person speaks well of you, when a customer tells a friend “you have to use them,” that recommendation carries more weight than any ad you could ever run. You cannot buy it, you cannot fake it, and Scripture says it is worth more than great riches. A good name is not a separate tactic you bolt on at the end. It is the natural fruit of doing everything else with honesty over time. Over this session we will look at four truths about reputation, and how to earn the kind of name that markets for you. Read each one, write your notes, and answer the reflection.

Principle 1: Referrals Are the Highest Trust, Lowest Cost Marketing There Is.

Ask yourself why word of mouth is so powerful, and the answer is trust. When you say you are great, people quietly discount it, because of course you would say that. But when a third party says you are great, with nothing to gain from it, the words land as simple truth. A recommendation from a trusted friend slips past every defense a person has, because the trust is already there before you ever enter the room.

That is why the best marketing is not something you say about yourself, it is something others say about you. And it costs you nothing but the character it takes to earn it. There is no ad budget on earth that can buy the sentence “you have to use them.” It is handed over freely by people you served well, and it reaches places your own voice never could. Your job is not to shout louder. Your job is to be so genuinely good, so honest, so excellent in serving people, that they cannot help but talk.

Reflect: Who already speaks well of you that you have never thought to thank or ask? What is your business known for right now, and is that what you want it known for?

Notes:

Principle 2: You Earn a Good Name With Consistency, Integrity, and Over Delivery.

A good name is more precious than riches, Proverbs says, and it is your most valuable and least protected asset. It takes years to build and can be lost in a day. So how do you build it? Not by announcing it, but by the second mile you learned in Course 2, by giving people more than they expected, again and again, until the pattern becomes your reputation.

Everything honest you have built feeds this. Knowing and genuinely serving your customer builds it. Telling the truth always builds it. Being clear and easy to deal with builds it. Showing up consistently builds it. You do not

manufacture a reputation, you earn it, one honest interaction at a time, and then it begins to spread on its own. And here is the beautiful part: a good name is built quietly, long before it ever pays off publicly. You are being faithful in a hundred small moments no one seems to notice, and then one day, in a room you are not even in, your name gets spoken and people lean in.

Reflect: What one genuine, generous action could you take that, repeated over time, would earn the reputation you actually want?

Notes:

Principle 3: Make It Easy. Simply Ask Happy Customers to Share.

Being worth talking about is the foundation, but you are still allowed to help the conversation along. Many businesses that deserve a great reputation stay quiet because they think asking is pushy. It is not. When you have genuinely served someone and they are glad, inviting them to share a word, leave a review, or make an introduction is a normal and gracious thing to do.

The key is that you are not begging, and you are not manufacturing praise. You are being so good that recommendations flow, and then simply making it easy for them to flow. A happy customer often wants to help you but never thinks to, or does not know how. A short, honest ask, “would you be willing to share your experience,” removes the friction and lets their real gladness do its work. Treat every customer as if they will tell everyone they know, because they might, and then give the willing ones an easy way to do it.

Reflect: Name three happy customers you could ask this month for a testimonial, a review, or an introduction. What would you actually say to them?

Notes:

Principle 4: Guard Your Name. It Takes Years to Build and a Moment to Spend.

A good name is fragile in a way that money is not. You can lose a large sum and recover it with work. A reputation, once broken by a single dishonest act, is far harder to rebuild, because trust does not come back on the same timeline it left. This is why Scripture treats your name as something to be chosen over silver and gold, and something to be protected.

Guarding your name does not mean anxiously managing your image. It means refusing the small compromises that would betray the trust others have placed in you, even when no one is watching and even when it would be cheaper to cut the corner. Every kept promise adds a little to the account. Every broken one

spends a lot of it. Live so that if the people who know your business had to vouch for you, the way the elders vouched for the centurion, they would say exactly what you would hope, because it would simply be true.

Reflect: Where might you be tempted to spend a little of your good name for a short term gain? What is one boundary you will hold to protect it?

Notes:

The Story: The Centurion Others Vouched For (Luke 7:1 to 10)

Read the passage. A Roman centurion has a beloved servant who is dying, and he wants Jesus' help. But notice what he does not do. He does not show up with a list of his own accomplishments and market himself. Instead, the Jewish elders of the town come to Jesus and plead on the centurion's behalf: "he was worthy for whom he should do this: for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue" (Luke 7:4 to 5).

Sit with how remarkable that is. A Roman officer, an outsider and an occupier, had built such a reputation among the local people through years of genuine generosity that when he was in need, they came running to speak for him. His reputation did the talking. He did not have to pitch himself, because his good name, earned quietly over time through real action, spoke louder than any words he could have offered. Bring in Demetrius from 3 John 1:12, a man whose report was so consistent that everyone spoke well of him, and even the truth itself testified to him. And over it all stands Proverbs 22:1: a good name is to be chosen rather than great riches. The centurion's name got him what money could not, an immediate and favorable hearing from the Son of God, and the healing he sought.

Reflect: If the people who know your business had to vouch for you, like the elders for the centurion, what would they honestly say, and is it what you want them to say?

Notes:

Put It Into Practice

1. Name the reputation you want, in someone else's words. Do not write a slogan. Finish this sentence the way a happy customer would describe you to a friend: "You have to use them, they ____." Then, honestly, write what people actually say now, and the gap between the two. That gap is the work.

2. This week's assignment. Do one thing this week that is genuinely worth talking about: an unexpected generosity, an excellence beyond what was required, a promise kept that cost you something. Then ask one satisfied customer to share their experience. Reputation is built one such action at a time.

The genuine action I will take:

The one happy customer I will ask, and what I will say:

3. Course 3 capstone. Assemble your one page marketing message on a single sheet: who you serve, your customer's story, your plain headline, your honest proof, your simple sowing rhythm, and now the reputation you are building. This is the fruit of the whole course. Bring it to the group.

Go Deeper (Optional)

- **Read:** *Building a StoryBrand* by Donald Miller, and revisit *The Speed of Trust* by Stephen M. R. Covey.
 - **Listen:** the *Marketing Made Simple* podcast.
 - **Study:** Proverbs 22:1; Luke 7:1 to 10; 3 John 1:12; and consider *The Thank You Economy* by Gary Vaynerchuk, run through a biblical filter (we serve generously because it is right, not as a growth hack).
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Close in Prayer

"Father, thank You for walking me through honest marketing, knowing my people, telling the truth, being clear, staying faithful, and now building a good name. Make me the kind of person and business worth speaking well of. Help me earn a reputation quietly, through real and generous action, and let that good name point the people I serve back to You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

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