

Lame Games we Play 3 – Name Game

Hello Redemption Church! Hello online attendees. God bless you.

I am so thankful for an exciting, passionate, and caring church in Plano, Tx. Our savior is exactly what Plano needs. Your testimony of how Jesus has rescued you is exactly what the Dallas Metroplex needs!

My name is Chris Fluitt. My parents named me Christopher and always intended me to be called Christopher, but I am cool with you calling me Chris. I am so happy to preach to you today.

We are in the 3rd week of our series – The Lame Games We Play.

Lame Games we Play Title

Life is filled with games that we should no longer play. We need to put the controller down and walk away when it comes to THE SHAME GAME & THE BLAME GAME.

Those are the 2 games we mentioned in the first 2 weeks of this series. If you missed them, you can catch up with those sermons on our website – redemption-church.com.

Today I want to talk to you about the name game.

The Name Game

I am not talking about the 1964 American Pop song by Shirley Ellis...

Katie, Katie, bo-batie, Banana-fana fo-fatie, Fee-fy-mo-matie Katie!
No I am not talking about that...

Today I am going to talk about something that can turn a great game into a frustrating experience.

Dragon Warrior

An early evolution in gaming was the role playing game. The first thing you would do in these games is to name the character. Dragon Warrior was one of the first games to do this.

It is done often in video games. You take your made character on a quest where they grow in strength and ability.

These games are great. They are very engrossing, but there is a mistake you can make that can be somewhat irksome and frustrating.

The first thing you do is enter your name for your character, which should be a simple task.. but not for a distracted 8 year old.

I remember once naming a character wrong. I must not have been paying attention. Instead of C-H-R-I-S-... C-H-I-R-S.

Chirs

For the rest of the game I was Chirs. I couldn't change it. Once you are named, you are always named.

So if your name is wrong, it is just too bad. You will walk into a village and speak to the villagers and they will say "Oh brave CHIRS, please save us from the dark lord." If you beat the game the king would say "well done Sir CHIRS."

On Dragon Warrior every time you fought it would say "Chirs attacks dealing 7 damage points to the slime creature."

What was a great game became kind of lame when you didn't get your name right.

Perhaps even worse than this is what could happen on an arcade game and got a high score.

High Score

Young people, you know about high score right? You might not. You played games like pac-man, galaga, frogger, and donkey kong to get the high score. They had a list of the high scores saved on the machine and you tried to make that list so that you could write your initials by your score.

For some reason, I could always get a high score, but I always had trouble putting in my initials. They game you like 10 seconds to put in your initials and I always messed up. My

initials are ccf and somehow I would get that wrong. CCE. CCC. BCF!?! WTC is going on here!

You can't brag and show someone your high score if you put the wrong name down. "See that CCE? That is me." "yeah right..." There is no high score swag with wrong letters by your score.

The Name Game is a frustrating game where you have allowed someone to define you with the wrong name.

In video games, names matter.

Names matter

In life, names matter.

When you are named in life it feels impossible to change.

Good luck living down that terrible nickname someone stuck you with in grade school. Anyone ever have a terrible nickname? If you run into those old friends they are likely to still call you that nickname.

People become branded by what someone has said about them. My wife was told she was not a good singer when she was young. What someone said in passing with any thought, stuck with my wife for years. Babe you have a great voice. I love to hear you sing unto the Lord.

Be careful what you call your kids. What you name someone, defines them.

Names Define

Hey stupid. Hey ugly. Hey loser. These awful names are tame when compared to some of the things young people call each other on social media.

Don't you ever call someone a "gutter word." Words that belong in the gutter should not be spoken over people.

Do you need me to spell those words out. S-L-U-T. B-I-T-C-H. The "N" word.

#1 Don't let gutter words in your mouth. The Bible tells us that what comes from our mouth comes from our heart. (Luke 6:45) A trashy mouth reveals a trashy heart.

Don't you dare have praise for God in your mouth one moment and gutter trash in your mouth the next.

James 3:9 (NIV2011) With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness.

James 3:10 (NIV2011) Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

James 3:11 (NIV2011) Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?

#2 You ought to care enough for people to not put damaging labels and names on them. Don't you understand that what you call someone matters!? Long after you forgot you said it, they will remember how you defined them. AND A TEXT MESSAGE IS JUST AS BAD AS SAYING OUT LOUD WITH YOUR TONGUE.

Names Define! Things said when you are frustrated and angry remain behind after you have calmed down. What you call your spouse when you are angry can bring ruin to your marriage. What you call your mom & dad when they tell you no can harm a relationship.

If you love that person then gutter trash should not flow from your heart and out of your mouth on them.

God gets frustrated with us, but he never has called you a loser. God has never called you filthy names. God calls you conqueror, victor, powerful & strong, wise, faithful, beautiful, treasure, son & daughter.

The Name Game is a frustrating game where you have allowed someone to define you with the wrong name.

Names matter

Names Define

Beware the namer..

- Beware the namer who is frustrated. You don't want them to name you out of frustration.
- Beware the namer who is faraway with distraction. They could be in the room with you but their heart & mind is somewhere else. Beware that namer.
- Beware the namer who is more focused on their own future than your future. If you don't care about my future than I prefer that you don't try to define me.

Somebody say "beware the namer..."

There is a sad character in the Bible named Rachel. She has more bad moments it seemed than good moments.

Rachel (sheep)

Her name was Rachel which means sheep. Before we understand Rachel we need to understand her husband – Jacob.

Abraham had a son named Isaac. He was to be the heir of promise. His children were going to be a great nation. Out of his family line would come the messiah, the savior, Jesus Christ.

Isaac had 2 sons. Esau & Jacob - Twins that wrestled in the womb. The 1st baby born was named Esau meaning "hairy." He was a hairy baby. Jacob was born with his hand around Esau's heel, appearing to be trying to be born first. They named the 2nd baby Jacob, which meant supplanter, one who trips others up, a deceiver.

Jacob (one who trips others up)

It's a long story, but through deceptive trickery Jacob becomes holder of the birth right promise. He has also made his larger stronger brother, Esau, angry and we now see Jacob running for his life. While running for his life he sees a beautiful girl – this was Rachel.

Rachel (sheep)

Jacob offers Rachel's father, Laban, to work 7 years for him and in return be able to marry the beautiful Rachel.

This seemed like the most promising of situations for Rachel. She was going to marry a man of promise and a man who loved her enough to commit 7 years of his life in servitude. She is going to be the mother of a nation. She is going to be a part of the promised messiah. She is going to be blessed and wealthy. ...but life can be unfair and frustrating.

After serving 7 years for Rachel's hand, Laban tricks Jacob into marrying the wrong girl! Jacob accidentally marries Rachel's less attractive sister Leah.

Leah was now Jacob's wife, and Jacob was forced to work 7 more years for Laban for the right to marry Rachel. This was a frustrating situation. The happy ever after ending she imagined turned out much differently.

It turns out that Rachel could not have children and her sister Leah gave Jacob 10 children. This was unfair. She was meant to be the mother of this great nation, and she couldn't mother a single child.

A tension between Leah & Rachel started to grow. Rachel wasn't so sure she was Jacob's love any longer.

She prayed and God gave her a son. She named him Joseph. This is a very bright spot in Rachel's life.

Then she has another son, but there were complications in birthing her 2nd child.

Genesis 35:16 (NIV2011) ..While they were still some distance from Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and had great difficulty.

Genesis 35:17 (NIV2011) And as she was having great difficulty in childbirth, the midwife said to her, "Don't despair, for you have another son."

Genesis 35:18 (NIV2011) As she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni...

Beware the namer..

- Beware the namer who is frustrated. Oh the frustration that Rachel had felt. Constantly cheated.
- Beware the namer who is faraway with distraction. Could it be that Rachel was not rejoicing in her final moments. She was distracted from the beauty of giving her husband a 12th child, perhaps regretting the fact that she would never give her husband as many sons as Leah.
- Beware the namer who is more focused on their own future than your future. Rachel, were you more focused on your lack of a future than the future of the child?

Beware the namer...

Ben-oni (son of my sorrow)

Ben-oni means “son of my sorrow.” With her final breath she named her son.

I want to remind you that NAMES MATTER & NAMES DEFINE. With her final breath she was defining that her entire life was sorrowful and that it ends right here with regret, fear, pain... sorrow.

But what is so terrible about the naming on Ben-oni is that Rachel was not just defining her perceived reality, but she was also defining the future of this baby. This was Ben-oni, the son of sorrow, the baby who killed his mother in childbirth. He was to be the culmination of his mother’s sorrow.

I want to remind you that NAMES MATTER & NAMES DEFINE.

Beware the namer who defines you from their frustration, who is distracted from the truth, and is more focused on their future than yours.

Rachel was frustrated by life so she named him Ben-oni. Have you let someone name you and define you out of their own

frustration? Parents, brothers & sisters, friends... the closer someone is the greater the sting is when they name you a loser, a failure, worthless, ugly, untalented. Beware the frustrated namer.

Rachel was faraway distracted from the truth that she was heir to the promise God had given Abraham. She too distracted to remember that God had answered her prayer and given her 2 sons when it seemed she would never have any children. **Have you let someone name you and define you that was distracted from truth?** Mom & Dad the truth is that child is a gift from God and we are easily distracted from this truth. Don't be distracted by the bad news about your job and lose sight of the miracle in your home. Don't be distracted by the economy and name your marriage a failure. Don't be distracted by your current health situation and define yourself as forsaken by God. Beware the faraway distracted namer.

Rachel was focused on her immediate future which was she was about to die. Rachel then defined her son with her future, her situation, her emotion. Have you let someone with no future tell you that you have no future? Have you let someone who has failed tell you that you are a failure? Have you let someone who is depressed define you with their symptoms? Beware the namer who is focused only on their own future.

Beware the namer..

It is hard to change a name. Once someone names you, it is very difficult to change that defining feature.

Jacob (one who trips others up)

A few chapters before the event of Rachel's death and the baby's birth, Jacob, had a face to face encounter with God. In this encounter God changes Jacob's name. He would no longer be Jacob the supplanter, the deceiver, the one who trips people up. God gave him the new name ISRAEL, which means one who struggles with God and is Triumphant with God.

Israel (triumphant with God)

The Father changed his name. The Father redefined him. The Father gave him a brand new future!

He was not stuck with the label someone else gave him. God gave him a new identity.

The Father can rename you

Am I speaking to anyone who has had a name change? Is anyone in here that God gave them hope and a future?

The Father won't stand by and let you have the wrong name.

Check out what Israel does at the sad scene in Genesis 35.

Genesis 35:18 (NIV2011) As she breathed her last—for she was dying—she named her son Ben-Oni. **But his father named him Benjamin.**

The Father said NO WAY! This baby is not Ben-oni, son of my sorrows, this baby is Benjamin, which means Son of my strength, the son of my right hand.

Benjamin (Son of my strength)

The Father won't stand by and let you have the wrong name. Son of sorrow was not the right name. The Father wouldn't let that child be called sorrow for the rest of his life. The father made sure the child was called strength the rest of his life.

In the book of Revelation, chapter 21 it tells us about heaven. And it tells us there are 12 gates to the new Jerusalem.

Revelation 21:12 (NIV2011) ...with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel.

When we get to heaven we are going to look up at a gate named BENJAMIN. There will be no gate named BEN-ONI. What some might have named the child on earth is going to be over and done, what the Father names the child will stand as a testimony forever.

Do you understand the terrible things people called you will not exist in heaven!?

Do you need a name change?

The Name Game is a frustrating game where you have allowed someone to define you with the wrong name.

Have you been answering to the wrong name?

Sinner. Drop out. Drug addict. Divorced. Failure. Hypocrite. Unhealthy. In debt. Joke. Unwanted. Unloved. Weak. Stupid.

Let the Father rename you Stop going through life with the wrong name.

In Revelation it says that God will give those that overcome a new name! (Rev 21:17, 3:12)

Isaiah 43:1 says that God calls you BY NAME and that you belong to him!

When you are baptized we declare the name of Jesus over you. You receive His name. You are called by His name.

God has written your name in the Lambs book of life!

HE DID NOT WRITE... Loser in the book... Ugly in the book... wannabe in the book... NO! GOD WROTE YOUR NAME! He didn't write Ben-oni, He wrote Benjamin! Who you truly are is written in the book! God didn't get your name wrong!

Rename someone

Don't you dare name Benjamin, Ben-oni. Don't you dare name someone who is loved by God, a trashy name.

In fact, like Israel, you should call people by the name God has for them.

You are beloved. You are His treasure. You are strong & victorious able to do all things through Christ.

I refuse to call you Ben-oni...

God wants Redemption Church to be a place where people receive a new name.

Jacob had a face to face encounter with God and His name changed forever. Let's have a face to face encounter with God today.