

Objective: to encourage the conscious release of the deposit of grace, each one has received, into other's lives.

10 October 2021
NLBC a.m.

What Will Your Legacy Be?

Ps. 78:1-7; Acts 20:24; Rom. 1:11; Prov. 13:22

1 Cor 11:23 – “For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you....”

Introduction

Every day, across the globe, families fight over the inheritance that they believe, they rightly deserve. Some person, perhaps very dear to them, has passed away and left all their material goods. Now they passionately want and strenuously pursue, what they believe should have been left to them. They turn up at the door of the nearest relative and ask or demand their portion.

You can take no earthly possessions with you, when you die. Your relationship to all the stuff you had, ends. However, there is a legacy or an inheritance, not defined in material or monetary terms that you leave behind that is far greater.

Legacy Defined

- Legacy – the amount of money or property left to someone in a will;
- something handed down to a person from a predecessor or ancestor.

What will your legacy be?

In material terms, people leave:

- Money
- Shares
- Businesses
- Business opportunities
- Property
- Valuable items
- Items of sentimental value
- Vehicles

“For the pagans (unbelievers) **run after** all these things.....” Mt. 6:32.
– “the ‘life-race’ to acquire stuff...”

All of those things listed above, that are left to you, you will someday leave behind, to someone else. In the end of all things, all of those things including the systems that generated them, will be consumed by fire, into ashes and then into nothingness. 2 Pet. 3:10-13; Jer. 16:19 NLT.

There is an “enduring legacy,” however. The Bible speaks of what will not be consumed by fire. What cannot be consumed by fire, is far more valuable, than what can be consumed by fire. 1 Cor. 3:11-15. What are the ‘things,’ that are more precious than gold, that you will leave to those who come after you?

- Your character – the kind of person that you are lives in the memory and life of those who knew you best – 1 Pet. 1:7. Your faith and love live on...unfortunately, hate does as well...
- Your example – your life and lifestyle, are an enduring signpost to those who live beyond you on how to live—good or bad. 2 Tim. 2:3; Ps. 19:9,10

- Your testimony – your experiences with God, live as a verbalised record of the love, power, and faithfulness of God. What encounters with God have you had that you have communicated to others? Josh. 4:1-7
- Your words – what you have said, especially what you have said over and over, will live on in the hearts, minds, and lives of those who come after you. Ps. 78:1-4; 2 Tim. 2:2; Ps. 119:72; Heb. 11:4
- Your eternal accomplishments – Acts. 3:6; Rom. 15:18,19; (healing, a manifestation of the power of God, lives on...that's why God provides both the record and the instruction inherent in the miracle)

You Pass the “Baton” of Legacy To All Those Who Follow

In the ‘relay-race of life,’ we *pass a baton to those behind us.*



What if I Don't Have Any Children?

Even if you don't have children, you still leave a legacy of life, in the lives of others. Joseph imparted into the lives of his family while he was still living—forgiveness, grace, provision and the wisdom of God, that was imparted to Him, through his life experience. Many people today remember aunts, uncles, cousins, Sunday School teachers, etc. that left a lasting positive mark in their lives.

How To Cancel A Negative Legacy

Often people have things they have said and done that they would not want others to be influenced, damaged, or mangled by. Bill Glass, in his book, *Champions For Life*, tells a story of a man who grew up angry and uncommunicative. He married and had a son. He went to prison for crimes he committed. One day, while in prison....building a cell for the new prisoners...he realised he had been building his own cell, before he ever went to prison...his anger, rebellion, and subsequent violence had destroyed his family, his prospects and his future.

Three Keys To Cancelling A Negative Legacy

Some believers start well, but allow events, people, (Rev. 3:11), and words, to 'take them out' of leaving a positive, enduring legacy...offences, attacks, betrayals, contradictions, grief, failure, loss, injustice, hardship and more...has brought them to the decisions that turn them from the path of righteousness, peace and joy. Rom. 14:17. They choose to go into self-medication, pleasure-seeking, anger, unbelief, and despair. This 'faith-failure' is a rebellion against God, according to Scripture, (Ps. 78:8), that they can repent from and return to life—life from the death, they have unwittingly chosen. (illustr. Skid-Row). 2 Tim.4:10.

Social media, in our time, used greatly by the Prince of the Power of the Air, Satan, is used with great effectiveness, to get believers to gradually drift away, from faith, intimacy, and spiritual vitality. They

become negative in their outlook, fearful, critical, and progressively isolated, from real relationships. Also, through social media many believers, get 'radicalised,' to a host of different causes, other than the great 'cause of the Gospel!'

Finishing well...we leave a lasting, positive legacy. Mk. 27:29; Ja. 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:8.

- Repentance -- stop smoking, stop taking alcohol, stop taking cocaine, stop hanging out with the wrong people, stop searching the Internet to find what 'feeds your inner addiction' and return to Christ and ask for His forgiveness and get a brand new unblemished start...illustr. 70 year old man...finally answered the call he had forsaken and spent the last two years of his life, winning souls to Christ, on the mission field.
- Forgiveness – Like Joseph—forgive others and ask forgiveness from all that you have wronged...Mt. 6:14,15
- Loving – love is God in action...redeeming the soul, repairing the lives of others, bringing hope, restoring identity, creating wholeness out of brokenness, in others and the one doing the loving. Love God in worship, faith, and obedience. Love on others every day wherever you find them. Philippians 4:1; 1 Thes. 2:19.

**The believers who live largely isolated lives—apart from a lifestyle of outward-focused loving—end up in loneliness, paralysing grief, depression, fear, and bouts of despair. A sense of uselessness and worthlessness, attacks them from time to time.

Summary

God made each one of us with great purpose. Our lasting 'give-away' legacy, is how we live our lives and pass on to others, the 'eternal things,' that make their lives better and enable them to 'finish their assignment,' with great joy and fruitfulness. Acts. 13:36. What will you leave others? Will you 'finish' well?