



Leaving a Legacy to Our Family

LifeCare Memos – Messages of Compassion

What's Your Legacy?

Legacy is a word we often use, but rarely define. Most commonly, a legacy is a bequest of something acquired from the past. We usually think of a legacy as a will or a trust so family members receive those items we want them to have. Many people spend an incredible amount of money to create an ironclad, final will and testament. They want to be very precise and very directive about what their children and/or grandchildren will one day receive from them.

It is true that the material things we leave behind will be remembered, but of even greater impact is the legacy we leave about who we are and how we have shaped the lives of others, especially the members of our immediate family. What would happen if we spent as much time and effort thinking about and planning for issues relating to our character and our commitment as we do for our money and our possessions?

We are all in the process of creating a legacy that we will pass on to the members of our family.

As Tim Kimmel puts it in his book, *Legacy of Love*, "Your words, your schedule, your choices, your obedience, the way you savor your victories and the way you swallow your defeats all help to define your life. It is this definition that your children will rely on most as they seek to chart their own future."

I Chronicles 28-29 gives an account of the intimate sharing between a father and his son. The application for leaving a legacy to our family means that...

We must Challenge Our Family by Our Words

David clearly described his priorities to his son when he said:

*⁹"...Solomon, my son, get to know the **GOD** of your ancestors. Worship and serve Him with your whole heart and with a willing mind. For the **LORD** sees every heart and understands and knows every plan and thought. If you seek Him, you will find Him. But if you forsake Him, He will reject you forever. ¹⁰So take this seriously. And Solomon, my son....The **LORD** has chosen you to build a Temple as his sanctuary. Be strong and do the work. ²⁰Don't be afraid or discouraged by the size of the task, for the **LORD GOD**, my **GOD**, is with you. He will not fail you or forsake you. He will see to it that all the work related to the Temple of the **LORD** is finished correctly" (I Chronicles 28:9-10, 20).*

We Must Back up Our Words by Our Lives

David could admonish and challenge his son the way he did because he lived that way; not perfectly, but consistently. It has been said that there is no better teaching tool in the life of a child than the model of a parent's life surrendered to the **LORD GOD**.

David modeled for his son a life surrendered to **GOD**. As Solomon watched his dad that day, there would have been no doubt in his mind about several things.

First, Solomon's dad worked for **GOD** fearlessly, and worshipped and served **GOD** supremely and willingly.

Solomon watched his dad willingly "write out a check" in the amount of ALL his private treasures of gold and silver to help in the construction of the temple and how his dad handled his treasures.

*¹⁶"Standing up, Paul motioned with his hand and said, "...²²After removing Saul, He made David their king. He testified concerning him: `I have found David, son of Jesse, a man after My own heart; he will do everything I want him to do'....³⁶when David had served **GOD's** purpose in his own generation, he fell asleep; he was buried with his fathers." (Acts 13:16, 22, 36)*

Chuck Swindoll sums up Paul's epitaph for David this way: "The tragedy of all tragedies is that we should live and die having never found that purpose, that special, God-ordained reason for serving our generation. You have, like no other person on this planet, particular contributions that you are to make to this generation. They may not be as great as your dreams, or they might be far beyond your expectations; but whatever they are, you are to find them and carry them out. Then, when the twilight years come and your life is ended, you can be satisfied that you have served **God's** purpose with **your** life."

Like David, **GOD** has a purpose for each of our lives. What has **GOD** given you to do in your generation? When you die, will it be said of you that you "served **GOD**'s purpose in your own generation?" What kind of legacy are you creating now to leave behind for your family?

To force ourselves to keep asking those questions, we would do well to keep the words of a song by Jeffrey Benward before us:

*"I hope they will say of me that I loved my children and wife. Most of all I hope they say I loved Jesus more than life. So when I'm laid to rest, life's journey I have trod. I hope my children will say of me, 'Dad was a man of **GOD**!' I hope they will say of me, my words were gentle and kind; Most of all I hope to leave a life of truth behind. So when I'm laid to rest, life's journey I have trod. I hope they will say of me, 'Here lies a man of **GOD**!'"*

Oh, to be a man of **GOD**, nothing more, nothing less. It's not what I did or did not do, but **why** I did it and **for whom**! I hope they remember me simply as a man of **GOD**.

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LifeCare Memos[®]

When experiencing the stresses of life, people need support. The Psalmist needed that support and found it when he turned to God. He said, *"Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one **cares for my life**. I cry to you, O LORD; I say, 'You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living'"* (Psalm 142:4-5).

LifeCare Memos are designed as messages of compassion that integrate biblical guidelines for emotional and spiritual well-being. Topics focus on various life-care issues and address them from the perspective of Scripture.