

What Legacy am I Leaving My family?

Leaving a legacy isn't new, all we need to do is look at what King Solomon wrote in the book of Proverbs: “*A good man leaves an inheritance [legacy] to his children’s children.*” {Proverbs 13:22} But what do these words mean for you and me? What is the inheritance or “legacy” we are to leave our families?



To understand this idea better, let's look at another of King Solomon’s proverbs. It reads, “*Where there is no vision, the people perish.*” {Proverbs 29:18}. Initially, I thought that verse referred to the Church hierarchy and not me. Thoughts like, why hasn’t the Church dealt with: loss of attendance at church; diminishing collections; poor turnouts at Church functions; etc. At times, it seems easy to see how the leadership of our Church has not kept abreast of the parishioners needs.

Then it hit me. Paraphrased, it reads “{*Insert your name here*}, where there is no *personal* vision, the *family* perishes.” This verse caused me to look not only to Church leadership but to my own leadership and involvement in the lives of my family. I began wondering what kind of a legacy am I leaving my family by the way I live my life?

For example, a friend told me how shocked he was when one of his children asked him which was more important, church or the movies [or sports, hobbies, tv, etc.]? He said “Church, of course”. Then inquired why they asked that question. Their answer stopped him in his tracks. The children said, “Because we never arrive late for a movie or leave before it ends, but we do for church.” I think his experience made me question my actions: do they really reflect how important my faith is to me; am I truly living my faith within my family or only thinking I am?

All too often, people tend to think of their legacy in terms of money. That’s an unfortunate mistake. Consider the words of Jesus concerning true wealth for both the individual and family. “*Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.*” {Matthew 6:20} And the words of St. Paul, “*But as for you, man of God, ... pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith*”. {1 Timothy 6:11-12} When we read these verses, we should realize more fully the importance of Solomon’s words on leaving a spiritual inheritance/legacy for our families and beyond. <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/leaving-a-legacy-making-a-memory/>

If you don’t intentionally pass on a legacy consistent with your beliefs and values, your culture will pass along its own. Is that what you really want? If not, you need to define your own personal answer to “{*Insert your name here*}, where there is no *personal* vision, the *family* perishes.” What will it look like? It's up to you to define your legacy to your family. The Bible has always encouraged us, as members of God's family, to take charge of the things that we can and to do so in light of our faith.

Some final thoughts. Your greatest legacy is what you leave **in** your family, not what you leave for your family. Commit enough of yourself that your legacy is the fact that you loved enough to be there. Most children and grandchildren remember presence more than they remember presents.

Reflective questions:

1. If a family member asked you to list your 3 most “time consuming” activities *excluding* work and sleep, what would they be? (E.g. faith, TV/Internet, sports, quality time with family, etc.)

2. In looking at this list, do these activities enrich your life and portray a legacy of love and faith to your loved ones? If yes, why? _____

If not as much as you’d like, why? _____

Is there a way you could modify any activity to be more faith filled? _____

3. What one activity might you add to what you are currently doing that would enrich your faith and core beliefs? _____

4. What legacy do you want to leave your family?



Music: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKT5BCmvmq0> * Find Us Faithful