



Passing the Baton of Legacy

Adapted from “Passing the Baton” series by Scott Erickson

Legacy is how we will be remembered after we are gone. What do you want your legacy to be? Dennis and Barbara Rainey tell an incredible story to illustrate the power of legacy. Read their powerful story:

A husband and wife who walked by faith and, consequently, left a legacy far beyond anything they could have imagined, lived in the early 1700s in colonial America. Their names were Jonathan and Sarah Edwards.

Jonathan Edwards felt God's call to become a minister. He and his young bride began a pastorate in a small congregation. During the years that followed, he wrote many sermons, prayers, and books, and was influential in beginning the Great Awakening. Together they produced eleven children who grew into adulthood. Sarah was a partner in her husband's ministry, and he sought her advice regarding sermons and church matters. They spent time talking about these things together, and, when their children were old enough, the parents included them in the discussions.

The effects of the Edwards's lives have been far-reaching, but the most measurable results of their faithfulness to God's call is found through their descendants. Elizabeth Dodds records a study done by A. E. Winship in 1900 in which he lists a few of the accomplishments of the 1,400 Edwards descendants he was able to find:

- 100 lawyers and a dean of a law school
- 80 holders of public office
- 66 physicians and a dean of a medical school
- 65 professors of colleges and universities
- 30 judges
- 13 college presidents
- 3 mayors of large cities
- 3 governors of states
- 3 United States senators
- 1 controller of the United States Treasury

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- 1 Vice President of the United States

What kind of legacy will you and your mate leave? Will it be lasting? Will it be imperishable and eternal? Or will you leave behind only tangible items—buildings, money, and/or possessions? ¹

¹ Dennis and Barbara Rainey, "Five Essentials to Leaving a Legacy that Will Outlive You," FamilyLife, <http://www.familylife.com/articles/topics/parenting/foundations/godly-legacy/five-essentials-to-leaving-a-legacy-that-will-outlive-you> (accessed August 2, 2017).

COURAGE

C1: In the book of Titus, Paul writes a pastoral letter to one of his younger assistants. He was a convert of Paul's, and in time a co-worker. Paul speaks of Titus as a son. Finally, Paul leaves Titus on the island of Crete to influence the Cretans as Paul went on to other missionary work. The baton was passed to Titus.

- Reflect back over your life. What did your grandfather and father pass on to you?

C2: What are you passing on to your children? Grandchildren? If you do not have children, write down what you hope to pass on to your children and grandchildren, or to other children in your extended family.

C3: The book of Titus contains three short chapters. Read the entire book in one setting. Write down two things from each chapter that stood out to you.

STRENGTH

S1: Read and answer the following.

Titus 1:1–3 (ESV)

- From these verses, Paul passed the baton of church involvement to Titus, entrusting him with preaching to increase the faith of those around him. On a scale from 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not well, rate yourself in how well you are doing in your church involvement. Write out a plan to improve.

S2: Read and answer the following.

Titus 2:11–13 (ESV)

- From these verses, Paul passed the baton to Titus of the behaviors that effect relationships. On a scale from 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not well, rate yourself in how well you are doing in your relationships. Write out a plan to improve.

S3: Read and answer the following.

Titus 3:5–8 (ESV)

- From these verses, Paul passed to Titus the baton of doing good. On a scale from 1-4, with 1 being very well and 4 being not well, rate yourself on how well you are at doing good in the world. Write out a plan to improve.

ENDURANCE

E1: Read and answer the following.

Titus 2:11–14 (ESV)

- From these verses, Paul hands off to Titus five behaviors of doing good. List them.

E2: Awareness of God's indwelling presence in your life is important. Read and answer the following.

Titus 2:12 (ESV)

2 Corinthians 13:5 (ESV)

- What do these verses communicate to you in regard to doing good in your life?

E3: We must pass on to our children and grandchildren the difference between temporary and eternal. Read and answer the following.

Titus 2:13 (ESV)

Philippians 3:17–21 (ESV)

- From these verses, what should we pass on to our children as a legacy?

E4: A father feels the weight to pass on these instructions to his kids and grandkids. Write out your plan to pass on what matters most to children and grandchildren – doing good and leaving a healthy legacy.