

Lesson 1

My Legacy

The Importance of Character

Introduction

It has been said that “when an old person dies, an entire library burns to the ground.” May each of us be challenged to put into circulation all the books within us: The ones of love and happiness, of grief and pain, the books of hope and despair, and of anger and forgiveness. All these and many more from a lifetime of experience.

By now it is evident that we need not have traveled the world to have a world of experience within us. It is the responses to those experiences that have created the framework of our character. Our *character* is the essence of our life that can live on within another person well after we have gone (“Grumpy old man – Grumpy son.) *Character* is who we are **now**.

Our *legacy* defines who we **were**. Our *legacy* will be a reflection of our character and faith. So, how shall we write these final chapters of our lives? How shall we fight the good fight? How will we finish the course? What will “my” legacy be?

Scriptures to Meditate On

- 2 Timothy 4:7-8: I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. There is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but to all those who have loved his appearing.
- Philippians 1:6: I am sure of this, that he who started a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Activities

1. Define legacy.
2. Define character.
3. Related Bible Verses: *Read the following verses and be prepared to share how you identify, or relate specifically to one of them:*
 - a. Proverbs 13:22
 - b. Psalm 78:4
 - c. Joshua 24:15

- d. Acts 20:35
- e. Philippians 2:3-4
- f. Hebrews 13:7

Key Points for Discussion

1. List 3 or 4 words of character that you would hope to be spoken at your funeral:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
2. What are your thoughts on why Solomon said a wise person leaves an inheritance to his children's children (grandchildren)

Applications

1. Identify an effort you would be willing to make to improve your legacy.
2. Which legacy memory verse will I memorize for regular self-encouragement?
3. Never forget, our legacy will most reflect our relationship with whom or what?

Today's Bible Verses

- Psalm 78:4 - We will not hide them from their children, but will tell a future generation the praiseworthy acts of the Lord, his might, and the wondrous works he has performed.

- Acts 20:35 - In every way I've shown you that it is necessary to help the weak by laboring like this and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, because he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' ”
- Proverbs 13:22 - A good man leaves an inheritance to his grandchildren, but the sinner's wealth is stored up for the righteous.
- Philippians 2:3-4 - Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others.
- Joshua 24:15 - But if it doesn't please you to worship the LORD, choose for yourselves today: Which will you worship—the gods your ancestors worshiped beyond the Euphrates River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living? As for me and my family, we will worship the LORD.”
- Hebrews 13:7 - Remember your leaders who have spoken God's word to you. As you carefully observe the outcome of their lives, imitate their faith.