



Praying the Word Series Week 8 - Leaving a Legacy

May 12, 2024 - Pastor Miki Graff

We are going to look at the lives of some women in the Bible whose lives left a legacy. However this message is for everyone, male or female. We are just focusing on some female characters in the Bible today!

Legacy - anything handed down from the past...could be property/possessions...also beliefs, traditions, lessons, life stories, values that help solidify and cultivate success.

Legacy focuses on what will endure. It's about passing on things of lasting value to those who will live on after us. Legacy involves living intentionally and aiming to build into the next generations for their success.

- What do you want to be known for? Have you ever thought about that? What do you want your life to reflect - what legacy do you want to leave?

We are all going to leave a legacy, but what kind of legacy you leave is directly affected by the choices we make as we live our lives.

Here are some actions we can choose so that we can leave a Legacy that glorifies God.

1. REMEMBER

Remember what He has done and Who He is. Remember when things are going well thank Him for who He is. Remember when things are tough and cling to Him and the fact that He never changes.

Deborah: Her legacy was a life of dependence on God. Her story is found in [Judges 4-5](#)

Deborah was a judge and prophetess in the Old Testament. She handled disputes among the Israelites. She would depend on God's leading and listen for His guidance by praying and meditating before proclaiming a decision.

Deborah is the only woman in the Bible who held this position. The book of Judges shares her life story and her obedience to follow God's leading. Every day she had to **remember** that His wisdom was what the Israelites needed, **remember** who He was, and **remember** that God gave HER the responsibility to **remind** them and declare His truth to them. One of those moments was when God told her to go to the leader of the army and tell Him to attack one of Israelites enemies.

Judges 4:6-8 "She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, "The Lord, the God of Israel, commands you: 'Go, take with you ten thousand men of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them up to Mount Tabor. ⁷ I will lead Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his troops to the Kishon River and give him into your hands.'" Barak said to her, "If you go with me, I will go; but if you don't go with me, I won't go."

In that moment she had to remember that God is faithful and that He would do what He said He would. So she agreed to go with. Think about how much confidence she had in what God had told her. There isn't another account in the Bible where a woman goes into battle with the commander to attack an enemy.

- How do you remember God's promises in scary or hard situations? How do you live in a place of faith and trusting in God's promised faithfulness?

Her obedience to and dependence on God allowed both Barak and the Israelite army to have confidence and remember that their God had been victorious before and would do it again. When she and Barak come back after defeating the enemy, together they praise God: Judges 5:31 "So may all your enemies perish, Lord! But may all who love you be like the sun when it rises in its strength. Then the land had peace forty years."

Deborah REMEMBERED who God is. She declared it and because of her obedience Israel had 40 years of peace. She is a woman whose life pointed others to God and left a legacy of dependence on Him.

- What fruit do you see in the lives of people around you who live lives fully dependent on God? Do you see it in your life?

- Do you see how her obedience actually affected the nation of Israel for a minimum of the next 40 years? Your faith and obedience do too. Can you share an example of how that you have seen in your life already?

She Bloomed where God planted her... There is something called "**Companion Planting**". It is where specific plants when grown in close proximity to other plants offer benefits. Like when you plant Basil close to tomatoes it improves the taste of the tomato and Basil also repels flies and mosquitos and Marigolds planted near vegetable gardens deter rabbits.

Close proximity to Deborah gave Barak the ability to accomplish leading the Israelites into victory because he needed her confidence in God. And all of Israel benefited from Deborah's legacy of living her life reflecting God.

- What moments do you need to Remember and declare so that others realize they can depend on Him?

- Who are you in close proximity to and how does it affect your life?

Psalm 78: 2-7 "I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old—³ things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us. ⁴We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. ⁵He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, ⁶so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. ⁷Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds."

-Remember to lean on His strength and leave a legacy of dependence on God like Deborah that glorifies Him. Remember His voice, listen to His leading. Remember your story and share it. Remember what God has done in other's lives! He is faithful and He has not changed.

2. REPEAT

Repeat who He is and what He has done.

Psalm 145: 4-7 "One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. They speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty and I will meditate on your wonderful works. They tell of the power of your awesome works—and I will proclaim your great deeds. They celebrate your abundant goodness."

- Are you repeating Who God is and what He has done?

Lois: Her legacy was sincere faith and then that legacy was repeated to her daughter Eunice and then to her grandson Timothy. Lois was the grandmother of Timothy, one of the apostle Paul's disciples. Lois was born into the Jewish faith, and later accepted Christianity along with her daughter Eunice. Lois and Eunice taught Timothy the scriptures from infancy. Clearly what they taught made a huge difference in Timothy's life and led to his conversion at an early age. As important as it was for Lois and Eunice to teach Timothy, **it was of equal importance that they lived what they believed in front of him.**

2 Timothy 1:5 "I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also."

2 Timothy 3:14-15 "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

Proverbs 13:22-NIV "A good person leaves an inheritance for their children's children."

- We need to repeat to our children and children's children His word and His faithfulness. Share a couple of truths you know firsthand about God that you could share with your children/grandkids/those you influence.

- Are you living what you believe in front of your children? In front of those whose lives you influence?

Billy Graham said "The greatest inheritance you can pass on to your children and grandchildren is more than the money or material possessions you get. It's a legacy of both character and faith.

You don't have to be a mother/father to leave an inheritance for future generations. Repeat who God is to those God has placed in your sphere of influence and leave a legacy of sincere faith like Lois.

- What are you going to be known for? How are you allowing God to use your life as an example to those around you? Can they repeat what they see in you?

- Repeat His goodness in and through your story, and what you have learned in your mistakes. Who needs to hear your story?

3. REMAIN

Don't Give Up! Life gets tough...making wise decisions isn't always easy. But don't give up...Remain grounded in Him.

Abigail: Abigail left a legacy of wisdom.

David is hiding from King Saul who is trying to kill him and sends some of his men to ask Nabal for some provisions. He and his men have been careful to treat Nabal's servants with kindness and protected them while they were out shearing sheep. Nabal is a very wealthy man and David is asking for help. But Nabal insults David's men and turns them away. Her husband Nabal makes terrible choices that will affect her. When Abigail hears what her husband has done, she doesn't just complain about her situation and resolve that her husband's foolishness is going to ruin her life. She wisely goes with gifts for David and his men and apologizes for her husband's mistakes. Abigail is living a difficult life but chooses to remain faithful to God.

1 Samuel 25:32-35 "David said to Abigail, 'Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. ³³ May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. ³⁴ Otherwise, as surely as

You *don't have to be* a mother/father to *leave an inheritance* for future generations. *What are you going to be known for?*

the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak.' ³⁵ Then David accepted from her hand what she had brought him and said, "Go home in peace. I have heard your words and granted your request."

Even when Abigail goes home, she realizes Nabal is drunk and unable to understand that what she has done has just saved their lives. She tells him the next day, and the Bible says that "The Lord struck Nabal and he died."

Even living in a family that is choosing to do evil in Gods eyes, she boldly stood up for what was right. She chose to remain faithful to him and depend on His justice and God honors her...She became David's wife...a queen.

- Remain dependent on His leading and guidance and leave a legacy of wisdom like Abigail.
- Remain vigilant. The enemy wants to "kill, steal and destroy", but God never leaves or forsakes.
- Remain focused on Him. When we get overwhelmed with everything going on in the world around us, we can get distracted. Remaining in His word, in prayer and surrounded by others who are in this journey of transformation can help you remain focus on Him.

- How have you remained? Or how could you choose to remain through a difficult situation?

RUINED LEGACY:

You might be listening to all these examples of legacies that are "repeatable" and are saying "but I have a **Ruined Legacy.**" Here is something you need remember and repeat...**God Redeems!**

Rahab: She had a ruined legacy that God redeemed. ([Joshua 2](#))

Joshua and the Israelites are preparing to take possession of the land God promised them and the city Jericho had to be conquered. So Joshua sends spies into the Jericho to bring back information on what kind of people live there so they can begin making plans on how to attack. And we are introduced to Rahab who is a prostitute. The king finds out there are spies in Jericho and sends out search parties to find them and kill them. Rahab brings two of the Israelites spies into her home and hides them. Then she lets them down out of the city through her window with a rope so they can escape safely.

Joshua 6:25 "But Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute, with her family and all who belonged to her, because she hid the men Joshua had sent as spies to Jericho—and she lives among the Israelites to this day."

God redeemed her legacy. They march around Jericho and bring Rahab and all of her family out of the camp to safety. When she made a decision to leave her past behind and live her life serving the God of the Israelites, the One true God redeemed her legacy. God didn't hide where she came from or the mistakes she made. He forgave. He redeems in such a way that He can use our lives like Rahab for His glory. Rahab is one of the 5 women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus in the book of Matthew. He highlights her redeemed legacy in His plan of salvation of the world!

Matthew 1:5 "Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab..."

She is no longer 'Rahab the prostitute'. Her legacy was redemption and recognizing the One True God and it changed the trajectory of her entire life.

Allow God to use your life to not only bloom where you are planted, but also to leave a legacy for those who will come after that will point them to Him.

Paul summed up how to live our lives in a way that leaves a legacy that will point people back to God. 1 Cor 10:31-33, 11:1 "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. ³²Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— ³³even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved. **11:1** 'Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.'"

This is NOT a statement of pride. Paul is saying "I set my eyes on Him and **choose to make choices each day to point people to Him.**" This shouldn't make us feel like it is unattainable. I definitely do not feel like my life is in any way equivalent to Paul, but I do recognize that God did not ask me to be Paul. He asked me to be Miki. Wife, mother, grandma, friend, pastor, and example of Christ.

- Who did God ask you to be?

- Of these 4 stories, who do you identify with? Men, even you can identify with one of these women or a man in the Bible. Share.

- What do you want to be known for? What legacy do you want to leave?

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