

HOW TO LEAVE A LEGACY

Father's Day 2018

Dallas Bivins

Everyone wants to leave behind a legacy. The Bible has a lot to say about it:

Proverbs 13:22: "A good life gets passed on to the grandchildren."

Psalm 112:6: "A righteous man will be remembered forever."

How do you do that? How do you leave a lasting, permanent legacy?

The Bible tells us that there are four qualities you can find in people who are respected:

Speak with INTEGRITY Serve with INTENSITY Give with GENEROSITY Succeed with HUMILITY

1. SPEAK WITH INTEGRITY

What is integrity? 3 activities – telling the truth, keeping your word and practicing what you say you believe.

Proverbs 17:7: *Respected people do not tell lies.*

Leadership is built on one thing. It's built on trust. You don't follow somebody you don't trust.

And all trust is built on truth. You don't follow somebody who doesn't tell you the truth.

Proverbs 25:14: *People who promise things that they never give are like clouds and wind that bring no rain.*

Have you ever failed to keep a promise?

- I'll return it as soon as I'm done with it.
- I won't tell anyone what you've told me.
- The check's in the mail.
- I'll be home at six p.m., honey.
- We're going to the CCC Membership Luncheon, soon.
- We can play this weekend, son.
- We'll do it when things settle down.
- My diet begins tomorrow.

Is it easy to walk with integrity? Absolutely not. That's why you need God's help.

Psalm 101:2: "I will try to walk a blameless path but how I need Your help [circle "how I need Your help"] especially in my own home where I long to act as I should."

It's most difficult to have integrity in your own home. Why? Because they know you.

The definition of success is having those who know me best respect me most.

It's easy to impress people from a distance because they don't see you up close – your foibles, your faults, your warts. But real integrity is when those who know you best respect you the most. That's integrity.

2. SERVE WITH INTENSITY

Proverbs 14:22: *You will earn the trust and respect of others if you work for good.*

The fact is most people only work for their own good.

- We work for our dreams, our ambitions, for our goals.
- We think about what we want.
- We're not thinking about the good of other people.
- We're thinking about our retirement.

Colossians 3:23: *Whatever you do work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord and not for men.*

Be enthusiastic, be eager to help other people, be ready to serve. Serve with intensity with all your heart.

No matter what you do, do it with all your heart.

What's the motivation behind working with intensity? You're doing it for the LORD!

John 6:27: "Don't work for food that spoils. Instead work for the food that lasts for eternal life."

What's not going to last? Fame – status – pleasure – power – things.

What is going to last for eternity? Truth and people.

TRUTH. Mathew 24:25: *Heaven and earth shall pass away but My word won't pass away.*
Isaiah 40:8: *The grass withers and the flower fades but the word of God abides forever.*

PEOPLE. John 3:16: *For God so loved the world, He gave His only son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

3. GIVE WITH GENEROSITY

You'll never leave a legacy until become a generous giver of your time, money, effort, energy, and talents.

2 Corinthians 9:9: *Godly people give generously. Their good deeds will never be forgotten.*

Psalms 112:9: *He who gives generously to the needy and shows kindness will be powerful and respected.*

Why be generous?

- God wants you to be generous because He wants you to become like Him.
- You're not going to take it with you. You were born naked, you'll die naked.
- You learn the joy of giving by learning to be generous now.

Three kinds of givers:

FLINTLOCK GIVERS. You have to take a hammer and hammer it and then the sparks fly.

SPONGE GIVERS. You've got to squeeze it, applying pressure.

HONEYCOMB GIVERS. You overflow with sweetness. You're always giving, you're always helping, you're always sharing, and you're always serving. You're generous, not stingy.

4. SUCCEED WITH HUMILITY.

Proverbs 29:23: *Arrogance will bring your downfall but if you're humble you'll be respected.*

How does God test us with our humility?

PRAISE. Praise is the test of character. Every time you're complimented, this is a test. Are you prideful?

The human species is the only species that when you pat them on the back their head swells.

Treat praise like you treat criticism. Ultimately it doesn't matter what other people think about you and me.

What matters is what God thinks about you and me.

MISTAKES

Proverbs 13:18: *Someone who will not learn will be poor and disgraced. Anyone who listens to correction is respected.*

You don't have to know it all to be respected. You just have to admit that you don't know it all.

“Humor” and “humility” come from the same root word. Can you laugh at your flaws and faults?

Worry about your character, not your image.

1 Peter 5:5: *All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."*

The greatest legacy of all is helping somebody draw closer to Jesus.

Is anybody going to be in heaven because of you? Because you took the time to tell them?

Your choice. Character is always a matter of the choices we make. You're as close to God as you choose to be.