

Be Positive (Leaving a Godly Legacy)
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Deuteronomy 34

How many in the class knew your great grandparents or knew much about them? If you did know some things about them, what did you know?

Whether you knew much about your great-grandparents or not, they LEFT YOU A LEGACY. Your family and heritage was shaped by how they lived.

You see, we don't DECIDE WHETHER we will LEAVE A LEGACY. We all leave a legacy of some kind. The question is: What kind of legacy will we leave?

We come to the end of the book of Deuteronomy...and to the end of the earthly journey of Moses. Though he would not join the children of Israel in this new land, Moses gave them a wonderful Godly legacy that would LIVE ON after his earthly life was over.

Deuteronomy 34:1-12

1 Then Moses climbed Mount Nebo from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, across from Jericho. There the LORD showed him the whole land—from Gilead to Dan, 2 all of Naphtali, the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land of Judah as far as the Mediterranean Sea, 3 the Negev and the whole region from the Valley of Jericho, the City of Palms, as far as Zoar. 4 Then the LORD said to him, "This is the land I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob when I said, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you will not cross over into it."

- Verse 4 says: "Then the Lord said to him..." reminding us that Moses was the only person in scripture who spoke with God face to face. (Exodus 33:11, Numbers 12:8)
- However, though he was faithful to God, he would not be allowed to live in the Promised Land.
- Remember, Moses lost the privilege of living in the Promised Land because of his disobedience (Numbers 20:12). When God said speak to the rock and water will flow, Moses got frustrated and STRUCK the rock with his staff. Severe punishment!
- But, God gave Moses the opportunity to, at least, LOOK over into the land of Promise.
- Imagine what Moses must have been thinking! After his faithfulness to such a DIFFICULT CALLING, he could SEE the destination of his people.

5 And Moses the servant of the LORD died there in Moab, as the LORD had said. 6 He buried him[a] in Moab, in the valley opposite Beth Peor, but to this day no one knows where his grave is.

Quick pause. Verse 6 says "He buried him..." Who buried Moses? It's believed that God did. His grave was known only to God.

7 Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone. 8 The Israelites grieved for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, until the time of weeping and mourning was over.

9 Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit[b] of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

10 Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, 11 who did all those signs and wonders the LORD sent him to do in Egypt—to Pharaoh and to all his officials and to his whole land. 12 For no one has ever shown the mighty power or performed the awesome deeds that Moses did in the sight of all Israel.

Moses was Israel's greatest prophet...it would be 1,000 years before one greater than him would appear...Jesus.

Warren Wiersbe said of Moses:

"There were times when Moses complained to God because his work was difficult, and more than once he was ready to quit, but in spite of these very human weaknesses, Moses was a faithful servant.

Moses was faithful to walk with God, and he spoke to God as a man speaks to his friend. The secret of his life wasn't his own abilities --he claimed he had none--- or even his education in Egypt, but his humble walk with the Lord. He spent time with God, he listened to God's Word, and he followed God's orders."

When Moses left this life, he left a GODLY LEGACY for his DESCENDANTS to follow.

As I thought about this lesson of LEAVING A GODLY LEGACY, I framed it into an ACROSTIC we could grab onto: L.I.F.E.

- L-ordship of Christ ... Live under the LORDSHIP of Christ
 - I-ntentional ... Live a life that is INTENTIONAL about serving God and leaving a Godly LEGACY
 - F-ocused ...Live a life that is FOCUSED on OBEDIENCE to God and teaching that to others behind us to do likewise
 - E-ternal view ...Live a life with an ETERNAL VIEW rather than a temporal view
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- The “L” in L-I-F-E is for living under the Lordship of Christ
 - Let's start with a basic truth: It's kind of hard to leave a Godly legacy if you aren't serving God.
 - As we consider Moses we know two things about him:
 1. Moses was obedient and connected to God.
 - Exodus 33:11 tells us: "The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend."
 - Time and again From the burning bush to the end of his life, Moses modeled obedience and continual CONNECTION to God.
 2. We can also take comfort in the fact that Moses wasn't perfect...he was fallable like me and you.

- He got frustrated and discouraged...he smashed the first set of stone tablets...he got angry and struck the rock rather than speaking to it and that cost him his entry into the Promised Land.
- If Moses hadn't been so HUMAN, you and I might say we could never use him as a model for our lives. But, though Moses MESSED UP from time to time...still, he was obedient and connected to God through it all.
- Even though we are HUMAN and MESS UP we can leave a Godly LEGACY if we LIVE UNDER THE LORDSHIP of Christ recognizing Jesus not only as savior, but Lord.

Galatians 2:20

New International Version 1984 (NIV1984)

20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- What are some practical ways to live our lives under the Lordship of Jesus Christ?
 - Continually model that God is the boss at our house.
 - Continually talk about making decisions based on what would be pleasing to God.
 - Continually give God the CREDIT and PRAISE for blessings...at our house we aren't LUCKY...we're BLESSED.

Robert Jeffress (Pastor First Baptist Dallas, Tx.) said:

"You can fool people at work and church about your Christlikeness. You will never fool your children. What do they see in your life? What are they learning about how to deal with anger; about forgiveness; about trusting God when things look very dim?"

- The next word in our ACROSTIC of LIFE is INTENTIONAL
- Nothing is created accidentally or without a plan. Do you and I have a plan for a Godly legacy?
- The whole book of Deuteronomy (second law) was an INTENTIONAL effort on Moses' part to make sure the Israelites were equipped for what was to come when they would be without him.
- He repeated the TEN COMMANDMENTS and gave them other Godly instruction for when he would not be around.
- Illustration: Susan's "if I get hit by a bus" plan of child rearing.

Mike Glenn:

Maybe it's not "what kind of future will we be leaving to our children?" but "what kind of children will we be sending into the future?"

- What are some ways we can live our lives intentionally in order to leave a Godly legacy?
 - Just look at Moses: He kept the Children of Israel focused on God's law; When there was trouble, where did Moses go...to God. Over and over he modeled God at the CENTER of life.

- The “F” in L-I-F-E is for “Focused”...staying FOCUSED on leaving a Godly legacy
- There is much to distract us in today’s world! Moses had a few things that could have distracted him too.
- Think about all of Moses' life from birth through leading the Israelites through the wilderness. What kinds of things could have distracted him from being FOCUSED on God's plan?
 - First, even before God called him, when he was in Egypt: Wealth, power, status.
 - How about when God called him at the burning bush: Inadequacy, fear
 - How about when he faced off with Pharaoh? Fear, a seemingly impossible task
 - How about when he was at the Red Sea?
 - How about when he was leading the people in the desert?
 - The water tastes bad...we don't have any food...this food is boring...we're gonna die...let's make a golden calf and worship THAT...
- Moses had much to DISTRACT HIM from BUILDING A GODLY LEGACY...but...
- Moses just stayed focused: TEN COMMANDMENTS...building the Tabernacle...handing down the Levitical rules and laws...Moses stayed FOCUSED.

Hebrews 11:24-28

24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible. 28 By faith he kept the Passover and the application of blood, so that the destroyer of the firstborn would not touch the firstborn of Israel.

- Moses not only STAYED FOCUSED he TAUGHT THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL to BE FOCUSED
- In Deuteronomy 5:32-33, after Moses had REPEATED the TEN COMMANDMENTS to the people he urged them to follow them with LASER FOCUS:

32 So be careful to do what the LORD your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. 33 Walk in obedience to all that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.

- After Moses was dead and Joshua became the leader, God reiterated to Joshua the FOCUS Moses had taught him:

Joshua 1:1

1 After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses’ aide: 2 “Moses my servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them—to the Israelites.

7 “Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go.

- Question: What are some ways you and I can STAY FOCUSED in our life as a Christian in order to LEAVE A GODLY LEGACY?
- The “E” in L-I-F-E is for LIVING LIFE WITH an “Eternal View”
- 1 Corinthians 3:11-15, Paul uses the metaphor of building a building with the RIGHT MATERIALS:

11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, 13 his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man’s work. 14 If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. 15 If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.

- When we live with an ETERNAL VIEW we build our lives with the RIGHT MATERIALS and on the right FOUNDATION: Jesus Christ.
- When we live with an ETERNAL VIEW we also need to STACK UP some STONES of remembrance.
- In 1 Samuel 4:1 after the recovery of the ark and a decisive Israelite victory over the Philistines, Samuel erected a monument of STONES so his people would remember.

C.S. Lewis said:

“If you read history, you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next... It is because Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this one.”

- What does it mean to you to live your life in view of eternity rather than in view of the here and now?
- How will living in view of eternity change the way you manage your time, resources, and relationships?

So, What’s The TAKEAWAY?

- The question is not WILL I LEAVE A LEGACY? It’s WHAT KIND OF LEGACY WILL I LEAVE?
- To leave a Godly legacy we must ...
 - LIVE A GODLY LIFE SURRENDERED TO THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST
 - LIVE INTENTIONALLY with a PLAN that leads to a Godly legacy
 - BE FOCUSED day by day to STICK with the PLAN and ABIDE in CHRIST
 - LIVE IN VIEW OF ETERNITY...and make our decisions not on the HERE AND NOW but on what will SURVIVE after we’re gone. What will have an ETERNAL IMPACT...a HEAVENLY IMPACT on those who come behind us.