

Leaving a Legacy that Lasts

What comes to your mind when you hear the word “heritage” or “legacy?” Heritage is something that is, or can be, inherited from your forefathers. There are certain traditions, customs or mannerisms that are passed from one generation to another. The **Korean** culture is rich with traditions and customs that have been passed down for thousands of years. Having a **Korean** heritage means that certain attitudes, beliefs and culture have been passed on to you through your ancestors.

A Christian heritage is based on the teachings of the Bible and reflects a Christian worldview. It means that your ancestors allowed the truths of Christianity to influence their lifestyle and to shape their beliefs. They, in turn, passed on that lifestyle to the generations that followed. That Christian influence continued on until it reached you.

A legacy is anything that is acquired through a will or is inherited from someone. It can involve property or monies. It can also involve physical, mental and emotional characteristics that have been passed on from a parent to a child. In fact, most of your physical characteristics and personality traits are derived from your parents and grandparents. Sometimes the physical resemblance between a parent and a child is so obvious that it is easy to recognize a mother and daughter just by looking at them. Speech, mannerisms, gestures, and other forms of body language are also passed on from parent to child. This process happens naturally and without much thought in many cases.

My youngest brother David, shared at our father’s funeral service and he recalled how many of our father’s mannerisms had found their way into his own life. He was raising his children in much the same way our dad had raised him. He had the same high standard of excellence in his work ethic. Even though he hated to admit it, in many ways he was, “Just like dad.” All David’s brothers and sisters acknowledged that we could see our father’s mannerisms in our lives, as well. We all had inherited a similar legacy from our father.

Your foundational value system and view of the world are inherited from your parents and from those who influenced you when you were young. You didn’t have a choice about the heritage you received, but you do have a choice in how you will respond to your heritage. All of us were handed a heritage that had both positive and negative elements.

Some people feel paralyzed by their heritage because of the pain associated with their past. They feel wounded and damaged by the abuse and injustice in their family. Some people are ashamed of their heritage and they seek to deny it or run away from it. You can either focus on your past and get stuck, or you can overcome your past and find God’s healing and grace. The heritage you were handed is not as important as the legacy you will pass on to others. The real issue is not what you received but what are you going to leave behind.

There are many examples in the Bible of individuals who suffered serious injustices as they grew

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up and yet they passed on a godly legacy to the next generation. One of the best examples is Joseph, the eleventh, and favored son of Jacob. We could hardly blame Joseph if he had become bitter and resentful toward his brothers for their cruel and unjust treatment of him.

They were jealous of him. They plotted to take his life. They sold him into slavery and robbed him of many years with his father and his family. He spent years in a foreign land living as a slave because of the actions of his brothers. He certainly would have been justified in being angry and vengeful. He could have easily turned away from God and abandoned his moral values in the midst of such unjust treatment.

To add to his troubles Potiphar's wife falsely accused him of trying to rape her after he refused to give into her sexual advances. Joseph then found himself in prison for a crime he did not commit. His godly actions ended up costing him his job and sending him to jail. However, Joseph did not allow these events to destroy him or embitter him. Instead, he overcame each of these adversities and continued to honor God in his life.

While in prison he ministered to Pharaoh's chief cupbearer and chief baker. He interpreted their dreams and told the cupbearer that God would restore him to his office shortly. The chief cupbearer forgot about his promise to remember Joseph, once he was restored. Joseph subsequently spent two more long years in prison. Joseph's story is full of tragedy and injustice. He could have looked at what happened to him and concluded that life was unfair and that God was not just.

However, Joseph overcame the unjust actions of others and found God's perspective on what had happened to him. The Bible repeatedly declares that the Lord was with Joseph at each step of his journey. Joseph's heart is best revealed through the statements he made to his brothers in Genesis 50:20, "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives." Even though someone may seek to say things that might hurt your reputation or bring discredit to you in some way, God can turn it around for good. You don't have to put up a great defense in order to save your face. You can rest in the fact that your circumstances belong to God and he is the one that is glorified when you trust in him. Joseph overcame the injustices of his past and, as a result, was a blessing to generations that followed him.

I grew up in a farming community of about fifteen hundred people. My dad was a plumber and owned his own business. The plumbing shop was on the main street of the town that I grew up in and our family lived in an apartment above the plumbing shop. I grew up in the plumbing business with my father.

At age five, I was already working along side my dad and by the time I was eighteen I had learned the plumbing trade from my dad. However, I learned much more than plumbing skills from him. I learned about life. My dad was a very hard worker and took pride in his craftsmanship. He taught me the value of doing a job well. "If it isn't worth doing well, it isn't worth doing at all!" was one of my dad's favorite sayings.

My father was also a man of integrity and honesty. He never cheated people and maintained the highest ethical standards possible. His craftsmanship was of the highest quality and he always

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used the best materials available. It didn't matter to him if his work was going to be hidden in the walls of a house or buried beneath the ground where no one could see it. He wasn't motivated by whether or not people would see his work. He took pride in his craftsmanship and pride in knowing he had done the best he could.

As a teenager, I struggled living up to my dad's standards. Many times my dad made me do something over again because it had not been done "right" the first time. I inwardly resented my dad's demands and didn't appreciate having to repeat my work. As I got older, however, my appreciation for my father grew and I realized the value of my father's investment in my life. I have to admit that many of those same values are now a part of my own life and I credit my dad for placing them there.

My father was also deeply committed to his wife and children. He made many sacrifices for his family as I was growing up. My mother and father were married to each other for over fifty years until she died of cancer at the age of seventy-one. During her last seven years of life she was hospitalized numerous times for her cancer. She had several surgeries that were followed by either chemotherapy or radiation. My dad was at her side the entire time until she died at home after all treatment options had been exhausted.

My dad never preached one sermon about marriage and family during his entire life. He never led a Bible study on the importance of commitment, loyalty and faithfulness. However, he modeled these truths to me and to the rest of my siblings. He passed on a legacy to all of his children by the way he cared for our mother. Someone has said that the greatest gift that a father can give to his children is to love their mother. My dad was a powerful example of a husband's love and devotion to his wife.

Every day we pass on something to our children. Our children observe us and pick up attitudes and values by the many little things that happen each day. Our tone of voice, the words we use, the music we listen to, and the prayers we pray are part of the process of passing on a legacy to our children. The way we treat our pets, the way we interact with our neighbors, and the way we react to unexpected interruptions during the day, contribute to the way of life we are passing on.

There are a variety of legacies that people pass on to succeeding generations. Some people leave monetary legacies to their children, as I mentioned earlier. Others leave behind land or houses full of possessions. While, still others leave behind many physical descendants as their legacy for the generations to come.

There are those whose legacies consist of organizations or movements that they founded. William Booth founded the Salvation Army in England in the nineteenth century and it grew into a movement that impacted the entire western world. John Wesley, along with his brother Charles, founded the Methodist church. John was known as a circuit-riding preacher because he traveled thousands of miles on horseback preaching the Gospel. It was said of John Wesley when he died, "He died, leaving nothing behind but his Bible, his horse and the Methodist church."

Gifted athletes are remembered for their great accomplishments. There are halls of fame built to honor great baseball players, football players, and basketball players. Almost every sport has a

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place to honor the legacies of its best players. People travel to these places to learn about the great accomplishments of these super stars. Their legacy consists of how many points they scored, how many home runs they hit or how many world championships they won.

Some people build great monuments that are admired by generations to come. The Great Wall of China is one such monument. In fact, it has been called one of the great wonders of the world. The original purpose of the wall was for protection and security, but it has become a great monument because of its impressive size. The Taj Mahal in India has been called the most extravagant monument ever built for love. People travel from all over the world just to see this marvelous structure. It is a testimony of an emperor's love and devotion to his wife.

Some people are known worldwide for their accomplishments, either for good or for evil. Just by mentioning their name certain images and memories come to our minds. Adolph Hitler, the leader of Nazi Germany, left a legacy of cruelty and evil. His name will be forever associated with concentration camps and gas chambers where over three million Jewish people were destroyed. Joseph Stalin, the cruel dictator of Russian will always be remembered for his ruthlessness in crushing those who opposed him.

Mother Theresa, who served the poor and desperately needy people in Calcutta, India, is known all over the world for her compassion and Christian virtues. She left behind a legacy of caring for the poor and the dying. Martin Luther sparked the Protestant Reformation in Europe when he took his stand for justification by faith. He is remembered for his fearless commitment to the Word of God. Each of these individuals left their mark in the world because of the enormity of their influence.

When you think about your childhood and the family that you grew up in, how would you describe the heritage your parents passed on to you? What words come to your mind as you think back on those early years of your life? Integrity, honesty, fidelity, diligence, hard working, perseverance, commitment to the family, and personal responsibility are the words that come to my mind when I think about my heritage.

For some people fear, abuse, violent, dishonesty, adultery, control, conflict and pain are the words that describe their childhood. Their experience was much more negative and painful. The truth is, there are positive and pleasant things that are part of our heritage and there are negative and hurtful things, as well. Facing our past involves being grateful for the positive things we experienced and finding God's grace to overcome the negative memories

Stop and take a few minutes to reflect on the heritage that you have received. What words come to your mind as you reflect back on your childhood? Write down both the positive and the negative impressions that come to your mind. These words help define where you came from.

Now I want you to think about what you want your legacy to be? How do you want to be remembered by your children? What do you want to pass on to them? What do you want to leave behind? What do you want people to say about you twenty-five years from now? As I mentioned previously, the heritage you were handed is not as important as the legacy you will leave behind. Isaiah 55:2 asks us, "Why spend money on what is not bread, your labor on what does not

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satisfy?”

As a young man, I attended the university to become a civil engineer. I was a very gifted student and was blessed with the best grades in my class. I was the top student in the engineering department and had a great future ahead of me. However, at the end of my first year at the university, I had surrendered my life to Jesus Christ and God gave me a burning passion to reach the lost. I was challenged by the words of Jesus in Luke 14:26-33, especially verse thirty-three, “In the same way, any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.”

I eventually completed my bachelor’s degree and then went on to graduate school. During the seventh year of my university studies, I knew God was calling me to leave school, forsake all, and follow the Lord. I wasn’t sure initially where I was to serve the Lord, but I knew the time had come to give up my educational pursuits. After considerable prayer and counsel, I informed my academic advisor of my decision to leave the university.

My advisor was stunned and shocked by this news. He didn’t agree with my decision and tried to persuade me not to take this step. His response when he heard the news was, “What a waste of a good mind!” Of course, he saw my potential for becoming a successful engineer and he was deeply disappointed that one of his gifted students was throwing away his future.

After forty-five years of full-time Christian ministry, God has blessed me far beyond what I ever could have experienced if I had remained an engineer. The Lord opened up a worldwide ministry to me and has used my life to touch the lives of people in many nations. My wife and I were never able to have children of our own due to some medical complications. But, God has given us the privilege of having spiritual children all over the world through the ministry opportunities that opened up to us.

The joys and rewards we have found in serving the Lord and in seeing people’s lives transformed are far beyond any monetary rewards we gave up. A life poured out for the Lord is never a wasted life. Investing our time and energy in the Kingdom of God is the best investment we can make in life. There is nothing more rewarding than giving yourself to other people. I have no regrets over the decision I made forty-five years ago to leave the university. My life has been fruitful and rewarding beyond my greatest expectation!

Every Christian is called to be fruitful and multiply. It was the first command God gave to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1:28. God wants his kingdom to increase in number and to fill the earth with his glory. Malachi 2:15 states that the Lord is, “seeking godly offspring.” He is pleased when we produce spiritual, as well as, physical children.

Single people, as well as married people, can produce godly offspring. They can mentor young believers and help them mature and grow in their relationships with God. God has called all of us to influence others and to see them grow in Christ. You can pass on a way of life as you love the Lord with all your heart and as you allow the Word of God to guide your steps. God will give you spiritual children if you make yourself available to him.

David tells us in Psalm 127:3-4, “Sons are a heritage from the lord, children a reward from him.

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Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate. Children are an heritage of the Lord." Someone has said that a godly legacy can be partially measured by the character of the descendants who have been spiritually influenced by a person's life.

Dennis Rainey the founder of Family Life states that, "Our children are living messages we send to a time and place we will never see." Paul considered his converts to be "letters" from Christ that were to be read by others. (II Corinthians 3:2-3)

"You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, know and read by everybody. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts."

The legacy you leave is determined by the life you live. Your life is a statement of your true values. If you want people to remember you as an honest person, you can't live as a liar and a deceiver. Proverbs 10:7 tells us that, "The memory of the righteous will be a blessing, but the name of the wicked will rot." Those who have lived godly lives will be remembered with fondness and affection. However, those who have lived wicked lives will be dishonored.

It is written in the Bible that, "Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God." (Genesis 6:9) His life was a powerful testimony to generations that followed him. All of us would like to be remembered as a righteous person that walked with God. For that to happen, we need to live a righteous and godly life.

Abraham was called God's friend in James 2:23. David was known as a man after God's own heart. These Old Testament leaders inspire and challenge us to embrace a blameless life in our generation. I Corinthians 6:9 warns us that, "The wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God." Galatians 5:21 says, "Those who live like this (walking in the works of the flesh) will not inherit the Kingdom of God." We need to follow the inspirational example of people like Noah, Abraham and David. We need to turn away from the pathway of wickedness and selfishness.

Leaving a godly legacy requires the faithful fulfillment of God's call on your life. It involves good stewardship of your time, your talents and your resources. It also involves a commitment to purposefully pass on to the next generation what God has done in your life. The Bible describes this process of declaring His deeds to succeeding generations in the following three passages:

Ps 78:3-7

What we have heard and known,
what our fathers have told us.
4 We will not hide them from their children;
we will tell the next generation
the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,
his power, and the wonders he has done.
5 He decreed statutes for Jacob
and established the law in Israel,

which he commanded our forefathers
to teach their children,
6 so the next generation would know them,
even the children yet to be born,
and they in turn would tell their children.
7 Then they would put their trust in God
and would not forget his deeds
but would keep his commands.

Ps 145:3-7

Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
his greatness no one can fathom.
4 One generation will commend your works to another;
they will tell of your mighty acts.
5 They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty,
and I will meditate on your wonderful works.
6 They will tell of the power of your awesome works,
and I will proclaim your great deeds.
7 They will celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness.

Joel 1:3 “Tell it to your children, and let your children tell it to their children, and their children to the next generation.”

You are encouraged by these scriptures to share with your children the great things God has done in your life. If God has blessed you and shown himself real in your life, you have a story to tell. Each person has a unique testimony and a living message that reveals God’s ways and His character. You need to recapture and preserve this ancient tradition of verbally passing on your stories to the coming generations.

Israel passed on its history and the testimony of God’s reality through the means of verbal transmission. The Old Testament consists of stories, describing God’s ways and His character. Israel’s legacy was passed on through celebrations that highlighted significant events in its national history. The people celebrated the Passover annually as a remembrance of God delivering them out of slavery in Egypt.

They set aside memorial stones to commemorate God’s miraculous parting of the Jordan River. Parents brought their children to this memorial and told them the story of how God brought them across the river on dry land. They were commanded by God to keep a pot of manna in the Ark of the Covenant as a reminder of how God fed them during their wilderness journey. A copy of the law given to Moses on Mount Sinai was also in the Ark as a reminder of God’s Covenant with Israel.

The rod of Aaron that budded was preserved in the Ark to remind people of their rebellion and God’s judgment for rejecting His anointed leaders. All of these ceremonies and sacred items kept the story alive of God’s miraculous presence in their midst. Parents faithfully told and retold

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these stories to their children until it became a part of their life and heritage.

I was very conscious of the need to pass on a legacy to my son, Jonathan as he was growing up. My wife Violet and I shared with our son how we each became Christians. I accepted Christ when I was nineteen and had a very dramatic and powerful conversion. My wife accepted the Lord as a four-year old girl. We both gave testimony of how God became more than just a word in our lives. We also shared with our son about the significant spiritual milestones in our lives.

Our marriage had started in a very unique way and it was evident that God had brought us together from the very beginning. We told this story of how we met to our son on several occasions. We shared about how God called us into the ministry and how we had both left promising careers in order to serve the Lord. We shared stories of how God had led us through our life of faith and of how He miraculously provided for us over and over again.

Jonathan, our son, was a special answer to prayer since we were unable to have any children of our own. We shared how we had faithfully prayed that God would give us a child. Five years after we were married, we were attending a family camp where the speaker challenged everyone to trust God for specific answers to prayer.

The speaker shared Matthew 18:19 during his message, which says, “Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.” When we returned to our room after the meeting, both of us felt that the Lord had spoken to us that we should specifically agree for a child.

So, even though we had prayed for a child many times before, we got down on our knees in obedience to the Lord and agreed in prayer for a child. The room was filled with the glory and presence of God. We both knew that God had heard our prayer and that we would soon have a child.

Nine months later, we held a newborn baby boy in our arms and we named him Jonathan. God had indeed, answered our prayers. A young teenage girl that we knew had become pregnant and was not able to raise her child by herself. She and her mother knew that we were praying for a child, so they approached us and asked if we would consider adopting this baby. The Lord confirmed to us that this child was the answer to our prayers, so we joyfully agreed to adopt the baby this young girl was carrying.

God used this incident to turn the heart of this teenage girl back to the Lord. She later married and God blessed her and her husband with two daughters. God’s hand was evident in so many ways through this journey. He turned a very tragic and sinful situation around and brought glory to His name through it all. We told our son the story of his conception and birth and of how the Lord sent him into our lives. It gave him a greater appreciation of where he had come from and a greater sense of God’s hand upon his own life.

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 is a model for passing on a legacy to our children. I have referred to this scripture previously because it is so foundational. It gives us important understanding about parenting our children and about passing on a legacy.

4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

If we want our children to love the Lord, WE must first love the Lord. If we want our children to have the Word of God in their hearts, WE must first have the word of God in our hearts. A continual “living” seminar should flow out of our lives to our children. We are to pass on a way of life by honoring God and His ways in every aspect of our daily living.

We need to be purposeful, as I mentioned previously. We need to be diligent. We need to be consistent, and we need to be tireless. We are not called to pass on religious instruction to our children. We are called to pass on the reality of a living relationship with a living God. We are called to pass on godly values to our children. Those values need to be anchored in God’s character and anchored in the truths expressed in the Bible.

We raised our son Jonathan while serving as fulltime, faith missionaries. We experienced many instances when God answered our prayers while we were raising our son. Often, we needed miraculous provision in order to meet our daily needs. God was involved in our daily life and when we saw His hand at work, we rejoiced together at His faithfulness. These regular demonstrations of God’s faithfulness left a lifelong impression on our son as he grew up. These stories became part of the legacy that we passed on to him.

When Jonathan left home in order to go to the university, I wanted to continue, “impressing” the Lord’s commands upon my son’s life even though he was no longer living with us. The Lord directed me to write letters to him regularly. In each letter I chose a particular topic or value to share with him.

In one letter the topic I chose was integrity. I shared with my son the importance of having integrity in dealing with people and in managing money. I included some scriptures in the letter and then I reminded my son of some events that happened when he was still at home. Those events illustrated the importance of being a man of integrity. I covered numerous topics over a period of several months. In this way, I was able to pass on these important values to my son.

Peter, the apostle, did something very similar by writing a letter to a group of Christians in the first century. Here is what he says in II Peter 1:12-15.

12 “So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. 13 I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, 14 because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. 15 And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.”

I then decided to take an additional step in order to pass on my values to my son and to my grandchildren. I put together a series of statements that summarized the basic values that had formed my life. I wanted my son and my grandchildren to be aware of these values and I prayed that they would embrace them in their lives also. I created a document using some decorative parchment paper and called it, "My legacy to my children and my grandchildren". I signed my name on the document and then presented it to my son.

Now, I use this legacy document as a prayer guide for my son and my grandchildren. Every time I prepare to speak on the topic of legacy, I pray over each of these statements and ask the Lord to make them a reality to my son and my grandchildren. Here is a copy of the legacy that I wrote for my family.

My Legacy To My Children And Grandchildren

- **I want you to have a vibrant faith in God and to know Him intimately.**
- **I want you to honor the Lord in everything you do.**
- **I want you to fulfill your God-given destiny in life.**
- **I want you to find joy in your vocation.**
- **I want you to have a love for the Word of God and a commitment to obey it.**
- **I want you to have sound moral convictions.**
- **I want you to live with an eternal perspective to life.**
- **I want you to be committed to a life of service, both to God and to others.**
- **I want you to avoid a selfish and self-centered way of living.**
- **I want you to take personal responsibility for your actions and attitudes.**
- **I want you to be faithful to your spouse and to be devoted to your family.**
- **I want you to have a good work ethic and to be a person of honesty and integrity.**
- **I want you to be a good steward of your time, resources and talents.**
- **I want you to be generous and gracious towards others.**
- **I want you to treat every individual with respect and dignity.**
- **I want you to have a love and care for the poor and needy.**
- **I want you to be compassionate and merciful.**
- **I want you to be just and fair in your dealings with others.**
- **I want you to have a good name and an honorable reputation.**
- **I want you to have a global and not just a nationalistic perspective to life.**
- **I want you to have God's heart for the nations.**
- **I want you to realize that pain and suffering build character and are a part of life.**
- **I want you to resolve your conflicts in a godly and honorable way.**
- **I want you to be an honorable citizen in your community.**
- **I want you to leave the world a better place than you found it.**
- **I want you to value and respect all forms of life.**
- **I want you to be a good steward of the environment.**
- **I want you to remember me as an example and model of these values.**
- **I want you to remember me as a person who loved the Lord, loved you and enjoyed**

life.

- **I want to be remembered as a good husband and a loving father who walked with God.**
- **I want you to be proud of your heritage and to be inspired by my life.**
- **I want you to be a good steward of any material possessions I may pass on to you.**

You have been given a great heritage through the sacrificial life and death of Jesus Christ. God has transferred you from the dominion of darkness into the kingdom of his beloved son. (Colossians 1:13) No matter what heritage you were handed through your earthly family, God has given you an inheritance in heaven that is imperishable. It is kept for you there and no thief can steal it and no rust can destroy it. (I Peter 1:4)

He has blessed you so that you can be a blessing to others. He has transformed your life so that you can be an agent of transformation in the world. God said to Abraham that he would bless all the families of the world through him. (Genesis 12:3) He wants to bless all the families of the world through you, as well, since you are sons and daughters of Abraham. (Romans 4:16) I pray that you will be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth with godly offspring. God bless you as you seek to fulfill your destiny as an individual and as a family.

Final exercise: Review the document “My legacy to my children and my grandchildren.” Take some time to consider what you would like your legacy to be. Write down some of the key values you want to pass on to succeeding generations. Ask God to show you ways to pass on this legacy to your children and to the people he has called you to influence.

Application Prayer

Father, I thank you for the heritage that you have given me. I am grateful for the parents you gave me and for the family that I grew up in. I want to preserve those things that are godly from my family and to let go of those things that were ungodly. Break the generational bondages in my life that hold me back from being a godly person.

I want to pass on to my children a legacy that honors you. I want my children to be proud of the legacy I leave for them. Show me how to invest my life in my children and in the lives of those I am called to influence. Keep me from wasting my life on things that have no eternal value. I commit myself to you and to your purposes for my life.

I want to be fruitful and to multiply godly offspring that can be sent into the world as messengers of your Kingdom. Show me practical steps I can take to pass on a godly legacy to the next generation. Make me a godly example of the values I want to pass on. Bless the memory people will have of me in the coming generations. In Jesus Name! Amen.