

LEAVING A LEGACY

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The story you are a part of does not start and end with your birth and death; rather, you are part of a *series of life impacts*. Your decisions, priorities, values; your efforts — they go way beyond your own life. Your value as an individual is *tremendous*, but your isolated life story is not *the* story. When we think about life with this frame of mind we start living intentionally and more aware of the people in our circle of influence. Because legacies are caught by the people we richly and meaningfully touch.

"Our days are numbered. One of the primary goals in our lives should be to prepare for our last day. The legacy we leave is not just in our possessions, but in the quality of our lives. What preparations should we be making now? The greatest waste in all of our earth, which cannot be recycled or reclaimed, is our waste of the time that God has given us each day." —Bill Graham

So, what exactly does it mean to leave a legacy?!

I believe leaving a legacy is passing along that which you ultimately stand for, define as important, and value most. Whether intentional or not -- you're passing along something. You are the common denominator in a theme. You bow your knee to something, and your response to this affinity; this theme you become known for, evokes responses from those you touch — and this is where a legacy is born. This is *beautiful* and *powerful* that something we claim could extend beyond our lifetime.

I was recently gripped by the comparison A.E. Winship (American educator and pastor) made of [Jonathan Edwards](#) (A Puritan Pastor from the 1700's) and a man by the name of [Max Jukes](#) (a convicted criminal). The purpose was to examine their lineages and determine notable differences. The findings were astounding.

According to [this source](#), Edward's legacy included the following: "1 U.S. Vice President, 3 U.S. Senators, 3 governors, 3 mayors, 13 college presidents, 30 judges, 65 professors, 80 public office holders, 100 lawyers and 100 missionaries."

"Max Jukes' descendants included: 7 murderers, 60 thieves, 50 women of debauchery, 130 other convicts, 310 paupers (with over 2,300 years lived in poorhouses) 400 who were physically wrecked by indulgent living."

Pretty compelling evidence that your legacy shapes lives and your decisions extend beyond yourself.

I think so often we are tempted to make tough decisions with the logic that ultimately, regardless of the discomfort they might cause others, "it's what's best for me." This mindset is honestly a dangerous place to live because here in this place, the universe revolves around me. You perceive life experiences with significant limitation through this lens. Alternatively, **a legacy perspective invites us to act with lasting intention, trust the true authority on life, and unselfishly consider the people impacted by the ripples we make.** It requires that we consider the eternal rather than the now (temporary). The unseen must be regarded alongside the seen. This life is bigger than we are. *We are leaving a legacy.*

I love the story of Moses. There were sacrifices made all around *just for his survival*. Then he accepted his role as the one who would lead a slave nation out of Egypt and transform them into God's chosen people. His children aren't notably mentioned. But Joshua is.

"Inside the Tent of Meeting, the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend. Afterward Moses would return to the camp, but the young man who assisted him, Joshua son of Nun, would remain behind in the Tent of Meeting." — Exodus 33:11

Joshua was *there*, witnessing stuff in person that we read about today. **He did life observing Moses, gathering confidence in the God who was leading them**, so much so that he was 1 of 2 men out of 10 who encouraged the invasion of Canaan to receive the land promised to them by God himself. He eventually led the nation himself and made a powerful declaration before all the people evidencing that the legacy continued.

"But if you refuse to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve... But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord." — Joshua 24:15

Legacies are built over a lifetime. And so I find it beneficial to pay attention to legacy leaving efforts at varying stages. **I don't think truth changes with age — but I believe perspective does.** As a believer in Jesus, ultimately my life is to be marked by loving God and loving people - that's it, it doesn't change. But like many of you, I'm neck deep in the *front end* of legacy building. My statement alone would be terribly lacking in perspective. So I have asked for another 2 generations to weigh in on the topic of leaving a legacy; to offer their key piece of advice for those of us just getting started; a 30-60-90 if you will. I'm wildly excited to announce the additional insights offered for our reading pleasure: [John Herrington](#) (my Dad - I am so proud to say), and [Cliff Herrington](#) (my Papaw - the wittiest 90-something you will ever meet), will be sharing their insights and advice on leaving a legacy. I cannot even wait.