

What Will You Leave Behind?

One Saturday I spend four or 5 hours helping of my niece, Cherish, and her husband (Andy) put together a fort. I don't mean like Fort Apache or Fort Knox but a fort for their two children to play on. This fort had like 5,000 pieces with a bay window, slides, a kitchen and I kept looking for the sliding glass doors or an elevator to take them up to the top floor.

While I was not there to finish putting it together it was completed the next day. They took pictures with their children playing on the fort. I kept on thinking of something Thomas Jefferson said, "When I am too old to plant trees for my own gratification, I shall do it for posterity." I understood exactly what he meant. The tree would continue to grow and he left behind something others could enjoy and see. Andy and Cherish's two boys will get to enjoy that fort for many years.

Let me ask what will you leave behind for others when your life ends. I don't mean how much money or anything physical in nature but what will you leave behind in non-physical or monetary terms.

You will leave behind memories. Everybody's life touches the lives of many people. Whether you like it or not they will have memories of you. We determine what those memories will be. Will you leave behind good memories, ones of laughter, and joy? I have memories of my Aunt Mamie and her good cooking. My grandma Beasley always had left overs on the table with a table cloth covering the food. One could get a biscuit or leftover bacon if it was after breakfast. We all have those special memories but what will they remember about you in relation to God? Will they remember you always going to worship services? Or how you loved to sing praises to Him?

You will leave behind your reputation. What will people say about you once you are gone? In Acts 6 an issue arose over the neglect of the Grecian widows. The Apostles said, "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven **men of good reputation**, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" {Acts 6:3, emphasis mine D.T.} Would you

be selected if you were there? Reputations are built one day at a time but can be ruined by one event, one word said in anger, or moment of weakness. Before we do anything, we need to think of the consequence. That can be pretty heavy stuff to think about but will you leave behind a good name?

You will leave behind your influence. You are influencing people now and will continue to do so later. I can tell you, there are times I do things and think “that is my mom or dad in me.” This may be the cumulation of the memories we leave behind and our reputation whether good or bad. Timothy was influenced by his grandmother and mother, **“when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.” (2 Timothy 1:5)**. Let me specify here addressing our young couples and their parenting. Make sure you teach your children about God. Let them see you studying the Bible and worshipping God. It will have long last effects on their lives and destiny.

The one thing we won't leave behind is our relationship with God. **“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." (Revelation 14:13)**. If one is faithful to the point of death, they are faithful after the point of death. A saved person remains saved after they leave this world. But this also goes true for a lost person. One cannot live outside the Lord and expect to be in the Lord on the other side of the grave.

Your works will also follow you. **“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them." (Revelation 14:13)**. Your labor of love, your sacrifice, your good deeds will not be forgotten before the Judgement Seat.

What you leave behind is up to you. Make sure it is something that will help others enjoy life and go to heaven. – Dennis Tucker