

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church  
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Sermon Title: What Will Be Our Legacy? Whatever We Decide! Matthew 6:19-24

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**INTRODUCTION:** The three points to today's sermon are:

1. Legacy is what we spend our lives creating.
2. Healthy vision leads to a healthy legacy.
3. Commitment to God provides legacy direction.

This morning I want to you to consider what legacy you will leave behind. I've preached several times about legacy, and it's important for us to consider it seriously. As we age, our legacy building should become more refined.

I realize this morning I am speaking to all ages. Those who are young have probably never thought about it. But, those who are older should really be thinking about it. Why? Because life is a gift. None of us are on this earth by accident. All of us have a God-given purpose or purposes. It's our choice to waste it or make something of it.

We build legacy in four ways—as an individual, couple, family, and group.

- We all know of individuals who left behind legacies. In the Bible, we have countless individuals including Joseph, Noah, Samuel, Jesus, and Paul.
  - On Wednesday nights I've been teaching about King Ahab, who left a legacy noted in the Bible as the most evil and vile king ever!
- The second way to leave a legacy is as a couple. We know of famous couples who left behind legacies. In the Bible, the couples who stand out to me are Adam and Eve and Priscilla and Aquilla.
- Then there are families who left behind legacies—Joseph's family, Abraham's family, and so on—

- The fourth way to leave a legacy is through a group—think of the groups in the Bible who left behind legacies: the disciples, the Christians in the Book of Acts. Sometimes a whole generation leaves a legacy.

### **First, LEGACY IS WHAT WE SPEND OUR LIVES CREATING.**

The legacy we leave behind is the legacy we spend our lives building.

- If you think, “Well, first I need to save a lot of money to build my legacy,” then you are missing the point.
- If you think, “I need to have some more free time so I can start working on my legacy,” then you’ve missed the point.
- If you think, “When I retire, I will start working on a legacy to leave behind,” then you have missed the point.

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 6:19-21 <sup>19</sup> *“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. <sup>20</sup> But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. <sup>21</sup> For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.*

**EXPLANATION:** Jesus was very clear. Where our treasure is, that’s where our heart is. If you are not sure what type of legacy you are building, read these verses about ten times, and it will start to sink in. You’ll start identifying where your treasure is. Your spending, giving, and saving habits identify your value system...which, in turn, is creating your legacy.

**APPLICATION:** Before I move on, I want to make sure everyone understands—what you are doing right now is creating your legacy. Sure, you will have diversions and circumstances that happen beyond your control, that distract you every now and then. But, even in those distractions, you can still build a legacy. Perhaps your treasure has been in the wrong place, and now you realize it. There is no better time than today for you to start over and start focusing on the legacy that God wants you to create for him.

Not only is legacy what we spend our time creating, but—

## **Second, HEALTHY VISION LEADS TO A HEALTHY LEGACY.**

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 6:22-23 <sup>22</sup> *“The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. <sup>23</sup> But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!*

**EXPLANATION:** Legacy requires healthy vision...and of course, I mean this in a figurative sense. Short-sightedness might be the worst disease of all. Looking for the quick fix, looking for the easy way out—none of these things really work, nor do they build a healthy legacy.

**ILLUSTRATION:** While I love our country, I believe many of our leaders are short-sighted. They look for quick fixes. I don't see politicians proposing solutions that will take years, and if long term solutions were accepted, they would just be overruled by the next group of leaders. Unhealthy eyes create an unhealthy country.

**ILLUSTRATION:** How about short-sightedness on a personal level? If we find ourselves in a problem, we tend to look for the quick fix instead of dealing with root causes. Unhealthy vision leads to unhealthy lives.

**APPLICATION:** We must educate our eyes so we will have clearer vision. Our eyesight, our vision, should pierce the darkness of limited vision. Our eyesight must capture a vision for the future. Our eyesight should imagine the possibilities of what we can leave behind.

If we only focus only on the here and now and fail to focus on tomorrow, then in a sense, we commit treason on life itself...because we've failed to plan to pass along something good for future generations. I trust all of us will leave this world a better place than we found it.

Let's review:

- Legacy is what we spend our time creating.
- Healthy vision leads to a healthy legacy, and—

## **Third, COMMITMENT TO GOD PROVIDES LEGACY DIRECTION.**

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 6:24<sup>24</sup> *“No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.*”

**APPLICATION:** Think about your legacy. Thinking about your legacy might be new thinking for you. You might have wandered through life just doing what people do without really thinking about legacy. If you are married, it’s highly possible that you, as a couple, have never had a thought about your legacy. If you have a family, it’s highly possible that you’ve never had a talk about your family legacy. Why not start that conversation today? What do we want the legacy of our family to be, and how can we start making that legacy?

The Bible is clear. You cannot serve two masters. If your focus is serving God, then he’ll reveal his will to you. You’ll know what he wants you to do with your heart, your treasure, your focus, and your money.

Again, as I shared earlier, your legacy is important because life is a gift. We only have one life to live. We can use it to build something good, or we can waste it.

**ILLUSTRATION:** This week, I read a sad story about the 101-year-old Florida Street Baptist Church in Greensboro, North Carolina. A once large church dwindled to 18 people, and they voted to disband at the end of the year. The article talked about the decades of decline and numerous efforts to prop it up, but decline was steady. Who knows the real reason for the death of the church. The article didn’t really get into that. I looked up the church on Google Earth and saw it is located in the middle of a large population, so it was not as if people had moved away from the area.

Normally I don’t finish depressing articles, and I was about to quit reading this one when it said they had voted to give their facility to a Christian school, which had been meeting in their building for quite some time. Over the years, the school had grown and become successful. The end of the story was much happier than the beginning of it. Now, the legacy of Florida Street Baptist Church will not be that they closed their doors in defeat but that they gave their building and land unselfishly to a Christian School.

Legacy is not necessarily about leaving money or objects behind. Indeed, it can be about leaving nothing but good memories behind.

**ILLUSTRATION:** This past week I had the privilege of taking some teenagers from the neighborhood to Austin Peay for a tour of the university campus. None of them had ever been to Clarksville. Most of them had never stepped foot on a college campus. They were pretty well mesmerized at the possibilities of going to college.

The one thing about this group was that all of them came from homes where their parents have given up everything to start a new life in America. Someday those kids will see it. Someday those kids will say, “My parents gave up their own dreams so I would have a better life.” I’d say the parents have never thought about what legacy they will leave behind, but that’ll be it: the parents, and in some cases the grandparents, gave up everything.

**CONCLUSION:** Right now, everyone in this sanctuary is creating a legacy. It is impossible for you not to create one. What legacy are you creating? What legacy will you leave behind? How will people remember you? Here’s my guess— how you live your life right now will be your legacy...whether you give or are stingy; whether you hold grudges or forgive; whether you volunteer or expect things to be done for you; whether you did the best you could with what you had or were wasteful; whether you persevered or gave up easily.

If you do not know Jesus as your Lord and Savior, your legacy is terribly limited.

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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