

What is Legacy Giving?

I once received a legacy gift. Actually, I have received more than one, but one in particular stands out in my mind. I had been out of school about two years. My wife and I wanted to buy a home, but we did not have enough saved to even come close to being able to make a good down payment. At that time, we received a \$12,000 bequest from a great uncle for whom I was named. That was, almost to the penny, the amount needed for us to purchase our home, the home we have lived in the last 40 years. That was a legacy gift, timed by God, given with the right heart and received with gratitude.

The Old Testament shows the development of the Hebrew's theology of eternal life and the soul. Over a long period of time they began to realize the scope of eternity and the full meaning of their special relationship with God. Unfortunately, some of that is being lost in modern America as many Americans struggle to find relevance for God; He simply does not appear to be necessary to their modern lives. In fact, He is rather demanding and intrusive because He wants part of the weekend and a chunk of the income!

They don't see a need for God in their day because they have everything they need, or so they think. It is only as they become aware of their mortality and the brevity of life (James described life as a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. James 4:14), that God grows in importance. It is at that same time that they may begin to wonder what kind of footprint they will leave in the sands of time. That footprint is what may be called legacy.

James 4:13-15

13 Now listen, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money."

14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.

15 Instead, you ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that."



One Biblical way to live on is through legacy giving. A legacy gift is a gift that reflects values, states to those who receive it and perhaps to others who and whose the legacy leaver was. This can continue our influence even after we have gone to glory. Simply put, a legacy gift is one that reflects our faith in the Kingdom come in heaven" while we are still here "on earth . . ." It allows our memory and our influence – and our testimony - to live on.

It doesn't take a lot to leave a legacy gift. \$12,000 wasn't that much to my great uncle, not even in 1987. But the right gift at the right time (God's time - *kairos*) with the right heart and perhaps even with a message of love can change a life and last a lifetime. And the best part is that legacy giving does not have to wait until you pass away, perhaps the time is right to make that lasting impact right now.

Legacy giving is happening right now at Idlewild Baptist Church. If you are interested but don't know where or how to start, please give us a call at The Idlewild Foundation, (813) 264-8713. We would love to show you how legacy giving shaped the world of the Old and New Testaments and can shape the world around you – and the world that is to come.

Legacy giving is one faithful way of expressing your heart and living on. Call and let us show you how to leave your legacy.

