

# Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



## Leaving a Godly Inheritance

KEY PASSAGE: 2 Timothy 1:1-7; 3:14-15 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURE: Luke 6:38

### SUMMARY

**The word “inheritance” is usually associated with material possessions, but there is another kind of legacy that’s even more valuable.**

Although it can’t be seen, counted, or measured, it’s the most priceless gift you can pass on to your children and grandchildren. I’m talking about a spiritual inheritance, which money can’t buy and death can’t take away.

Unlike an earthly inheritance that is passed on after death, a spiritual one is imparted over the course of a lifetime through godly words and actions. From the moment a child is born, parents have the opportunity to pour themselves into that young life. But remember, you cannot give what you do not have. This is why parents and grandparents should develop their own spiritual lives first so they can invest in the lives of their children.

The apostle Timothy is a wonderful example of someone who was blessed with such a treasure. When he was young, his mother and grandmother shared their faith and knowledge of Scripture with him, and because of it, he had a firm foundation to stand on when he was called into ministry.

### SERMON POINTS

#### Components of a Spiritual Heritage

There are many spiritual treasures you can leave to your children that will have a lasting impact on their lives. You can instill:

- **A desire to follow Jesus.** Although you can’t pass on salvation—that’s a choice each person must make for him or herself—your desire for the Lord

is contagious. When your children experience the joy you feel when you talk about Christ, they’ll also become interested in Him. Take advantage of every opportunity to share your passion for the Savior. Talk about Jesus when you’re driving in the car or sitting down for a meal. They won’t develop a true desire to follow the Lord simply by going to church and hearing sermons. Their interest in Christ comes from watching and seeing that He is the center of your life.

- **A reverence for God’s Word.** No other book in the world can match the Bible. It’s the most important message ever given to mankind, and parents have the responsibility to pass it on to their children. Let them see you reading the Word so they know how important it is. Be sure to give them their own Bibles and read to them regularly, explaining what each passage means. As your children grow, challenge them to go to Scripture to find the answers to all their questions.

If you want your children to respect the Word of God and live obediently, you have to make it a priority in your own life. Turn off the television and start having conversations about the Bible at home. Make your passion for this remarkable book obvious to your children, because the pattern you establish in your own life will be the one they’re likely to follow.

- **An understanding of how to listen to the Lord.** When my children were young, I told them the most important thing in life was to learn how to listen to God. Since He can’t be perceived by our physical senses, children must be taught to listen with their spirits. The best opportunity to learn this skill is when they need guidance. Instruct them to ask the Lord for direction and wait patiently until

He answers—this could take days or even weeks. When they think the Lord has spoken, help them search the Scriptures to see if what they discerned is consistent with God's Word.

- **A pattern of obedience.** Since kids follow our examples more easily than our words, the best way to teach obedience is by modeling it. This means we must let them know when our actions are done out of submission to God. Training in obedience also requires that we admit mistakes and explain why it was wrong for us to choose our own ways instead of following the Lord. The goal is to let our children learn from both our successes and our failures.
- **A faith that conquers the trials of life.** Although we want to protect children from adult worries, we also need to let them know some of our struggles so they can see how we trust the Lord in hard times. I learned some of the greatest lessons about God's faithfulness by watching my mother handle difficulties. Because I had repeatedly witnessed how God provided for us, I learned to trust Him in my times of need.
- **A forgiving heart.** This one is a difficult lesson because granting forgiveness requires that we first suffer the pain of mistreatment. And like all the other benefits of a spiritual heritage, this one must be taught by example. Our children need to witness a forgiving response from us when we're wronged. Christ holds nothing against us, so we do not have a right to do so against someone else.
- **An orderly lifestyle.** One of our jobs as parents is to provide disciplined lives for our children. Since they learn how to handle responsibilities from us, it is important that we demonstrate self-control in our actions, finances, diets, and schedules. We cannot be focused on God and His plans for us when we're living hectic and cluttered lives.
- **A servant's spirit.** A willingness to serve others is a valuable quality that will benefit children throughout their lives. It's up to us as adults to model this characteristic for them by unselfishly putting others first. As we care for both our families and those around us by doing what we can to help

them, children will learn to imitate our servant-hearted behaviors.

- **A generous hand.** Every child enters the world bent away from God. That's why so many of their quarrels include the words, "It's mine!" As parents, we have a responsibility to teach them generosity because it won't ever come naturally. When they see us freely sharing our money, possessions, and time, they'll understand the joy of giving and how God is always faithful to provide for those who are charitable towards others (Luke 6:38).
- **Sincere love.** All children need to feel loved. As they experience our genuine, unconditional affection, they'll learn to give it to others. This kind of devotion is not demonstrated by the things we give them but by pouring our lives into theirs.

## RESPONSE

We provide a spiritual inheritance to children in three ways. First and most importantly, we do so by the pattern of our own lives. Secondly, we pass on to them the principles that govern our lives. That's why we are responsible for explaining the biblical truths we believe and follow. And finally, we provide a spiritual legacy through the power of our words as we interact daily with our children.

As you tackle the task of leaving a spiritual inheritance, ask the Lord for wisdom to help you teach the lessons that will equip those children to live in a way that is beneficial to them and pleasing to God.

- Name one biblical principle you have passed along or will pass along to your child/children. Why is this principle important?
- What biblical principle(s) did you inherit from a parent or friend?
- Is there a memory verse you have learned that you would like to leave as a legacy for your family?

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