

What will your Legacy look like?

Graham Nelson – LMC – 09/11/2025

- Today is a special day in the life of our church, one that we want to continue to remember and celebrate.
- 67 years ago, on the 9th November 1958, the first official Sunday meeting of our church was held at the Loyal Orange Lodge in Box Hill.
- Slides of our history
 - 1958 Oxley's home – house meeting, Wattle Park
 - 1958 Loyal Orange Lodge – Box Hill
 - 1960 YWCA, Russell St Melbourne CBD
 - 1969 Kew Chapel, Kew
 - 1973 Oban Road, Ringwood
 - 1975 Nunawading High School, Nunawading
 - 1977 331 Maroondah Ringwood
 - 1986 Old Melbourne Road, Chirnside Park
 - Property 1987
 - Property 2025
 - HKO & JO, G&K, A&C (Ps Delton Gordon, Ps Ian Richardson)
- Let's see who our longest attender is – 50 years (Oban Road), 55 Years (Kew Chapel), 60 years (YWCA Melbourne), 67 years (Loyal Orange Lodge).
- One of the things that I take great pleasure in is the fact that we are a generational church – not only do we minister to all generations, but we see joining together to worship our God multi generations in families.
- Today we praise God for His faithfulness, for the pioneers that have gone before, for the strong legacy and foundations on which we have been built.
- Many Christian organisations who have been going as long as we have, have suffered mission drift, they don't look anything like the organisations they started out to be, in fact many would not even be seen as Christian now.
- We are where we are today because of the solid teaching and the determination of the past and present leadership to stay mission true to what The Bible says – not a small thing considering all the changes that have taken place in the world, our country and even more so, our state, over the past 67 years.

- Throughout our 67 years we have left a legacy as seen by the:
 - Ministry to families, YA, Youth and children through the programs run from LMC
 - Salvations, Baptisms, Weddings
 - Training of Pastors and leaders through LMBC
 - The 21 churches that have been planted out of LMC.
 - The 10's of thousands of children educated through OCC
 - And at Oxley kids, a safe place where children are not being indoctrinated in the woke ideas that the world is now following.
- It's around this thought of legacy that I propose to share this morning – by asking “What will your Legacy look like? Or “How do you build a strong Christian legacy”.
- The dictionary says a legacy is:
 - an amount of money or property left to someone in a will, or
 - the long-lasting impact of particular events, actions, etc. that took place in the past, or of a person's life.
- It's the latter that I want to focus on this morning as we know the temporal things don't flow on into eternity and therefore can't really leave a legacy that we would value.
- Let me pose a few questions that you might like to ponder on.
- When your life here on earth is over, how do you want to be remembered?
- What would you be happy to have people say about you?
- What are you going to leave behind that won't lose its value?
- What will be the message of your life?
- As we unpack these questions, let's start by looking at the kind of legacy that God approves of.
- So many passages we could quote or use but here are a couple that stand out.

Matthew 23:23 *"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.*

Micah 6:8 *He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

1 Samuel 16:7 *But the Lord said to Samuel, "Don't judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*

- A legacy that God approves of involves the passing down of wisdom, faith, and godly influence on future generations, rather than focusing on material wealth.
- This is achieved through being role models, teaching values, living generously, and building a spiritual inheritance that honors Christ and reveals God's grace.
- What legacy do you want to leave your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren?

Proverbs 13:22 *A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children.*

- While we can't make the decision to follow Christ for any of our loved ones, however, we can teach them about our great God and create an atmosphere in our homes, church and school where trust in Him can flourish.
- Let me give you four principles from Scripture which are non-negotiable if we are going to ensure that we are building our own spiritual legacies both personally and corporately.

1. **Be intentional about teaching God's Word**

2 Timothy 3:14-15 *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

2 Timothy 1:3-8 *I thank God whom I serve, as did my ancestors, ⁴ As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. ⁶ For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, ⁷ for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control. ⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord,,*

- Timothy “caught” the faith of his mother and grandmother
- They paved the way for his salvation by faithfully teaching him the Old Testament Scriptures.
- We can do the same for our children and grandchildren.
- Depending on their age, we can do things like
 - reading bedtime Bible stories,
 - having family devotions (JDe story heard last week),
 - ensuring they are making use of the programs run by the church (playgroups, kids club, children’s church, youth activities, camps etc,)
 - Placing them in OK and OCC,
 - Guiding them in the activities they get involved in are going to shape or influence them in a positive Godly way.
 - Watching who they hang out with.
- It is also important that we are walking the walk, and they see us doing what the Bible says, which leads us to the second point.

2. **Model** a life of faith founded on God’s Word

Ezra 7:10 *For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes in Israel.*

- Ezra, didn’t just teach God’s Word, he set his heart to obey it.

- Children need to see us acting out God's word not just telling them what it says.
- What we do always speaks louder than our words.
- If we long for our families to experience the joy and blessing of living a life that pleases God, they need a real-life model.
- They need someone to show them how it's done.
- Before we can effectively teach God's Word to our children, we must live it.
- And before we can live it, we must know it.
- When we make reading and studying God's Word, Church attendance etc a priority, our children will notice.
- When they see us open our Bible and watch us obediently follow God, they'll know we aren't all talk.
- We'll know when they have got it when they start saying; "what does the Bible say? When they start quoting scripture, when they start pulling us up.
- Pastor Hal used to say we never escape our parents – I thank God for the way my parents, Pastor Hal and Bill Simpson lived, and for the godly example they imaged for me – they weren't perfect, but they were the real deal and lived their lives accordingly.
- My father used to assist older people on a Sunday afternoon, and he would take us boys with him – we would sit down for afternoon tea and he would say; sit down, listen, you might learn something.
- Looking back, I now realize the truth is that statement, older people have wisdom and experience which we can learn from.

3. **Encourage** a mindset of faith

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 *And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

- Legacy building is a way of life and happens in our everyday life.
- It is an investment we invest in as we go through our day.
- In the practical, we probably don't think about it much – cooking, mowing lawns, driving, maintenance around the home, washing, ironing, serving at church, being good neighbours etc.
- Building a Godly legacy must be purposeful and intentional.
- As we faithfully continue in that commitment to instill a love for God in our children, it will become a natural part of the flow of our days.
- For instance, when we spot a rainbow on our way to school, not only do we look for the pot of gold, we remind our children of God's promise to Noah and it's outworking now.
- When we learn a friend is sick, we stop and pray for them together.
- Example - Ambulance siren.
- Our children need to get to the point that prayer is their default and that will only happen if they see us doing it.

4. **Help** them remember what God has done

Joshua 4:21-22 *And he said to the people of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in times to come, 'What do these stones mean?' then you shall let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.'"*

- When God held back the rushing waters of the Jordan River so His people could cross into the Promised Land, God commanded Joshua to take 12 large stones gathered from the dry riverbed and set them up at the other side as a memorial called Gilgal.
- These stones were to be memorial stones, a long-lasting reminder of God's mighty deed throughout their time in the wilderness.
- They also served as a great conversation starter with their children.
- These stones were a spiritual marker.
- They memorialized God's great activity and provided concrete opportunity for one generation to tell the next.

- We need to create our own opportunities to tell our family's God stories by establishing spiritual markers.
- As our children get older, share age-appropriate stories of your own battles and victories so your children can identify with you – it will open doors in the future for them to seek advice and wisdom from your experiences.
- 3 John sums up the reason for being so purposeful and intentional in building the kind of relationship that I have been talking about.

3 John 1:4 *"I could have no greater joy than to hear that my children are following the truth."*

Closing

- As I close this morning, I know I have focused a lot on families, however the same principle applies to those who have no children.
- We have a responsibility to leave a Christian witness and legacy to our workmates, friends at Uni etc.
- Let me leave you with some simple statements. (notes on the website)
- Leaving a strong Christian legacy requires
 - Intentionally living a Christ centered life,
 - Being courageous to share our faith.
 - A willingness to serve others through discipleship and mentorship.
- It involves honoring God with our life and actions so that others see a clear, lasting example of faith.
- A biblical legacy is not about worldly success but about glorifying God and leaving a spiritual inheritance for future generations.
- Oh, to have God say of us:

Matthew 25:21 *"Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; O will set you over much. Enter now into the joy of your Master."*

Acts 13:22 *I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.*

Job 1:8 *"Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?"*

Matthew 3:17 *This is my beloved Son^l with whom I am well pleased."*

- Or be named as one like those heroes of faith named in Hebrews 11 who the Bible says:

Hebrews 11:13 *These all died in faith, not having received the things promised...*

Closing Prayer

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