

6 Ways You Can Leave a Godly Legacy

Father's Day is the time to honor the men who gave us life. But if you struggle with pornography, perhaps the last thing you want to do is reflect on your early years with your father.

The roots of porn bondage can often be traced back to a dad's esteem-crushing put-downs, physical or emotional abuse or other hurtful acts towards you. Using porn has been your way of self-medicating the pain from your past. This is not to blame your porn usage on your father, but it helps you understand where it all began.

But now you are in a father role or hope to be someday. You want to make sure your children have completely different types of memories. You have determined that you will break free from pornography and leave a godly legacy for your family.

No matter how long you have been viewing porn or how shameful and unworthy you think you are to leave a positive legacy, you truly can begin today.

As Tim Challies, the pastor at Grace Fellowship Church in Toronto, Ontario, explained, "Because of the cross of Christ, there is no sin that cannot be washed, and there is no legacy that cannot be redeemed."

He continued, "Every day, with each passing minute, with every tiny decision, you are forming your legacy. It's not the grand moments of life but rather unremarkable, unnoticed persistence that forms a legacy. Your detailed plans and good intentions will do no good if you don't follow them with action. If you want to leave a godly legacy, get started now. Don't waste another moment and give yourself to eternal investments that

will leave the greatest legacy for your children.”

6 Keys to Leaving A Godly Legacy

Your porn usage does not disqualify you from leaving a godly legacy. Actually, as you gain freedom from porn, you can draw on the experiences and feelings you have had. They can teach you how to be a respected and honored father.

You may not have had a positive legacy passed on to you, but here are six keys you can focus on as you begin to build your legacy.

1. Set the example of character traits your children should develop.

Your children will be watching you closely, so practice being honest, faithful, loving, encouraging, compassionate and more. You know what it was like to have a father who didn't show such characteristics, so let them see how beneficial they can be. As the old saying goes, “More is caught than taught.”

2. Make sure your own choices reflect Jesus' teachings.

Even in the smallest decisions—like the movies you watch, how you spend your time and the materials you read—should be grounded in the Bible. Let your children see you following Christ in all your decisions, whether big or small. Your decision to break free from porn has set the groundwork for consistently making the right choices.

3. Freely give and receive grace and forgiveness.

The shame and guilt you experienced when viewing porn were intense. But remember the incredible feeling of freedom from bondage when you realized God's grace was more than enough to cleanse your sin and shame.

Now you must learn to practice grace and forgiveness with your children. Love them unconditionally and let them know that,

like their heavenly Father, you will also freely extend grace to them when needed.

4. Encourage and inspire them.

If your father always told you that you were worthless and would never amount to anything, then you know how important this is. Encourage them to develop their talents and skills and inspire them to succeed and pursue their dreams. Your support will be invaluable to them, and their respect and honor for you will grow over the years as they achieve their goals.

5. Give of your time and be available to them.

When you were struggling with pornography, you spent many hours isolated from your family as you stared at images on your computer. Your children felt they were unimportant to you because you were not spending much time with them. As you recover, make sure you redirect those wasted hours to becoming more involved with your family. Be available for them, and let them know you are interested in all areas of their lives.

6. Become your family's spiritual leader.

The most important part of your legacy must be that you taught them about God, the Bible and having a relationship with Jesus Christ. Take them to church, read the Bible to them, serve in the church, pray with and for them. You may think your porn usage made you unworthy to be your family's spiritual leader. If you are walking a journey of recovery and have asked for God's forgiveness for your sins, He has done so. Now as your family sees you seeking to follow Jesus, they will too. This will impact their lives for eternity. It's that important.

Move Forward in Your Recovery

You may not have been the father you wanted to be, but as you recover from your porn usage, you can start to become a man

who leaves a godly legacy for his family.

Eddie Capparucci, LPC, CSAS and Clinical Director of the National Decency Coalition, said,

“As men, we can do many things our loved ones respect and admire. But all those deeds are undermined when we allow ourselves to succumb to the darkness of pornography. Failing to get control of our lust can ruin everything we worked hard to achieve while leaving the ones we love seeing us through tainted lenses.”

He added, “To become a man of integrity, we need to better understand our emotional hurts and how they occurred. That takes serious self-reflection and courage. It’s not an easy process, but it is gratifying and fruitful.”

Freedom for You and Your Kids

Jeff Bush is a father from Alabama. He was convinced that every young man growing up today would struggle with pornography, except his kids. He explains,

“I was wrong. Eventually my oldest son confided in me about his battle with pornography. Later I learned that both my boys dealt with it, but got in the habit of just telling me everything was OK each time I asked. My accountability questions brought on guilt but did not help my boys.”

That was true until he guided his sons through the Conquer Series.

The Conquer Series is a cinematic small group study that helping men and their families find freedom from pornography.

Jeff explains the impact he saw the series have on his sons,

“I figured the material would speak for itself, and it did. I could tell my boys were both impacted by them. They both expressed gratefulness that I not only purchased the series,

but took the time to watch the DVDs with them too. That's significant, coming from teenage boys!"

Another man from Manitoba, Canada, noted how the Conquer Series helped him.

"The journey is winding, but so awesome. I have found true freedom in the Lord. Today I mentor my 17-year-old son. I now get to teach him the same principles and truths that I have learned."

Learn more about the Conquer Series and leaving a lasting legacy at