

Does the Holy Spirit Care About the Legacy of a Leader?

Leadership writers seem dedicated to defining the crown of effective leadership as “leaving a legacy.”

Some writers suggest 5, 7, or 10 levels of leadership progression. The top level of the progression seems to always point to legacy leadership.

The dangling carrot for a leader is to do something, build something, or say a lot of somethings that outlive a life. Maybe this explains why I like to see my quotes on Twitter enveloped in a meme. “Look, grandkids, I’m leaving a legacy forever carved into the Twitterverse.”

I searched the Bible for the L-word and found nothing in most versions. In a few versions, including the Modern English Version, the word appears in this one verse:

“The wise will inherit glory, but shame will be the legacy of fools” (Prov. 3:35).

Perhaps the wise are tweet-poor.

I can approach an understanding of the word legacy through a synonym such as an inheritance or gift of money or property. Some suggest that philosophers left a legacy with their pattern of thinking out-loud. And those ancient philosophers had nary a tweet among them.

I try to visualize the genesis of a philosopher’s career. Did he have a scribe attached at the hip listening for good words?

“Did you catch that one, scribe?”

“Oh yes, sir, it was so good. That’s two sayings already

today. Let's go for the trifecta!"

How did a young wannabe philosopher become known to have a philosophy? Was he first a good leader? Did he develop systems to get things done?

A good friend of mine suggested I consider the hall of faith to gain an understanding of legacy. Hebrews 11 is peppered with legacy imprints. The Hebrews letter is pastoral in nature and it seems to be written to encourage and edify.

In Chapter 11, the author selects a message arc around the importance of faith in our walk. After making an opening statement on faith, he references the lives of men and women who were models of faith. Apparently, their legacy was established in faith.

The writer suggests Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets had earned a legacy of faith.

They all received a good report but did not receive the promise. Faith seems to be interwoven with legacy. Leaders with little faith probably do not leave a legacy.

So, as we lead, do we make decisions with reflections about how it will impact our legacy? We know that politicians wring their hands about the significance of their legacy. Do CEOs of Fortune 500 companies plan trips to an exotic location to plan their legacy?

I think the moment we begin thinking about our legacy, we lose touch with it. Thinking about my legacy is egomaniacal. Whatever I have said and done by the end of my life will speak for itself. As I have followed the Holy Spirit, I should have no concerns about what remains after my body does not.

A legacy leader has died to self. We live through Christ and take up our cross daily. I will give an account of my legacy

on that great and glorious day.

Today's Scripture

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, for he who comes to God must believe that He exists and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6).

Platform Tip No. 137

Good intentions matter little in the building of a platform.

People with good intentions don't make much of a difference. It's the people who show up and take action that can really change their ZIP code.

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