

# GRANDPARENTING: A LEGACY OF LOVE AND LIFE

*Cavin Harper*

There are few things that compare with the excitement of becoming a parent for the first time – unless it is becoming a grandparent for the first time! Both experiences are too wonderful to describe. If you are a grandparent, you know what I mean.

When our first grandchild was born, I was both excited and sobered by the realization that another generation of my flesh and blood had been born. I am probably more acutely aware of the significance of my role as a grandfather than when I became a father at the age of 21. Though the roles are different, I was suddenly faced as a grandfather with the realization that I had a responsibility to provide a critical strand in the family cord.

In the Truth Project material taught by Del Tackett, Del masterfully illustrates how God in the reality of the Trinity has created so many things in threes. Family is one of those “realms” or spheres of creation where the mystery and majesty of the Trinity is reproduced – husband, wife, child. Ecclesiastes 4:12 also illustrates this “three principle” God has written in to what He has made. “A cord of three strands is not easily broken...” As a grandparent, I began to understand another application of this “cord of three” spoken of in this passage – parents, grandparents, child. Of course, Christ is the substance that holds it all together. My desire became for God to make me a strong and useful strand in that cord. I wanted to leave a legacy that matters and endures.

Proverbs 13:22 reminds us that “A good man leaves an inheritance for his children’s children.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: “A righteous man lives for the next generation.” If I work to leave only a material inheritance, then I labor largely in vain, for moth and rust corrode and thieves can steal such an inheritance. While a wise man will certainly exercise good stewardship of the resources God has given him for future generations, he will also be intentional about leaving better treasures as his legacy that will never perish.

So, what steps do I, as a grandparent, take to ensure I am building a legacy that matters and will last? Here are some suggestions:

## **GET INVOLVED**

Jump into your role with eagerness and intentionality. Be a proactive grandparent, not an absentee grandparent. And GrandDads, don’t let Grandma do all the work (and get all the blessing!). Whether long distance or close by, grandparents hold the key to a successful inheritance. Your grandchildren need your example and involvement in their lives, even if it is by phone or email. When they are with you, they need to experience a place of safety, stability, authentic love and joyful fun.

## **LEAVE A WRITTEN LEGACY**

As “Keepers of the Story”, we grandparents are treasure chests of valuable information, history, and experiences which can have a powerful impact on future generations. Put your thoughts about the lessons of life and God’s truth into writing. Share your stories of your own personal journey, the wondrous works of God in that journey, and wisdom about the choices they must make in their own journeys. There are lots of wonderful tools available to help you in this important task if you don’t feel confident to do it on your own. CGN offers a [free Legacy Journal](#) to anyone who will subscribe to this newsletter and request it. It is a great tool for starting this process. Heritage Makers (see our web site for a link) also offers elegant and priceless journals that you create on-line with your own pictures and stories for a very affordable price. However you choose to do it, create a family journal now while you have the opportunity. Don’t miss the chance and thereby miss the opportunity to leave a written legacy that will be cherished treasure of history and encouragement for future generations.

## **SPEAK A BLESSING**

With the birth of each of our grandchildren, Diane and I prepared a grandparents’ blessing, printed it on nice paper, and framed it to hang on each grandchild’s bedroom wall.

Our blessing is more than a plaque to hang on the wall, it is a spoken word as well. At various stages or milestones in our grandchildren’s lives (and our children), a special blessing is spoken and recorded to communicate a high value as one made in the image of God, a vision of a special future according to God’s plan and design for their lives – how He has wired them, and a genuine commitment to stand with them and pray for them and encourage them in the journey ahead. We want them to know how much we believe in them and live with expectancy concerning God’s special plan for their lives.

Our grandchildren will always grow up aware of the legacy that is being inscribed for them through the lives of those who have and are going before. We want them to be aware of God’s hand upon their lives, of the wonder of the Gospel expressed in the lavish grace of God in Christ Jesus, and how powerfully God has worked in their family to bring them this rich heritage and legacy which they, in turn, are given to pass on to the next generation – a legacy of love and life in Christ.

You can get more information on our web site about creating a blessing for your grandchildren. Go to <http://www.christiangrandparenting.net/articles/AGrandparentsBlessing.html>