

Commit to Generosity Now By Starting Wherever You Are

A huge difference exists between a legacy and an inheritance. Anyone can leave an inheritance. An inheritance is something you leave **to** your family or loved ones. A legacy is something you leave **in** your family and loved ones. While hard work and success may lead to an inheritance, it takes courage through a lifetime to live a legacy.

Inheritance

- Something tangible you give to others
- Temporarily brings them happiness
- Eventually fades as it is spent
- Your activity may or not may pay off

Legacy

- Something tangible you place in others
- Permanently transforms them
- Lives on long after you die
- Your activity becomes achievement

What would you rather leave: an inheritance or a legacy?

THE QUICK SUMMARY - [Giving It All Away...and Getting It All Back Again](#) by David Green

David Green believes that generosity and building a legacy based on giving can lead to getting back what you *really* want: a family that stays together, prays together, and shares life joyfully.

Green tells the story of caring for the small things and starting Hobby Lobby in their garage. He shares the difference between the worlds of “having and hoarding” and a world of “giving and generosity,” the principle of working for God and not for men, and that now is not too soon to consider what you want your legacy to be.

As proof of how living by those principles can change your life, Green shares that when Hobby Lobby came close to bankruptcy in 1986 and when the Supreme Court challenged the Hobby Lobby’s right to life beliefs in 2014, the company emerged with its integrity intact.

Green sees the life of giving as a life of adventure. But it’s a life that pays the best rewards personally, offers a powerful legacy to your family, and changes those you touch.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION - **Commit to starting now wherever you are**

An often-used sports metaphor, taken from the relay race, is the handing off of the baton from one runner to the next. A relay race is a track and field event in which athletes run a pre-set distance carrying a baton before passing it onto the next runner. The two standard relays are

the 4x100 meter relay and the 4x400 meter relay, though there are long-distance relays as well.

The shorter distance relays are exciting to watch as the four participants for each time execute their leg of the race with speed and precision – until they don't.

The rules vary, but runners typically have a specified distance to accelerate, hand off or receive the baton, and a specific lane to stay in. The strategy varies, but a team of the fastest athletes isn't guaranteed to win. There is a strategy to a relay race, involving knowing the strengths and weakness of each team member, and ordering them accordingly.

Our "financial race" is often the same way. We have to understand our strengths and weaknesses, and plan accordingly.

My journey into generosity has shown me that generosity has a starting point. You don't just wake up one day and poof, you're generous. It begins with a decision to steward your resources with a heavenly mindset.

I want my grandchildren to grow up understanding that generosity begins with an attitude that extends into every aspect of life, not just money. I want them to understand that today begins their legacy. Because if there's one thing I've discovered, it's that true wealth encompasses all of life.

That's the big idea. I believe we can chart a course for our lives and our families that allows us to think beyond one generation. We can outline our vision, mission, and values. And we can live that out through our generosity. These ideas will allow us to stay rich for generations – not just in a monetary sense but in a values sense.

Some of you are nearing the end of your life, wondering how to finish well and leave a legacy that will bless your family and those that interact with you for generations to come. Some of you are just starting out in life, taking your first steps toward those dreams and plans.

Whether you're at the end or the beginning of life, I want to challenge you to do three things:

1. Work with all your heart, for God and not for men.
2. Hold those plans lightly, because you really have no idea what the Lord has in store.
3. Consider now what you want your legacy to be. It is not too early to begin.

The decisions you make today will affect the legacy you leave behind. Today is the right day to make your decisions in light of the truth that God owns it all. Live your life in this world while investing your wealth in the next.

David Green, [*Giving It All Away...and Getting It All Back Again*](#)

A NEXT STEP

David Green and Bill High have developed an extensive “Reader’s Guide” as a part of *Giving It All Away*. Found in the back of the book, it will help your questions, ideas, and actions. Listed below is one section from that guide addressing the material quoted above.

First, set aside a two-hour time to think, reflect, and pray about the questions in the “Reflection” section. Then, use the questions in the “Discussion” section as helps or starters for a discussion of this topic with your friends.

Reflection

1. Why has God put you on this earth? Have you really thought about it? To what end? Why this job? Why that opportunity?
2. We were created to work, to cultivate the world and its resources. God is a worker and a creator. We were made in his image. We’re hardwired for work and creativity. But when work and creativity become the goal, things can quickly go sideways. In what ways are you safeguarding your career and legacy from the dark side of ambition?
3. What does it mean for you to do things with an eternal perspective? How will that reality change the way you go about your day-to-day activities?

Discussion

1. What does it mean to live with an eternal mindset? Share your thoughts with friends and either discuss how this concept challenged you to rethink some things, or share how you do this already and suggest some tips that might help others.
2. List the things you would like for your children and grandchildren to possess and pass on even five generations from now. How will you pass those items on to them?
3. When you consider your life today, what are the things and people that you are invested in that will last for eternity?

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*This is part of a weekly series posting excerpts from one of the most innovative content sources in the church world: **SUMS Remix** book excerpts for church leaders.*

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