

WISDOM UNIVERSITY

PROVERBS 10:1-16

LEAVING A LEGACY THAT LASTS



FIRST BYRON CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

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INTRODUCTION

According to a 2015 HSBC survey, American retirees expect to leave an average inheritance of almost \$177,000 to their heirs. The Survey of Consumer Finances reported that the median inheritance was \$69,000.

Whatever the figure, no legacy lasts very long. The average inheritance is spent within five years because of careless debts and bad investment choices. One study found that one third of people who received an inheritance had negative savings within two years of the event. "The vast majority of people blew through it quickly," said Jay Zagorsky, an economist and research scientist.

How can we leave a legacy that lasts? Proverbs 10:1-16 helps us answer that question, with verse seven being the hub that pulls it all together. **The memory of the righteous is a blessing, but the name of the wicked will rot.** Or, as *The Message* paraphrase of this verse puts it, **A good and honest life is a blessed memorial; a wicked life leaves a rotten stench.**

CONTEXT

- **Preparation for Wisdom** (Proverbs 1:1-7)
- **Principles of Wisdom** (Proverbs 1:8-9:18)
- **Practice of Wisdom** (Proverbs 10:1-31-31)

In chapter 10, the rubber of Proverbs hits the road of life. The big-picture principles of Wisdom are now connected to the details of life. Solomon zooms in and slows down to look at how the theory of wisdom all works out in practice. The 101 classes are behind us and we are now into 201 and 301 classes. There are a few ways to approach chapters 10-31:

- Study every single Proverb. However, this will take us years to get through and we'll also have a lot of repetition.
- Pick out the most vivid and memorable Proverbs throughout the 21 chapters. This will keep our study shorter and fresher, but we will not only miss a lot of verses, but also the context of the Proverbs we do study.
- I will take a hybrid approach that focuses on vivid and memorable Proverbs but also shows how they connect with and summarize the surrounding Proverbs.



1. A BLESSED MEMORY IS A PRICELESS LEGACY

The memory of the just is a blessing (7a)

The Saving Faith of the Just

Who are 'the just'? This can be the just by faith (Rom. 5:1) or the just in life (Rom. 6:19). Given the practical focus on Proverbs 10, it probably refers to the just in life. However, as the rest of the Bible makes repeatedly clear, only the just by faith in Christ can be just in life like Christ.

The Godly Life of the Just

The chapter selects two areas of living that contrast the life of the just with the life of the wicked: their wealth (2-5, 15-16) and their mouths (6-14).

The wealth of the just: They may never be rich, but they will always have enough to live (2-3). They work well and wisely for their income (4-5), and use their wealth to protect and benefit others (15-16).

The mouth of the righteous: Their speech is like a fountain of life (11), because they lovingly cover offenses (12), and speak out of knowledge not ignorance (13-14).

The Happy Memory of the Just

Happy memories: A godly person leaves happy memories behind them while they live (2) and after they died. Indeed, these memories will last for all eternity as those brought to heaven by their life and witness will forever remember them with joy and laughter.

Holy memories: The memory of just is blessed because it makes those who remember them just by faith and just in life. The memory motivates them to seek and find what they had.

APPLICATION

Leave that memory. Whatever money we leave behind, let's leave holy memories behind. Such memories have been blessed to many, even after death.

Keep that memory alive: If God has given us this priceless legacy, let's use it and invest it wisely so that it lasts for and blesses future generations too.

Remember Christ: Christ is the only one who was perfectly just. Remembering his perfect life is a blessing. Remembering his perfect death is an even greater blessing. He gave us the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper to give us happy and holy memories of him: **Do this in remembrance of me.** What a legacy!

THE POOREST BELIEVER
CAN LEAVE THE RICHEST LEGACY



What's the alternative?



2. A ROTTING NAME IS A WORTHLESS LEGACY

The name of the wicked will rot (7b).

The Self-Confidence of the Wicked

The just are just by faith in Christ. They look away from themselves and look to Christ alone for salvation and to the Spirit alone for sanctification. The wicked, though, have confidence in themselves. They rely on their own works instead of Christ's. While this kind of self-reliance doesn't seem like a big sin to us, in God's sight it's the incarnation of wickedness.

The Ungodly Life of the Wicked

The wicked are also assessed by their their wealth (2-5, 15-16) and their mouths (6-14).

The wealth of the wicked: They get it wrongly (2), it never satisfies them (3), they want something for nothing (4-5), they lose it stupidly (15), and use it sinfully (16).

The mouth of the wicked: Their talk conceals violence (6), ruins them (8), is hypocritical (10), stirs up strife (12), ruins others (14).

The Rotting Memory of the Wicked

The wicked use their wealth and mouth to promote themselves but, like Jeffrey Epstein:

Their name will rot while alive: People may flatter and fear the wicked when they are with them, but in their minds and behind their backs their name is a stench.

Their name will rot after death: How many times have we seen this happen to famous people and not so famous people. As soon as they are buried sordid details about their lives become public and no one wants to be known as their friends now.

Their name will rot forever: As people arrive in hell due to the bad example of the wicked, the names that used to be in the headlines will be rotting, stinking insults.

APPLICATION

Don't leave that legacy: While it's easy to see this as Jeffrey Epstein's legacy, it's also possible to do this ourselves

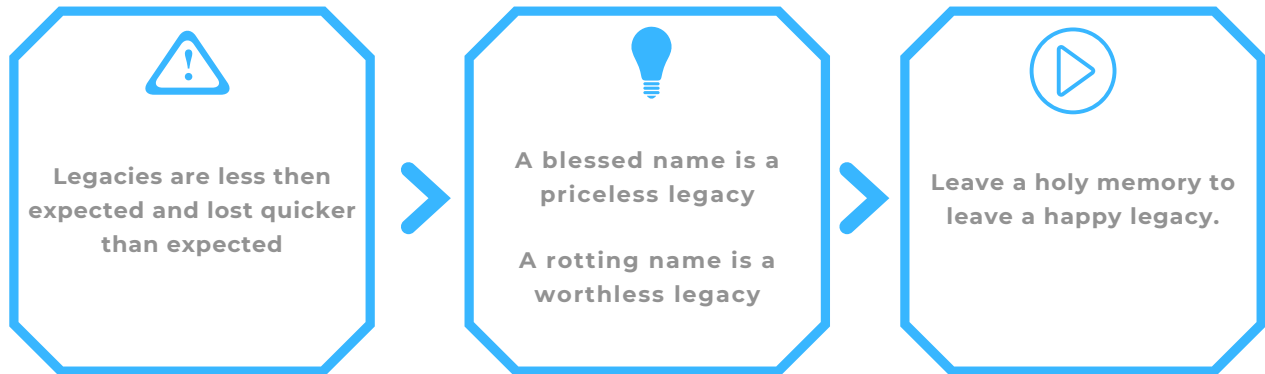
Don't celebrate the wicked: Don't let their names and lives fill your thoughts. Why bring what's rotting into your life?

This is the Devil: The Devil's cardinal sin was to want to be his own god. He wanted independence from God and wants the same for us. He uses wealth and words to make others as wickedly self-reliant as himself. His name is already rotting and will continue to rot forever.

BLACK OPIUM WHILE YOU LIVE
BUT BLACK HELL AFTER DEATH



CONCLUSION



PRAYER: Lord Jesus, give us your rich righteousness and your happy holiness so that we can leave a holy and happy legacy behind.

FURTHER STUDY

Online Articles

- [The Legacy I want to Leave](#) by John Piper
- [Consider Your Legacy](#) by Tim Challies
- [Five Essentials to Leaving a Legacy that Will Outlive You](#)

Books

- [Holiness](#) by J C Ryle
- [Heaven: Priceless Encouragements on the Way to our Eternal Home](#) by J C Ryle
- [The Legacy Journey: A Radical View of Biblical Wealth and Generosity](#) by Dave Ramsey

Discussion Questions

1. Where have you seen a legacy disappoint, be squandered, or cause more harm than good?
2. Why do you think Solomon focused on wealth and mouths in distinguishing the wicked from the just?
3. Discuss the holy memories godly people left as a legacy and how that blessed you and others.
4. What is your favorite memory of Christ and how is that a blessing to you?
5. Why is spiritual self-confidence and self-reliance such a sin in God's sight?
6. Can you think of times when someone left behind a lot of wealth but a rotting reputation?

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LEAVING A LEGACY THAT LASTS



Legacies

- Less than expected
- Last shorter than expected

Biblical answer?



A blessed name is a priceless legacy

- Saving faith of the just
- Godly life of the just
- Happy memories of the just

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Alternative?

WHAT WE AIM TO LEAVE BEHIND AFTER WE DIE SETS THE COURSE FOR HOW WE INTEND TO LIVE.

TIM CHALLIES



LEGACY IS NOT LEAVING SOMETHING FOR PEOPLE. IT'S LEAVING SOMETHING IN PEOPLE.

PETER STROPLE



Leave a holy memory to
leave a lasting legacy



A rotting name is a worthless legacy

- Self-confidence of wicked
- Ungodly life of wicked
- Rotting memory of wicked

BLACK OPIUM WHILE YOU LIVE BUT BLACK HELL AFTER DEATH

Action?