

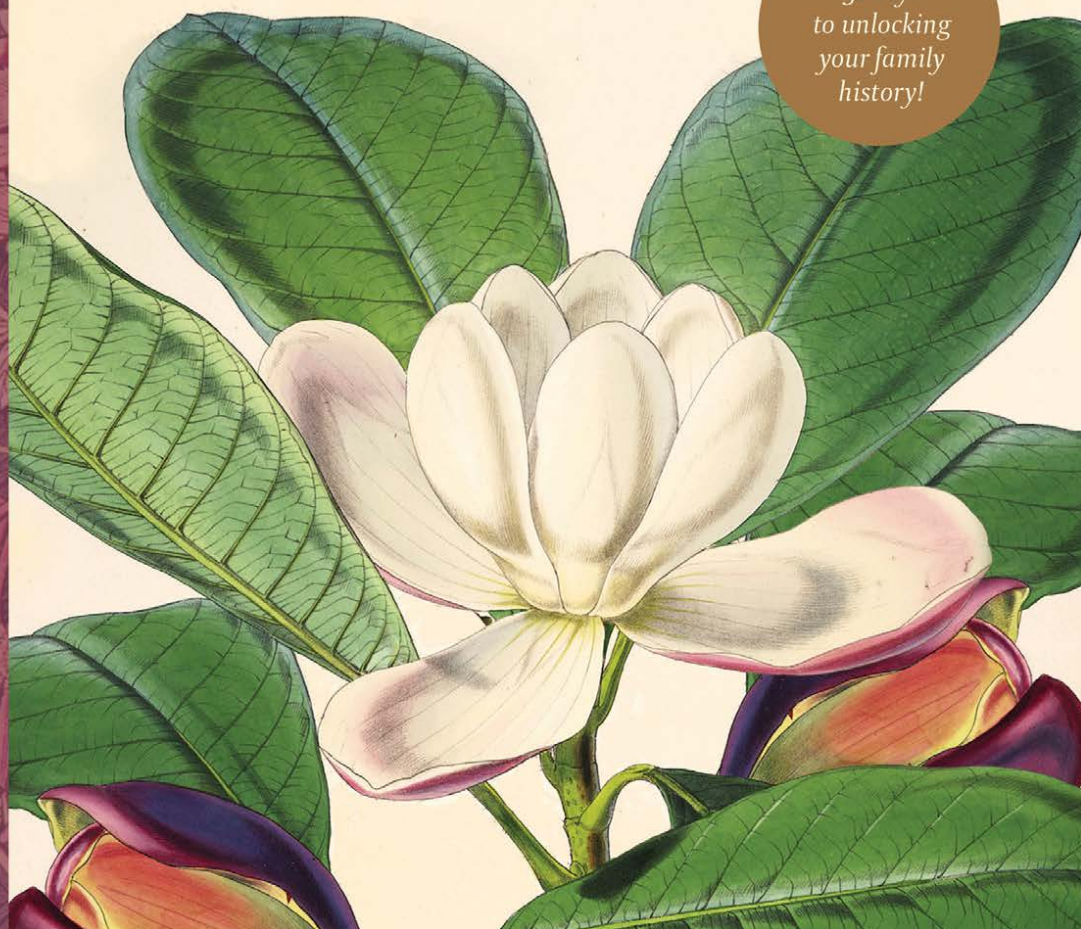


HEIRLOOM

Living and Leaving a Legacy of Faith

KATHY HOWARD

Includes
52 keys
to unlocking
your family
history!





Presented to



From



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HEIRLOOM

Living and Leaving a Legacy of Faith

KATHY HOWARD



Tyndale House Publishers
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Heirloom: Living and Leaving a Legacy of Faith

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*I could have no greater joy than to hear that
my children are following the truth.*

3 JOHN 1:4, NLT

Introduction

I'm fascinated by the stories of my ancestors. I want to know where they came from, how they lived, and what they were like. Their stories help me understand how I got to be "me." Maybe you feel the same way.

The Bible places great value on knowing our family history, specifically our spiritual roots. The stories of those who have come before us can strengthen and encourage our faith today. As we live intentionally for God, we lay a spiritual foundation for those who come after us.

When our three children were growing up, my husband and I worked to encourage their faith. In hindsight, I see some gaps in our discipling. We could have been more purposeful in some areas. Looking toward the future, I want to take advantage of every opportunity God gives us with our grandchildren.

What legacy do you want to leave for your children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren? For other members of your extended family? The most valuable heirloom we can pass down is a legacy of faith. While we can't believe *for* any of our loved ones, we can teach them about our great God and create an atmosphere in our homes where trust in him can flourish. We can tell our own stories, share God's Word, and point them to Jesus.

This devotional book is designed to help you purposefully live today in ways that will leave a legacy of faith for your descendants. *Heirloom* ties the past to the future. Within these pages are fifty-two stories about people who have gone before us and how they lived

and whom they worshiped. These stories, which come from personal anecdotes, historical records, and the Bible, reveal the seeds of our faith—seeds that sprouted and took root, growing through the centuries to touch our lives today.

These accounts exemplify biblical principles of spiritual legacy. Each devotion includes Scripture, questions for personal reflection, a prayer, and a practical tip to help you create a spiritual heirloom your family will treasure. And if you love digging into the stories of your own family's past, each devotion includes a bonus genealogy research tip.

Today we're reading our ancestors' stories. Tomorrow our descendants will be reading our stories. What kind of legacy will we leave?

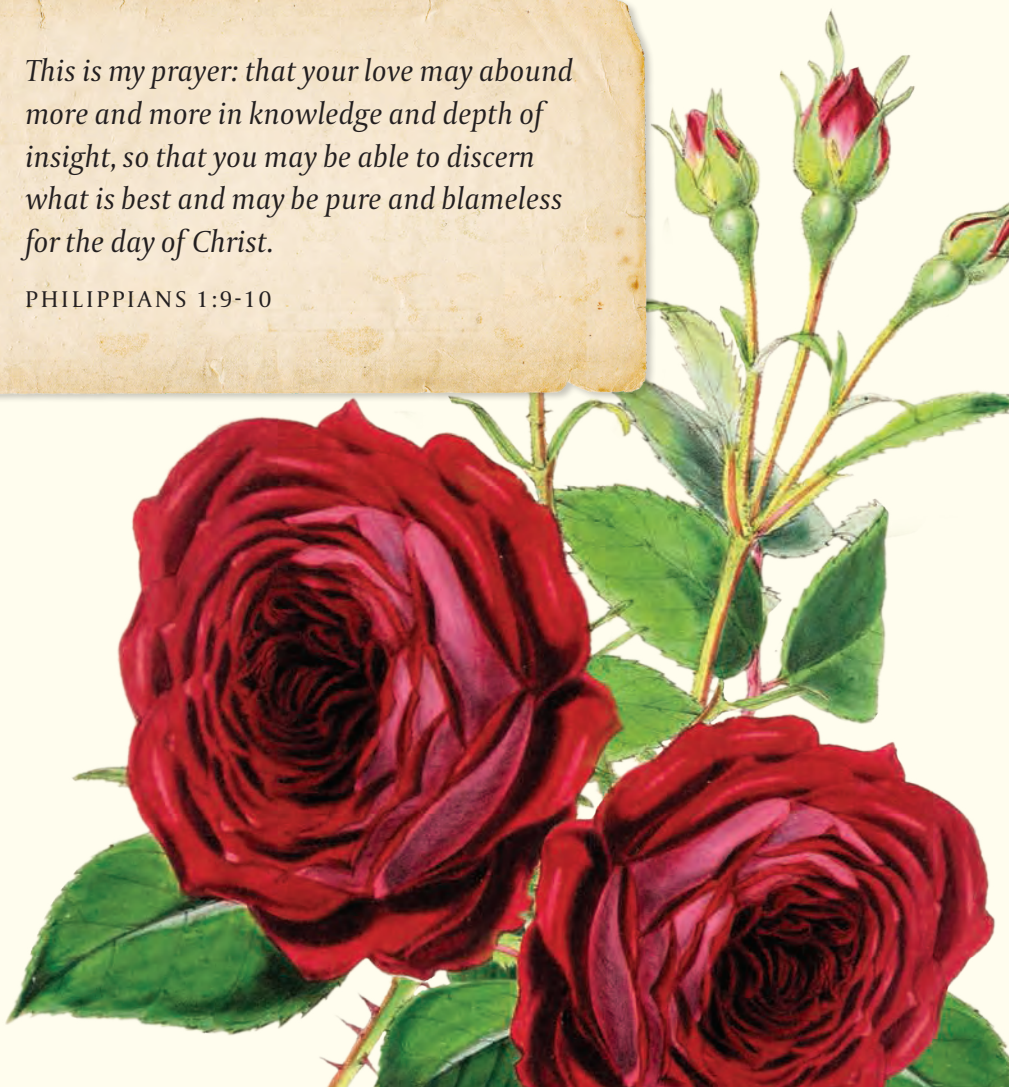
Kathy Howard

1

A Prayer from My Great- Great-Grandmother

This is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ.

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-10



I found a treasure while cleaning out a desk at my parents' home. Stuffed in an old metal box, it shared the space with a pair of delicate, wire-rimmed spectacles and a small ledger with regular entries of twenty-five cents a week in savings. The letter, yellowed and fragile with age, was dated March 26, 1914. I struggled to read the faded ink. Addressed to Howell Adam Shouse, my great-grandfather on my mother's side, it was written by his mother, Mary Dozier Shouse.

Much of the news was what you'd expect—who had been sick, who had gotten married, who had visited, and how she longed to see her “dear son.” But one paragraph brought me to tears:

Oh, how much I do pray for you every single morning and night. I pray mightily to the Lord that you, Howell, and your children may be convicted and converted and sanctified. Never a day do I miss. May God hear and answer my prayers.

In chapter 1 of the apostle Paul's letter to the Christians in Philippi, he recorded a similar prayer for their spiritual well-being. Paul loved these “spiritual children” and prayed for them constantly.

Like Paul, Mary Dozier Shouse faithfully interceded on behalf of her descendants. This discovery thrilled me, because I knew her prayers covered me too. Long before I was born, my great-great-grandmother prayed for me to have a saving, growing relationship with Jesus. The letter challenged me not just to pray for the physical welfare of my loved ones, but also to faithfully lift prayers that matter for eternity.

Yes, I pray for my family's physical circumstances. But I pray for their spiritual needs and struggles as well. Maybe one day my

great-great-granddaughter will find my prayer journal and be blessed when she discovers that I prayed for her.

READ PHILIPPIANS 1:3-11 AND REFLECT: What kinds of things did Paul prayerfully request for the Philippian Christians? How can you use this prayer and others in Scripture as models for praying for the spiritual well-being of your family and friends?

Father, thank you for the incredible privilege of connecting with you through prayer. May I faithfully bring my family by name before you. Teach me how to specifically pray for them in ways that matter for eternity. In Jesus' name, amen.

Legacy Tip

Make a list of Scriptures you can pray for your loved ones. Regularly let your family know the things you are praying for them. Send texts and emails often, but also drop them a handwritten note when possible. In addition, consider keeping prayer journals that will encourage your family long after you have gone to be with Jesus.



Genealogy Tip

OLD LETTERS, POSTCARDS, AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE

Living before the digital age, your ancestors used pencils or pens and paper to communicate. Letters, cards, journals, and other materials, written by and between your ancestors, are valuable sources for genealogical research. They can provide a treasure trove of clues about family members. If you have old correspondence, it is a good idea to digitize each item to preserve them for future generations. You might also choose to share them online so other researchers can benefit from your findings. Archivists recommend removing old letters from envelopes and leaving them unfolded, as continuous unfolding and refolding causes wear to the creases and could eventually tear the paper. Store the original letters and postcards in archival-quality sleeves for safekeeping. Pay particular attention to postmarks and stamps since they provide clues about the time periods and locations of your ancestors.



2 Lingerin Melody

*Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name;
make known among the nations what he
has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.*

PSALM 105:1-2



When Becky was a child, she took piano lessons. As she got older, her life filled with other commitments and she found less time for the creative outlet. Now, after a forty-year hiatus, her love for the instrument has reawakened. She loves to worship God through music, continuing a family legacy that spans four generations.

It began in a small country church in North Florida, where Becky's great-grandmother Lizzie McIntosh was the church pianist. Lizzie found assurance of heaven and God's care for her through the words in the old hymns. "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! O what a foretaste of glory divine," Lizzie played and sang, offering God a sacrifice of praise. "Praise him! Praise him! Jesus, our blessed Redeemer! Sing, O earth, his wonderful love proclaim!"

Sadly, in 1914, at the age of twenty-eight, Lizzie died during childbirth. She left behind a husband, three small children, and an invalid father-in-law. She also left a lingering melody of praise. Her graceful accompaniment and sweet singing had planted seeds in the heart of her nine-year-old daughter, Rubye. Those seeds sprouted and grew into an avid love for the piano.

Like her mother, Rubye faithfully served in the church and led many friends and family members to Christ. And also like her mother, she passed on a passion for music to her daughter, Elizabeth—Becky's mother. Now an octogenarian, Elizabeth still enjoys playing songs from her church's hymnal. The music Elizabeth plays is a call to worship in the style of Psalm 105, urging God's people from all generations to praise him for who he is and what he has done.

Today Becky is a dedicated piano student, always challenging herself to learn something new. When she sits at the keyboard, she



experiences overwhelming joy and deep satisfaction. Part of that comes from remembering who helped mold her into the person she is today: Pianist. Daughter of the Most High. A woman who leans on the promises of eternal life with Christ.

READ PSALM 105:1-6 AND REFLECT: What guidance does this passage give for how to praise God? What attributes of God can you praise him for today? What “wonderful acts” have you experienced that you are grateful for? God deserves your worship every day, not just on Sundays. How can you foster a lifestyle of worship?

Father, help me explore creative ways to worship you. Fill my heart with gratitude and my mouth with praise. Inspire my family to be grateful people who are always ready to praise you. We want others to know how much we love you. In Jesus' name, amen.

Legacy Tip

Introduce praise and worship into your family's lifestyle. Help them recognize attributes of God for which you can praise him. Incorporate music, either with a family musician or by playing praise music tracks.



Genealogy Tip

LOCATING VITAL RECORDS

Pivotal occasions mark every individual's life—key events like birth, marriage, and death. “Vital records” are the government documents that report these critical events. Some common types include birth certificates, death certificates, marriage licenses, divorce decrees, and wills. You can search for vital records at the local, county, and state levels. Hospitals and funeral homes may also hold death records. Churches or the minister who performed a marriage ceremony may have copies of marriage records. The time period and location will impact the exact formats of these records.



Jesus Maria
 ...
 ...
 ...
 ...
 ...



God's greatness

shew forth his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the heathen, his wonders among all people.

4 For the LORD is great, and greatly to be praised: he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the nations are idols: but the LORD made the heavens.

6 Honour and majesty

PSALMS 96-99.

11 Light is sown for the righteous,

12 Rejoice in the LORD, ye

and give thanks at the remembrance

his holiness.

PSALM 98

A Psalm,

SING unto

Exhortation to

PSALMS

PSALM 100.

A Psalm of praise.

MAKE a joyful noise unto the LORD,

2 all ye lands.

3 Serve the LORD with gladness: come

before his presence with gladness and


3

A Mother's Immeasurable Influence

These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

DEUTERONOMY 6:6-7




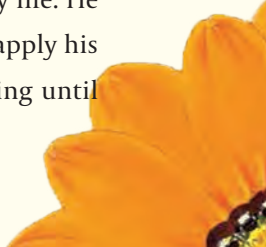
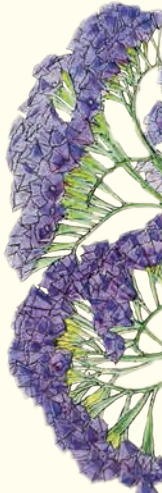


Over his lifetime, he prayed with thirteen sitting US presidents. He shared the gospel with more than 200 million people in hundreds of live crusades around the world. Hundreds of millions more heard him through the airwaves.¹ And it's estimated that more than two million people gave their lives to Christ through his preaching.² Although the ministry of Reverend Billy Graham cannot be encapsulated with mere numbers, these statistics emphasize the incredible impact he made during his lifetime for the Kingdom of God.

But long before Billy Graham preached the Good News to the world, his mother wove its truth into the daily fabric of his life. In his autobiography, *Just As I Am*, Billy described how his mother, Morrow Coffey Graham, gathered her family together daily to pray, read the Bible, and experience the presence of God. Her commitment to establish a family altar began the day she married William Franklin Graham Sr., and it never wavered. Morrow believed her family's eternal life and earthly unity depended on the Word of God, so she faithfully taught her children to revere Scripture.

Although Billy Graham's ministry reached well beyond his North Carolina roots, he readily acknowledged the crucial part his mother played in his life. Billy recognized the great potential every mother has to point their children to Christ, saying, "The influence of a mother upon the lives of her children cannot be measured."³

God designed the family to be our first and greatest school of spiritual formation. Mothers and fathers are the teachers, and the Bible is their textbook. In Deuteronomy 6, God instructs parents to weave the commandments he has given them into the patterns of family life. He commands them to teach his Word, talk about his Word, and apply his Word throughout the day—from the first awareness of morning until



sleep closes in at night—and all the countless moments in between. The eternal value of this lifestyle is immeasurable.

READ DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 AND REFLECT: What responsibility has God given us for our families regarding his Word? What command does God give in verse 5? How could obedience to that command naturally lead into your responsibility to share God's Word with your children? What are some ways you can purposefully weave God's truth into the fabric of family life?

Lord, show me how to diligently teach your Word to my family. Help me to prioritize their spiritual well-being over the demands of daily life. In Jesus' name, amen.

Legacy Tip

Establish and commit to a regular family devotion time. Shape it according to the ages and attention spans of your children. Make it fun and interactive, and give everyone an opportunity to contribute.



Genealogy Tip

START WITH A BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Birth certificates contain significant information about ancestors. These documents include the date of birth and, usually, the child's name. Some specific situations could have prevented recording the name. For instance, the parents may not have chosen the name before the certificate was recorded, or sadly, they may have decided not to name the child if the infant lived only a few days. Birth certificates often include other information, such as the place of birth, number of siblings, and name of the "informant," the person who informed, or provided, the information. The certificates may also include more details, such as the mother's maiden name and the parents' names, their ages at the time of the child's birth, and their dates and places of birth.

