



## Generations

### Part 3 – Your name will be forgotten, but your legacy might not be

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If you just joined us today, the last two weeks, Ted dove into the Book of Ruth. We've been going through a series in the Book of Ruth, Chapter 1 and 2. Today we are going to look at Chapter 3.

But before we do, I just want to talk to you about names. We're going to see a name today in Chapter 3 that is pretty significant. Some of you are going back to school and some of you are Wolves if you're over in Reeds Spring or you're Tigers if you're in Hollister or you're Pirates or Pirate parents or you might be Panthers out in Forsyth or you might be Patriots over at S of O. You might just be the home school Hornets. There are names and we attach names to everything. Some of you also might have a pretty popular parent. Maybe a parent that's in a show or a popular grandparent. A lot of times, you get identified as that individual. For example, Corynn and Carson fight the battle of being "Ted's kids," rather than being Corynn and Carson. When you have a dad up front, you might get labeled as that individual's son or daughter.

I've been all over Taney County and Stone County this summer, meeting a lot of your names. As a matter of fact, I was out at Dogwood Canyon with a group of kiddoes and I met Chad. I knew Chad, but then I met Debbie, who also works at Dogwood Canyon. They're Woodland Hills folks. Just like you, they are loving Jesus and trying to do the best they can.

If you've never been out to Jill's Ozark Barbeque, you need to go check out Jill's Ozark Barbeque. It's a complete hole in the wall between the Kimberling City bridge and Lampe. My wife went on a date night out there and we met Kelly. Sweet Kelly goes to Woodland Hills. If you're here today, you're awesome and you serve a mean smoked chicken.

Then I'm at Michaels and I'm picking up something for my job. I'm at the cashier and I have about a five-minute conversation. At the end of the five-minute conversation, Debra tells me that she goes to Woodland Hills. She knew who I was the whole time. I'm glad I wasn't a jerk. It helps me a lot if you just say right away "Hey, I'm so and so; I go to Woodland Hills and I know you." I don't know a lot of you, but you obviously know me because I'm up here. It keeps me on my toes, which is a good thing.

Two days ago, I was at Walmart and I bumped into Charles who works back in electronics and he goes to Woodland Hills.

I get my hair cut at Take One Studio in Hollister by a single mom named Misha. All you mid-twenty somethings, stop playing video games and go get your hair cut by Misha and something else might happen too. Do you know what I'm saying? She's awesome. You need to go get to know her.

My wife and I got a loan this summer from the bank. I'm in there with Adrian and she had us sign all these papers. I just wrote down on a piece of paper "I've been praying for you and Aiden every day." She has a little son named Aiden too. She's a single mom, killing it.

Or I go get my oil done and the guy who changed my oil is Michael. Michael goes to Woodland Hills. There are these Woodland Hills people everywhere; I just can't get away from you guys; it was awesome.

What He's been doing all summer long is He's been working this message in my heart. We all have names and we all know names, right?

How many of you, if I called you a nimrod, would take that as a compliment? For one, you know the biblical context and where I'm going with this, but none of us would say nimrod is a compliment. As a matter of fact, in Genesis 10 it says, **8 Cush fathered Nimrod; he was the first on earth to be a mighty man. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the Lord. Therefore it is said, "Like Nimrod a mighty hunter before the Lord."** Now some of you are like, I'm going to name my first boy Nimrod." Probably not because of what culture has done to that name. The way we now use the name Nimrod is not in a positive connotation.

Culture does the same thing to family. Culture does the same thing in the way we view family, the way we view parenting, the way we view bringing up our kids, the way we view success, the way we view accomplishments. If we're not careful, we can begin living for what the cultures says defines these things versus what the Bible actually says defines these things.

When my mom was 21 and my dad was 22, they had a four-year-old, a three-year-old, a two-year-old, and a one-year-old. I was the two-year-old. Here's a picture of the soon to be two-year-old, in case you were wondering how chubby I was as a baby. My sister was a year older than me and she couldn't say brother, so she called me Bubba. She always called me Bubba, so my nickname growing up... I literally can't remember one time that my siblings called me by my name. They called me Bubba. To this day, when they text me, it's "Hey Bub..." Or with birthday cards, it's Bubba. That's my name in my family; they don't call me anything else, but Bubba.

My nickname changed when I got to college. I was playing basketball. We would be disciplined if we weren't taking care of our academics. I was always a great student. I've always loved to learn, but not so much with my teammates. It's a team, so it's a group effort. If we weren't making good grades, there were consequences for poor decisions. Our team GPA was low one semester, so we had this thing called the 65 Club. The 65 Club is five miles at 6:00 in the morning. I could either be mad at all my teammates that weren't getting good grades or I could figure out a solution. I figured *I get really good grades and school comes pretty naturally to me.* "Hey, guys, why don't you sign up for the classes that I'm in and I'll tutor you as you sit next to me during test day."

The next semester comes around and sure enough, our team GPA has boosted. The coach is happy and he asked them, "Have you been studying hard or what?" Kewan Woods grabs me behind my neck and says, "We've got a great tutor, Coach. He's A plus." So, from that day on, to this day, my college teammates, if they call me or text me, they call me A Plus or they'll shorten it and just call me Plus.

So, basically my whole life, I've never been called by my real name. Even at camp, everyone calls me by my last name and most people don't even know my name. As a matter of fact, Ted tells me all the time that people will come up to him and ask "Who's the short pastor that teaches at your church?" I don't care that people do or don't know my name, but what we're going to learn in Ruth 3 today is the importance of one name. Not the importance of your name, not the importance of making your name known, but the importance of one name.

So let's look at Ruth 3. **1 Then Naomi...** Naomi is the mother-in-law to Ruth. **...her mother-in-law...** Let me give you a quick background if you missed the last two weeks. Naomi lost her husband who died, lost her two sons who died, and then she was left with two widows, Ruth and the other one who left her and didn't want to be with her. **...said to her, "My daughter..."** This is a term of endearment. Even though she is not her biological daughter, she is still loving her like she is. She cares about her and she wants her to be taken care of, as we see in this next verse. **"...should I not seek rest for you..."** That word *rest* there is security, comfort. She's trying to find a husband for her that can provide for her, take care of her, especially in this dark period of Judges that they are in. **"...that it may be well with you?"**

**2 "Is not Boaz our relative..."** It wasn't Ruth's biological relative, but it was Naomi's biological relative. **"...with whose young women you were?"** They were related to the man she married that is now deceased. **"See, he is winnowing barley..."** This is harvest season. **"...tonight at the threshing floor. 3 Wash therefore and anoint yourself, and put on your cloak and go down to the threshing floor..."** Just so you know, the threshing floor... They are harvesting all the barley and the grain and they get it all put up in these bundles and then they sleep right there so nobody comes and steals any of the stuff. So they are literally sleeping in the fields. **"...but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4 But when he lies down, observe the place where he lies. Then go and uncover his feet and lie down..."** I don't encourage this for any ladies today that are single and struggling with your singleness right now. That's a bad idea. You might get the police called on you. **"...and he will tell you what to do."** How many of you ladies out there have this same response with your mother-in-law?

**5 And she replied, "All that you say I will do."** She's trusting her mother-in-law. This sounds like a crazy plan. "Let's just get this straight. You're telling me to go down to a man who has been drinking, is tired, is lying down and sleeping, and you want me to lift up his blanket to about his knees and lie down by his feet and see what happens when he wakes up?" That's crazy, right? Nevertheless, it is a plan. It's important to know that she had a plan.

That leaves this question. What plan do you have for your family's legacy? Is there a plan? We know this. **A failure to plan is planning to fail.** You do realize that your kids aren't just going to grow up one day and be followers Jesus. It doesn't just happen. Or you're not going to be leading your wife in the word and washing her in the word and praying with her... You're not just going to one day have a God-

fearing family because you say, “Hey, I want this to happen.” That’s intentionality. That’s being focused. That’s being very intentional with the direction your family is heading. If I want Aiden and Anders to be serving the Lord and humbling themselves before the Lord, I need to be modeling that for them as they grow up. If I want to eradicate entitlement from their lives, I need to be cultivating giving in their lives now.

One of my plans with my boys is that I’m just journaling to them. God could wipe me out of this earth and right now I could be gone, but as I continually journal to these boys, I’m leaving them something. These are journal prayers or scripture, journal prayers over their lives. I don’t know how long I’ll be on this earth and I know that my name will be forgotten.

How many of you in here can name the great, great grandparents’ names on both sides of the family? Look around. That’s your own family and you can’t even tell me their names. Do you see the craziness to this? Everything that we try to plan for, becoming CEO, CFO, president, get a trust fund for our kids, get them to college... If I can just do all these things, I’ll be set. No. Your name will be forgotten; my name will be forgotten. The only legacy, the only plan worth leaving for my kids is one that is in Jesus Christ... period. Everything else will be forgotten.

For the last 14 years, I’ve counseled 13 to 20 year olds for 345 days a year. I’m not making that up. I have never once, in those 14 years, heard a teenager come up to me and say “Do you know what? I just wish my dad would buy me more stuff.” “You know what? I wish I just had a different car.” “I wish my dad would go to work more.” “I wish my mom would go to work more.” I’ve never heard a teenager, in 14 years of counseling, tell me that.

Do know what I have heard them say a lot? “I wish my dad would play with me more.” “I wish my dad would kick work to the curb sometimes and just maximize those small moments that he gets with me.” “I wish my mom would talk to me more about purity.” “I wish my mom would have those hard conversations with me.” I hear that a lot. I hear a lot of legacy talk from 13 to 20 year olds a lot. I don’t ever hear anything about you becoming CEO or CFO or president. I don’t hear talk of that, but I know the plan that they desire us to have is one that would point them back to Jesus and be connected with Jesus.

I understand plans can be tricky. I graduated high school and then I graduated college. When I got in to college, I went to a seminary program where they told me to make a five-year plan. That didn’t work out. I finish that and then I’m a teacher and a coach saying, “Hey, make a five-year plan.” That didn’t work out. I made them; it just didn’t matter much because if you want to make God laugh, tell him your plans, right? Unless, you’re plans revolve around his word.

So if you think you want to build your kingdom and it completely contradicts his kingdom, I’m telling you right now that those plans are useless. His kingdom will be established. His kingdom will stand forever. There is biblical support for this. If you’re plans are around his word, ***Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart.*** There are really two parts to this verse. There’s Psalm 37: 4a and then there’s Psalm 37: 4b. A lot of times, if we’re honest, we focus on Psalm 37: 4b – give me the delights of my heart. Give me what I want.

Whoa, you're missing the whole point to this verse. Delight yourself in the Lord... Here's the beautiful thing when you start talking about plans and plans for your family. When you delight yourself in Lord, his desires become your desires. His plans become your plans. Your heart is knitted together with his. That's the most consistent prayer my wife and I pray together at night. "God, align our hearts with yours." Not align your will with our hearts. No. God, align our hearts with your will. By the way, nothing can thwart God's plan. So, it's a lot better if I align my heart with his will than him trying to get me to what my selfish desires want.

Similarly, it says almost the same thing in Proverbs 16: 3 – ***Commit your work to the Lord and your plans will be established.*** Not commit your work to your 401K, not commit your work to your retirement plan. Commit your work to the Lord.

I'll be honest with you. The first two and a half years of marriage, I didn't do a great job as a husband. We didn't have kids until about four and a half years in. I will tell you I was more married to being a successful basketball coach, teacher, and speaker than I was to being a husband. So, we sat down towards the end of our third year of marriage and my wife and I came up with some non-negotiables. If I want to leave a different legacy than what was left for me and what I received from parenting, then there has to be some non-negotiables. That's because I found myself apt to repeat some of the same things I saw modeled for me growing up. So we made some non-negotiables. Just let me give you a couple of non-negotiables. If you don't have non-negotiables in your family, I can't encourage you enough to have non-negotiables.

By the way, when Ruth went to the threshing floor, there was a non-negotiable. She wasn't going to sleep with Boaz. History tells us she was a noble woman as we are going to see more of here in the text in just a second. Boaz was also a godly man of character that wasn't going to do it either. That was a non-negotiable. This was just to get the ball rolling, per say. So that was just a non-negotiable.

One of the non-negotiables my wife and I have is that I will never throw her under the bus in a public setting or with friends around. If there is conflict we need to take care of, I'm going to take care of that one on one. That's a non-negotiable we've established in our life. Another non-negotiable we've established is we will never allow money to dictate experiences with our family. I'm never going to say yes to a monetary opportunity when there is a memory to be made with my kiddoes. That doesn't mean I won't ever go out of town and speak. I'm saying that if Aiden has a basketball game, the speaking is no and the basketball game is yes. There are all these small memories that a child is always going to remember. These are non-negotiables that we list. If you don't have non-negotiables, how are you going to get to a spot where you're negotiating when it comes up in your family. You're just going to fly by the seat of your pants. Once again, that's no plan according to the Lord.

C.T. Studd said it best. *"Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last."*

Your kiddoes won't remember how much money you made. They won't remember what kind of car you drove. They're going to remember the way you sowed Christ into their heart. You can chase making your name known all you want, but I just want to remind you there is one name in heaven to whom every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. Like we just found out a second ago, every name in

here will be forgotten in two generations. So, it's not about whether or not your name will be remembered or forgotten; it will be about whether or not the legacy you'll leave is worth following.

Continuing on with Ruth - **6 So she went down to the threshing floor...** She followed Naomi's advice. **...and did just as her mother-in-law had commanded her.** That's a submissive daughter-in-law. **7 And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain.** Where all of his stalk is. **Then she came softly and uncovered his feet and lay down.** She's following the plan. **8 At midnight the man was startled and turned over...** Do you think? Yeah! And what's crazy about this is this is the dark period of Judges. So, what prostitutes would do during this time is they would go lie at their feet and if the man saw the prostitute and he wanted to do something, he'd pay her and she would be on her way. **...and behold, a woman lay at his feet! 9 He said, "Who are you?"** He wanted to find out quickly is she was a prostitute and what she was doing there.

**And she answered, "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread your wings; the word for wings can also mean corners of a garment over your servant, for you are a redeemer."**

**10 And he said, "May you be blessed by the Lord, my daughter. You have made this last kindness greater than the first in that you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich."** When you are following God's call and putting Christ in the center of your family, money doesn't matter. She's not worried about that. She's worried about being faithful and being in the line of Christ. **11 "And now, my daughter, do not fear."** There it is again. Don't fear; God's in control. **"I will do for you all that you ask, for all my fellow townsmen know..."** I love this word *know* here. The word *know* here is *yada*; it's the same word we see in Genesis when God says he knows Adam and he knows Eve. This is an intimate know, right? We were all created *yada*. First to be known by the creator and then to be in relationship with other people. Vertical relationships first, horizontal relationships after. **"...that you are a worthy woman."**

Do people know that you are worthy. Do people know you are man of character? What we found out from here is that God is going to reward her character, not her reputation. Character and reputation are two different things. You can put on a front to make your reputation seem great, but your character is who you really are. A lot of you came to church today and you were bickering and fighting and all of the sudden you get to church and you're like, "Alright, get it together, we're walking in. Act like we've got it all together." That's reputation, that's not character.

As John Wooden says, *"Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are."*

God knows character and as we see with Ruth, he rewards her character. He uses Boaz to reward that character. Ruth was a woman of character and she's not willing to compromise or deviate from the plan and she's willing to stay faithful to the Lord.

**12 "And now it is true that I am a redeemer. Yet there is a redeemer nearer than I."** So he has a younger relative. He's like, "You might be more attracted to him. He's still in shape. You might want to hook up with him instead, Ruth." **13 "Remain tonight, and in the morning, if he will redeem you, good;**

***let him do it. But if he is not willing to redeem you, then, as the Lord lives, I will redeem you. Lie down until the morning.***” Ted hit this at the end of Chapter 2 last week. That phrase, “Lie down until the morning,” is a kinsman redeemer. The Hebrew word is *goel*. A kinsman redeemer is a male relative who, according to various laws of Pentateuch had the privilege or responsibility to act on behalf of a relative who was in trouble, danger, or need. The Hebrew term *goel* for kinsman redeemer designates one who delivers or rescues.

This week, I asked Denise what this church family needed to hear. She said, “There is a lot of hurt going on in our church family right now. There’s a lot of tension, a lot of brokenness, a lot of addictions. There’s a lot of stuff going on right now.” It takes one kinsman redeemer to say, “I’m going to act on behalf of my family that’s in trouble.” If you’re a single mom or if you’re a dad with a bunch of kids or if you’re a grandparent. “I’m going to act on behalf of a relative that is in danger because they are not living for Jesus. I’m going to be that one that stands up and lives for Jesus and I’m going to point them to the one who truly delivers and rescues.” That legacy will never be forgotten.

***14 So she lay at his feet until the morning, but arose before one could recognize another. And he said, “Let it not be known that the woman came to the threshing floor.” 15 And he said, “Bring the garment you are wearing and hold it out.”***

***So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley and put it on her. Then she went into the city.***

***16 And when she came to her mother-in-law, she said, “How did you fare, my daughter?”***

***Then she told her all that the man had done for her, 17 saying, “These six measures of barley he gave to me, for he said to me, ‘You must not go back empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’”***

***18 She replied, “Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest but will settle the matter today.”***

I love this term *wait*. It’s such a hard term for us to grasp in our culture today. You guys get everything instantly. You young punks don’t understand. I used to go to the store called Sam Goody’s to buy a compact disk. You older people are like, “You don’t understand, Adam, we used to buy eight tracks!” Or you have old school records. You guys are like “Yeah, if you play it backwards, you can hear Satan worshipping.” Do you know what happens when you play a country song backwards? You get your dog back, you get your house back, and you get your kids back. You get everything back.

But, everything in culture is instant. You can leave here today, get on your phone, order something on Amazon, and have it in the mailbox in two days. Everything is instant, so this idea of waiting for something... Some of you are in a hard season right now. You don’t know if your husband is going to repent. You don’t know if your kid is going to get out of his addiction. Your parents might have cancer. That’s a hard season. So you’re thinking *It is so difficult to be focused on the Lord in this season that I’m in right now.*

But, I love this word wait. Those who wait on the Lord will mount up like eagles. They will walk and not be weary. They will run and not grow faint. Be still and know that I am the Lord. This idea of wait...

Look at how Charles Spurgeon talks about waiting. *"If the Lord Jehovah makes us wait... Which he does. We are just horrible at it. We want stuff instantly. We hate waiting. Our patience is awful. I'm the first to tell you that. ...let us do so with our whole hearts... How can we do it with our whole heart? Because we know God is working something. We know he sees the big picture. Next time you have to wait for a dark season, just remember that the Hebrews were in slavery for 400 years. That's waiting. ...for blessed are all they that wait for Him. He is worth waiting for. Some of you single ladies are like, "Yeah, but can you please hurry this thing up." The waiting itself is beneficial to us: it tries faith, exercises patience, trains submission, and endears the blessing when it comes. The Lord's people have always been a waiting people."*

In those waiting moments, we have two choices. We either press into him and relinquish control and say, "Father, you're in control. Just like Ruth did at the threshing floor, I'm here and you are in control. I'm going to wait. You are in control." Or, we do the latter, which is try to take control. This only makes us realize we don't have control, so then it makes us more anxious so we try to take more control. Then we realize more so we don't have control, so that only makes us even more anxious, so we try to take more control. There's this vicious cycle of anxiety, worry, and control, or the illusion of, and we realize "I don't do waiting very well, Lord help me." That's what happens in those moments because God is like, "Relinquish the illusion of control and know that you can wait for me because I'm working out a bigger picture."

Can you imagine Naomi in Chapter 1? She loses her husband, loses both of her sons... "I have no redeemer. My family line is done." No, you see, Boaz ends up marrying Ruth and they give birth to Obed. Obed ends up being the grandfather to King David, a man with a whole heart for God. King David is in the line of Jesus Christ. God sees the big picture even when we don't. Sometimes we get focused on what is right in front of us and we fail to realize there is someone bigger and more powerful than us that has got this whole thing under control.

So, I don't want to ask what your name is today. I'm not worried about your name. I love you and I love meeting all your names out in Stone and Taney Counties, but I want to ask this question. What legacy are you going leave far beyond after your name is forgotten.

[Video plays]

*Legacies transcend the boundaries of time. We create them with or without our knowledge. Our words, our deeds all pieced together will form the history you leave behind. They are told, shown, held, felt. Memories we absentmindedly create for countless tomorrows. Legacies are roads left paved for those who will follow. They leave trails filled with reflective ideals. They are monumental. They are minimal. But, they are never forgotten. Children, grandchildren, neighborhoods, co-workers, friends, enemies... The lives of those around us inherit the story we leave behind. They make their way to everywhere, through a tale or a virtue. Legacies stand tall in the face of trial; they prevail. They are found in risk that clings to the promise of hope.*



*Legacies can be found in tattered souls and wrinkles aged with wisdom. They make their way to empty rooms and trailing heartbeats. They find their way into the back of our minds, sit with us, lingering, waiting to be remembered. Found in humbled homes, inherited mansions, and tin roofed rooms, legacies extend past the limited hours of your life and mine. Where have you seen them? Where have you taken them in? What will your name leave behind? Legacies test all boundaries. Legacies find no limits. Legacies light the way. Legacies lead. The choice is yours. What will be your legacy?*

When I think of leaving a legacy, I think of my friends, Carol and Jeff. They have six kiddoes that they are leading in Christ. If their kids each had six kids, that would be 36 kids, and then if those kids each had six kids, that would be 216 kids, and then by the time Jeff and Carol's names are forgotten and there are great grandkids, there are 1,200 kids that they have left that legacy for. You don't understand the deep impact we have.

About three years ago, my wife and I attempted to foster... When I say attempted, I know God's plan is bigger. He sent me Cooper that didn't have a dad that was leading him at all in the Lord. As a matter of fact, his dad had been in and out of prison his entire life, so Steph and I asked him come live with us. Cooper buried his dad yesterday because his dad was murdered in a drug deal gone bad. This took place two months ago, but there was all this investigation. So, they finally had the funeral yesterday and he buried his dad. Two months ago, Cooper and I had a heart to heart on the phone. I told him, "That doesn't have to be your legacy. That doesn't have to be the story you leave." He's been into drugs and he's been into trouble just like his dad had modeled for him.

You could have had an alcoholic father who had an alcoholic son who had an alcoholic son... and those cycles continue. Or an abusive relationship where an abusive father becomes an abusive son who becomes an abusive father... But you forget to remember that Jesus is the great cycle breaker. He breaks those cycle. While you're worried about your name, let me remind you that the devil knows your name and he calls you by your sin, while Jesus knows your sin and he calls you by your name.

So, you can decide to keep making excuses as to why this is going to be this way or you can break the cycle and decide that's not the legacy you are going to leave. It only takes one person. It takes on husband, one single mom, one kiddo for that matter.

I grew up in a family that did not walk with Jesus, that did not know Jesus. I told you my parents were kids raising kids. My mom and dad did not have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Where is the hope in that? There were multiple affairs on both sides. They got divorced when I was eight. I spent the majority of my years living with my grandparents who weren't even my biological grandparents. When my mom she was six months old, she was left at the doorstep of the orphanage. My biological grandmother dropped her off and put her in the husband's name and not her name because her parents didn't want it to be traced back to her. She didn't want to give her up for adoption, but her parents made her give her up for adoption.

So, my non-biological grandparents basically raised me. I had never had a relationship with Jesus Christ. I have an older brother who is a recovering drug addict and alcoholic. He's been in and out of rehab for 13 years. My older sister, who in a previous relationship, was severely beaten. She had her face broken

by one of her former boyfriends. She didn't know the Lord. Then I had a younger sister that didn't know the Lord. My mom didn't know Lord. My dad didn't know the Lord.

All of the sudden, God gets hold of me in college. It's almost as if someone had been praying for me. It's almost as if someone had been looking out for me. I come to know Jesus and I decide I'm going to work on my mom. I wanted to see if God would use me in my mom's life. So, God used me to bring my mom to Jesus. A couple of years ago, I was able to go back to Utah and baptize her. She wanted me to baptize her.

She had been looking for her biological mother her entire life. She couldn't find her because the last name wasn't what she thought it was because of what her grandmother had done with the name. She wouldn't have met her biological mom without a relationship with the Lord. Three years ago... you can't make this stuff up. Three years ago, my mom gets a phone call. This is after I baptized her, after she came to know the Lord. "Is this Shelly? This is your biological mom." What?! She had buried her mom. She never thought she would meet her mom. Here is a picture of my mom and my biological grandmother that I just met three years ago. My mom is in her mid-50s when she meets her biological mom for the first time.

My wife and I go went to San Diego with my newborn Aiden at the time. We went out to San Diego and we sat down with... Her name is Sandy. I sat down with Grandma Sandy and we were on her couch. This lady loves the Lord. She loves Jesus. And she looks at me and she looks at Stephanie and she goes, "I've been praying for you since the day I dropped your mom off on that step."

I walked out of there crying, just balling. I looked at my wife and I said, "What is going in my life is a product of her prayers." To look at my family, there is no way there is going to be a guy preaching Jesus on Sunday. There is no way that's going to happen. Except for one woman. One woman who was faithful to keep praying for her biological daughter who she didn't even know for 50 plus years. It takes one person in that family to say "I don't care of the bags; I don't care..." One redeemer that says, "Jesus, you are going to be the center of this family. Like Ruth, like Boaz, like Naomi, we are going to be focused on you and we're going to walk out in faith. Even if we don't see it right now, even if we don't see the big picture..." You can't make this stuff up. it's crazy.

My dad's dad left him when he was eight years old. He still has his biological mom. His dad wanted nothing to do with him. His name is Merle White. My biological name would have been White. He wanted nothing to do with him. His biological dad reached out to him four years ago. He has a passionate relationship with the Lord. So, now my dad's got me on this side, hammering the gospel, and he's God his biological dad, hammering the gospel. He's got no hope now.

One person. Whether it's a kiddo or a dad or a mom. One person. I promise you this. Your name will be forgotten, but the legacy you leave in Christ's name will echo in the halls of eternity. I promise you your kids don't care how much money you make. I counsel them all the time. I promise they don't care how famous your name is. I promise you can try to get as many Twitter followers and Instagram followers and likes and Facebook comments. You can chase that all you want, but by the end of the day, there is one celebrity in heaven and it's the name above all names to whom every name will confess and

every knee will bow and that's the only thing that will have a lasting legacy. While all of our names are forgotten, Jesus' name won't be.

Even if you have to ask Ted, "Hey, who's that short pastor?" I don't care if you know my name. Forget my name; just don't forget my Jesus.

Father God, we thank you so much for a story like Ruth that once again points us back to your faithfulness, that points us back to legacies you leave when we center our lives and our gate on you. Thank you for models that are in this church. Thank you for all that you're doing. Thank you for the single moms like Misha and Adrian. I know there are so many other single moms out here that are pursuing you and trusting that you are faithful. We are trusting you will be faithful in raising Aiden up to know you. We're trusting you'll be faithful to raising Lauren up to know you and so many other kiddos in this church that don't have spiritual daddies around.

We know we have you around, our heavenly Father. And we know you can do a mighty work and you've been doing it for centuries. We love you. We thank you. We just pray for any hurting hearts, hurting families, addictions. I just pray if there is a dad in here that's been challenged or convicted today that he would step and be that spiritual leader. I pray for the single mom that feels like she's all on her own, trying to do this herself. I pray you comfort her and encourage her. I pray that people in this church would rally around them and look out after orphans and widows.

Your name is great and your name is the only name that matters. Ours will all fade, but yours will reign forever. We confess that today. It's in your matchless name, Jesus, we pray. Amen