

# **Week Four:** The God Who Leaves a Legacy

January 23-27, 2023



**THE GRANVILLE CHAPEL**

Sharing Our Lives | Sharing The Gospel

## “There Is No Explanation for Such a Life”

In his book, “The Treasure Principle,” author Randy Alcorn shares about a trip he once took to Cairo, Egypt. His friends, missionaries to the country, brought them to an overgrown graveyard where other missionaries had been buried. As they walked, their attention was drawn to a sun-scorched tombstone that was marked, “William Borden 1887-1913”. The epitaph that followed described both his love for God and his sacrifices for the Muslim people of Egypt. It ended with this inscription: “Apart from faith in Christ, there is no explanation for such a life.”

William Borden was a graduate of Yale College, and an heir to great wealth. But he rejected the life of ease and chose instead to work to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to Muslims. Refusing luxury, Borden gave away hundreds of thousands of dollars of his own money to missions. After only four months of zealous ministry in Egypt, he contracted spinal meningitis and died at the age of twenty-five.

Alcorn goes on to talk about how his friends drove him from that cemetery to the National Museum, where they spent time in wonder of the King Tut exhibit. Tutankhamen (King Tut) died at the early age of seventeen. He was buried with solid gold chariots and thousands of golden artifacts. His golden coffin was found buried within gold tombs within gold tombs. The ancient Egyptians of his day believed in an afterlife – one where they could take with and enjoy their earthly treasures. But all those earthly treasures intended for King Tut’s eternal enjoyment stayed right where they were for more than three thousand years, until they were finally discovered by the Egyptologist, Howard Carter, in 1922.

Wrapping up, Alcorn says, “You cannot help but be struck by the contrast between these two graves. One was obscure, dirty, and hidden off a back street littered with garbage. The other glittered with unimaginable wealth. Yet where are these two men now? One, who lived in opulence and called himself king, is in the misery of a Christ-less eternity. The other, who lived a modest life in service of the One True King, is enjoying everlasting reward in the presence of His Lord.”

As we come to the fourth and final week of our month of prayer, I want us to do so with the right perspective in mind. We may have our eyes set upon an earthly goal, but we must also have our hearts set upon an eternal hope. Yes, we need the Lords’ wisdom, blessing, and favor to achieve our goal of having our own church home here in our community, but we must not seek that with just our immediate needs in mind. Instead, we need these two things before us: (1) the glory of God, and (2) the good of Christ’s Church for the coming generations until He returns.

To that end, let’s pray together to the God Who leaves a legacy – to the One Who will be glorified “in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.” (Ephesians 3:21)



# Monday, January 23

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*"This is My Name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations." -Exodus 3:15*

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## **A Forever Name**

In Exodus 3, Moses encounters the eternal God at the burning bush. It was there that God revealed His name: I AM or YHWH. You'll see this in your English Bible when the word 'lord' is printed in all caps: LORD. This name is special. It not only speaks to God's aseity (i.e., that God is eternally self-existent), but it also speaks to the covenant He has made with His people. This means that God's name serves as an anchor to all His covenant promises and all His mighty acts in history. You see, God wants His people to know that He is the God who keeps His promises. So even today, living on this side of the greater Exodus – the redeeming work of Jesus Christ upon the cross for our sins – we still experience God's covenant faithfulness to us. Just as He was the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob...so He is also our God and the God of our children and the God of our children's children. He has never stopped being our God, nor will He ever stop. So, to honor God as the LORD, we take this verse to heart by doing more than just acknowledging His name – we honor His name by remembering it forever.

## **Prayer**

*"My LORD and my God, I am very thankful that You have revealed Yourself to us in the Scriptures, and in the person and work of Your Son, Jesus Christ. I find great comfort in knowing that You will never change, and that every one of Your promises will most certainly come true. While there are many things that my heart desires, I ask that You help me to align my heart with what You have revealed – not with the selfish or evil things that I desire. I also ask that You help me to remember Your name – to not use it in vain – but rather to honor it because it reveals Who You are and all that You do. In Jesus' Name. Amen."*

## **Question for Reflection**

What can you do in your life to rightly remember the name of the LORD?

# Tuesday, January 24

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*"Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God Who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, to a thousand generations." -Deuteronomy 7:9*

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## **A Thousand Generations**

While God is always faithful to keep His covenant with us, we are not so able nor faithful. Therefore, we need what is referred to here in Deuteronomy 7:9 as God's 'steadfast love' – a steadfast love that is rooted in God's election of His people. Consider what it says just a few verses before this one: "The LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His treasured possession...it was not because you were more in number than any other people...but it is because the LORD loves you." (Deuteronomy 7:6-8) God has freely set His love upon the people whom He has chosen, including us even today. And what is our response? We love Him in return, and we joyfully keep His commandments, and we answer His call to teach the generations to come to do the same as well.

## **Prayer**

*"Jesus, you said in John 14:15 that, 'If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.' I long to do this – to love You and live for You; to love as You have loved, and to serve as You have served. But I am unable to do this in my own strength. I rejoice that You kept Your promise to send Your Holy Spirit Who gives me the help that I need. Lead me to walk in Him so that I may obey You from a pure heart. And grant me opportunity to not only do this until the day that You call me home to glory, but to teach and model for generations to come the blessing that accompanies living in response to Your steadfast love for us. I do love You, Jesus, and I am thankful for Your faithfulness to me. In Your Name. Amen."*

## **Question for Reflection**

Who had the greatest impact in modeling a Godly life for you?



# Wednesday, January 25

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*"Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your Name give glory,  
for the sake of Your steadfast love and Your faithfulness!"  
-Psalm 115:1-2*

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## **A Battle Cry**

C.S. Lewis once wrote, "Pride is spiritual cancer: it eats up the very possibility of love, or contentment, or even common sense" (From, "Mere Christianity"). Pride is indeed a spiritual cancer. As we think about the growth that our church is experiencing; as we delight in the strengthening of our ministries; and as we watch God pour out His provision for us in wonderful and unexpected ways, we cannot begin to think that we somehow have earned this or deserve it because of who we are or what we have done. No, we are not the ones who deserve the glory. God alone deserves the glory. We may be recipients of His blessings, but we are surely debtors to His grace and mercy in these things. For all He has done, is doing, and will do, we are called to reflect His glory; to offer Him our very lives as living sacrifices; to rejoice and delight in His steadfast love and faithfulness to us - not ours to Him. May this be, now and always, our only battle cry.

## **Prayer**

*"Dear God, I am most certainly guilty of spiritual pride. I often live as though I have earned Your grace and blessing by what I have done for You. Please forgive me and help me to walk in the glorious light of Your steadfast love and faithfulness. When I am tempted to claim the glory of Your works for myself, lead me to turn from that and instead give to You the glory that You alone are due. I also pray that, as we face the future before us, You would help my church, The Granville Chapel, to make this our battle cry: 'Not to us, O LORD, not to us, but to Your name give glory.' In Jesus' Name. Amen"*

## **Question for Reflection**

What are some practical ways that you can turn from spiritual pride?

# Thursday, January 26

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*"On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." -Matthew 16:18*

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## **A Victorious Church**

It's truly a beautiful scene – but it is also a triumphant one. In response to a question Jesus asks about His identity, Peter says, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." (Matthew 16:16) Jesus then takes this simple, yet profound statement, and makes the glorious promise that on such a confession He will build His church, and nothing – not even Hell itself – will be able to prevail against it. There's too much to unpack from this scene in this space, but I encourage you to not miss this: the Church (our church too!) – is Jesus' Church, and He is the One building it. As we pray together and ask God to allow us to leave a legacy for our families and our community for years to come, we labor in vain if we do not recognize and celebrate that it is Christ who builds His Church. And because He is the One building and persevering it, we can rightly rest in knowing that it's not so much *our* legacy that we are leaving – rather we are passing on *His* legacy for as long as He continues His work among us.

## **Prayer**

*"Jesus, I rest and delight in the truth that You are building Your church. And I rejoice at the promise that You will lead Your church to victory. Help me to see beyond the obstacles that appear to stand in the way of The Granville Chapel's hopes and future plans. Give me faith in the work that you are doing to build Your Church, and please hear my cry for help for my church. We need Your wisdom; we need Your resources; and we need Your grace to carry on Your gospel legacy in our families and in our community. Grant us peace to endure suffering and strength to discern and withstand the schemes of our defeated enemy, Satan, as often as they arise. In Your name. Amen."*

## **Question for Reflection**

In what way(s) have you witnessed Jesus building His church among us?



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# Friday, January 27

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*"The glory that You have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as We are One." -John 17:22*

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## **A Surprising Legacy**

Let's wrap up this week (and month) of prayer by turning to the prayer of Jesus recorded for us in John 17. If you haven't done so, I encourage you to stop now, read the whole chapter, and then return to this space. Notice that Jesus does not desire to leave a legacy that is marked by buildings or institutions, but rather by men and women who are united as one, carrying on His mission for His glory. This is the heart of the legacy that God is leaving for us: in our life and service to Him, there is no glory for us, but there is great glory for Him as He fulfills His will through us. Friends, it is not our legacy that we are leaving, but His. As those who are on mission *with* Him and *for* Him, looking *to* Him to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, may we do so in absolute and total dependence and hope that this good work that He began in us will certainly be brought to full completion - for our good and for His glory.

## **Prayer**

*"O God, thank You for including this prayer of Jesus for us in Your Word. I am comforted to know that as He prepared to face the cross, He had me and my Christian brothers and sisters on His heart. Would You grant us a heart like His? It's good for us to work towards having our own church home here in our community, but it is far much better if that goal is realized in light of what Jesus says here. May we be more concerned with leaving a legacy of works done in Your Name, for Your glory, than we are in anything in and of ourselves. You alone, O God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are worthy of all praise and honor and glory, forever and ever. Amen."*

## **Question for Reflection**

What kind of legacy are you looking to leave for the generations to come?

## A Closing Thought

Nearly two hundred years ago there were two Scottish brothers named John and David Livingstone. Early in life, John set his mind on making a name for himself by becoming wealthy – and he did become very rich. But under his name in an old edition of the “Encyclopedia Britannica,” John Livingstone is simply remembered as, “the brother of David Livingstone.”

But who is David Livingstone? While John was dedicating himself to earthly riches, David was kneeling and praying – surrendering himself to Christ. At a young age, he had resolved, “I will place no value on anything I have or possess unless it is in relationship to the Kingdom of God.” The inscription over his burial place in Westminster Abbey remembers his name thus: “For thirty years [David’s] life was spent in an unwearied effort to evangelize the native races, to explore the undiscovered secrets, [and] to abolish the desolating slave trade of central Africa.”

As we close out week four, I am thankful to the LORD for renewing our confidence in His sovereign ability; His limitless power; His work in and through us; and His glory that endures forever. As we look toward the next steps in our church’s journey, I would hate for us to simply settle for being a secondary note in the annals of history. Rather my deepest hope is that our church will be known through the ages to come for its zeal for God’s glory, its faithfulness to the Scriptures, its passion for the true gospel, and the many generations of fruitful disciples that it will most surely produce. Amen and amen!



The Granville Chapel  
309 W. Broadway  
Granville, OH 43023  
[www.thegranvillechapel.com](http://www.thegranvillechapel.com)