

Passing Your Values to the Next Generation

If you've ever shopped in a Target store, you may have noticed the displays in the check-out lanes and at the customer service desk highlighting their commitment to philanthropy in the community. In fact, Target was the second company in the nation to contribute the maximum amount deductible under the tax code, giving away 5% of the company's pre-tax profits.

Where did that value of generosity come from? It can be traced back to George Dayton, the founder of Dayton Corporation (which later became the international chain of Target discount stores). George believed it was very important to pass along his values to the next generation - and he passed along those values in two ways - in person and in writing.

Even before possessing great wealth, George modeled the values he communicated to his family. He believed tithing was the starting point for giving, calling it "evangelism in action." By age 30, George was giving 40% of his income away. A minister that George had supported for many years once told him "Most men spend all their time making money. You evidently spend a lot of time in thinking about how to give it away." George also felt it was important to communicate his values to family in a letter, and wrote "I can truly say to you that nothing brings as much pleasure to your father and mother as doing something for others."



How about you? Are there lessons in George Dayton's story that would bless your family and the ministry organizations you care about? Here are a couple of suggested next steps:

Live it. Jesus said, "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:16). What is the "light" that people see in you? What can the next generation learn by watching your interactions with people? Or handling of money? Commitment to family? Involvement at church? Approach to work? Investment in kingdom causes during and after your lifetime?

Write it. In addition to transferring your wealth in a Will, have you ever thought about also transferring your wisdom in a Spiritual Love Letter to the next generation? Although it's not a legal document, a Spiritual Love Letter is a wonderful opportunity to communicate your values and life lessons to your heirs. For example, you could affirm the members of your family, and go on to explain what Christ has meant to you during your lifetime. You could highlight meaningful passages of Scripture, and how those verses have shaped your values. And finally, you could write out your prayer for the next generation, encouraging them to follow Jesus and live out the values that meant so much to you.



PLEASE CONSIDER INCLUDING PINE REST FOUNDATION IN YOUR WILL

- I am interested in creating or updating my Will or Estate Plan
- I have included Pine Rest Foundation in my Will or Estate Plan

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