



THE LIFE OF
PAUL

FAMILY DEVOS

A Lasting Impression

Scripture: Acts 20:17-38

Memory Verse: Acts 20:35b

“And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

For My Family:

Do you know what it means to leave an impression on someone? Imagine that you are walking past a sidewalk where fresh cement has been poured. It’s so soft that you could push your hand into it. If you did, an impression of your hand would be left for all to see, and they would know something about you by what they saw. Paul had left an impression on the Ephesians. For three years he served the Lord in Ephesus, working with his own hands, declaring the good news of the Kingdom of God, teaching the church the whole counsel of God, and warning them of dangers to come. Long after Paul left, the impression of what he did and said remained. Impressions can be good or bad, but we can learn from Paul’s example of how to leave a good and godly impression everywhere we go.

One of the things that stands out as we read Paul’s testimony is that he was a giver. He reminded the church elders of this as he said goodbye, encouraging them to follow his example and remember the words of Jesus, that “it is more blessed to give than to receive.” Paul didn’t just preach this, he lived it! He humbly served the Lord and the church throughout his time in Ephesus, even through difficult trials. “I kept nothing back that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you... I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.” What he had received from the Lord he freely gave without seeking anything in return. Like a runner who collapses from exhaustion after crossing the finish line, having given everything to win the race, Paul had given his all in Ephesus, and no one could deny it.

Paul’s ability to make a good and lasting impression on the Ephesians was rooted in his obedience to God’s Word. God had called him to “testify of the gospel of the grace of God,” and he would do that no matter the cost. Nothing could move him from his goal, and the Ephesians took note of this. As they walked with the Lord, they remembered how Paul had lived among them, and that encouraged them to live the same way: boldly sharing the Gospel, and doing all they could to help one another and meet one another’s needs.

What do people remember about you? Does your example encourage them to follow Jesus? Have you shown others God’s love? Are you a giver, or have you been selfish? Have you been unkind? None of us are perfect, but it’s important to know that the things you say and do matter to God, and they matter to those around you. Each interaction we have is kind of like wet cement. It soon dries and whatever we said or did cannot be undone. An impression is left, for better or for worse. What kind of impression will you leave on those around you today? Ask for God’s help to leave an impression that will point others to Him.

Questions for Young Children:

What are some examples of how we can make good impressions that point others to Jesus?

What are some examples of how we can leave a bad impression?

What did Paul do and say that helped his ministry continue even after he was gone?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

What does it mean to leave an impression on someone?

What can we learn from Paul's example?

Do you remember a time when you left a bad impression on someone? How did that feel and what was the outcome?

Do you remember leaving a good impression on someone? How did that feel and what was the outcome?