

OVER 100 FAMILY QUESTIONS

Ask or answer these family history and legacy questions

What is a legacy? A legacy by definition is something you “hand down or pass along” to others. When it comes to end-of-this-life issues, many people focus on handing down money and possessions but miss out on handing down a legacy of their life to their children, grandchildren, and/or loved ones. The truth is the money will soon be spent or redirected, and the amount given will be forgotten. What will be remembered most is your living legacy of lessons learned, loving counsel, and laughter springing from past memories that you share in stories, writings, or recordings.

The Bible speaks about passing along life legacies and our spiritual heritage to our families:

- **Proverbs 13:22** A good man leaves an inheritance (legacy) for his children’s children.
- **Psalm 71:18** Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come.
- **Psalm 78:2-4** I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old—what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

YOUNGER FAMILIES: Let your children look through the list and take turns asking any question they want to ask you. This would be especially good for conversations around the dinner table, in the car, or during family travels, vacations, and trips.

ADULT CHILDREN WITH AGING PARENTS: Look through the list and highlight some items you can use as conversation starters at holiday or family gatherings. If possible, have a recorder or videotape running.

Or you can also ask a few questions each time you call to talk on the phone.

PARENTS OR GRANDPARENTS: You may want to write out, record (audio or videotape), email, or put on a website your answers to some of these questions and then give them to your children and grandchildren. Choose from the following list of ideas to jog your memory or to start family conversations about things you can hand down and pass along to your loved ones as part of your living legacy and spiritual heritage.

Places you’ve lived? Addresses, description, or location (if you can remember them)?

Names and cities of the schools you attended (grade school, middle/junior high, high school, colleges)?

Who were your best friends in school? What were they like?

What were your favorite pastimes or fun activities to do as a child?

What were some of your earliest memories about church?

What type of jobs did your parents have while you were growing up?

Did you ever move from one place to a new place? How did you feel? How did it impact your life?

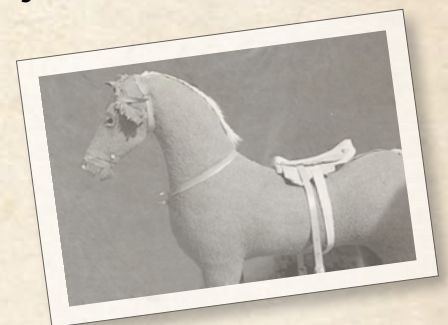
What did you used to do to celebrate birthdays? Christmas? Easter? Thanksgiving? July 4th? Spring break?

What were your family finances like while you were growing up? How did that affect you?

What did your family do on the weekends? Special outings? Vacations? Where did they go for trips?

Did you ever take lessons or special classes (music, art, sports, etc.)? Did you ever collect anything?

When you were a child or a teenager, what did you want to be when you grew up?



What was a favorite school subject, school memory, or year/grade in school? Favorite teacher? Why?

How did you get to school (walk, bus, parents drive you, car pool, or . . .)? How far was it?

Were you ever in band, choir, club, school play or drama production, student council, sports team, etc.?

What type of grades did you have in grade school? Why? Jr. High or Middle school? High school? College?

If you played sports, what sport and position did you play? Did you ever score/win? Were you ever hurt? What were some of the biggest highlights and memories you have from being on this team?

Did you ever go to school dances or proms?

Was there ever a big tragedy among your immediate family, relatives, or friends?

Were you ever taken or called to the principal's office? Why? Did you ever go through a time of rebellion?

Special or silly talents or abilities you had growing up (or still have)?

Did you ever have any nicknames growing up? What were they? Who gave them to you?

What do you remember about the people and the neighborhood where you grew up? What did the kids do for fun in your neighborhood? What were some funny stories or people you remember?

What were experiences you had growing up camping, hunting, fishing, going on vacations, going to camp, going to summer school, being on a farm, going on retreats, being in the scouts, etc.?

Awards, trophies, records, badges, medals, scholarships, elections, or prizes you won?

What about college—if you didn't go, why not? If you did go, what was your major and why did you choose this major?

First crush? First kiss? First serious boyfriend/girlfriend? First heartbreak? First job(s)? First car?

Most funny, unique, memorable, amazing, unusual memories you have of growing up?

Names (and cities where they live or lived) of aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents?

What were your political affiliations, beliefs, involvements, offices, or views of voting and citizenship?

Did you have physical or medical problems as a child or in your adult life?

Were you ever in a serious accident? Were you ever in a hospital?

What was the biggest event you ever attended (concert, conference, rally, game, etc.)?

The three people that have had the greatest influence on you—what did you learn from them?

Lessons learned from failures or difficulties in your life? Hardest times in your life?

Places you've traveled? Most exciting or fun things you've ever done?



Were you in any clubs, fraternities/sororities, civic groups, associations, non-profit boards, or government groups? Did you hold any leadership positions? Were you ever elected to a special office?

What was some of the best advice you ever received? Who gave it to you?

What are some of the most important lessons you learned about cars?

How or when you met your spouse? Why were you attracted to them? Details about your dating, courtship, engagement, wedding day, honeymoon, and early years before children? How did you know this was the person God had for you? Did you almost marry someone else—and if yes, what happened?

Marriage - How are you different from each other? How do these differences complement and strengthen you as people, as a couple, and as parents?

Favorite memories of your children? Most difficult, fun, or frightening experiences with your children?

Did you ever invent anything, write a book, make a musical recording, or...?

Lessons you learned along the way about money - earning, saving, giving, borrowing, investing, budgeting, gambling, credit, record keeping, paying taxes, shopping, etc.?

Lessons you learned about marriage and relationships - loving, forgiving, caring, helping, talking, or more?

Names of your sister(s), brother(s), their spouse (and where they live) and their children (and where they live)? How did you get along with your sister(s) and brother(s)?

Special attributes and abilities you see in each child and/or grandchildren? Things about them or special times when you were really proud of them?

What do you remember about how you chose each child's name?

Specific wishes and desires you have for your children and/or grandchildren?

Favorite aunt/uncle, coach, teacher, employer, friend, pastor, etc.? Why?

What are some of your favorite songs, funny songs, and hymns? If you can, sing them.

Jobs, vocations, occupations, and employers you've had over your lifetime?

What was the dumbest, bravest, most foolish, courageous, funniest, or smartest thing you ever did?

What were the circumstances or people that influenced you on your primary career path?

If you were in the military, where did you go, what was your rank, what are your most vivid memories, what did you learn, and how did you benefit from the military?

What are some funny stories from your personal life or family?

Most meaningful successes or things you have been proud of in life?



Favorite jokes and stories? Favorite recipes, meals, and desserts? Favorite pets? Favorite toys? Favorite vacation(s) or trip(s)? Favorite house? Favorite place you lived? Favorite movie(s)? Favorite bands/singers?

Encounters you have had with any famous people?

What were the major life changing events in your life?

Instruments played? If you can, record your playing.

Stories and facts you know about your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, or siblings?

Where were your parents or grandparents born/raised? What did they do for a living? What do you most remember about them? What was their spiritual background/heritage? What stories do you recall about them? Where are they buried (if known, provide name of town/city, cemetery, address, row #, lot #, block #, section #)?

Where (cities/towns/areas) are most of your relatives living in (sisters/brothers, cousins, aunts/uncles)?

Lessons have you learned about gambling, lying, cheating, laziness, immorality, drinking, smoking, or drugs?

Favorite hobbies, interests, activities, and sports you enjoyed in your lifetime?

Greatest tragedies or disappointments you've experienced? Greatest regrets? Greatest joys?

YOUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE—Churches you were part of?

Circumstances and details on how you were born again?

When were you baptized?

In what ways or places have you served the Lord?

Spiritual gifts God gave you? How you used your time/abilities/gifts to serve and follow the Lord?

Stories of God's leading, provision, calling, faithfulness, forgiveness, or more?

People that most influenced you in your spiritual journey? How did they impact your life?

Things you learned and practiced about reading, studying, memorizing, and obeying the Bible?

Favorite Bible verses? Explain why these are special (or stories) about how God used these verses in your life?

How and when you came to be a generous giver? What ministries did you faithfully support? Why?

Are you assured and confident you will go to heaven when you die? What are you basing your answer on?

Other:

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT PHOTOS: Take one evening a month and go through your family photos and write the approximate date, place, names, and connections (i.e. cousin, aunt/uncle, grandparents, etc.) of other people that may be in the photo.



LEGACY ORGANIZER

List of Forms & Pages

HOUSEHOLD & FAMILY MATTERS

Over 100 Family Questions	1-4
Family Tree	5-7
Special Days, Birthdays, Anniversaries	8
List of Advisors & Service Professionals	9
Seasonal Household To Do Checklist	10
Documents Checklist	11
Important Household Items	12

FINANCIAL MATTERS

List of Accounts	13
Income Sources	14
Lifestyle Expenses	15
Liabilities and Debts	16
Assets and Possessions	17
Christian and Charitable Giving	18

RETIREMENT AND MEDICAL MATTERS

List of Internet Resources for Retirees	19
Family Medical Information	20
Medical & End-of-this-Life Decisions	21

END-OF-LIFE PLANNING MATTERS

Most Important Spiritual Decision	22
Personal Information and Funeral Plans (<i>Man</i>) (<i>Woman</i>)	23-24
Distribution of Special Personal Possessions	25
Equitable Distribution of Family Possessions	26
People and Groups to Notify About My Homegoing	27
40+ Things to Do After a Loved One Dies	28

ESTATE PLANNING MATTERS

Top 10 Estate Planning Mistakes.....	29
Top 5 Ways to Get Your House in Order	30
9 Biblical Insights for End-of This Life Planning	31-32
Guardian Choices for Children	33
How to Conduct a Family Meeting	34
Estate Planning Tools for Effective Charitable Giving	35-36

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional Resources	37
Products and Resources by Dr. Brian Kluth	38
Ordering Information	39
Tips for Effectively Using the Legacy Organizer	40

RECOMMENDATION:

In order for you and your loved ones to gain the greatest benefit from any of the forms and lists in this LEGACY ORGANIZER, it will probably be best to *set aside a specific 30-90 minute time period each week* to work on this over the coming months.

Also remember to write things in PENCIL, so you can easily erase and update information as things change.

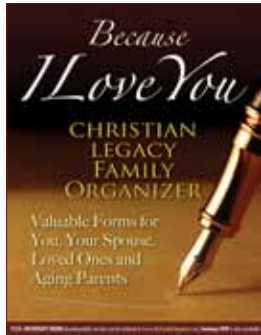
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