THE DAILY BREAD

The Missio of the Beloved



Legacy

The Woman You Will Have Been

A FORMATION BOOK BY

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The Everyday Apostle

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When It Is Over, What Will It Have Meant?

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INTRODUCTION

Looking at a Life from Its End

There is a clarifying power in looking at one's whole life from the vantage point of its end, in asking honestly what it will all have meant when it is over, what kind of woman one will have become, and what one will leave behind. This is not a morbid exercise but a profoundly clarifying one, for a woman who considers the end of her life gains a vantage point from which the trajectory of her days comes into focus, and she can ask whether she is becoming the woman she wants to have been and leaving the legacy she hopes to leave. This final station looks at the whole of a woman's life backward from its end, not to frighten her with death but to help her live forward with purpose, letting the woman she wants to have been shape the woman she is choosing to be today.

This book is about legacy, the woman a woman will have been when her life is complete. It will consider the clarifying power of looking at her life from its end; the question of what her life will have meant; the truth that legacy is more about who she becomes than what she accomplishes; the legacy of love as the deepest of all; the handing on of what she has received to those who come after; the fruit of a faithful life that remains; and the living of her whole life toward eternity. The aim is to help a woman live in light of the end, so that she becomes the woman she is called to be and leaves a legacy that lasts, her life pointed, from today, toward what she wants it finally to have meant.

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. — 2 Timothy 4:7

Saint Paul, near the end of his life, looked back and could say that he had fought the good fight, finished the race, and kept the faith, a summing-up of a life well spent, and this is the kind of legacy a woman is invited to consider and to aim for. This book will help her look at her own life from its end and live toward such a conclusion. The question is not merely what a woman will do but who she will have become and what she will leave behind, the legacy of a life. This book is about facing that question now, while there is still time to shape the answer, so that a woman lives her life pointed toward the end she hopes to reach and the woman she hopes to have been.

CHAPTER ONE

The Woman You Will Have Been

Living Backward from the End

A woman gains wisdom and direction by imagining herself at the end of her life and asking what woman she will have become, then letting that vision of the woman she wants to have been shape the woman she is choosing to be today. Understanding how to live backward from the end gives a woman a powerful way to order her present life.

O Lord, make me know my end and what is the measure of my days; let me know how fleeting I am! — Psalm 39:4

The Vantage Point of the End

Looking at her life from the vantage point of its end gives a woman clarity she cannot gain from within the rush of her days, revealing what truly matters. There is a unique clarity available from the vantage point of the end, for when a woman imagines her life as finished and looks back on it as a whole, she sees it differently than she does from within the rush and pressure of her daily life, the trivial falling away and the truly important coming into focus, so that the vantage point of the end clarifies her life, letting her see the whole trajectory and judge what matters by the light of its conclusion rather than the distractions of the moment. This means a woman gains clarity from the vantage point of the end, looking at her life as a finished whole, so that she sees what truly matters more clearly than she can from within the rush of her days. The woman who takes the vantage point of the end sees her life's trajectory and what truly matters. The vantage point of the end clarifies a woman's life, so that she sees what matters by the light of its conclusion.

Letting the End Shape the Present

A woman lets her vision of the end shape her present, allowing the woman she wants to have been to guide the choices and direction of the woman she is now. The purpose of looking backward from the end is to let it shape the present, for when a woman has a clear vision of the woman she wants to have become by the end of her life, she can let that vision guide her present choices, asking whether what she is doing and becoming now moves her toward or away from it, so that the woman she hopes to have been shapes the woman she is choosing to be today, the end informing and directing the present rather than the present drifting without reference to it. This means a woman lets the end shape her present, allowing her vision of the woman she wants to have been to guide her current choices and direction, so that she lives deliberately toward that end rather than drifting. The woman who lets the end shape the present lives toward the woman she wants to have become. Letting the end shape the present lets a woman's vision of who she wants to have been guide her choices, so that she lives deliberately toward it.

Numbering Our Days

Remembering the shortness and measure of her days, as the psalm prays, gives a woman the wisdom to use her limited time well rather than squandering it. The psalmist prays to know his end and the measure of his days, to be made aware of how fleeting life is, and this numbering of our days gives wisdom, for a woman who remembers the shortness and limit of her life is moved to use her time well, to invest it in what lasts, and to avoid squandering her fleeting days on the trivial, so that the honest awareness of life's brevity, far from being morbid, grants the wisdom to live her limited days with purpose and care rather than as if they were endless. This means a woman numbers her days, remembering the shortness and measure of her life, so that she gains the wisdom to use her limited time well rather than squandering it on the trivial. The woman who numbers her days gains the wisdom to use her fleeting time well. Numbering our days remembers the shortness of life, so that a woman gains the wisdom to use her limited days with purpose.

CHAPTER TWO

What Will It Have Meant

Measuring a Life by What Lasts

The deepest question legacy poses is what a woman's life will have meant, a question answered not by worldly measures of success but by what truly and eternally lasts. Understanding how to measure a life by what lasts helps a woman judge her life by the right standard.

For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? — Mark 8:36

The Question of Meaning

Beneath all a woman's activity lies the question of what it will all have meant, a question of meaning and worth that the end of life forces to the surface. At the heart of considering legacy is the question of meaning, what a woman's life will ultimately have meant, for beneath all her activity, achievement, and busyness lies the deeper question of whether her life will have been worthwhile, significant, and good, a question that the vantage point of the end forces to the surface, so that a woman is invited to ask not merely what she has done but what it has meant, confronting the question of the ultimate worth and significance of her life. This means a woman faces the question of meaning, asking what

her life will ultimately have meant beneath all her activity, so that she confronts the deeper question of her life's worth rather than only its busyness. The woman who faces the question of meaning asks what her life will ultimately have been worth. The question of meaning asks what a woman's life will have meant beneath all her activity, so that she confronts the worth and significance of her life.

Not the World's Measures

A woman's life is not rightly measured by the world's standards of wealth, status, and achievement, for these can be gained while the soul and what truly matters are lost. The world measures a life by its own standards, wealth, status, achievement, fame, and comfort, but these are not the true measure of a life's meaning, for Christ asked what it profits to gain the whole world and lose one's soul, revealing that a life can be successful by every worldly standard and yet be empty or lost in what matters most, so that a woman must not measure her life by the world's standards, which can be fully met while the deeper worth of a life is missed entirely, the true measure lying elsewhere. This means a woman rejects the world's measures as the standard of her life's meaning, understanding that worldly success can coexist with the loss of what matters most, so that she does not judge her life by wealth, status, or achievement. The woman who rejects the world's measures judges her life by a truer standard than worldly success. Not the world's measures, for a life can gain the world and lose its soul, so that a woman does not judge her life by wealth, status, or achievement.

What Truly Lasts

A woman measures her life rightly by what truly and eternally lasts, the love she has given, the souls she has touched, the holiness she has grown in, and her faithfulness to God. The true measure of a life's meaning is what truly and eternally lasts, for when the world's goods have all passed away, what remains is the love a woman has given, the souls she has touched and helped toward God, the holiness and character she has grown into, and her faithfulness to God, so that a woman measures her life by these lasting things, judging its meaning not by what will perish but by what will endure into eternity, the love and faithfulness and souls that outlast every worldly achievement. This means a woman measures her life by what truly lasts, the love given, souls touched, holiness grown, and faithfulness to God, so that she judges its meaning by what will endure into eternity rather than what will perish. The woman who measures her life by what truly lasts judges it by what will endure into eternity. What truly lasts is love, souls, holiness, and faithfulness, so that a woman measures her life's meaning by what will endure rather than perish.

CHAPTER THREE

Becoming, Not Just Doing

Legacy Is Who You Become

A woman's deepest legacy is not primarily what she accomplishes but who she becomes, the character and holiness she grows into, for the saint she is called to be is a greater legacy than any work she can do. Understanding that legacy is becoming more than doing redirects a woman's life toward its truest goal.

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. — 2 Corinthians 3:18

Who You Become Matters More Than What You Do

A woman's character and holiness, who she becomes, matter more in the end than her accomplishments, what she does, for being outlasts and outweighs doing. The deepest truth about legacy is that who a woman becomes matters more than what she does, for accomplishments fade and are forgotten, but the person she becomes, her character, her holiness, the soul she has formed, is the most lasting and significant thing about her, outweighing and outlasting all her doing, so that a woman's primary legacy is not her works but her self, the woman she has become through a lifetime of choices, being mattering more in the end than doing. This means a woman understands that who she becomes matters more than what she does, so that she gives priority to her own formation and holiness over mere accomplishment, knowing her character is her deepest legacy. The woman who understands who she becomes matters more than what she does prioritizes becoming over accomplishing. Who you become matters more than what you do, so that a woman's character and holiness outweigh her accomplishments as her deepest legacy.

Being Transformed into Christ

The becoming to which a woman is called is a transformation into the image of Christ, so that her legacy is finally the degree to which she has been made like Him. The transformation a woman is called to is a growing conformity to Christ, for Scripture says believers are being transformed into His image from one degree of glory to another, so that the ultimate measure of who she becomes is how far she has been made like Christ, her holiness consisting in this transformation, and her deepest legacy being the degree to which the image of Christ has been formed in her, the saint she has become through grace reflecting Him. This means a woman understands that her becoming is a

transformation into Christ, so that she sees her deepest legacy as the degree to which she has been conformed to His image through grace. The woman who understands being transformed into Christ sees her legacy as how far she has been made like Him. Being transformed into Christ is the becoming a woman is called to, so that her legacy is the degree to which His image has been formed in her.

The Saint You Are Called to Be

Every woman is called to become a saint, and this is her highest legacy, the particular holiness God intends her uniquely to embody and leave behind. The highest vision of a woman's legacy is the saint she is called to be, for God calls every woman to holiness, to become the particular saint that only she can be, and this sanctity is her greatest possible legacy, surpassing every other achievement, so that a woman's truest aim is to become the saint God intends, the unique embodiment of holiness that she alone can offer, leaving behind not merely works but a life made holy, the saint she was called to be being the legacy that most matters. This means a woman understands that she is called to become a saint, so that she aims at the particular holiness God intends for her as her highest legacy, surpassing every other achievement. The woman who understands the saint she is called to be aims at holiness as her greatest legacy. The saint you are called to be is a woman's highest legacy, so that she aims at the particular holiness God intends her uniquely to embody.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Legacy of Love

What Truly Remains

Of all that a woman might leave behind, the deepest and most lasting legacy is love, the love she has given to God and to others, for love alone never ends and is what truly remains when all else passes away. Understanding the legacy of love reveals what a woman most truly leaves behind.

Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease.
— 1 Corinthians 13:8

Love Is What Lasts

Among all things, love is what ultimately lasts, for Scripture declares that love never ends while all else passes away, making love a woman's most enduring legacy. Scripture

declares plainly that love never ends, while prophecies, tongues, knowledge, and all else will pass away, revealing that love is the one thing that truly lasts, so that of everything a woman might leave behind, the love she has given is the most enduring, outlasting all her works, words, and achievements, and a woman's legacy of love is therefore her most lasting legacy, the one thing that endures into eternity when everything else has faded, love being what finally remains. This means a woman understands that love is what lasts, so that she sees the love she has given as her most enduring legacy, the one thing that remains when all else passes away. The woman who understands love is what lasts sees it as her most enduring legacy. Love is what lasts, so that a woman's legacy of love is the most enduring thing she leaves behind.

The Love You Have Given

A woman's true legacy of love is not the love she has received but the love she has given, poured out on God and on the people of her life. The legacy of love consists not in the love a woman has received but in the love she has given, for it is her own self-giving love, poured out on God and on the people of her life, her family, her friends, the souls she has served, that constitutes her legacy, so that a woman leaves behind, most truly, the love she has given away, the kindness, sacrifice, care, and devotion she has poured out over a lifetime, this given love being her real and lasting legacy rather than anything she has gained for herself. This means a woman understands that her legacy of love is the love she has given, poured out on God and others, so that she sees her self-giving love as the true and lasting thing she leaves behind. The woman who understands the love she has given sees her self-giving as her true legacy. The love you have given, poured out on God and others, is a woman's true legacy of love, the self-giving she leaves behind.

Love Remains in the People You Loved

A woman's love remains alive in the people she has loved, continuing to bear fruit in their lives long after she is gone, so that her love outlives her in them. The love a woman gives remains alive in the people she has loved, for genuine love shapes and blesses those who receive it, continuing to live in them and to bear fruit in their lives long after the one who loved them is gone, so that a woman's love outlives her in the hearts and lives of those she loved, passed on by them to others, her legacy of love enduring not as an abstraction but concretely in the people she touched, who carry her love forward. This means a woman understands that her love remains in the people she loved, continuing to bear fruit in them after she is gone, so that she sees her love outliving her concretely in the lives she has touched. The woman who understands love remains in the people she loved sees her love outliving her in them. Love remains in the people you loved, so that a woman's love outlives her, bearing fruit in the lives she has touched.

CHAPTER FIVE

Handing On What You Have Received

Who Will Carry It After You

A central question of legacy is who will carry what a woman has been given after she is gone, for the faith, wisdom, and love she has received are meant to be handed on to those who come after her. Understanding the handing on of what she has received orients a woman toward securing her legacy in others.

We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. — Psalm 78:4

A Trust to Be Handed On

The faith and formation a woman has received are not hers to keep but a trust to be handed on to those who come after her. The faith, wisdom, and spiritual inheritance a woman has received are not possessions to be kept and buried with her but a trust to be handed on, for she received them from others and is meant to pass them to those who come after, so that her formation is given to her in part for the sake of the next generation, a treasure held in trust to be transmitted rather than hoarded, and a woman recognizes that what she has been given carries with it the obligation and privilege of handing it on. This means a woman understands the faith and formation she has received as a trust to be handed on, so that she sees her spiritual inheritance as meant for transmission to those who come after rather than kept to herself. The woman who understands it is a trust to be handed on sees her formation as meant for the next generation. A trust to be handed on is what a woman's faith and formation are, so that she passes them to those who come after rather than keeping them.

Telling the Next Generation

A woman hands on her legacy by telling the next generation the truths and works of God, actively transmitting the faith to her children and those who follow. Scripture describes handing on the faith as telling the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, not hiding them from the children, and this is how a woman secures her spiritual legacy, by actively telling and teaching the next generation what she has come to know of God, transmitting the faith, the stories, the wisdom, and the love of God to her children and all who come after, so that what she has received is passed on through her deliberate telling, the legacy handed down by transmission to the young. This means a woman hands on her legacy by telling the next generation of God and His works, actively transmitting the faith

to those who come after, so that her spiritual inheritance is passed down through her deliberate teaching. The woman who tells the next generation hands on her legacy to those who follow. Telling the next generation transmits the faith and the works of God, so that a woman hands on her legacy to those who come after.

Securing the Legacy in Others

A woman secures her legacy by investing it in the lives of others who will carry it forward, so that what she has received continues and multiplies through those she has formed. The surest way a woman secures her legacy is by investing it in others who will carry it forward, for a legacy written only in works or memory fades, but a legacy planted in living people, formed, taught, and loved into carrying the faith themselves, continues and even multiplies, so that a woman secures what she has received by forming others who will bear it after her, her children, those she has mentored, the souls she has touched, becoming the living carriers of her legacy into a future she will not see. This means a woman secures her legacy by investing it in others who will carry it forward, so that what she has received continues and multiplies through the living people she has formed. The woman who secures her legacy in others plants it in living people who will carry it forward. Securing the legacy in others invests it in living people who will carry it forward, so that a woman's inheritance continues and multiplies after her.

CHAPTER SIX

The Fruit That Remains

What Endures of a Faithful Life

Christ calls His followers to bear fruit that remains, and a woman's faithful life, lived in Him, bears a lasting fruit, souls, love, and good works that endure into eternity beyond her earthly life. Understanding the fruit that remains assures a woman that a faithful life is never wasted.

You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide. — John 15:16

Appointed to Bear Lasting Fruit

Christ appointed His followers to bear fruit that abides, so that a woman's life is meant to produce lasting fruit for His Kingdom, not merely activity that passes away. Christ told His followers that He appointed them to go and bear fruit, and fruit that would abide,

revealing that a woman's life in Him is meant to produce lasting fruit, not merely passing activity, so that she is called and appointed to bear fruit that remains, fruit for the Kingdom of God that endures beyond her earthly life, and her labors, when rooted in Christ, are meant to produce not transient results but abiding fruit, the lasting harvest she was appointed to bear. This means a woman understands that she is appointed to bear lasting fruit, so that she sees her life as meant to produce fruit that abides for God's Kingdom rather than mere passing activity. The woman who understands she is appointed to bear lasting fruit lives to produce what will endure. Appointed to bear lasting fruit, a woman is meant to produce fruit that abides, so that her life yields a lasting harvest for the Kingdom.

The Fruit of a Faithful Life

A faithful life bears real and lasting fruit, souls helped toward God, love given, good works done, and holiness grown, which endure into eternity though much of it is unseen. The fruit of a woman's faithful life is real and lasting, consisting of the souls she has helped toward God, the love she has given, the good works she has done, the faith she has handed on, and the holiness she has grown, so that even a hidden and ordinary life, lived faithfully in Christ, bears abundant fruit that endures into eternity, much of it unseen in this life but real and lasting, the faithful woman's life producing a harvest of eternal worth that remains when her earthly days are over. This means a woman understands that a faithful life bears real and lasting fruit, souls, love, and good works that endure, so that she trusts her faithful life produces an eternal harvest even when much of it is unseen. The woman who understands the fruit of a faithful life trusts it produces a lasting harvest. The fruit of a faithful life is souls, love, and good works that endure into eternity, so that a woman's faithful life bears lasting fruit.

A Faithful Life Is Never Wasted

Because her faithful life bears fruit that remains, a woman can be assured that no faithful life is ever wasted, however hidden, small, or unrewarded it may seem. The assurance that flows from the fruit that remains is that a faithful life is never wasted, for even a life that seems small, hidden, obscure, or unrewarded, if it has been lived faithfully in Christ, has borne fruit that endures into eternity, so that no faithful woman need fear that her life has counted for nothing, since God sees and keeps the lasting fruit of her faithfulness, and a hidden life of faithful love and service is as fruitful before God as any celebrated one, the faithful life never wasted. This means a woman is assured that a faithful life is never wasted, so that she takes heart that her faithfulness, however hidden or small it seems, has borne lasting fruit and counted before God. The woman who knows a faithful life is never wasted takes heart that her faithfulness bears eternal fruit. A faithful life is

never wasted, so that a woman is assured her faithfulness, however hidden, has borne fruit that endures.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Living Toward Eternity

The Woman Formed, Sent, and Homeward Bound

The whole of a woman's formation and mission finally orients her toward eternity, her true and lasting home, so that she lives her earthly life as a journey toward the city that is to come. Understanding how to live toward eternity gathers up a woman's whole life and points it to its final end.

For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. — Hebrews 13:14

No Lasting City Here

A woman lives rightly by remembering that she has no lasting home on earth, so that she holds her earthly life as a pilgrimage rather than a final destination. Scripture reminds the faithful that here they have no lasting city, and this truth orients a woman's whole life, for she is a pilgrim on earth, not a permanent resident, her true and lasting home being elsewhere, so that she holds her earthly life, with all its attachments and achievements, as a journey rather than a destination, living as one passing through toward her real home, not clinging to earth as if it were lasting but recognizing that she has no permanent city here. This means a woman remembers that she has no lasting city on earth, so that she holds her earthly life as a pilgrimage toward her true home rather than a final destination. The woman who knows she has no lasting city here lives as a pilgrim toward her true home. No lasting city here reminds a woman she is a pilgrim on earth, so that she holds her earthly life as a journey rather than a destination.

Seeking the City to Come

A woman lives toward eternity by actively seeking the city that is to come, orienting her desires, choices, and hopes toward her eternal home with God. Because she has no lasting city here, a woman seeks the city that is to come, the eternal home with God toward which her whole life is a journey, so that she orients her desires, choices, and hopes toward heaven, living each day with her final home in view, investing in what will matter there, and letting the hope of the city to come shape how she lives now, so that her life is an active seeking of eternity rather than a settling into earth, her heart set on the

home God has prepared. This means a woman seeks the city that is to come, orienting her life and hopes toward her eternal home with God, so that she lives each day with heaven in view and her heart set on her final home. The woman who seeks the city to come orients her whole life toward her eternal home. Seeking the city to come orients a woman's desires and hopes toward heaven, so that she lives toward her eternal home with God.

Formed, Sent, and Coming Home

At the end of her formation and mission, a woman sees her whole journey, as beloved daughter, formed believer, and sent apostle, as a pilgrimage homeward toward the God who made and called her. The whole of a woman's journey comes together in this final vision, for she has been loved as a beloved daughter, formed in conviction, and sent as an apostle, and all of it has been a pilgrimage homeward, a journey toward the eternal home with the God who made and called her, so that she sees her formation and mission not as ends in themselves but as the path home, and lives the whole of her life as a woman formed, sent, and now coming home, moving through her earthly days toward the final embrace of the God she has served. This means a woman sees her whole journey, as beloved, formed, and sent, as a pilgrimage homeward to God, so that she lives her life as one coming home, her formation and mission the path to her eternal home. The woman who sees herself formed, sent, and coming home lives her whole life as a pilgrimage to God. Formed, sent, and coming home, a woman sees her whole journey as a pilgrimage to her eternal home with God.

CONCLUSION

Live the Life You Will Be Glad to Have Lived

The woman considering her legacy now sees her life from its end. We have seen the clarifying power of looking at her life from its end, letting the woman she wants to have been shape the woman she is today; that her life will be measured not by the world's standards but by what truly lasts; that her deepest legacy is who she becomes, the saint she is called to be, more than what she accomplishes; that love is the legacy that never ends, remaining in those she has loved; that she is called to hand on what she has received, securing her legacy in others; that a faithful life bears fruit that remains and is never wasted; and that her whole journey is a pilgrimage toward eternity, her true home.

Running through all of it is a single invitation: to live now the life she will be glad to have lived. Legacy is not built at the end but in every present choice, and the woman she will

have been is being formed today, in the love she gives, the holiness she grows, and the faith she hands on.

So live the life you will be glad to have lived. Look at your life from its end, and let the woman you want to have been shape the woman you are choosing to be today. Measure your life by what truly lasts, not by the world's passing standards. Give yourself above all to becoming, to the saint God is calling you to be, for who you become is your deepest legacy. Pour out love, the one thing that never ends, and it will remain in those you love. Hand on what you have received, securing your legacy in the lives of those who will carry it after you. Trust that your faithful life, however hidden, bears fruit that remains and is never wasted. And live the whole of it toward eternity, as a beloved daughter, formed and sent, now journeying home. When it is over, let it have meant that you loved God and others well, became who He made you to be, and handed on the faith. Live now, so that you will be glad, at the end, to have lived.

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