

Your Father's Legacy

By Stephen R. Phinney

The purpose of this section is to complete an assignment that will directly affect you and your children, your family history, your childhood memories, and the meaningful traditions that affect your present generation and the generations to come through you.

These questions are designed in such a way for you to “interview” your father. If your father has passed on or cannot be found, use these questions to interview other family members who may know the answers about your father, even if he did not raise you. If you are adopted, or were raised by a surrogate father, like a grandfather, this father figure becomes your priority interview. What you were given relationally is far more important than genetics. However, if I were this child, I would conduct the interview with both fathers, first the one that raised you and then your genetic father. In some cases, these questions cannot be answered about a father/father figure. In these instances, answer these questions about yourself. If you are a mother/future mother who is unable to contact their father, swap the term “father” for “mother”.

This portion of your workbook requires a weekly phone call to your father, or face-to-face visit, to gather the information to assist you in making note of your **Father's Legacy**. For example; when you talk with your father, start in day one of week one, ask the questions, then go to day two and so forth and so on. In one visit, you will cover 5 days of questions from your workbook. By the time you have completed this study, you will have had a minimum of 7 interviews with your father. By doing this assignment, you will be accomplishing two goals, first, opening the doors of intimate communication, second, building a legacy ledger that can be passed on to future generations. Therefore, it is important that you take adequate and accurate notes. These questions are found in the **Appendix** portion of your workbook.

Yes, I commit to interviewing my father/father figure.

WEEK ONE

Your Father's Legacy

Legacy Series One:

Find out from your father basic information like his full name, his date of birth, his place of birth, his siblings and their ages. Once you have achieved this, have him answer the following questions:

Notes:

1. What is your favorite?

Sport	Bible Verse
Book	Song
Leisure Activity	Vacation Spot
Food	Author
Person In History	Bible Teacher
Television Show	Musician
Event in History	Humanitarian Event

2. If you were to change one thing about your childhood, what would it be?

3. What activity did you enjoy the most in your childhood?

Legacy Series Two:

1. Dad, what was your perspective of God when you were a child?

2. What was your perspective of your dad as you were growing up?

3. If you could have changed one thing about your dad, what would it be?

4. What was your view of authority growing up?

5. What is your view of authority today?

6. Make a statement about pride.

Legacy Series Three:

Dad, at 15 years of age, when you looked into the mirror, what did you see?

When you look into the mirror now, what do you see?

If you could have changed one thing about yourself, what would it be?

What was your view of fatherhood growing up?

What is your view of fatherhood today?

Make a statement about yourself today.

Legacy Series Four:

Dad, what was/is the one redeeming factor of your life?

How would you describe God's redeeming love in your life?

Recall for me the 5 most important lessons you have learned in life:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

WEEK TWO

Legacy Series:

Dad, have you ever questioned that fact that Jesus was and is God? _____ Please explain your answer: _____

What question have you always wanted to ask God? _____

What question have you always wanted to ask me? _____

Legacy Series Day Two:

What does it mean to you personally that Jesus was and is the Son of God? _____

Do you believe there is any other way to God except by Jesus? _____

Explain your answer: _____

Have you ever asked Christ into your life? _____ If yes, have him share his testimony: ____

**_____ If no,
ask him if he is open to accepting Him into his life someday: _____**

Legacy Series Day Three:

Dad, what views were ingrained in you from your youth regarding the institution of marriage?

What is your view of marriage today? _____

If you were able to change one thing about your marriage with mom, what would it be? _____

What marriage advise do you have for my marriage (or future marriage)? _____

Legacy Series Day Four:

Dad, from your perspective, what do you believe is the reason for the engagement phase of getting married? _____

Did you and mom have an engagement period? _____ If so, how did it help you prepare for marriage? _____

Do you believe it is the grooms' responsibility to assist the bride's father prepare her for marriage? _____ Why or why not? _____

What is one thing you would do different in your engagement time with mom? _____

Legacy Series Day Five:

Dad, tell me how you met mom and why you were attracted to her: _____

As a groom, what ways did you prepare for your marriage with mom: _____

Did you seek her father's permission to marry her before you ask her to marry you? _____

If you did, why did you consider this important to do? _____

If you did not, why didn't you go through this step? _____

What was the most important and significant sacrifice you made for mom? _____

WEEK THREE

Legacy Series Day One:

Dad, why do you believe it is so important to help other Christians grow into maturity?

Do you believe that we are to be our "brother's keeper?" _____ Why or why not? _____

How would you describe your maturity level when you married mom? _____

Legacy Series Day Two:

Dad, why do you believe it is difficult for people to speak the truth in love? _____

In all honest, when you speak using harsh or condemning words, what is your goal? _____

When you are walking in error, describe how you would like others to treat you?

Legacy Series Day Three:

Dad, what vices have held you from experiencing full freedom as an adult? _____

Are there any vices that hold you today that I can pray for you to be set free from? _____

Note: Take a few moments to share with your dad the vices that have held you through the years.

Legacy Series Day Four:

Dad, have you ever read Song of Solomon? _____ If so, what did you think of it? _____

How would you describe your love for mom the first year you were married? _____

(If your parents are still married today) How would you describe it today? _____

Note: Take a few moments to share with your dad your love for him.

Legacy Series Day Five:

Take time to list out all the lessons you have learned in the Faithful father study to this day, call your father and share with him what you wrote down. This could be one of the most intimate times you have had with him yet. Plan, organize and go forth!

WEEK FOUR

Legacy Series Day One:

Dad, as a teen, what image did you strive to be like?

As a young adult, what idols (things that replaced God) did you have in your life?

Dad, in the present, with what idols do you still struggle?

As you look back on your childhood, what idols did you see in your father's life?

Legacy Series Day Two:

Dad, what was the most faithful thing your father did as you were growing up?

Describe the level of compassion your father expressed to you and your family as you were growing up?

What desires did you end up carrying out that match those of your father?

What ways, if any, did your father impart to you the ways of God?

Legacy Series Day Three:

Dad, what was the one thing you wish your father would have done differently in training you?

Dad, please rate how your father demonstrated the following:

- 1 = Never**
- 2 = At Times**
- 3 = Most of the Time**
- 4 = Always**

Word	Rate
Love	
Instructed	
Warned	
Rebuked	
Chastened	
Delighted In You	
Considered Needs	
Self-restrained	
Friend	

Word	Rate
Commanded	
Guided	
Trained	
Disciplined	
Nourished	
Showed Pain	
Carried Your Burdens	
Viewed You As Great	

Legacy Series Day Four:

Dad, I will read a list of attitudes regarding authority figures, please rate yourself as you see yourself relating to a *master* from ages 16 - 25. Place a "check" in the box labeled "present" if it is a present struggle for your father.

Description	Never	At Times	Often	Present
Despises wisdom and instruction (Proverbs 1:7)				
Rejects knowledge handed down by an authority figure (1:22)				
Grieves his/her mother by straying from the truth (10:1)				
Enjoys devising mischief – defying a chief (10:23)				
Right in his/her own eyes before accepting direction (12:15)				
Quick to anger when obligated to obey (12:16)				
Avoids departing from evil – won't stay out of trouble (13:19)				
Deceitful – lies to cover tracks when authority corrects (14:8)				
Arrogant and careless around authority figures (14:16)				
Rejects his/her father's instruction (15:5)				
Despises his/her mother and or father (15:20)				
Does not respond well to discipline (17:10)				
Does not understand wisdom (17:16)				
Has a worldly focus – loves things not of God (17:24)				
Grieves his/her masters – parents, bosses etc. (17:25)				
Hurts his/her parents by doing things that defy them (17:25)				
Will not discuss any viewpoint but his/her own (18:2)				
Provokes others to strife and anger by his/her words (18:6)				
A smart mouth usually gets him/her into trouble (18:7)				
Is quarrelsome and contentious (20:3)				
Is a spendthrift or can't manage money (21:20)				
Repeats his/her foolishness (26:11)				
Trusts in his/her own heart and not in the heart of others (28:26)				
Cannot resolve conflicts without conflict (29:9)				
Gives full vent to his/her anger – out of control (29:11)				

Please list a minimum of 4 ways you tend to “get back” at authority figures or “strike out” at him or her when you are upset.

Please define your attitude regarding authority between the ages of 13-18.

How would you describe your attitude toward authority today?

Legacy Series Day Five:

As I read these statements, please tell me, which items best describe your fathers style of teaching as you were growing up.

Style	✓
Avoid teaching loved ones	
Used healthy words but a “sharp” tone in teaching our family	
Frequently yelled when he “couldn’t” get his “point” across	
Used sarcastic and demanding words	
Used vulgarity	
Used words that produce guilt in me	
He communicated/taught effectively	

Style	✓
Used loving and encouraging words	
Used non-verbals that communicated “I don’t care”	
Used non-verbals that say, “I care and I am listening”	
He listen before he talked	
He teared up when you shared your pain	
Used a “lecture” format when teaching me	
He laughed or smirked when I didn’t get it	

Which of these best described you when you were in the process of being taught by an authority figure who tended to be “strong.”

Response	✓
Ungracious in speech	
Interruptive	
Disrespectful	
Gives “silent treatment”	
Name calling	
Judgmental	
Raises voice	
Rolls eyes when offended	
Manipulates those around them	
Controlling	
Pouts (depression)	
Frowns	
Doesn’t listen – talks too much	
Unforgiving	
Vulgar in speech	
Harsh and critical	

Response	✓
Verbiage is filled with mercy	
Waits on others – patient	
Respectful tone & attitude	
Gently draws others out	
Calls on God’s name for help	
Stands forgiving	
Quiet when hurt	
Maintains good eye contact in turmoil	
Allows others to have control	
Rests – knows God is in control	
Joyful while being stressed	
Soft and caring appearance	
Hears others out	
Seeks the forgiveness of others	
Words used to bless people	
Loving and gentle when being harmed	

What ways do you find yourself resisting teachers today?

WEEK FIVE

Legacy Series Day One:

Dad, what is your view of slavery?

Make a statement about the “masters” (authority figures) in your life:

What types of things “enslaved” you through out your childhood?

If you were to give me advice about being “enslaved” to people, places or things, what would it be?

Your Father’s Legacy

Legacy Series Day Two:

How would you describe your father as a parental figure?

Dad, from what I understand, the way you and I were managed as children has a major impact in our lives today. I will be reading a series of True or False statements and the instructions ask that you be as transparent as you possibly can.

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> My parents had marital harmony. | T | F | |
| <input type="radio"/> I grew up in a child-centered home. | | T | F |
| <input type="radio"/> One or both of my parents modeled sinful anger. | T | F | |
| <input type="radio"/> One or both of my parents disciplined me in anger. | | T | F |
| <input type="radio"/> I was rarely physically disciplined as a child. | T | F | |
| <input type="radio"/> My parents scolded me in front of others. | T | F | |
| <input type="radio"/> I saw my family live a “double standard” life. | T | F | |

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| ○ My mother was inconsistent with physical discipline. | T | F | |
| ○ My father was inconsistent with physical discipline. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother used “time out” as a way to discipline. | T | F | |
| ○ My father used “time out” as a way to discipline. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother would “hit” me in public places. | T | F | |
| ○ My father used “name calling” to correct me. | T | F | |
| ○ My father sexually abused me. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother sexually abused me. | T | F | |
| ○ My sibling(s) sexually abused me. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother used an “instrument” to physically discipline me. | T | F | |
| ○ My father used an “instrument” to physically discipline me. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother used her hand to spank me. | T | F | |
| ○ My father used his hand to spank me. | T | F | |
| ○ My parents used many rules to change my behavior. | T | F | |
| ○ I rarely heard my parents say they were wrong or seek forgiveness. | T | F | |
| ○ One or both of my parents were constantly finding fault in me. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother functioned as head of the home. | T | F | |
| ○ My father was “passive aggressive” in managing our home. | T | F | |
| ○ My father did not lead me in times of trouble. | T | F | |
| ○ One or both of my parents would lecture me without hearing me. | T | F | |
| ○ I was compared to other siblings or children. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother would not take time to “just talk” with me. | T | F | |
| ○ My father would not take time to “just talk” with me. | T | F | |
| ○ I have few memories of being encouraged as a child. | T | F | |
| ○ I have many memories of my parents breaking their promises. | T | F | |
| ○ I felt like I was a 6-year-old while being corrected as a teen. | T | F | |
| ○ I was not given much freedom as a child. | T | F | |
| ○ I was excessively mocked and teased as a child. | T | F | |
| ○ I believe I was physically abused growing up. | T | F | |
| ○ One or both of my parents had unrealistic expectations of me. | T | F | |
| ○ I observed one or both of my parents show favoritism growing up. | T | F | |
| ○ One or both of my parents used a lot of vulgarity. | T | F | |
| ○ One or both of my parents were addicted to substance abuse. | T | F | |
| ○ I was exposed to pornography as a child. | T | F | |
| ○ My mother had an adulterer relationship with a man outside the home. | T | F | |
| ○ My father had an adulterer relationship with a woman outside the home. | T | F | |
| ○ My parents used the TV as a babysitter for me as a child. | T | F | |
| ○ My parents allowed me to be a “video game junky” growing up. | T | F | |
| ○ My parents allowed me to have an internet connection in my room. | F | | |
| ○ My parents would not require me to have a clean bedroom as a child. | T | F | |
| ○ Our family eat dinner together a minimum of 3 times a week. | T | F | |
| ○ Our family spent more time eating in front of the TV than not. | T | F | |
| ○ One or both of my parents required me to live on a budget as a teen. | T | F | |
| ○ One or both of my parents would buy me things to clear their guilt. | F | | |
| ○ I frequently would hit my mother as a child. | T | F | |
| ○ I frequently would hit my father as a child. | | T | F |
| ○ I was allowed to “back-talk” one or both of my parents. | T | F | |
| ○ I rarely was “spanked” growing up. | | T | F |

As I was taking you through this exercise, what were you thinking or feeling?

What type of emotions have you been experiencing as a result of our conversations?

What statement would you like to make regarding the “outcome” of our talks?

Legacy Series Day Three:

Dad, as you have served under authority figures, which one did you feel the freest to be yourself?

Why did you feel so free under this leader?

What did you learn from this leader and how have you applied these things to your life?

How would you describe yourself as a leader?

How would you describe yourself as a follower?

Do you enjoy being under the hand of an authoritative leader? _____ If not, why?

What authoritative figure hurt you the most in your life? _____ What did they do to you to cause this hurt? _____ How do you believe this hurt affected your attitude toward authority today? _____

From your perspective, do you believe you have a healthy attitude toward all authority today? Please explain your answer: _____

Legacy Series Day Four:

Dad, have you ever viewed yourself as a harsh authority figure? _____ If yes, what ways do you believe you were harsh? _____

If you were to seek forgiveness from those you treated harshly, what would you ask forgiveness for?

Explain the style of discipline your father used on you and how or if he was harsh.

How harsh:

As I read the following, which best describes you when you are being challenged by a harsh authority figure.

Response	✓
Ungracious in speech	
Interruptive	
Disrespectful	
Gives "silent treatment"	
Name calling	
Judgmental	
Raises voice	
Rolls eyes when offended	
Manipulates	
Controlling	

Response	✓
Verbiage is filled with mercy	
Waits on authority – patient	
Respectful tone & attitude	
Gently responds	
Calls on God's name for help	
Stands forgiving	
Quiet when hurt	
Maintains good eye contact in turmoil	
Allows authority to have control	
Rests – knows God is in control	

Pouts (depression)	
Frowns	
Doesn't listen – talks too much	
Unforgiving	
Vulgar in speech	
Harsh and critical	

Joyful while being stressed	
Soft and caring appearance	
Hears authority out	
Seeks the forgiveness of authority	
Words used to bless authority	
Loving and gentle when being harmed	

Legacy Series Day Five:

Dad, describe the “feelings” you had when your father acted unreasonable: _____

How did you respond to him when he acted this way: _____

What ways did you attempt to “win” his favor when he acted unreasonable: _____

Because of my sinful reactions to your authority growing up, I want to seek your forgiveness for my behavior. Dad, will you please forgive me for not honoring and respecting you when you felt you had to be unreasonable with me? _____ Thank you for forgiving me dad!

WEEK SIX

Legacy Series Day One:

Dad, what was your perspective of women when you were 8 years of age?

What was your perspective of women during the ages of 20-25?

What was your perspective of women after being married to mom for 5 years?

Legacy Series Day Two:

Dad, what weaknesses do you believe women have? _____

How do you believe these weaknesses have affected you as a man? _____

Dad, what do you see as the strongest characteristic of a woman? _____

Dad, what trait of a woman do find most intimidating? _____

Legacy Series Day Three:

Dad, in your view, how are women different than men? _____

What are some characteristics of women that come to mind? _____

What type of vulnerabilities do women have that men do not? _____

What are your favorite qualities of a woman? _____

List five things that you will take away from today's lesson:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Legacy Series Day Five:

Dad, what trait did you see in your mother that you admired the most? _____

What trait did your mother have that hurt you the most? _____

What trait did/does mom have that you admire the most? _____

What trait did/does mom have that hurt you the most? _____

WEEK SEVEN

Legacy Series Day One:

Dad, what liberal philosophies do you hear taught in the church today? _____

What liberal philosophies are you tempted to practice in your life? _____

How do you protect yourself from being deceived by false teachers? _____

Legacy Series Day Two:

Dad, what reasons would you list for a marriage union to dissolve? _____

Is there ever any reason for our union with Christ to dissolve? Please explain your answer.

In your opinion, is there any sin that God cannot forgive? Please explain your answer using scriptures. _____

Is there any sin within a marriage that God cannot resolve? If yes, explain your answer.

Legacy Series Day Three:

Dad is there any sin or hurt that we cannot forgive? _____

Is there any person we cannot love? _____ Explain your answer: _____

Is there anything that we cannot give thanks for? _____ Explain your answer: _____

Is it possible to be content in all circumstances that come our way? _____ Explain: _____

Legacy Series Day Four:

Dad, in your opinion, why was the earth put here? _____

Why was Adam & Eve put here on earth? _____

Why was Satan put here on earth? _____

Why was Jesus put here on earth? _____

What do you believe your life calling is? _____

We are hoping this homework assignment has been rewarding and healing. If you have a testimony regarding what God did between you and your father, or father figure, please send it on to us. You can do this by typing out the testimony and sending it to us. Please state if we have permission to use your name.

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