

FAMILY MATTERS: INVESTING IN THE THINGS THAT LAST

Looking Ahead to Things That Last

Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18, 24



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Think hard about this question for just a moment: *what in your life will endure the test of time; what will withstand the ups and downs of the future?* Life is lived in the present, but there is a future coming, even if many live as if the future doesn't matter, as if the choices we make today will not echo into tomorrow. Each of us will leave a legacy after we've passed on to eternity. Memories of our life and our character, for good or for ill, will linger in the lives of our families and friends, making each choice, each word, each moment an essential one. So what legacy will we leave when today's future becomes tomorrow's present?



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. When Looking Back, These Things Matter

Regardless of age or level of patience, here are six enduring ideas that can bolster courage, inform wisdom, and strengthen character.

The first marker: *biblical principles are more important than traditional opinions.* Opinions are merely truths filtered through preferences, but convictions are rocklike and stand the test of time. Opinions are momentary, convictions are enduring, and biblical principles are eternal.

Our second landmark: *personal relationships are more valuable than individual accomplishments.* A poor man or woman, if he or she enjoys one true friend, is richer by far than the man or woman who can claim the world's power and possessions yet is alone.

The third guidepost: *domestic priorities rate higher than church programs.* It's easy to get out of kilter. Chasing the good, we often miss the best. While men's and women's Bible studies, Sunday school, AWANA, and youth events are all good, we musn't let them rob us of our time with family.

The fourth marker: *positive reinforcement is better than negative reactions.* As parents, we should strive to say yes every chance we get. Positive reinforcement is much better than negative reactions.

Our fifth monument: *unconditional forgiveness is much preferred to lingering probation.* In the midst of a heated argument, it's easy to dig up old bones or worry over them. But that contradicts the necessity of unconditional



Quotable

*Remember
that only two
things on this
earth are eternal:
human souls
and the
Word of God.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



www.insight.org | www.insightworld.org

Original outline copyright © 2009 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM05

FAMILY MATTERS: INVESTING IN THE THINGS THAT LAST

Looking Ahead to Things That Last

Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18, 24

forgiveness. Part of the forgiving process is forgetting—letting go and putting the past behind so there is no manure to fertilize grudges.

The sixth signpost: *mutual respect is of greater concern than chain of command*. We may not be able to get thousands of people to respect us, but if we can get a few to respect us, especially our immediate family members, that's a great place to start.

2. When Looking Ahead, These Things Last (Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18, 24–25)

Human bodies and souls will last into eternity, but these three aspects of human life will linger, if not into eternity (Matthew 22:30), at least until the present touches eternity.

The first feature requires us to stay strong in maintaining vital relationships because *the institution of marriage and family will last*. When God created the earth and everything in it, He pronounced the work of His hands as “good . . . very good” (Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). The pinnacle of God’s handiwork was the creation of humanity. But when God saw that Adam was alone, He said, “It is not good” (2:18), because Adam couldn’t fulfill the purpose for which he was designed—to rule, to bear children, and to spread out over of the earth to make it blossom (1:26, 28). Adam needed a “helper suitable for him” (2:18)—one unlike the animals but just like him. So God formed Eve from Adam’s rib and joined them together in the everlasting bond of marriage (2:21–24).

The second facet relating to human life demands that we discern Scripture, because the truth of *God’s plan and requirements for domestic harmony will last*. With the marriage of a man and woman, God intends to create a new family. Each partner leaves behind the daily obligations of his or her previous home and begins a new home with new obligations. Cleaving to each other, the man and woman “become one flesh” (2:24), being completely transparent and self-sacrificing with each other physically, spiritually, emotionally, and mentally (2:25).

No enemy has waged war on marriage and family with greater ferocity than the enemy we call selfishness. Individuals so consumed with their own desires and pleasures would rather injure those they love than deny themselves anything. Perhaps the garden of Eden could bloom again if selfishness could be uprooted from the human heart, but as it is, weeds grow where roses and daisies once flourished.

The third aspect of human life challenges us to stay faithful to the right road because *the effects of our influence will last*. It’s been said that “the things we excuse in moderation, our children will excuse in excess.” Whether positively or negatively, the things we do and say today ripple into the future. Little by little, drip by drip, character is formed; and like the walls of a canyon, our spouses, children, and friends can read the layers and point to times when we failed or succeeded under pressure, gave in to or triumphed over temptation, and stumbled or remained surefooted in our walk with Christ.



www.insight.org | www.insightworld.org

Original outline copyright © 2009 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM05

FAMILY MATTERS: INVESTING IN THE THINGS THAT LAST

Looking Ahead to Things That Last

Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18, 24



A CLOSER LOOK

On Friendship and One-Fleshness

True friendship is a rare reward. The greatest friendship recorded in Scripture was between David and Jonathan, the son of King Saul. In fact, Scripture says that “the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself” (1 Samuel 18:1). So close was the bond between these two men that “Jonathan made a covenant with David,” recognizing David’s anointed authority as Israel’s future king (18:3). As a sign of their friendship—and Jonathan’s submission to David’s royal rule—Jonathan gave David his princely garments and armaments (18:4).

If two souls could be so tightly knitted together in manly friendship, as were the souls of David and Jonathan, what of the souls of husbands and wives? Marriage according to Scripture is between one man and one woman becoming one flesh for one lifetime. (See Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:5–6; 1 Corinthians 6:16; and Ephesians 5:31.) The phrase “one flesh” captures the depth of intimacy that occurs when a man and woman are united in marriage. Next to a believer’s oneness with Christ, the one-fleshness of a married couple is the most intimate relationship humans can experience. Involving more than physical intimacy, the married man and woman share an emotional, mental, and spiritual bond unlike that between parent and child or among friends.

Adam and Eve were literally one flesh—she was fashioned by the hand of God from one of Adam’s ribs (Genesis 2:21–22), which is why Adam declared: “This is now bone of my bones, / And flesh of my flesh” (2:23). Married couples become one flesh by leaving their parents and cleaving to each other (2:24).



LET’S LIVE IT

No matter what changes occur in our culture, at least three truths remain constant in the eyes of God: the institutions of marriage and family, His arrangement and requirements for domestic harmony, and the effects of family influence. Our investment in these three areas will ensure a legacy of faithfulness, discernment, and strength of character. The first question is: *Are you investing in these things that will last?* The second question follows: *Do those investments include a few people God calls “special”?*

What eternal investments have you made in your marriage and with your children? How are you maintaining and watching over those investments?



www.insight.org | www.insightworld.org

Original outline copyright © 2009 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM05

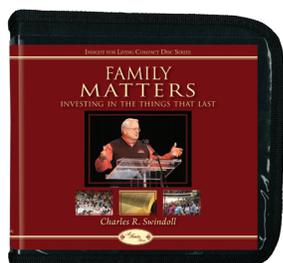
FAMILY MATTERS: INVESTING IN THE THINGS THAT LAST

Looking Ahead to Things That Last

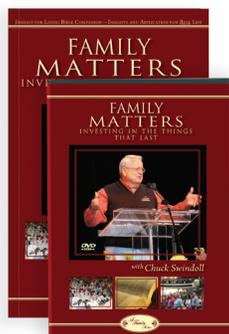
Genesis 1:26–27; 2:18, 24



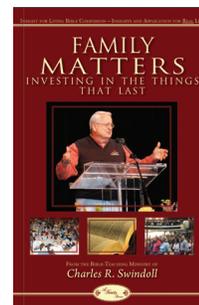
Tools for Digging Deeper



Family Matters: Investing in the Things That Last
by Charles R. Swindoll
CD series



Family Matters: Investing in the Things That Last
by Charles R. Swindoll and
Insight for Living Ministries
DVD and softcover
Bible Companion



Family Matters: Investing in the Things That Last
by Insight for Living Ministries
softcover Bible Companion

For these and related resources, visit www.insightworld.org/store
or call USA 1-800-772-8888 • AUSTRALIA +61 3 9762 6613 • CANADA 1-800-663-7639 • UK +44 1306 640156



www.insight.org | www.insightworld.org

Original outline copyright © 2009 and Message Mate copyright © 2015 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc.
All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.
Committed to Excellence in Communicating Biblical Truth and Its Application

MM05