

October 13, 2017

“What We Leave Behind Says a Lot”

Several years ago, a family called on me to celebrate a funeral service for their grandmother who once attended the church I pastored. Her health, however, had forced her to move several states away so that her family could care for her in her nursing home. I did not know the woman as she moved from our town over twenty years ago. The family offered modest assistance in helping me prepare an appropriate word for her life. Then a granddaughter remembered that the deceased woman’s Bible was in the car. She asked me if the Bible might help me to prepare. As you would expect, I said, “Yes.”

That evening, as I looked at her old and tattered Bible, I realized that I had a much better portrait of this woman’s life of faith than I ever dreamed. She marked her Bible with hundreds of favorite biblical stories and passages. Also, tucked inside the Bible were letters, cards, and notes written by her grandchildren over the years. Especially moving were the thank you notes written for Christmas and birthday presents given to her grandchildren. I am convinced that these “thank yous,” were this woman’s most prized possessions. Human beings appreciate the tokens of gratitude that others provide.