

Every Picture Has a Story

Our son, Jeffrey, sent us an article he had written about a family we are acquainted with. This is an abbreviated version of Jeff's article.

There were two photographs of this family, one was taken of the young couple on their wedding day and the second photograph of their family was taken about 30 years later.

The young couple did not know what lay ahead for their family when the first picture was taken. They did not know how many children they would have nor did they know what kind of lives their children would live. They didn't know the pending heartbreak of their young daughter dying in a fire. They didn't know the pain of losing two of their children prematurely, one being murdered and the other committing suicide. Another son never fully recovered from the effects of serving in the army during World War II.

This story is not unique. Similar stories are repeated in families time and again through the years; some with even more sorrow and some with more joy and happiness. The last chapter of this family's story has been written in full. What about our stories?

The final chapters of our stories have not been written. Granted, we can't control everything that happens in our families, whether good or bad. But while we still live and have breath in our bodies, God not only provides us with opportunities to positively affect those in our family picture but also commands us to do just that for those in our area of influence. We should and can:

- Live sacrificial, Christ-like lives (Rom. 12:1, I Cor. 6:19-20)
- Teach God's word to our children and grandchildren (Eph. 6:4, Deut. 6:6-7)
- Be good neighbors and good citizens (Matt. 22:39, Phil. 2:3,4)
- Share the hope that is in us at every opportunity. (I Pet. 3:15)

We understand that our life span is short. James wrote, *For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away* (James 4:14b). Furthermore, we have a limited amount of time within our life span to do the Lord's work (John 9:4).

Only we can write our picture's story. What are we doing to positively affect those in our picture?

For the elders,
Don Denton