

Ripples in the Pond

by Wayne Goff

As a child visiting my grandparents farm, I spent hours throwing rocks, or fishing bait, or something into their pond. I watched a small stone disappear beneath the surface, and continued to watch as the ripples from that small stone began to expand across the water. What started out as small and insignificant soon became a larger result. So it is with our lives.

Your Legacy

Your descendants will reflect your legacy for either good or bad. Just like the ripples in the pond, one life today will affect so many others in the future. Brent Hunter once wrote about the *effect* of two men's lives on their descendants:

"In the early 1700's two men developed distinct reputations for themselves — one was Jonathan Edwards, a man of integrity, refinement and Christian character, and the other was Max Duke, a well-known criminal. During the last two hundred years, their descendants have been traced. In Jonathan Edwards' line of descendants are thirteen college presidents, two hundred preachers, sixty prominent leaders, nine physicians, thirty-two authors, six professors and three hundred farmers. On the other hand, Max Duke's descendants include ninety prostitutes, one hundred criminals, one hundred forty-five confirmed drunkards, three hundred delinquents and two hundred eighty-five who contracted various evil social diseases."

So you see, the decisions you make today in favor of God, religion and morality will have a future affect on those who have come from your family. I am reminded constantly of the three thousand souls on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2) who made a positive, but difficult, decision to follow Jesus Christ and become a member of His spiritual body, the church (v. 41). It was a decision based upon conviction, not upon convenience. It would have been easier to stay back, blend in with the crowd, and say that the family religion was good enough. But these three thousand souls could not contain themselves, but out of deep conviction, being pricked in their hearts, said: *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* (v. 37). They could not be held back. But I have also wondered what a positive effect this must have had on their children and grandchildren in the future years. If their children and grandchildren became Christians, at least their decision to follow Jesus was made a bit easier because it was something their family had done before.

Dear reader, think about how your life and the decisions in it will one day affect your children. Believing in God, choosing to obey and be added to His church, and living godly, moral lives is not easy, but it is good. Likewise, living only for today, choosing to squander life's opportunities and responsibilities will cause you to raise children who will do the same. I do not think the *"eat, drink and be merry"* philosophy of so many is a wise use of one's time on earth. There will be too many regrets in the grave one day.

Harvest Time

"Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life" (Gal. 6:7-8). But how many **are** deceived? They allow the pursuit of the trivial to dominate their lives. They have been deceived, and that with their own consent.

Where are the "ripples" going in your life? Are they leading to the positive, spiritual, eternal things? Or are they ever broadening into the trivial, temporal things? Take time to assess your choices, and to consider how they are affecting your loved ones. Do the right thing, always, because it is right.