



**RIVERSIDE**  
CHURCH

Your story matters.



# WHAT STORY DO I WANT TO TELL?

PASTOR TOM LUNDEEN  
SEPTEMBER 26TH, 2021

**MYRC.CHURCH**

**better decisions**  
fewer regrets

# “WHAT STORY DO I WANT TO TELL?”

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Note Ephesians 5:15-17

*Dr. J. Robert Clinton, professor of leadership at Fuller Theological Seminary, has spent the past 15 years conducting extensive research on the lifelong development of Christian leaders. In an exhaustive search of the Bible, he identified approximately 1,000 leaders. Most were mentioned only by name. These included everything from Old Testament patriarchs, priests and military leaders to New Testament apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers and pastors. Sufficient information was available on only 49 prominent leaders to analyze how they finished. The results are shocking. Only \_\_\_\_\_% of leaders in the Bible finished well. This means that \_\_\_\_\_% fell short of God’s plan for their lives. This fact should jolt any present day leader who desires to count for God.*

So how can you and I be part of the 30% whose life and \_\_\_\_\_ leave a story we want to tell?

Note Acts 26:9-11 and 2 Timothy 4:7

How do we write a good life story by the \_\_\_\_\_ and decisions we make every day?

## **1. Say Yes to Jesus as \_\_\_\_\_**

Saul the Pharisee was well-known in his day, but for the \_\_\_\_\_ reasons... If he had never said Yes to Jesus as Lord, he would have been at best, an \_\_\_\_\_ in history...

Note 1 Timothy 1:13-16

No matter what your \_\_\_\_\_ may be, no matter who you’ve been...Jesus can forgive you, give you a new start...and help you start \_\_\_\_\_ a new story.

## **2. Say Yes to Jesus’ \_\_\_\_\_**

Note Acts 9:19b-22, 26-28

Every next step Paul took in following Jesus was preceded by, based on, and

\_\_\_\_\_ through the mission of Jesus.

There is no “\_\_\_\_\_” without the mission of Jesus first in our hearts and the motivation for everything we do.

Note 2 Timothy 1:8-11

### 3. Say Yes to God’s \_\_\_\_\_

A good life story is never written in \_\_\_\_\_.

Paul mentions \_\_\_\_\_ people just in Romans 16 and \_\_\_\_\_ people in just 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

So often we can focus our attention and efforts and \_\_\_\_\_ invested in things that don’t last...the only thing we can bring into eternity...is other \_\_\_\_\_.

Writing a meaningful life story means that we \_\_\_\_\_ in relationships with others.

Paul’s investment was two-fold:

- A. He invested in \_\_\_\_\_ up others (note 1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10-11a, 14-15; 4:1-2, 5).
- B. His investing in others also resulted in others \_\_\_\_\_ in him—Paul was honest about the \_\_\_\_\_ even the strongest Jesus followers experience in life:
  - i. Complete assurance of \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus (note 2 Timothy 4:6-8)...
  - ii. ...but also acknowledging my human \_\_\_\_\_, struggles, needs, disappointments, etc. (note 2 Timothy 4:9-16, 19-21).

### ***Am I making better decisions so I can have fewer regrets?:***

- What story are you \_\_\_\_\_ writing?
- What story do you \_\_\_\_\_ you were writing?
- Saying Yes to Jesus as Lord, to His mission, and to His family will help us write a story that will outlive us, touch many other people and give glory to God (note 2 Timothy 4:17-18).

*Tell someone about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey! Let us know, too, and fill out our connect card (digital\* or hard copy).*

*\*[MyRC.link/connect](https://www.myrc.link/connect) or text riverside to 94000*

# SG

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

*Icebreaker:* Favorite way to travel on vacation; planes, trains or automobiles?

Your *group* matters.

1. Take some time to talk through Chapter 3 of *Better Decisions, Fewer Regrets* and process what jumped out at you.
2. As you think about what you want your legacy to look like, read [Ephesians 5:15-17](#). What are some things you can do to finish well, regardless of what your past looks like?
3. What would you reasonably have expected your legacy to be if you had never said “YES!” to Jesus? What are some of the ways that expectancy has changed since your decision to follow Jesus? (If your group hasn’t had the chance to hear how you started following Jesus, take time to do that now.)
4. Think about some of the excuses you have from your past about why God can’t use you...then read [1 Timothy 1:13-16](#). How much control does your past actually have?
5. Our legacy as Jesus-followers revolves around His mission first and foremost. Read [Acts 9:19b-22, 26-28](#) and consider Paul’s life focus. How is Jesus’ mission being accomplished through your life?
6. Pastor Tom shared that “A good life story is never written in isolation.” and illustrated that by sharing about people Paul invested in, who invested in him, as well as some of his struggles along the way. (See message notes for pertinent passages.) Who are your people? Who are you investing in? Who have you invited to invest in you?
7. What next step will you take to ensure that the story that’s written beginning today will be one you’re excited to have told?

□ *Better Decisions, Fewer Regrets*—Chapter 3  
(pages 53—87)

□ *Genesis 37, 39—45*

**WEEKLY READING**

**better decisions**  
fewer regrets

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So how can you and I be part of the 30% whose life and legacy leave a story we want to tell?

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## 1. Say Yes to Jesus as Lord

Saul the Pharisee was well-known in his day, but for the wrong reasons... If he had never said Yes to Jesus as Lord, he would have been at best, an asterisk in history...

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No matter what your past may be, no matter who you’ve been...Jesus can forgive you, give you a new start...and help you start writing a new story.

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Note [Acts 9:19b-22, 26-28](#)

Every next step Paul took in following Jesus was preceded by, based on, and filtered through the mission of Jesus.

There is no “deep” without the mission of Jesus first in our hearts and the motivation for everything we do.

Note 2 Timothy 1:8-11

### **3. Say Yes to God's Family**

A good life story is never written in isolation.

Paul mentions 29 people just in Romans 16 and 34 people in just 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

So often we can focus our attention and efforts and time invested in things that don't last...the only thing we can bring into eternity...is other people.

Writing a meaningful life story means that we invest in relationships with others.

Paul's investment was two-fold:

- A. He invested in building up others (note 1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Timothy 3:10-11a, 14-15; 4:1-2, 5).
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