

Your Legacy

You have probably heard of the Nobel Peace Prize, but do you know how it came about? It is named after a Swedish inventor named Alfred Nobel. He was a very successful armaments manufacturer who amassed an enormous fortune inventing various kinds of explosives, including dynamite and the blasting cap.

In 1888, Alfred was astonished to see his own obituary in a French newspaper with the headline: "The Merchant of Death is Dead." It went on to say, "Dr. Alfred Nobel, who became rich by finding ways to kill more people faster than ever before, died yesterday." The paper had confused Alfred for his brother, Ludvig, who had just passed away.

After reading the mistaken obituary, Alfred became very apprehensive about how he would be remembered and decided to make some drastic changes. He updated his will and specified that most of his fortune (worth about 250 million US dollars) was to be used to create a series of prizes for those who confer "the greatest benefit on mankind" in five areas, including peace. Alfred wrote, "I was so shocked by people's perception that I committed the rest of my life to work toward world peace."

Alfred got a rare opportunity to see how the world would portray his life and define his legacy, and that prompted him to make some major changes. The "Merchant of Death" became a promoter of peace. But what about you? If your life ended today, how would the world remember you?

Would the world remember you as a chronic worrier, a greedy hoarder, a lazy bum, a deadbeat dad, a neglectful mother, an unfaithful wife, a dishonest businessman? Or would your legacy be more positive than that? Would they say things like, "He was a great husband," "She was a loving mother," and most importantly, "They were a committed Christian?" We all need to realize that the decisions we make today will determine how we're remembered tomorrow. Your legacy is being written right now, what does it say about you?



Aaron Erhardt Village church of Christ