

Have you ever heard of Frozen Dead Guy Days? That's right, *Frozen Dead Guy Days!* That's actually an event held every year for the last couple of decades in the small Rocky Mountain town of Nederland, Colorado. 'Course, I can't leave it at that—here's a synopsis of the story...

A man from Norway with the first name of Bredo died in 1989. Bredo was then literally packed in dry ice by his grandson and brought to America for long-term storage! *Grandpa Bredo*—as he became known—was quietly kept frozen under the watch of his family, at least 'til the local government officials realized what was going on. Then the town judge ordered that Grandpa Bredo be removed from Nederland.

Now, keep in mind this happened only a few decades ago. Naturally, the media got ahold of that juicy story. But the town's government still didn't want any dead humans being kept on private property in Nederland, so they passed a law forbidding that. However, the publicity stirred up got really big, so they included an exception specifically for Grandpa Bredo, as long as he was kept properly preserved. Ironically, in the legal profession, that kind of legal exception for an already existing situation is called a "grandfather clause." How funny is that? Grandpa Bredo's ice-cold remains legally protected under a grandfather clause! So now, there Grandpa Bredo remains, and every year, a rowdy celebration erupts!

In due course, Grandpa Bredo's family reportedly became disenchanted with the issues of naming rights and money related to those happenings in Nederland. Still, to this day, there's the frozen, physical evidence of Grandpa Bredo there in Nederland, celebrated in a sort of cartoonish pageantry and revelry by thousands in March of every year. And virtually none of those folks ever even knew Bredo! But the reality is that Bredo's long-departed spirit has already reaped what he confessed and accomplished during his life. How's that for a legacy? A spirit faded in memory but a set of molecules preserved! Wow.

This is a type of story that's been repeated over and over in similar ways, from many different angles. A life memorialized, but with the true legacy often getting blurred. Like monuments built and buildings named for George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Yes, institutions and foundations established and enduring. You know, like Elihu Yale and his university...Walt Disney...John D. Rockefeller, Sr. Then there are denominations and movements. You know, like Martin Luther...John Wesley...Martin Luther King, Jr.

Inevitably, as time grinds on, contemporary memories fade, cultures twist and turn, and writers with stale ideologies shape their opinions into fresh, new versions of history and remembrances. And next thing you know, heroes of yesteryear fall out of favor and rivals are raised up in their place. Businesses ultimately fade or are acquired. Foundations and institutions are repurposed into completely different directions, often completely contrary to the clear beliefs of their founders. So, how about legacies that supposedly last in a fashion as originally crafted? The truth is, that rarely happens. Simply put, legacies dramatically fade or are often repurposed in contorted ways. That's just the ways of the world.

Hey, the ultimate true reality is, each and every one of us is—as the old saying goes—just passin' through...yes, traveling through this life without staying very long at all. In fact, our time here on earth is demonstrably infinitesimally small—we know that's true, for sure! That's because our 70 or 80 or 100 years here on earth mathematically rounds down to zero in the context of eternity.

Still, for many people, it's pretty compelling to have their impact continue after they have passed away from this world. That breeds a desire to affect multiple generations that follow. And you know what? God Himself is the key author of this type of thinking—that's evidenced in His covenant with Abraham captured in Genesis 17:4-7 (ESV). Let's listen in..."Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant

between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.”

And then there’s this completely accurate rendering of a life’s legacy, the results of Abraham’s life, as God-breathed in the Bible, recorded here in Romans 4:20-25 (ESV): “No unbelief made [Abraham] waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. That is why his faith was ‘counted to him as righteousness.’ But the words ‘it was counted to him’ were not written for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord, who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.” That’s right: Abraham’s faith counted as righteousness was recorded in the Bible *for our sake!* Now that’s the legacy of a life that’s rounded down to zero mathematically, yet, amazingly holds real power for billions of faithful people to follow!

And likewise, so it goes with believers everywhere since the Cross—thankfully! Yes, 200 years from now, the chances of reasonably accurate and detailed renderings of our short lives here on earth are very, very slim, even among our direct descendants. Wait, you might say...at least a few people are famous for their deeds now! But then the chances are even more slim that such people will be portrayed accurately centuries from today...because many adversaries will be twisting their story or portraying them as evil!

But. *But something else is always afoot—the record of events kept by God.* Whether you’re a believer in Christ or not, Jesus has a totally accurate record of every person, a record whose consequences will be meted out perfectly, justly, and gracefully, in the appropriate measures. Is there rejoicing or weeping at the feet of the Mighty Judge, Jesus Christ? Yes, the judging of Grandpa Bredo, whose remains are frozen solid. Yes, the judging of George Washington, buried at Mt. Vernon. Yes, the judging of Vladimir Putin who has claimed his work is to restore the fullness of a “Christian nation” called Russia. Yes, the judging of me. And, yes, the judging of you. Indeed, each and every person judged, for better or for worse. And for all those who have called upon the name above all names, it’s for the better, for salvation and for heavenly rewards. What a gift of grace purchased by Jesus, fully covering our efforts at following Him, even though those efforts sometimes wobble quite a bit!

But this podcast episode is part of the “finance focus” series! What in the world does all this have to do with finance? Well, we have covered some classic investment topics in this series, from the stock market...to the time value of money...to business ownership being made available to ordinary investors by a company “going public.” See, investing is about risk management of the resources we’re steward of, carefully assessing the time frames, and all that done with focus on gaining the very best outcomes!

And God gave us a very clear picture of finance in the Bible. Here it is: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21 (ESV) And, we must recall Mark 8:36...“For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?”

‘Course, these verses apply to the whole of life. But they also apply directly to finance. And it’s simple. Even the poorest person giving time and treasure to the glory of God “does” finance much better than the billionaire building grand mansions to the glory of man. There are two approaches to ensure we stand the test of time. First, you can move to a place like Nederland, buy an ice-house, and try to convince local authorities to make you an exception clause like Grandpa Bredo’s. Or you can prepare to meet the Great Judge, Christ Jesus, by setting your heart to store up treasures in heaven!

So, what’s your legacy strategy? Jesus is keeping a record of your life...and what an opportunity that is!

## *A&A: Application & Action*

1. As believers, how much and how often are we tempted to celebrate the frozen, dead remains of times past rather than focus on the vibrant Christ-infused opportunities of the present—even when some of that dead, unfruitful past is described as “Christian” tradition? Give examples.
2. Many Christians are focused on managing the risk of their portfolio, working to ensure that all will be well at the end of their lives. How do you specifically ensure you have the optimal “storing” strategy from Matthew 6:19-21? Be specific.
3. How’s your true legacy shaping up? How do you expect Jesus measure it and reward you at His glorious judgment seat (1 Corinthians 3:9-15)? Be specific.