



## **The Significance of Cathedral Thinking 09.07.25**

This newsletter was inspired by Dr. Eric Bryant, one of my mentors in life. He spoke about the Basilica Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, designed by Gaudi. Sagrada's construction began in 1882 and it's still being built. Our guess is that this cathedral will be around a millennium from now.

"Cathedral thinking" is a powerful metaphor for living a life of true significance and building a legacy that endures beyond your lifetime, just like Gaudi. The concept originates from the medieval era, when cathedral builders often began construction on structures they knew they would never live to see completed. Despite this, they pursued

the work with dedication, artistry, and a sense of purpose because they understood they were contributing to something far greater than themselves.

Here's how this idea connects to living a meaningful life and leaving a lasting legacy:

## 1. Thinking Beyond Your Lifetime

Cathedral thinking requires long-term vision. The stonemasons and architects who built cathedrals worked for decades or centuries, with multiple generations contributing to the same goal.

- **Life of Significance Application:** When we live with cathedral thinking, we invest in people, values, and causes that will ripple far beyond our own lives. Instead of chasing only immediate rewards, we focus on impact that benefits future generations—whether that's through mentoring, creating institutions, advancing knowledge, or nurturing a family legacy.

## 2. Alignment with Core Values

The cathedrals were not just buildings; they were reflections of the builders' faith, artistry, and devotion.

- **Life of Significance Application:** Similarly, a life of true significance stems from living in alignment with core values—integrity, compassion, generosity, courage. By staying true to these principles, the "cathedral" of our life becomes a testament to what we believed in and stood for.

## 3. Embracing Patience and Perseverance

Cathedrals took centuries to complete, requiring workers to plant seeds they would never personally harvest.

- **Life of Significance Application:** Leaving a legacy requires patience and trust. It may mean mentoring someone who surpasses you, supporting initiatives whose benefits you'll never fully witness, or shaping a culture that thrives long after you're gone.

## 4. Collective Effort and Community Impact

No single builder could finish a cathedral alone; it took communities, generations, and collaboration.

- **Life of Significance Application:** A legacy worth leaving is rarely solitary. It's about empowering others, building institutions, or influencing movements that grow stronger because of the foundation you helped create.

## 5. Courage to Dream Big

Cathedral builders imagined soaring spires and stained-glass beauty before the first stone was ever laid.

- **Life of Significance Application:** To live significantly is to dream boldly about what's possible for humanity, for your family, for your craft—and to act on those dreams even if you won't see their full realization

Now go and craft a legacy that is intended to last beyond your life. fyi....Next year we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of Gaudi's passing.

Significant Podcast of the Week: At 11, Evan Ehrenberg decided to start college. At 16, he began work on his Ph.D at MIT. With his cathedral thinking, he now co-leads Water Lily, considering our we can age with dignity and prepare for our future “extended” lives. <https://www.spreaker.com/episode/truly-significant-com-presents-evan-ehrenberg-co-founder-of-water-lily--67650200>

Significant Book I'm Reading: With all the mixed messages coming out of RFK Jr., I am re-reading Discovering Truth, a very timely book by Tim Love.

Quote of Significance: “Slow is smooth and smooth is fast.” Inspired by Navy Seals

Add a touch of cathedral thinking to your week. Rick