Christian Stewardship Services'
advancing stewardship
estate planning and other news

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Changing Your Will - Is it Necessary?

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Often when people are asked to produce their Will, it takes some time for them to dig it out of the filing cabinet (or a less obvious place) and blow the dust off it. It's common that a Will would be created at the birth of a first child or before a major trip. Do the decisions made then still apply today?

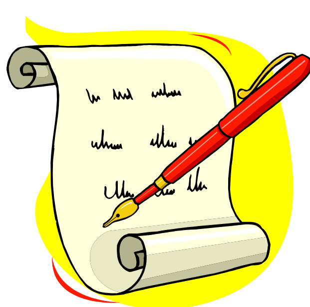
Executors:
The primary individuals involved with your Will are your executors and the guardians of your children. Take a moment to imagine your kids growing up in the home of the person/couple you mentioned when your Will was created. Given your family situation today, are the people listed there still appropriate? Is your executor still familiar enough with your personal situation to be able to take on that role? Has he/she moved far away or out of province? You may wish to make some adjustments in this area if you are uncomfortable with what your Will reflects today.

Distribution of Assets:
The second important part of your Will deals with distribution of your assets. When children are young, the priority is usually to ensure they can be provided for until they are old enough to care for themselves. When a child reaches age 18 they have full access to their share of your Estate unless the Will declares otherwise. Familiarity with this legislation usually causes parents of teenagers to take a second look at their Wills. The opportunity to lay out a payout strategy to be implemented over a number of years is often appealing and fitting. The Will may need to be changed to clarity this.

When children are grown and have become financially independent, the responsibility of the parents to care for their needs diminishes. Therefore, many parents are now stopping to consider their Wills and the distribution alternatives available to them. Obviously, caring for the surviving spouse is paramount, but what happens to your carefully acquired assets when the last of the two of you has passed away? Should your children be the only ones to share in the distribution of your Estate? What about grandchildren? Is you in-law child included? If a child predeceased you, what would happen to their share? These are all questions that should be answered in your Will and may require it to be changed as life progresses.

Ministries and Charities:
More and more people are now considering including charities and ministries in the distribution instructions in their Wills. Having contributed many hours and much financial resource over their lifetimes, they desire to ensure the work of the local church and Christian school continues. They may have contributed to other ministries or medical research organizations and will now consider including them as beneficiaries of their Wills.

Biblical Foundations:
Finally, the growth of a faith commitment over a lifetime may change the desires of an individual or couple in their Will planning. The Bible clearly states that all that we have comes as a gift from God and therefore this principle should play a role in the care of children and in the distribution of assets at death. Biblical stewardship of what God had entrusted to us does not stop the moment we die.



All Wills and Estate Plans should be reviewed every three to five years. If required, simple changes can be made through a properly documented and witnessed codicil, but more significant changes should be made through the drafting of a new Will. Contact CSS for further assistance.

Endowment Gifts

Christian organizations depend on your donations for their existence. Every donation is eagerly accepted and is quickly used to meet current needs. But how can you give a gift that is not immediately absorbed into the budget?

One of the most popular forms of planned gifts today is an Endowment. An Endowment gift is a permanent gift that is invested and only the interest or income earned on that investment is made available for use by the charity.

Features of Endowment Gifts:

- immediate tax credits or tax credit for the estate
- income from the gift supports the charity
- no minimum amount/flexible arrangement
- irrevocable gift
- gift subject to probate if made through Will
- charity uses the gift immediately or on death of the donor.

Example:

Mr. & Mrs. VanSmith support their Christian school each year. Of their $2,000 annual contribution, $1,000 will continue to go into the school's regular budget. The remaining $1,000 will be placed in an accumulating Endowment where it will grow in value. They will then add $1,000 every year for t next nine years.

At the end of ten years, they have contributed $10,000 to the Endowment and because the annual income of 5% has accumulated, the value of the Endowment is $13,206. The VanSmith's have chosen to end the accumulation of the annual interest after ten years so the school will then begin to receive the interest on that $13,206 each year.

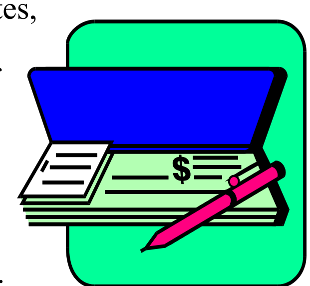
In their estate plan they have also included a significant gift which will be added to the Endowment.

For more information how you or your organization or school/church can make use of an Endowment Fund, contact the CSS office.

News Release Christian Stewardship Services

Ancaster, Ontario May 2, 2003

At the 27th Annual meeting of Christian Stewardship Services (CSS), Bill van Staalduinen, Chairman of the Board welcomed 47 delegates, guests & staff representing 34 Partnering organizations, ministries and charities (Partners) from across Canada and the United States. The meeting was held on the campus of Redeemer University College in Ancaster, Ontario.



In his report to the delegates, Henry Eygenraam, Executive Director of CSS told the delegates that CSS had provided gifts to Partners with some $560,000 in endowments, scholarships and operating funds in the year ending June 30, 2002. In total CSS has received just under $2 million in deposits and other funds in the past year. The income from these funds will be used primarily to fund the work of Partner organizations in various ways. "We are looking forward to an increase in our payments to Partners as the full impact of new regional representatives is felt", said Henry Eygenraam during his presentation. Three regional representatives have been appointed to CSS in the last 12 months; one serving Eastern Ontario and the Maritimes and resident in Ottawa, one in Alberta and resident in Edmonton and one in British Columbia, resident in Surrey. Plans are to add one more representative for South Western Ontario in the near future.

Christian Stewardship Services, together with its supporting Christian Organizations, promotes Biblical stewardship through planned giving and education. CSS has some $13 million in funds under administration, of which some 40% is invested in mortgages to Christian schools and churches.

For more information contact: Christian Stewardship Services, 600 Alden Rd., Suite 315, Markham, ON L3R 0E7; 1-800-267-8890 or admin@csservices.ca.

Baptize Your Worldly Possessions

by John H. Rudy

..."As the minister and the applicant went in the stream, the applicant suddenly remembered that he still had his wallet in his pocket. He grabbed for his wallet, to throw it onto the bank. The minister stopped him, "You bring your wallet right with you. That needs to be baptized too."

What would happen if all of us would bring our wallets to be baptized? We'd bring all our real estate, our bank accounts, our stocks, our retirement funds, our business interests.

What if we'd dedicate to God all of our possessions? We'd bring all we have under the rule and reign of God.

That would be revival!"

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Moneywise Meditations

by John H. Rudy

(quote from Mr. Rudy's Preface to his book)

"I heard someone say there are two things we have not talked about in church: sex and money. Now there's only one. Money.

Worse yet, it has often been fashionable to be negative about money. We seem to enjoy talking about unrighteous mammon, filthy lucre, and the stinking rich. We thunder against the evils of money, and then pass the offering plates.

I feel it is high time we emphasize the good news about money. In "Moneywise Meditations", I am trying to suggest that money can be an asset and not just a liability. It offers opportunities and not just problems. Money in the hands of Christians can be good stuff - but it's dangerous.

[We are] reminded that money can be a true friend or a vicious enemy. It can be a faithful servant or a cruel master. It can serve man or rule him. Money can be a great blessing or a terrible curse.

My purpose in writing "Moneywise Meditations" is to both affirm and challenge money-making Christians. Many of us have more wealth than ever before. Our wealth can lure us into self-indulgent living. Or we can use wealth to help further the cause of Christ. Privilege leads to responsibility. In spite of the overwhelming needs of the world, we can make a difference with our money, God's money.

...It is my hope and prayer that "Moneywise Meditations" will help nudge many of us to greater faithfulness.

We need a stewardship revival. Perhaps an unusual time of spiritual renewal will come when we bring our money, and our whole estates, under the rule and reign of God."

(Order your copy of "Moneywise Meditations" today for only $7.50 including shipping. Great resource for Stewardship Committees, etc.)

"The Treasure Principle"

written by: **Randy Alcorn**

a book review by Rick DeGraaf
Stewardship Education Coordinator

Comments: A short, quick rad book - but an exciting one - one that helps you uncover the treasure principle and six key principles that shapes a biblical understanding of how we should manage our "treasures". Randy writes in an easy reading style and yet is 'pastorally blunt' when it comes to our over-embracing love of possessions, money and material gain. He often uses applicable and often personal life illustrations that help bring clarity. Biblical references are clearly entered and labeled making it a good resource for persons looking for key biblical teaching.

Recommendations: This is a 'must' read for anyone working in the area of financial and resources stewardship. It is particularly suitable of anyone 14 and up. I wish everyone would read this book and act on it!

Source: Christian bookstore. Published by Multnomah Publishers, INC, PO Box 1720, Sisters, OR 97759 - see website www.lifechangebooks.com or www.multnomahbooks. com.

Highlights from my review: Randy begins the book by focusing on the key story that the book is based on - the story of a man who discovers a treasure in a field that isn't his. He sells all that he has so that he can purchase the field and make the treasure his. (Matt. 13:44). What treasure are we to seek? Lasting treasure that goes beyond the earthly. Randy reminds us that "You can't take it with you" and adds a refreshing insight which he calls, "The Treasure Principle: You can't take it with you - but you can send it on ahead".

In his book he identifies six treasure principle keys:

Key #1: *God owns everything. I'm His money manager.*
Key #2: *My heart always goes where I put God's money.*
Key #3: *Heaven, not earth, is my home.*
Key #4: *I should live not for the dot but for the line.*
Key #5: *Giving is the only antidote to materialism.*
Key #6: *God prospers me not to raise my standard of living but to raise my standard of giving.*

Here follows some sample quotes on the 6th key:
p.82... When it comes to giving, churches operate under a "don't ask, don't tell" policy. We lack communication, accountability, and modeling. It's as if we have an unspoken agreement: "I won't talk about it if you won't, so we can go right on living as we are."... How does a young Christian in the church learn to give? Where can he go to see what giving looks like in the life of a believer captivated by Christ?
p.92...he'd discovered the life-giving antidote to the materialism that had poisoned his soul. Scrooge learned the Treasure Principle - the secret of joyful giving.

Request for Information: mail or fax to:

Christian Stewardship Services, 315-600 Alden Rd, Markham, ON L3R 0E7; Fax: (905)947-9262

Please provide the following:

- ☐ More Information on the work of CSS
- ☐ Information on making/updating a Will
- ☐ Call me to arrange a visit/presentation
- ☐ Information on Charitable Gift Annuity
- ☐ Information on RRSP/RRIF Gifts
- ☐ Information on the CSS Endowment Fund
- ☐ Stewardship Education Information

Name(s):______________________________

Street:______________________________

City:____________________ Prov.__________ Postal Code:__________

Telephone: (_____)____________ E-mail:____________________