

Indisputable Principles of a Committed Steward

#6. Eternally Committed

by Gordon Botting

A keynote speech given by King George VI (King of England, 1936-1952) was heard over the radio by millions of enthusiastic listeners in England and around the world. However, in the middle of the speech someone accidentally tripped over the wires, breaking them and interrupting the signal. The quick-thinking chief engineer immediately grasped the loose wires with his own bare hands and held them for the next 20 minutes as his body became the conduit for the electrical current that passed through his body while the words of King George VI were communicated to his ardent audience. Without the bravery and fortitude of the chief engineer, the king's communiqué would have utterly failed.¹

Like the radio engineer, we are to be channels of the King of King's resources, both while we are living and after our demise. Many Christians are faithful in their giving of tithes and offerings as well as managing their material possessions while they are living, but they fail to understand that God holds them responsible for the property and money they leave behind as well. Ellen White in *Testimonies to The Church* reminds us of this responsibility: "They are accountable for the means which Heaven has entrusted to their care, and in no way can they excuse themselves from this responsibility until they are released by rendering back to God that which He has committed to them" (Vol. 1, pg. 530).

To help you face the challenge of this long-term stewardship principle, listed below are two practical suggestions for your contemplation and action.

1. Give generously of your money and property while you are living — you will enjoy the benefits of seeing it used in God's work and knowing that it is going to causes and institutions you believe are in His purpose for you.
2. Write your Will (which means having one) in such a way that none of your money or property falls into Satan's ranks: "Believing parents have frequently transferred their property to their unbelieving children, thus putting it out of their power to render to God the things that are His" (E. G. White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, pg. 333).

Reference: ¹ Dave Sutherland, Kirk Nowery, *33 Laws of Stewardship*, NewSource Publishing, 2003, pg. 149.

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A potpourri of practical ideas to help you become a better steward

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THY WILL BE DONE!

by Dennis Yoshioka*

Did you know that 70% of people reading these words have not made plans for the future? Why do I say that? Because statistics show that seven out of ten people who pass away do so without a last will and testament.

For those who are unmarried, with no children, an only child of an only child, unchurched, without any assets whatsoever and living a hermit's existence, not having a will might not be too bad. But for the rest of us, especially those with dependent children and a spouse, not having a will can potentially be catastrophic.

"The last words of Christ were, 'Go ye into all the world...'
This was Christ's last will and testament to his followers who walked with him during the years of his earthly ministry, and to those who should believe on him through their word" (*RH*, 11-06-94).
Who would have known that Jesus Himself had a last will and testament?

Why Don't You Have a Will?

The importance of having a will cannot be overemphasized, yet we hear many reasons why people don't have one.

1. I'm Too Busy.

It takes a lot to live in today's world and oftentimes both husband and wife have to be employed to make ends meet. So it is understandable when people tell us they have been too busy to make out their wills.

Stewardship is a total life-style. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, *spirituality* and *finances*.

Last Will
&
Testament

August 1, August

"The living trust is the finest gift a husband can give his wife." (Max B. Lewis in the *Reader's Digest*)

We know you are busy, so Field Representatives of the various Conferences are committed to working around your busy schedule. An hour or two of your time with a Field Representative and you'll be on your way to protecting your family, ensuring that your assets will be distributed according to your wishes, not someone else's.

2. I Have Too Little Property.

Many young couples do not see the need for a will simply because they don't have much in the way of assets. But if you are married, don't you want to provide for your spouse? If you have children, don't you want to ensure that they will be cared for in a manner consistent with your religious beliefs? What if you should be killed in a



traffic accident? Did you know your estate could possibly recover millions? Without a will, there is no way to ensure what the distribution would be, but if you have a will you can designate the guardian of your children and the distribution of funds for their care.

Without a will, who knows what relative or other person the court might choose to care for your children? And even if a court chose a "good" couple to raise your children, would they have the same values as you? Would your children be raised Adventists?

3. It's Too Expensive.

Many wills can cost upwards of several hundred dollars and for a young family just starting out, that could be a consideration. However, most Conferences provide simple wills for its constituents without cost. We do this because good stewardship is important to us all. Also, if you want to leave a gift to charity (to benefit your church or educational institution, etc), you must have a will or similar document. Without a will, the government sees you as an atheist and will not give a penny towards charity.

4. I Don't Like Legal Documents.

Let's face it, who does? Legal language is hard to understand and very confusing, but you can't get away from it if you want to be prepared. That is why we have Field Representatives who can explain things in common, everyday language that anyone can understand. We are not attorneys but we are all trained and certified to help you through the maze. We will answer all your questions or find someone who can.

5. I Don't Know What the Future Will Bring.

All the more reason to be prepared. The point is to be a good steward and prepare for something we know is going to happen to us if Jesus does not come first. "For the living know that they shall die. . ." (Eccl. 9:5).



6. If I Make a Will, I'll Die Sooner.

This is just a misconception that needs to be put to rest permanently. Generally, those who have made out their wills tend to live longer. Why? Probably because they find a certain measure of peace knowing that their affairs are in order and they've prepared for their loved ones. The stress is gone. And we all know that stress is a killer. Those who have their wills made do not die *sooner* — they die *prepared*.

These are the six most common reasons people give for not making a will. I hope I have helped to remove some of these barriers. Should you desire to be among the *prepared*, please call your local Conference and ask for Trust Services. We want you to be the best steward you can be of all God has blessed you with and having a will and last testament is a part of that good stewardship.

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"Many are not exercised upon the subject of making their wills while they are in apparent health, but this precaution [i.e., hesitancy, indecision] should not be taken by our brethren...They should arrange their property in such a manner that they may leave it at any time." (Ellen White, *Counsels on Stewardship*, pg.328)