

The Necessity of a Will

“Careful planning puts you ahead in the long run; hurry and scurry puts you further behind.” PROVERBS 21:51

To recognize and acknowledge God as the owner of all things is a fundamental principle of Christian stewardship. As He has given to us the use of His creation for His greater honour and glory, our needs, and the needs of our neighbours, so we will also remember this principle in our giving and sharing.

The making of a will is an important act of stewardship. Proper instructions for passing on to others our responsibilities can be a complicated task. A will is very personal document and should be designed to suit your family situation, your finances, and your religious outlook on life.

A Will means the details of your estate can be worked out quickly and easily. Without a Will, the province appoints an administrator. In addition to extra layers of bureaucratic red tape, this can also result in more of your estate going towards fees.

What Are Some Considerations When Making a Will?

A. ESTATE PLANNING

Estate planning is taking the time to think and pray about what will happen to your earthly possessions once you're no longer here to use and enjoy them. It's a planning process which incorporates responsibilities towards a surviving spouse and children as well as asset management, tax planning, insurance assessment, budgeting, wills, etc. Such a plan brings all of your finances into focus and provides goals to work toward.

Because of the significant tax implications of succession, giving to charity and other matters, CSS strongly recommends that clients consider undertaking this planning process. Of course, the CSS staff is available to provide leadership in this exercise.

B. FAMILY PROVISION:

Both partners in marriage should make a Will and the Will should begin with family. It is extremely important to make adequate provision for dependent children and your spouse in your Will, and then to consider others who are special in your life. Single persons should consider the needs of parents and friends.

Need should be a major criteria, and if there is not need, consider if an inheritance would be a blessing or a burden to the individuals chosen.

C. CARE OF CHILDREN:

Choosing the appropriate person(s) to care for your children in the event of the loss of life of both parents is one of the most important decisions you can make. It's also the reason many young parents do not have Wills in place.

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Legally your choice may be any capable person or couple over the age of majority, preferably a couple who share your worldview and approach to parenting. As with Estate Trustee, no one is required to accept this extra responsibility, and you should discuss your wishes with your guardians to make sure they are willing to serve, before you finalize your will.

D. THE CHOICE OF ESTATE EXECUTOR/EXECUTRIX OR TRUSTEE:

Please refer to another information sheet from Christian Stewardship Services which clearly outlines the appropriate choice and the work of the executor.

E. CHARITABLE CAUSES:

Your gifts to an organization can bless many people in their daily walk of life and can continue the support you have given throughout your lifetime.

Some persons provide for their children first and then leave the rest to one or more charitable causes. Some designate charitable work for an equal share with each of their children - known as "a child called charity". Without a will, no gifts to charity can be made by your estate. A gift in a will can often lead to significant tax savings for your estate.

F. THE LEGALITY OF A WILL:

CSS strongly advises consultation with a legal representative and completion of your Will by a lawyer. In the case of contestability, this professional will stand up for your choices in a court of law.

G. TIMING:

A Will must be completed while an individual is of sound mind. That means waiting until it appears to be a necessity is not a good choice. Just thinking about creating a Will is not good enough.

The scripture says: *Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your heart, for in the grave, where you are going, there is neither working or planning or knowledge or wisdom.* (Ecclesiastes 9:10.11)

What happens if I don't have a Will?

If we take seriously that what we have is God's to begin with, then it is our responsibility to carry our stewardship commitments through to the final distribution of our blessings. Imposing government distribution rules to those blessings is not scriptural, and will completely eliminate any contribution to ministry. Your spouse and children will share in your estate according to a government imposed formula.

About Christian Stewardship Services

There is no charge or obligation connected with our services, and Christian Stewardship Services does not encourage charitable gifts for its own work. The funding for our work with individuals and families comes from annual sponsor fees paid by our member organizations. A list of these charities and non-profits is available upon request. CSS does not sell or advocate any insurance, investments or professional services and holds all information received in strict confidence. Our goal is simply to help you exercise Christian stewardship in a way that is consistent with your needs.

Remember: A Will is for the Living. Make it while you can!

