

provide for and influence for Jesus after our death. This can only be done if you've made preparations beforehand and in such form that they will be carried out.



## State of California

Without a Last Will and Testament, did you know, for example, that the State of California will consider you an atheist? I say that because without a will, the State has no provision to give any portion of your estate to charity. It doesn't matter if you have been an Adventist for the past fifty years and returned tithe all your life — without a will, none of your estate will ever go to the work of the church.

And if you are a parent with minor children, without a Last Will and Testament, the State of California will decide who raises your children. And although the courts will undoubtedly do the best job they can to place your children in a loving home, the people they choose may not share your Adventist values or lifestyle. So the only way to influence the decision of who raises your children is to have a Last Will and Testament.



## Where Will Your Assets Go?

Remember, there are only three places your assets can go after you are gone: family and friends, charity, or the government. If you would like to give only to family and friends and your favorite charity, you must have a Last Will and Testament. Otherwise, your assets may go to some of your family, or to the government, but never will they go to your favorite charity.

So if you haven't already done so, please take the opportunity to make your wishes known. Get your Last Will and Testament done. Just give your local Conference Trust Department a call and I am sure they will be happy to help you.

Remember, Jesus had one, Ellen White had one — shouldn't you have one too?

# The Stewpot

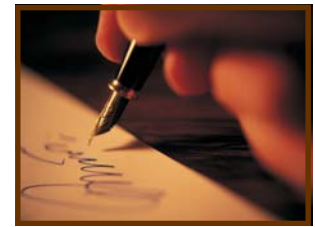
A potpourri of practical ideas to help you become a better steward

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## Jesus' Last Will and Testament

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Did you know that Jesus had a Last Will and Testament? Look at this, from the writings of Ellen G. White: "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.



Okay, I know that this is not the kind of Last Will and Testament you were expecting. But the concept is the same. Christ's last words were His legacy to us because He knew if we followed His last wishes, all He worked for while on this earth would be realized....the salvation of man.

## For Those Who Follow After

You see, the purpose of a Last Will and Testament is to leave instructions for those who follow after. In most cases, the Last Will and Testament leaves instructions regarding assets and their disposition. But more importantly, the Last Will and Testament is the testator's last opportunity to influence those who come after.

## Conditions Reflect Value

It is very common for conditions to be placed upon bequests (gifts from a Last Will and Testament), and it is these conditions that can have a profound influence on the beneficiary. Very often, we have grandparents who leave educational trust funds for their grandchildren

## Do You Have a Story to Share?

In these times of economic difficulty and even crisis, we are looking for some personal examples of how God has blessed and/or answered prayer. If you would like to share your story with our *Stewpot* readers, please write it up and send it by email to: [carol@puconline.org](mailto:carol@puconline.org) — we look forward to hearing from you!

with the condition that the children receive the funds only if they attend Adventist schools. And as a parent who has seen all three of his children through our Adventist educational system, I can testify to the value of Adventist Christian education.

Hence, the Last Will and Testament is the means by which those who come after us can know what we value most. And in the case of Jesus' last words, it is quite obvious that He wanted us to follow in His footsteps. Why? Because He knew that to do so would bring us great joy, peace, and eventual salvation.

In the same vein, our Last Will and Testament can have a profound impression on our children and heirs. The instructions we place in our Last Will and Testament will identify what we want for our children and what we value most of all.

### Ellen G. White

Take the example of our Lord's servant, Ellen G. White. I know you have enjoyed her writings, which have endured long after her death in 1915. And the reason why we continue to be blessed by new works from her 100 thousand pages of writings is because she recognized the importance of having a Last Will and Testament.



***Her Last Will and Testament.*** At the age of eighty-four, Ellen White prepared her Last Will and Testament, bequeathing her writings for *“the improvement of the books and manuscripts held in trust by them, and herein provided; for the securing and printing of new translations therefore; for the printing of compilations from my manuscripts; for general missionary work of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination; for the support of mission schools, under the Negro Department*

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*of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference; for the support of Mission Schools for the illiterate whites in the Southern States,....”*

If you ever wondered what was important to Ellen White, you only need to peruse her Last Will and Testament to find out. Other than providing for her children and grandchildren, the bulk of her estate went to the Seventh-day Adventist Church for missionary work.

And what effect do you think that Last Will and Testament had on her children? James Edson White and William C. White were both bequeathed for their lifetimes *“10% of the net proceeds of said properties for (their) sole use and benefit...”* However, shortly after their mother's death, these two sons relinquished all claims from their inheritance, leaving the funds to work exclusively for the benefit of the church.

***Her Trust.*** Not only did Ellen White have a Last Will and Testament, she also created a Trust with her will. Her Trust appointed five trustees to manage the estate. The original trustees were William C. White, Clarence C. Crisler, Charles H. Jones, Arthur G. Daniells, and Frank M. Wilcox, who were charged with the management of the estate for the purposes identified above.

The trustees were appointed for life, but she also provided for vacancies from this Board of Trustees to be filled by the Executive Committee of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in the event that the then sitting board could not agree on a replacement.

***The Benefit.*** So, as you can see, we benefit from the continued writings of Ellen White because she had the foresight to set her wishes to pen and paper. And by creating her Last Will and Testament, she ensured that the words given her by the Lord Jesus Christ would be perpetuated till His coming.

You and I may not have as extensive an estate or as noble a calling as Sister White, but we do have loved ones who we want to

