

Introduction:

A Will, also known as a Last Will and Testament, is a legally prepared and bound document that states your intentions for the distribution of your assets and wealth after your death. In the event you have children, a valid Will also allows you to designate who will care for them.

My mother was promoted to glory in 9/11/2010. She left a will that had specific instructions for how she wanted her younger brother to be cared for. My Uncle Ike at that time was living in my grandmother's home where he grew up and where he lived his entire life. He was mentally disabled and was never well enough to earn an income take care of himself. He was 65 years when my mom passed. Before my grandmother passed, she entrusted his care to my mom in her will with detailed instructions of what she wanted done to take care of him.

My mom left these instructions for my grandmother's estate that was passed to her and now on to us. Everything had to be done exactly as she had it annotated in her last will and testament.

She believed if we really loved her, if we really wanted to honor her life, we would carry out the wishes of her will to the letter. And if we were ever becoming unclear about what she meant, we had to go and read the will again. We were commissioned to oversee the inheritance stated in her Last Will and Testament.

A. Where is your will?

1. Too often, people wait until they are much older to have one written on their behalf

2. **James 4:14.** *14 Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes.*

C. Most understand the concept of a will. It is a common practice in our society.

1. Though we may not understand every legal detail like a lawyer does, most people understand what a will is and generally how it works.

C. The practice of people leaving a will and testament is not a modern development, but an ancient practice.

I. The Definition of a Will (Hebrews 9:15-17).

15 For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. 16 In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, 17 because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living.

- A. Testament is described as a (covenant / diatheke / dee-ath-ay'-kay): The last disposition which one makes of his earthly possessions after his death, a testament or will. (*Thayers Greek Lexicon*).
1. The testament or will specifies who will receive the legacy of a person the amount of money or property left behind by the person.
- B. For every will (testament) there must be a testator who made the will (**Hebrews 9:16**). *In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it,*
- C. A will (or testament) cannot be written unless the person has a legacy (i.e., money or property to pass on to others) (e.g., **Psalms 105:7-11**). *7 He is the Lord our God; his judgments are in all the earth. 8 He remembers his covenant forever, the promise he made, for a thousand generations, 9 the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac. 10 He confirmed it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as an everlasting covenant: 11 "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion you will inherit."*

II. Jesus Has a Wonderful Legacy to pass on to others!

A. The Legacy of Forgiveness of Sins.

1. Jesus had a grand legacy! He has eternal blessings to pass on to us!
2. After the cross and resurrection, Jesus declares before His ascension that His people would be given the forgiveness of sins (**Luke 24:46-47**). *46 He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*
 - a. No greater legacy (or gift) could have been left to another than the forgiveness of sins!
 - b. When a person finally closes his eyes in death, there is nothing on earth that this world contains that would be more important than having his sins which stand between himself and his maker to be forgiven! (**Hebrews 8:13**). *13 By calling this covenant "new," he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear.*
 - c. Sin separates us from God and without forgiveness there is a separation from God for all eternity (**2 Thes. 1:8-9**). *8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might...*

B. The Legacy of Eternal Life.

1. Linked to forgiveness is the promise of eternal life in Heaven with God **(1John 2:25)**. *25 And this is what he promised us—eternal life.*
2. The greatest legacy that could ever be imagined -- passed on to us! **Example:** When there is the death of a very rich person, people will go around for weeks and say: *"I sure hope my name is in the will! - In some cases, people will, for years afterward, fight and quarrel over whose name is in the will, and whose name is not in the will."*
 - a. Many people desire to be in the will because of the earthly possessions and riches they may acquire.
3. Not all the riches of the earth could begin to compare with the eternal riches that the Lord Jesus gives us! **(Ephesians 1:3)** *"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."*

III. Jesus Will (Testament) Went into Effect at the Moment of His Death.

- A. In every will, the testator must die (or blood must be shed) for the will to go into effect **(Hebrews 9:16-17)**. *16 In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, 17 because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living.*
- B. When Jesus died upon the cross, a New Testament (or new will) went into effect **(Colossians 2:13-17)**. *13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you[a] alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, 14 having canceled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. 15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*
- C. The New Testament (will) replaced the Old Testament (will) with all of its laws and regulations (as prophesied - **Jeremiah 31:33-34**). *33 "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the Lord. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the Lord. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."*
- D. To follow the Old Will (testament) in addition to the New Will (Testament) will cause a person to be cut out of the will **(Galatians 5:1-4)**. *It is for freedom that Christ has set*

us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. 2 Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. 3 Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. 4 You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

IV. The Conditions of the Will.

- A. In every will, there are conditions that must be met in order for people to inherit the person's legacy (e.g., to inherit a ranch in Texas, the son must live in Texas) **(Revelation 21:7)**. *7 Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.*
- B. The testator (author of the will) has the absolute right to make whatever conditions he wants to make **(Matthew 28:18-20)**. *18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore **go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*
- C. The Lord Jesus passes on His legacy to only those people who are His children.
 1. When people die and leave a will, it is most often the children who are the heirs of the parent's legacy.
 2. In many wills, this is the only condition that a person must meet to be a recipient of a will, be one of the testator's children **(Romans 8:16-17)**. *16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*
- D. To be one of His children, each person must be **adopted** into the Lord's family, in other words, be born again spiritually.
 1. We are not the natural born children, but we become a part of his family through adoption **(Galatians 4:4-7)**. *4 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. 6 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." 7 So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.*
 - a. We are not outsiders, but we become legitimate, intimate, members of God's family.

2. A person cannot be physically or naturally born into God's family; A person must be born again spiritually (**John 3:3-5**). *3 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again." 4 "How can someone be born when they are old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born!" 5 Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit.*

V. How May a Person Be Adopted into God's Family and Thus Become an Heir of Christ?

- A. By the grace of God found in Jesus Christ our Savior, a person may become an heir of Christ (**Titus 3:5-7**). *5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*
- B. To gain access to His grace, each person **must believe** in Christ (Mark 16:16), confess his faith in Him (Rom. 10:9-10), repent of his sins, and be baptized into Christ (Acts 2:38) **as specified by Jesus in His will.**
- C. Only those who are baptized into Christ are children of God and thus heirs of eternal life (**Galatians 3:26-29**). *26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*
- D. To **remain** an heir of Christ after baptism, a person must maintain an obedient faith unto the Lord to the very end (**Hebrews 6:11-12**). *11 We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. 12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.*

Conclusion:

God's will is like a road. He does not care if you walk on the right side, the left side or down the middle. He does not care if you jump, skip, jog, or walk fast down the road. He does not care if you sing or if you are silent. But He does care if you leave the road. He wants you to

always stay on the road. Each of us has a different road to travel. The road is God's will for your life. The road will turn and twist, but His plan will be accomplished.

Are you an heir of Christ? Meet the conditions of the Will of Christ and become an heir today.

THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF JESUS CHRIST

I, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, the Son of God make this my last will and testament.

I give to you an inheritance that will last forever. It has been reserved for you from my Father, the Almighty God, the Creator of the universe.

I give you every spiritual blessing in heavenly places, I give you the free gift of salvation through faith, I give you the forgiveness of all your sins, I give you the peace that passes all understanding.

I give you joy unspeakable and full of glory. I crown you with lovingkindness and mercy.

I give you blessings that will exceed anything you could ask or think. I give you wisdom when you open your mouth, and the law of kindness on your tongue.

I give you strength and honor for your clothing. I give you the greatest gift you'll ever know, it's the gift of my love, the love that caused me to give my life for your sins.

Furthermore, in addition to all these blessings, I give you a mansion where you will live forever. This mansion will be situated in the Holy City, in the New Jerusalem, where you will have no more tears, no more death, no more sorrow, no more pain, nothing evil will be in that city, for the throne of God will be there, and the greatest of all, you will see me face to face.

I also give you a treasure that is better than silver and better than gold and is contained in the Sacred Scriptures that I am giving you. The Bible will guide and comfort you and will instruct you on how to use your inheritance.

The foregoing testament consisting of all these blessings is yours when you believe that I am the Son of the Living God and receive me as Savior and Lord.

These blessings have been attested to by a great cloud of witnesses, beginning with Abraham, Moses and all the prophets. They have been declared by all my disciples, sent to you by my Father, ratified by my blood and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

These words are faithful and true,

Jesus Christ

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